

THEA 321 SPECIAL TOPIC: CONTEMPORARY PLAYTEXTS: DRAMATURGY, SCENOGRAPHY, AND THE PERFORMING BODY

Trimester 1 2010

1 March to 4 July 2010

20 Points



Societas Raffaello Sanzio

TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates: 1 March 2010 to 4 June 2010

Mid-trimester break: 5 April to 18 April 2010

Study week: 7 June to 11 June 2010

Examination/Assessment period: 11 June to 4 July 2010

WITHDRAWAL DATES

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

CONTACT DETAILS

John Downie john.downie@vuw.ac.nz 463 6826 FT85, Room 101 Office hours posted on door

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Seminars

Monday, Wednesday each week, 1000-1250, 83 Fairlie Terrace, Room 102.

COURSE DELIVERY

The course will be focussed on the two weekly class meetings, which will be a mixture of lecture, discussion, practical workshop, viewing sessions, and student presentations. Students will be expected to attend a minimum of 80% of these sessions.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information will be posted on Theatre Programme noticeboards, for THEA 321, at 77 Fairlie Terrace.

COURSE CONTENT

This course examines and contextualises a number of international playscripts/theatre works that have been created in the past twenty years, in order to develop an understanding of how dramaturgy, scenography, and the possibilities of the performer have evolved together to shape contemporary cross-disciplinary live performance. Approaches will include study of dramaturgy, scenography, dance and music theatre, performance art, installation art and other related contexts.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students passing the course should be able to:

- have begun to develop an appreciation of how a contemporary theatre performance is scored and realised.
- be able to read written performance scripts and scores with an increased knowledge of how to interpret them in relation to realised theatre performance.
- have begun to be able to write critically about the processes involved in the creation and realisation of contemporary performance scripts.

- have developed practical skills in working collaboratively in the interpretation of contemporary performance scripts.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

Students will be expected to do a minimum of two hundred hours of work towards this course, including 72 hours class time, the remainder of the time being spent on the reading, research and writing up time expended on the four assignments.

GROUP WORK

Assignment 3 involves working in small groups, towards class presentations between 26 April and 12 May. A group mark will be awarded for this. Further information on this will be provided in class in due course.

READINGS

Essential texts:

There is a THEA 321 Reader available from Student Notes for this course, containing the six main texts for study, and relevant support material that will be examined in class. It is expected that all students will buy their own copy of this, as, amongst other things, the Reader will be used in class for workshop readings.

There will be av material shown in class, much of which which will be from the Central Library's collection, and hence available for student library viewing at more length.

For the first two weeks of trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of vicbooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two all undergraduate textbooks will be sold from vicbooks and student notes from the Student Notes Distribution Centre on the ground floor of the Student Union Building. You can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to you or they can be picked up from the shop. You will be contacted when they are available.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

There are FOUR assessable assignments for this course.

1. What is a 'theatre script', and what kinds of things does it provide to the production process and performance? Write from the basis of your own ignorance. 1500 words. DUE Wednesday 10 March. 20% weighting. *This assignment is to open up your awareness of how a script operates as a score for a*

performance. The idea of your own ignorance is to encourage you to begin to rationalise the question in terms of the complexity of the task.

2. Close analysis of one page of the script *The City* by Martin Crimp. 1500 words. DUE Wednesday 31 March. 20% weighting. *This assignment is to encourage you to look closely at how you might begin to expand a sense of the theatrical possibilities inherent within a short segment of written text, in relation to the whole work.*

3. Participation in group project of selected play for class presentation, plus short report on 'What discoveries have I made about the script in question?' 500 words. DUE Wednesday 19 May. 20% weighting. *This assignment is to encourage you to participate in the discursive and collaborative aspects of rationalising a script in relation to performance possibilities and meanings, and to think and report on what a creative 'discovery' might be in this context.*

4. EITHER write about adopting a creative, collaborative role in relation to a production of one of the scripts under study (ie director, designer, dramaturg, audience member), OR write a comparative critical study of three of the scripts under study. 2000 words DUE Wednesday 2 June. 40% weighting. *This assignment is to allow you to write at more length, and with a constructed sense of argument, about a contemporary performance script, and the particular questions and problems that it poses in interpretation.*

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

Assignment cover sheets and extension forms can be found on Blackboard or outside the Programme office. Remember to fill in your tutor's name.

PENALTIES AND EXTENSIONS

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day or part work day, starting from the hour the work is due. This means late work will drop one 'grade-step' every second day—i.e. from C+ to C, or A- to B+. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

Extensions

Extensions will be granted only in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. Issues of workload do not constitute exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. If you require an extension, you must complete an extension request form (available on your course Blackboard site) prior to the assignment due date. This must be accompanied by relevant documentation (e.g. a doctor's certificate) where appropriate. Tutors cannot grant extensions.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To gain a pass on this course, each student must complete the class and written exercises outlined above, by the due dates, unless provision is allowed for extension.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

STATEMENT ON LEGIBILITY

You are expected to present work that meets appropriate standards. If work is not typed or prepared on a computer, you are expected to write clearly. Where work is deemed 'illegible', you will be given a photocopy of the work and asked to transcribe it to an acceptable standard (preferably typed) within a specified time frame.

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>

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

The following text must be included in all course outlines.

You should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

The AVC (Academic) website also provides information in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx

COURSE PROGRAMME

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week	Mon 10-12.50	Wed 10-12.50	Assignments
1	Mar 1 What is a play?	Mar 3 Dramaturgy	
2	Mar 8 View: Forced Entertainment Intro <i>Club of No Regrets</i>	Mar 10 <i>Club of No Regrets</i> Practicum	Mar 10 Assignment 1 DUE
3	Mar 15 View: <i>Club of No Regrets</i> The sequence	Mar 17 Etchells on Scripting	
4	Mar 22 View: Martin Crimp Intro <i>The City</i>	Mar 24 <i>The City</i> - Practicum	
5	Mar 29 <i>The City</i> - scenography	Mar 31 <i>The City</i> - performer	Mar 31 Assignment 2 DUE
EASTER BREAK			
6	Apr 19 Space and scenography	Apr 21 Performing Body	
7	Apr 26 <i>Dracula Pageant</i>	Apr 28 <i>Dracula Pageant</i>	Group Presentations
8	May 3 View: Monster in a Box Intro <i>New York Values</i>	May 5 <i>New York Values</i>	Group Presentations
9	May 10 View: Red Mole docos. Intro <i>Grooves of Glory</i>	May 12 <i>Grooves of Glory</i>	Group Presentations
10	May 17 View: Societas Raffaello Sanzio Intro <i>Tragedia Endogonidia</i>	May 19 Societas Raffaello Sanzio	May 19 Assignment 3 DUE
11	May 24 View: Mixed Media Intro Cinematic Imaginary	May 26 Mixed Media & Performance Art	
12	May 31 View: TBA Intro Making texts	Jun 2 Making texts	Jun 2 Assignment 4 DUE