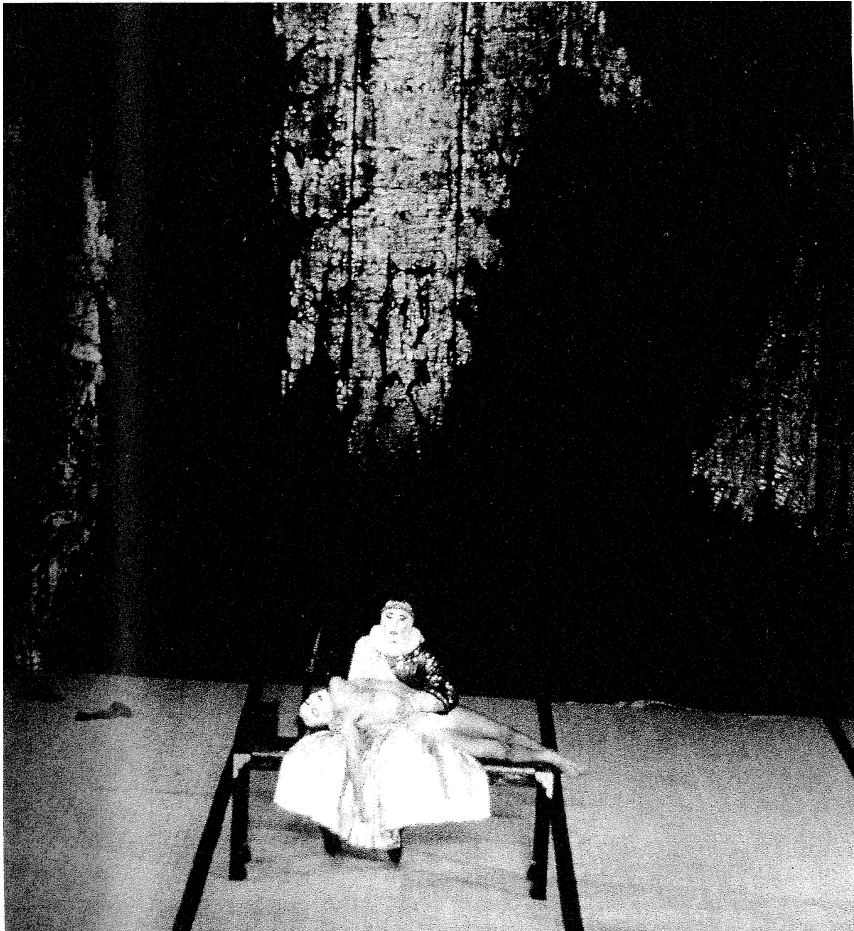


SCHOOL OF ENGLISH FILM THEATRE AND MEDIA STUDIES
THEATRE PROGRAMME
2009 COURSE OUTLINE
TRIMESTER 1 (MONDAY 2 MARCH – FRIDAY 5 JUNE 2009)

THEA 301 (CRN 9148)

COMPANY



Richard II by William Shakespeare, Théâtre du Soleil, Paris, 1981
Directed by Ariane Mnouchkine

Course Co-ordinator and Teaching Staff

Course Co-ordinator – David O'Donnell: Room 303, 77 Fairlie Terrace (FT77); Tel 463 6828
Office hours will be posted on the door.
Email david.odonnell@vuw.ac.nz. Specific email enquiries will be answered within 24 hours.

The course will be taught by David O'Donnell, Jim Davenport and Rachel Lenart, with a special guest appearance from Matt Wagner.

Matt Wagner: Room 310, FT77; Tel 463 6712; Email matthew.wagner@vuw.ac.nz

Rachel Lenart: Email rachel.j.lenart@gmail.com

Course Technician – Jim Davenport: Room 203, FT77; Tel 463 6842; Email james.davenport@vuw.ac.nz

Publicity Co-ordinator – Jo Bean: Room 307, FT77; Tel 463 5359; Email jo.bean@vuw.ac.nz

Class times and venues

First trimester:

Mon 10a.m.-1 p.m.; Wed 10a.m.- 1 p.m. Classes will normally be held in Studio 77 at 77FT (Room 102), unless otherwise advised.

Any changes to the schedule or additional information will be posted on the course noticeboard, on the 3rd floor of 77FT.

Rehearsals and Weekend Retreat

Rehearsals will normally be held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings and all day Saturday. A full rehearsal schedule will be prepared once the play is cast.

There will also be a weekend retreat near the beginning of rehearsals (Sat 28 and Sun 29 March, further details to be given in class).

Course Aims

A practical study of the creative and technical aspects of theatre production, with an emphasis on acting skills, analysis of dramatic structure, design and stage dynamics, leading to public performances of a full-length play, *Richard II* by William Shakespeare.

THEA 301 seeks to explore dramatic performance through the creation of a theatre company. The students (and related staff) are this company and undertake all production tasks.

The play will be under the overall direction of David O'Donnell assisted by Rachel Lenart, but students will be expected to participate in decision-making as well as undertaking specific artistic assignments in lighting, set and costume design, stage management, choreography, music, publicity and performing.

Course Objectives

Students in this course should

- Develop an understanding of theatre as a collaborative creative process.
- Develop their skills in script analysis and their understanding of dramaturgy.
- Develop their understanding of and skills in acting as an art form.
- Increase their technical theatre skills, in lighting, design, publicity etc.
- Increase their research skills, and knowledge of theatre history and styles.
- Increase their ability to think critically about the politics of theatre-making, particularly in relation to issues of gender, sexual orientation and class.
- Develop an awareness of selected critical approaches to theatre practice, and how these may affect the interpretation of a text.

Course Content

This year we will be mounting a production of *Richard II*, a history play by William Shakespeare written in 1595. The play depicts the civil disputes and plots leading to the deposition of the unpopular King Richard by Henry Bolingbroke who becomes King Henry IV. This chaotic episode of English history led to two generations of civil war (also dramatised by Shakespeare). *Richard II* was very popular in Shakespeare's time and there have been several internationally acclaimed productions more recently including Ariane Mnouchkine's kabuki-style production for Théâtre du Soleil, Paris (1981), Deborah Warner's feminist-influenced production for the National Theatre, London starring Fiona Shaw as Richard (1998) and Claus Peymann's intense, highly visual production for the Berliner Ensemble, Berlin (2001).

Richard II will be performed as part of Victoria University's contribution to the official programme of Compleat Workes 2009, a project of the Shakespeare Globe Centre of New Zealand (see www.compleatworkes.co.nz). The production will present the political struggles in the play as a Brechtian-inspired physical theatre piece, viewing politics as a macabre circus, using an ensemble ethos.

To inform the production and to understand theoretical approaches to forming a theatre company we will study some major international theatre companies. In conceptualising the production, we will research the world of the play, and explore creative possibilities in all aspects of the production. We will study relevant performance techniques including chorus work, vocal work, approaches to Shakespeare's verse, physicality, characterisation, motivation, and the endowment of space and props. At the same time we will continue to train as a company (physically, vocally, imaginatively, visually) towards performance.

Major design tasks for the production will be completed by students in THEA 324 The Scenographic Imagination, with assistance from 301 students.

PLEASE NOTE: This course is very practical in its teaching and learning. Students are expected to read widely and use the library as a research resource. Many of the extracts and articles in the Course Reader will point you towards books and journals you should read and comment on in your workbooks. Discoveries are to be shared among the company. All parts of the course are to be undertaken in a spirit of co-operation. Each individual is part of the ensemble, which relies on mutual support from all. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU BE ON TIME FOR ALL CLASSES AND REHEARSALS. Please wear loose, comfortable clothes which won't restrict your movement.

Required Texts

Shakespeare, William. *Richard II* (London: New Penguin) VicBooks, Cost \$
Shakespeare, William *Richard II* (edited version). Available from Student Notes cost \$
THEA301 Company 2009 Course Reader. Available from Student Notes, cost \$23.

Note: Please bring the Course Reader and playscripts to all classes.

Recommended Texts

Barba, Eugenio & Savarese, Nicola. *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology: The Secret Art of the Performer*. London: Routledge, 1991.
Brook, Peter. *The Empty Space*. London: Penguin, 1968.
Linklater, Kristin. *Freeing the Natural Voice*. New York: Drama Book Publishers, 1976.
Pisk, Litz. *The Actor and His Body*. London: Harrap, 1975.
Stanislavski, Constantin. *An Actor Prepares*. London: Eyre Methuen, 1980.

Assessment

Assessment for this course is internal. More detailed handouts on each assignment will be given out in class.

- 1) **Seminar** : Present a 15 minute seminar on the world of the play (topics to be provided).
To be presented in class on 30 March and 1 April 20%
- 2) **Essay**
A 1500 word essay on a theatre company (topic to be provided)
Due 5 p.m. Fri 1 May 20%
- 3) **Production workbook** for *Richard II*.
Due 5 p.m. Mon 15 June 30%
- 4) **Artistic contribution to *Richard II*, attendance and overall commitment.** A roll will be taken in all classes and rehearsals. Please note that comments from Jim Davenport and Rachel Lenart will be taken into account when assessing this mark.
Awarded in the week beginning Mon 15 June 30%

THEATRE PROGRAMME Extensions Policy

If you wish to ask for an extension (e.g., because of pressure of work) please do so well before the due date. Extension requests on the day the assignment is due will not normally be accepted.

Requests for extensions must be made in writing, by filling out the extension form (available on your course Blackboard site) and getting your Course Co-ordinator to sign it. Only Course Co-ordinators may grant extension, not tutors. The signed Extension form must be attached to the assignment when it is submitted, plus any relevant documentation. If circumstances prevent you from accessing the extension form, you must attach an email from the Course Co-ordinator, which confirms that an extension has been granted, to your assignment. In real emergencies we can of course be flexible, but the most important thing is for you to somehow let us know as soon as possible.

Extensions will not be granted beyond 22 June, except under exceptional circumstances. The University does not permit the School to accept work after the last day of the examination period 1 July.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances (e.g., medical reasons with certificate), or a previously agreed extension, work handed in late will normally lose half a grade (2½%) for each weekday or part-weekday late, starting from the hour the work is due. Comments on late work will be minimal.

Work submitted late without an extension will not normally be accepted if it is more than two weeks after the due date. **Note:** if you fail to hand in work by this two-week deadline, you will normally be considered as having failed to meet a mandatory requirement and therefore fail the course. Aegrotat provisions may apply if you are unable to submit your final project for unavoidable reasons. The Aegrotat procedures are listed in *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html

In such a case you should also contact the course co-ordinator. There is a university policy on reasonable accommodation with respect to assessment procedures for students with disabilities (see *Calendar* as above).

Relationship between Assessment and Course Objectives

Assessment has been structured to allow you to respond to the course material in a variety of ways:

- The seminar (Assignment 1) allows you to develop your skills in researching the world of the play from the perspective of a theatre practitioner. It also gives the opportunity to develop skills as a presenter in a real-life production context. By sharing the results of individual research, the group as a whole will develop collective knowledge of the world of the play which will inform the artistic choices made in rehearsal.
- The essay (Assignment 2) allows you to engage with the philosophical approaches and methods of major theatre companies, which will inform our training as a company and production work on the course. This should assist towards forming your own philosophy of what a theatre company should be.
- The workbook (Assignment 3) allows you to record your impressions, thoughts, and arguments on a daily basis, during the actual processes of the course. It provides an opportunity to make coherent and critical résumés of your creative input into the production, your research and your reading in the course. As the major piece of written work in the course, the workbook must be a thorough, creative and ANALYTICAL account of the process, drawing connections between theory and practice.
- The final mark allows for your artistic work in the production to be evaluated and acknowledged. It also acknowledges your professionalism and contributions in terms of attentiveness, imagination, attendance and commitment.

Mandatory Course Requirements

In order to pass the course, completion and submission of all assignments is required as well as an overall passing grade. You must also attend all rehearsals and performances for which you are called.

Workload

It is always difficult to precisely specify the workload of courses which have a high practical and creative content. The university anticipates that you should be able to devote about 27 hours per week to a 36 point course at 300-level. Therefore you should probably expect to spend on average about 21 hours per week (apart from class time) in reading, preparation, thinking, writing and rehearsal. The intensive practical nature of this course means that there will be periods during project and production work when these hours will be significantly increased, particularly during the major rehearsal and production period in May and June. **YOU SHOULD THEREFORE TAKE SPECIAL CARE WITH YOUR TIME MANAGEMENT**, making sure you can balance your workload on this course with your work on other university courses. You should also take particular care with your general health and wellbeing.

In practical production work, it is vitally important that students support each other, in a collective and collaborative sense. Please **always** be prompt at classes and rehearsals, and **always** take full responsibility for tasks allotted to you, or for which you volunteer.

NO THEATRE WORK OUTSIDE OF YOUR THEATRE COURSES SHOULD BE TAKEN ON WITHOUT DISCUSSION WITH THE COURSE CO-ORDINATOR BEFOREHAND.

General University Statutes And Policies

A copy of the General University Statutes and Policies can be found on Blackboard.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

Reasonable Accommodation Policy

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities.

The policy aims to give students with disabilities an equal opportunity with all other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, then please contact the Course Coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services to confidentially discuss your individual needs and the options and support that are available. Disability Support Services are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building, or phoning 463-6070, email disability@vuw.ac.nz.

The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person can be obtained from the Administrative Assistant or the School Prospectus

THEATRE PROGRAMME FACILITIES

There are standard requirements regarding conduct within 77 FT, 93 KP, 83FT and 225 Aro St:

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in any buildings. **Please smoke outside and dispose cigarette ends in the ashtray provided outside the main door at 77 FT.**

Food

Food may only be consumed in the 77FT Green Room, 85FT, 93KP and Aro St kitchen areas.

No beverages (with the exception of bottled water) are allowed in the studio theatre, dressing room, film room, library, foyer area, and 83FT, 93 KP or 225 Aro St and 85FT(except kitchen areas listed above).

Student and staff using kitchen areas are strongly expected to clean up after themselves **Strictly no food or drink in the 85FT Digital Edit Suites.**

Alcoholic drinks are not to be brought onto the premises unless authorised by Programme Director Film or Programme Director Theatre

Green Room

The Green Room is available to students working in the Film and Theatre Programmes. **You are expected to clean up after yourselves** (this includes returning any mugs removed from the Green Room and operating the dishwasher).

Library

Students are encouraged to make full use of the Robert Lord Library at 77 Fairlie Terrace; however, please note that **books and department materials do not leave the building**. Please return books to shelves before you leave the library.

End of Class

Rooms 306 (lecture theatre), 305, 205 (film room), 209 (seminar room), studios, studio foyer, 93 KP and 225 Aro St must have the desks and chairs returned to order for any following classes or rehearsals.

Lockers

Lockers are available to majoring drama students on Level 0 77FT. There are only 52 so once they run out those with double lockers will have to consider sharing. Students provide their own lock and key. See Administrator in room 307. Access your lockers via back stairs through Green Room. Please make sure the door to the main stairwell remains shut Access will not be available during the trimester break so please take everything with you at the end of this trimester and inform the Administrator if you are not taking a drama subject next trimester.

Theatre Rules

Safety and security within the premises occupied by Film and Theatre is the responsibility of everyone who uses these facilities. While we make every effort to ensure that our premises are safe and hazard free, we need the cooperation of all students and visitors.

Full details of theatre safety rules are contained in the FAT book, which is available on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to make yourself familiar with them. Safety rules can also be found on the noticeboard in the Green Room.

Jim will provide you with hazard assessment forms in the first week. It is essential that these are completed way in advance of seasons opening. He will also provide further details of technical responsibilities.

While the stage manager will co-ordinate the set changeovers between shows, it is the responsibility of *directors* to ensure that their casts all assist with these, and that they treat all collaborators with respect.

Further note: It is the responsibility of the stage manager to arrange volunteers to video the performances.

TIMETABLE 2009

Week	MON 10am-1pm	WED 10am-1pm	OTHER
1	2 March Introduction (RL) Technical briefing (JDAV)	4 March <i>Richard II</i> – Inspiration (MW) Physicality/ensemble (RL)	
2	9 March <i>Richard II</i> Reading/discussion (DOD/RL)	11 March Designers pitch (JDAV/324) Script analysis (DOD)	
3	16 March The choric impulse (RL/DOD)	18 March Shakespeare verse workshop (DOD)	Auditions
4	23 March Status (DOD)	25 March Stage management (DOD/JDAV) Joint class with 324	Weekend retreat
5	30 March World of the play seminars	1 April World of the play seminars	Rehearsals begin Assignment 1 DUE
6	6 April Endowment/props (DOD)	8 April Design presentations (JDAV) Joint class with 324	Rehearsals TBA

TWO WEEK EASTER BREAK

During Break: Rehearsals, scene work and world of the play work

7	27 April Improvisation (DOD)	29 April Lighting workshop (JDAV) Joint class with 324	Fri 1 May Assignment 2 DUE
8	4 May Actioning /rhythm (DOD)	6 May Character work (DOD)	Rehearsals TBA
9	11 May Publicity/Voice & breath (DOD)	13 May Character work (DOD) (DOD)	Rehearsals TBA
10	18 May Rehearsal (DOD)	20 May Rehearsal (DOD)	Rehearsals TBA
11	25 May Rehearsal (DOD)	27 May Rehearsal (DOD)	Rehearsals TBA
12	1 June Technical rehearsal	3 June Finale	2 - 6 June PERFORMANCES <i>Richard II</i> Mon 15 June Assignment 3 DUE