

Theater Production I/II

Spring 2012, G Block Classroom: 212 Instructor: Eric de Lora
Office Hours: Friday Lunch/212 E-mail: ericd@maybeckhs.org

I think theater ought to be theatrical ... you know, shuffling the pack in different ways so that it's -- there's always some kind of ambush involved in the experience. You're being ambushed by an unexpected word, or by an elephant falling out of the cupboard, whatever it is.

TOM STOPPARD, interview, March 10, 1999

When you come into the theater, you have to be willing to say, "We're all here to undergo a communion, to find out what the hell is going on in this world." If you're not willing to say that, what you get is entertainment instead of art, and poor entertainment at that.

DAVID MAMET, *Three Uses of the Knife* (2000)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is about putting on a play: reading it, casting it, rehearsing it, producing it (i.e. creating the sets and lights and costume and props necessary to stage it), and ultimately performing it for a live audience. You will also have the opportunity to attend two or more live professional productions to observe how plays are put on out in the real world. Enjoy!

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To fully understand and participate in the cooperative process of acting.
2. To construct a physical character by identifying and selecting from character givens and by creating clear character objectives based on given circumstances.
3. To design an appropriate theatrical ground plan with organic blocking.
4. To break a scene down into units and transitions.
5. To evaluate effective acting choices by watching professional theatre productions.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND SUPPLIES

- Texts as required
- One Blank Notebook with ample supply of lined notebook paper
- Pencil, Pen or other writing instrument

EVALUATION

1. Attendance/Reading/Memorization/Participation based on all rehearsals and performances of two productions: 75%
2. Production Journal: 15%
2. Play Critiques: 10%

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION

1. Regular attendance and active participation in class are vitally important to both you and your classmates/cast members/production team. More than two unexcused absence will lower your grade. More than three unexcused absences is reason for failure. Tardiness is unacceptable and will also lower your grade. If you know you will miss a class, let me know by phone and/or e-mail immediately.
2. Because of the amount of physical activity, stretching, jumping, etc., that we will be doing in this class, it would be advisable to wear loose-fitting clothes, pants, sweats, etc., or at the very least to avoid wearing tight fitting skirts, pants, or other apparel that would hinder your movement.

PRODUCTION JOURNAL & PLAY CRITIQUES

1. Production Journal: You will need to write a journal entry for every class meeting/rehearsal, reflecting on what you learned in class, your thoughts on the work under preparation, or other relevant theatre subjects (a production you attended, performances viewed on film or television, etc.). This will be submitted several times during the semester for my comments and suggestions.
2. Play Critiques: You will need to attend two (2) professional productions outside of class over the course of this semester. You are required to see both shows and to write and hand-in a Play Critique (review) on

each. Use the *New York Times* theatre reviews as a model for your own. FYI: We attend one Berkeley Rep production (the entire school), several ACT productions with Michael and Eric (sign-up in the office), and depending on offerings, a Shotgun Players production. If in doubt, ask me for a recommendation. ***High school and community theatre productions will not fulfill this requirement.***

PRACTICES

- I hope you feel welcome in this class and help make others feel welcome too. It should be an intriguing class and I hope you have a positive, rewarding and even exciting time this semester. If not, please let me know. Never hesitate to talk with me before or after class, during office hours or any other time we can arrange. My email is at the top of this syllabus for you to use.
 - With this in mind, the primary rule in class is: Everyone, Everything Treated with RESPECT.
Meaning:
 - No personal put downs or purposefully hurtful comments.
 - You can sit next to who you want to unless you get distracted.
 - Do not disrupt the class. Comments on topic are cool – conversations off to the side and random comments are not.
 - No one should have to raise their voice to be heard.
 - Take care of the room and of each other.
 - Please come to class prepared. Meaning:
 - Have your script, notebook, and a pencil or pen in hand, ready to rehearse.
 - Go to the bathroom, eat snacks and get a drink before or after class. Our time together is limited and leaving the class will be disruptive and will often mean missing something important.
 - Always remember: understanding something is not necessarily agreeing with it.
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Spring 2012 Rehearsal Schedule

The Laramie Project

Regular Rehearsals:

G Block (every class meeting)

January 30—March 9, 2011

Extra Afterschool Rehearsals:

March 5--9, 330 PM- 530 PM

Performances

Friday, March 9, 7 PM (Call 330 PM)

Saturday, March 10, 7 PM (Call 530 PM)

Godspell

Regular Rehearsals:

G Block (every class meeting)

March 12—May 11, 2011

Extra Afterschool Rehearsals:

May 7--11, 330 PM- 530 PM

Performances

Friday, May 11, 7 PM (Call 330 PM)

Saturday, May 12, 7 PM (Call 530 PM)