

# THEA 511 DIRECTING METHOD

**Trimesters 1 + 2 2009**  
(Monday 2 March – Friday 30 October 2009)

## STAFF

### Course co-ordinator

Bronwyn Tweddle Room 301, 77 Fairlie Terrace Tel: 463 6852

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Staff of VUW Theatre Programme and Toi Whakaari will share the teaching of this course. The following may appear on the course timetable: BT = Bronwyn Tweddle; CP = Christian Penny; AR = Annie Ruth; DoD = David O'Donnell; ME = Megan Evans; MW = Matthew Wagner; DC = David Carnegie & JD = John Downie. Teaching may also occasionally be undertaken by invited guests.

## CLASS TIMES AND ROOMS

### Practicum

Fridays 9am – 1pm 93 Kelburn Parade

### Seminars

Fridays 2pm – 5pm Room 305, 77FT

As a courtesy to your fellow students and staff:

- Cell phones are to be turned off during classes and rehearsals
- It is expected that students will arrive punctually for their classes. Lateness to class or rehearsal will be noted, and taken into account in your mid-year and final Part 1 assessment meetings

## COURSE DELIVERY

A regular weekly class (am) introduces selected ways in which to structure and apply directorial practice, followed (pm) by an open seminar in which ideas about 'research' and 'methodology' are variously addressed and presented.

## COURSE CONTENT

This course aims to provide historical, theoretical, and practical approaches to the directing of aesthetic performances. There are practical class exercises and assessed directing projects with performance outcomes, in collaboration with students of both institutions. Seminars, presented/facilitated by staff, guest artists/teachers, and the students themselves, examine methodologies and theatre research, and place the practical work into a broader context. Methods of documentation of artistic process are directly explored through the keeping of a journal during the length of the course.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the completion of the course, students should:

1. be increasingly familiar with the idea of praxis: formulating questions, examining them by experimentation, both practical and theoretical, and providing a concluding critique to the process
2. have investigated and explored, both theoretically and practically, several aspects of the directing process
3. have developed a familiarity and ability with theatre procedures, including script analysis, working with performers, shaping performance space and time, devising, and conceptualisation, as applied to the directorial process
4. have a sense of the development of directing methods over the past century, and in contemporary practice, and be able to identify and analyse the approaches and styles of different practitioners
5. have shared in, and contributed to, the artistic and educational ethos provided by Toi Whakaari and Theatre Programme, VUW

## EXPECTED WORKLOAD

The university anticipates that you should be able to devote at least 12 hours per week to a full-year paper in a 4–paper graduate programme. Therefore you should probably expect to spend, on average, about 5 hours per week (apart from THEA 511 class time) in reading, preparation, rehearsal, thinking and writing. This guideline generally applies to 400-level papers, however as THEA 511 is a masters-level paper, you should treat this as a minimum guideline. At Masters level it is expected that students will attend every seminar; if you are going to miss a class through ill health or whatever, please contact the course co-ordinator in advance if possible. Absences due to illness should be documented by a medical certificate.

## MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

Students should wear comfortable rehearsal clothing, which allows extended movement, to all classes.

The journal should be kept in a visual diary of no less than A4 size.

## READINGS

Students will develop their own individual list of readings as part of clarifying their own methodological directions. Reading material will be introduced during class sessions.

### Recommended Texts

Rebecca Schneider & Gabrielle Cody, eds: **Re:Direction** London: Routledge, 2002.

Maria M. Delgado and Paul Heritage, **In Contact with the Gods? Directors Talk Theatre** Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996.

## ASSESSMENT

VUW Trimester One:

1. Methodology showing 1: short scene prepared to a brief **15%**  
Showing: 27 March  
Written report due: 20 April [Length: 1000 words maximum]

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2. Methodology showing 2: presentation of an inspirational artist **20%**  
Proposal due: 5pm, 15 May [Length: 1000 words maximum]  
Showing: 5 June  
Written report due: 5pm, 19 June [Length: 1000 words maximum]

VUW Trimester Two:

3. Methodology showing 3: with THEA 204 students **30%**  
Showing: 16 September (Group A) or 14 October (Group B)  
Written report due: 5pm, 2 October (Group A) or 30 October (Group B)  
[Length: 1000 words maximum]
4. Journal: to be kept throughout the year **20%**  
Journal due: 5pm, 27 October
5. Class exercises & directing process **15%**

Learning objectives and marking criteria are included in detailed assignment handouts

Assignments will be graded as either, Pass, Fail or Pass with Distinction.

### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ASSESSMENT AND COURSE OBJECTIVES

All methodology showings are designed to develop students' praxis (learning objective 1). Methodology showing 2 particularly emphasise the formulation of artistic questions, through the writing of a proposal. The practice of process critique is developed in the reports on each showing and the journal.

The investigation of directing process and theatre procedures (learning objective 2 & 3) occurs in class exercises and methodology showings. Knowledge of the development of directing and of specific practitioners' styles and approaches (learning objective 4), will be demonstrated in the Methodology 2 showing on the work of an inspirational director or artist.

### PENALTIES AND EXTENSIONS

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 (2.5%) 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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html)

#### Extensions

If you wish to ask for an extension (e.g., because of illness or pressure of work) please do so well before the due date. Work completed to deadline with a demonstrated sense of good organisation is essential. Extension requests on the day the assignment/presentation is due will not normally be accepted.

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Requests for extensions must be made in writing, by filling out the extension form (available on the course Blackboard site) and getting the Course Co-ordinator, Bronwyn Tweddle, to sign it. Only Bronwyn may grant extensions, other teaching staff on the course may not. The signed Extension form, plus any relevant documentation, must be attached to the assignment when it is submitted. 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 **6 November**, except under exceptional circumstances. The University does not permit the School to accept work after the last day of the examination period. 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).

### MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All the assignments above must be completed to a satisfactory standard for a Pass in THEA 511 to be awarded. A high standard of attendance to both class and assignments is expected throughout.

### PRESENTATION OF WORK

See detailed assignment documents for presentation details. Referencing of sources should be in accordance with the 'Referencing for Theatre' document available on Blackboard and in the MTA Part 1 Handbook.

### 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>

### COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any additional information, or changes to the course, will be sent via email in the first instance, so it is your responsibility to ensure that Bronwyn has your current email address and that you check your emails on a very regular basis. The information will also be posted on the THEA 511 noticeboard on level three, 77 FT, and/or posted on the Blackboard system. It is recommended therefore that students regularly check the noticeboards, and Blackboard in addition to their email. Bronwyn will endeavour to respond to emails from students within 48 hours.

### GENERAL ADVICE

As the MTA Part 1 as a whole is a very intensive and practical course of study, students will need to be very conscious of their time management. Any quieter periods of the year should be used to prepare future assignments ahead. The journal for this course is an ongoing record of your development, and can be used to track readings that are done in advance for later projects.

### GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

A copy of the General University Statutes and Policies can be found on Blackboard and in the MTA Part 1 Handbook.

### COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1	6 March	AM Introduction to methodology [BT] PM Weekly colloquium: <i>Cardenio</i> [DC]
Week 2	13 March	AM Approaches to Text 1: Play Structure [DC] PM Weekly colloquium: Staff Self-presentation [BT]
Week 3	20 March	AM Approaches to Text 2: Units of Action [DC] PM Weekly colloquium : Staff Self-presentation [DOD]
Week 4	27 March	AM THEA 511 Methodology 1 Showings & Oral Critique [BT/CP] PM Weekly colloquium: Staff Self-presentation [ME]
Week 5	3 April	AM THEA 589 Self-presentation Showings & Oral Critique [MW/BT/CP] PM THEA 589 Self-presentation Showings & Oral Critique [MW/BT/CP]
Week 6	NO CLASS	GOOD FRIDAY
<b>Mid Trimester Break: (Good) Friday 10 April – Friday 24 April 2009</b>		
Week 7	1 May	AM Approaches to Text 3: Directing Models 1 [DOD] PM Weekly colloquium: Forum on Auditions/Casting [BT]
Week 8	8 May	AM Approaches to Text 4: Directing Models 2 [DOD] PM Weekly colloquium: Forum on Planning and Rehearsal Management [DOD]
Week 9	15 May	AM Space 1: Composition/Image-making [ME] PM Research Seminar: Gary Taylor [DC hosting]

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Week 10	22 May	AM Space 2: Spatial relationships/Moving the Action [BT] PM Weekly colloquium: Forum on the Importance of Imitation [BT]
Week 11	29 May	AM Space 3: Diverse Staging Arrangements [BT] PM Research Seminar: Anita Hammer [DC hosting]
Week 12	5 June	AM THEA 511 Methodology 2 Showings & Oral Critique [MW/BT/CP] PM THEA 511 Methodology 2 Showings & Oral Critique [MW/BT/CP]
<b>Mid-Year Break: Monday 8 June – Friday 10 July 2009</b>		
Week 13	17 July	AM Time 1: Timing & Rhythm [BT] PM Weekly colloquium: Forum on Research & Documentation for Directors [BT]
Week 14	24 July	AM Time 2: Shaping Performance [BT] PM Weekly colloquium: Forum on Conceptualisation [BT]
Week 15	31 July	AM Working with the Performer 1: Physicality and Gesture [BT] PM Weekly colloquium: Forum on Managing Collaborations [BT]
Week 16	7 August	AM Working with the Performer 2: Action and character [BT] PM Weekly colloquium: Forum on Working to a Brief (Community/Corporate)
Week 17	14 Aug.	AM Working with the Performer 3: Directing Chorus [BT] PM Research seminar: Megan Evans [topic tbc]
Week 18	21 Aug.	AM Working with the Performer 4: Directing Non-Western Theatre [ME] <b>NB: This class will be in the Aro St Hall</b> PM Weekly colloquium: Forum on Theatre Etiquette [guest]
<b>Mid Trimester Break: 24 August – Friday 4 September 2009</b>		
Week 19	11 Sept.	AM Working with the Performer 5: Directing Shakespeare [DOD] PM Weekly colloquium: Forum on Theatre Criticism [guests]
Week 20	18 Sept.	AM Working by devising 1: Directing models 3 [BT] PM Weekly colloquium: Interdisciplinary Creative Research [JD]
Week 21	25 Sept.	AM Working by devising 2: Directing models 4 [BT] PM Research seminar: Sleep/Wake & Societas Raffaello Sanzio [JD]
Week 22	2 Oct.	AM Working by devising 3: Finding the subject [JD] PM Weekly colloquium: Interdisciplinary Creative Research [JD]
Week 23	9 Oct.	AM Working by devising 4: Creating structures [JD] PM Weekly colloquium: Cinema, Digital & Network performance [JD]
Week 24	16 Oct.	AM Methodology round-up [BT] PM Weekly colloquium: Performance Art/Installation [JD]
ALL MORNING CLASSES ARE IN 93KP & ALL AFTERNOON CLASSES ARE IN ROOM 305 (77FT) UNLESS OTHERWISE ADVISED		