

# THEA 303 Composition, Production, Performance

**Trimester 2 2012**

16 July to 17 November 2012

**30 Points**



*Camino Real* at Goodman Theatre, Chicago 2012 (Carolyn Ann Hoerdemann/Photo: Liz Lauren)

## TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates:	16 July to 19 October 2012
Mid-trimester break:	27 August to 9 September 2012
Last piece of assessment due:	19 October 2012

## WITHDRAWAL DATES

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

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

## NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

### Course Coordinator

Lori Leigh                      [lori.leigh@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:lori.leigh@vuw.ac.nz)                      463-6712                      304/77 FT

### Design Mentor

Jim Davenport                      [james.davenport@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:james.davenport@vuw.ac.nz)                      463 6842                      310/77FT

### Technical Staff

Nick Zwart                      [nick.zwart@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:nick.zwart@vuw.ac.nz)                      463 8950                      203/77FT

### Course Administrator

Cathy McCullagh                      [cathy.mccullagh@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:cathy.mccullagh@vuw.ac.nz)                      463 5359                      202/FT83

## CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Mondays, Wednesdays                      10am - 12.50pm                      225 Aro Street

Evening and weekend rehearsals TBA, extensive rehearsals and design construction during mid-term break.

## TEACHING LEARNING SUMMARY

Classes will be a mixture of seminars, practical workshops and rehearsals. The latter will be scheduled once the course begins.

PLEASE NOTE: This course is very practical and demands consistent commitment and collaboration. It is essential that you **be on time** for all classes and rehearsals. Please wear loose, comfortable clothes which won't restrict your movement. Participation is utterly essential to the success of the project and constitutes a substantial part of your 'audition' for performance roles as well as your assessment.

## COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any additional information, or changes to the course, will be announced in class, posted on Blackboard, posted on the Theatre Programme notice boards on Level 3 of 77 Fairlie Terrace, or sent via email. If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

## COURSE PRESCRIPTION

A critical and practical study of the process of collaborative production work in theatre and/or video, leading to the creation and public presentation of original work.

## COURSE CONTENT

This course will investigate the distinctive American style of theatre that came into prominence in the 1940s/1950s (post World War II) when playwrights such as Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams became world-renown. We will workshop acting techniques and practices associated with the American Method,

the major American acting teachers and directors as well as their associated theatres (The Group Theatre and The Actor's Studio). We will also explore the cultural and historical contexts surrounding this work: the economic boom and consumerism, the Cold War, McCarthyism, pop culture and mass media (popular rise of television), and Hollywood's Golden Age. We will explore this content creatively and collaboratively through rehearsing and performing a full production of *Camino Real*, by Tennessee Williams.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the completion of this course, students should have:

- A sound understanding of the distinctive American style (how American drama came into its own) and its influences (realism and expressionism)
- Investigated a number of major cultural and historical forces at work in the development of the studied forms
- Investigated major American dramatists (Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams) and acting teachers /directors (Lee Strasberg, Stella Adler, Sanford Meisner)
- Investigated an influential period in theatre history (rise of American theatre)
- Gained practical experience in performance techniques of the studied form
- Developed their understanding of and skills in acting as an art form
- Increased their technical theatre skills, in lighting, design, publicity, etc.

## EXPECTED WORKLOAD

It is always difficult, however, to specify precisely the workload of courses which have a high practical and creative content. The expected workload for a 30 point course is 300 hours spread evenly over the 12 week trimester and breaks, or 20 hours per teaching week. This means you should expect to spend an average of about 14 hours per week (apart from class time) in reading, preparation, thinking, writing and rehearsal. A substantial portion of this will be scheduled rehearsal time, and your research and writing time will need to take place in addition to that. We will try to balance the requirements of the course, but inevitably these hours will be substantially increased during the later phase of rehearsal and the performance period in September and October. **YOU SHOULD THEREFORE TAKE SPECIAL CARE TO MANAGE YOUR WORKLOAD IN THIS COURSE WITH YOUR OTHER COURSEWORK AND COMMITMENTS.** Also, a standard of professionalism includes **attending to your health and general wellbeing** by getting enough sleep and nutrition to function effectively, especially as performance looms.

In practical production work, it is vitally important that students support each other in a collective and collaborative spirit. Please **always** be on time to 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.

## GROUP WORK

You will work in teams on production roles, but your assessment is based on your individual contribution.

## READINGS

### Essential texts:

*Camino Real* by Tennessee Williams, available from vicbooks.

THEA 303 Student Notes, available from vicbooks (price TBA).

All undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer from 9–27 July 2012, 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 of the trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from vicbooks on Level 4 of the Student Union Building.

You can order textbooks and student notes online at [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz) or can email an order or enquiry to [enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz](mailto:enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz). Books can be couriered to you or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. You will be contacted when they are available.

Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

## ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

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

- 1) **Pecha Kucha style presentation** on world of the play topics related to the production: **20%**  
topics and presentation dates to be selected by 25 July;

### **DUE: weeks 5-6**

Marking criteria: Adherence to the format, framing of topic, interest and reliability of info presented, clarity and organization, creativity in presentation. Instructions and full criteria to be posted on Blackboard.

- 2) **Analytical blogs:**

Students will create five short (300 words max.) blogs reflecting on either the in-class workshops or readings. Topics will be posted on Blackboard. **25%**

**DUE: 23 July, 30 July, 6 August, 13 August, 20 August by 5pm**

- 3) **Production work** (artistic contribution, attendance, collaboration, overall commitment) **30%**

Students will contribute in one or more creative roles to the development and performance of a full production of *Camino Real*. Marking includes input from Jim Davenport, Cathy McCullagh, and

Eleanor Bishop (publicity mentor). Please note: A roll will be taken in all classes and rehearsals.

**AWARDED: Week of 29 October**

- 4) Essay (1500 words):** **25%**
- a. Reflection and analysis of the journey of the production and its results in performance, particularly the ways in which conventionalized elements influenced staging choices, and including critique of your own contribution to that process and product.
  - b. Marking criteria: clarity, thoughtful integration of theory and practice, articulation of your understanding of aesthetic goals and achievements of the production.

**DUE: Friday 19 October by 5pm**

### **Relationship Between Assessment and Learning Objectives**

- 1) The presentation on the world of the play will support the company's understanding of important issues related to the production.
- 2) Analytical Blog: The blog is a chance to reflect upon and analyse readings, workshops, and class discussions. It will support your understanding of these forms, and some of the major cultural and historical forces at work in its development. Experimentation with these techniques will increase your understanding of acting and intercultural theatrical practice. Weekly written reflections give an opportunity for you to analyse and articulate your progress.
- 3) Production work will increase your skills in technical aspects of theatre—assessment allows your creative contribution and commitment to be acknowledged. Workbooks give an opportunity for you to analyse and articulate your progress.
- 4) The essay gives you an opportunity to critique the production, as well as reflect on and articulate your creative contribution and analyse the process by drawing connections between theory and practice.

### **ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS**

Assignment cover sheets and extension forms can be found on Blackboard or outside the Administration office in room 202, 83 Fairlie Terrace. Remember to fill in your course coordinator's name.

### **EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES**

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.

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

### **MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

In order to pass this course, you must complete all assignments. A high standard of attendance, at least 80%, at classes is required. You must attend 100% rehearsals and performances for which you are called unless excused for medical or other exceptional circumstances.

### **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. Work submitted during the course (i. e. work that is internally assessed) should be typed or prepared on a computer. Where handwritten work is required you are expected to write clearly. If this 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>

### WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study).

Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at

[www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress). Most statutes and policies are available at

[www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy), except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx) (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic).

### THEA 303 COURSE PROGRAMME

All readings are in the Course Reader or script. Readings are due on the Monday of each week.

WK Date	Mon Class	Wed Class	Readings	Other (wkend/evening)
Wk 1 16 JUL	Introduction	Read-through of <i>Camino Real</i>	Foreword, Afterward of <i>Camino Real</i> (script); “Williams’s Allegory about the Fifties”	None
Wk 2 23 JUL	The American Method: From Stanislavski to Strasberg <b>Blog #1 DUE</b>	The American Method: From Stanislavski to Strasberg <b>Presentation Topics DUE</b>	“Toward a Map for the <i>Camino Real</i> ”; “The United States”; “Strasberg, Adler, and Meisner Method Acting”; “I Hate Strasberg”	Evenings: Auditions TBA
Wk 3 30 JUL	Tennessee Williams’ <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> <b>Blog #2 DUE</b>	Workshop	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> ; “American Blues”	Rehearsals TBA
Wk 4 6 AUG	Arthur Miller’s <i>Death of A Salesman</i> <b>Blog #3 DUE</b>	Workshop	<i>Death of a Salesman</i> ; “Kushner on Miller”; “Salesman Tells Today’s Story”	Rehearsals TBA
Wk 5 13 AUG	Expressionism and Romanticism <b>Blog #4 Due</b>	Presentations on the world of the play	“Alienation Effects in Chinese Acting”; “Alienation and Contradiction in <i>Camino Real</i> ”	Rehearsals TBA

THEATRE PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE THEA 303

Wk 6 20 AUG	Tennessee Williams & Plastic Theatre <b>Blog #5 Due</b>	Presentations on the world of the play	Production Notes to <i>Glass Menagerie</i> ; "Tennessee Williams's Plastic Theatre"; "The Sculptural Drama"	Rehearsals TBA
Break 27 AUG	Build	Build	Build	Set/costume construction
Break 3 SEPT	Rehearsal	Rehearsal	Rehearsal	Rehearsal M-F 9am-5pm
Wk 7 10 SEPT	Rehearsal Costume Fittings	Rehearsal	"Signs and Stage Props in TW's <i>Camino Real</i> "	M-F Evening + S or S rehearsals
Wk 8 17 SEPT	Rehearsal	Rehearsal		M-F Evening + S or S rehearsals
Wk 9 24 SEPT	Rehearsal	Rehearsal		M-F Evening + S or S rehearsals **Sun 30 Sept <b>Pack-in, 10am-?</b> <b>ALL CALLED</b>
Wk 10 1 OCT	Rehearsal (Studio 77)	Rehearsal (Studio 77)		Plotting during day M-F, actor volunteers needed
Wk 11 8 OCT	Tech Rehearsal TBC	No class (eve perf)		Last performance, Pack-out Saturday night
Wk 12 15 OCT	Reflection + De-brief	Course Wrap-Up		<b>19 OCT: ESSAY Due 5pm</b> <b>Then BBQ time!</b>