

THEA 406 Special Topic: Advanced Directing

Trimester 1 + 2 2015

2 March to 15 November 2015

30 Points



Agamemnon's return home in Peter Stein's 1991 Moscow production of *The Oresteia*. [Image source: Patterson, Michael. *Peter Stein: Germany's Leading Theatre Director*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981. Print.]

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates:	2 March to 16 October 2015
Easter/Mid-Trimester break:	3 to 19 April 2015
Mid-year break:	2 to 12 July 2015
Mid-trimester break 2/3:	24 August to 6 September 2015
Last assessment item due:	2 November 2015

Withdrawal dates:

Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Fridays 10am – 12.50pm KP93

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course Coordinator: Bronwyn Tweddle bronwyn.tweddle@vuw.ac.nz 463 6852 FT77 301

Office Hours by appointment

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any additional information, or changes to the course, will be announced in class, sent by email, and/or posted on Blackboard. It is the student's responsibility to regularly check Blackboard and email. It is also your responsibility to ensure that Bronwyn has your *current* contact details. Bronwyn will endeavour to respond to emails from students within 2 working days. 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. Frequent access to communication is essential in this course.

PRESCRIPTION

This course explores a variety of approaches to theatre directing through practical workshops and theoretical study of directing methodologies. The emphasis is on leading a creative process from conception to performance through collaboration with actors, designers and technicians. Each student will direct short piece for public performance.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. collaborate effectively with others as the director of theatrical performance;
2. discuss and critique the aesthetic, social and political dimensions of live performance from the perspective of the director;
3. manage all aspects of directing scripted theatre performances, including scene analysis, casting, administration of rehearsals, and building a team of collaborators;
4. understand the creative processes and vocabularies of actors, designers and other collaborators, in order to communicate effectively with them; and
5. reflect critically on the effectiveness of their working methods, aesthetic goals and creative strategies and the quality of their work.

TEACHING FORMAT

The course will be delivered in seminars and practical workshops.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

- submit the essays and assignments, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work)
- attend at least 11 class sessions.

WORKLOAD

It is always difficult 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 over the year or 10 hours per teaching week. This means you should expect to spend an average of about 7 hours per week (apart from the 3 hours of scheduled class/rehearsal time) in reading, preparation, thinking, writing and rehearsal. The “estimated preparation hours” for assignments listed in the box below are merely a rule of thumb – especially as the projects are interlinked. Some class blocks will be more intensive than others and students should take care to prepare early for these intense periods, especially where they overlap with due dates for other Honours courses.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Production workbook/portfolio: including analysis of/reflection on directing process; evidence of research and preparation, artefacts of the process etc. [2 workbook instalments: word count variable, depending on production documentation] Estimated total preparation hours = 76	30	2, 4, 5	Instalment 1: 4pm, Fri 31 July Instalment 2: 4pm, Mon 2 Nov
2	Directing projects: short performances of pieces of scripted theatre Length: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 performances of max. 5 minutes duration each • Written critique of each project: max. 1000 words each Estimated total preparation hours = 100	40	1, 2, 3, 4	Project presentations: 17 July, 14 Sept & 9 Oct Critiques due: 4pm 25 July, 25 Sept, 27 Oct
3	Collaborative production role/in-class directing exercises Estimated total preparation hours = 76	30	1, 2, 4, 5	Completed by final class [Fri 16 Oct]

Detailed marking criteria are outlined in specific assignment briefs [given out in class/on Blackboard]

Please note: Marks for Honours level assignments and final course grades are not finalised until feedback from the external examiner has been considered. Honours grades gained in individual courses remain provisional until the overall final classification made by the Honours programme examination committee.

SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK

Work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by Turnitin the online plagiarism prevention tool. Each assignment is submitted as an MS Word file to Bronwyn via email: bronwyn.tweddle@vuw.ac.nz and cc'd to theatre@vuw.ac.nz. Your feedback will be handed back or emailed to you by Bronwyn. Any uncollected assignments can be picked up from the Programme Administrator after the last day of teaching. Assignments will be held in the Administration office until the end of the following trimester. You need to show your student identification to collect marked assignment from the Administration office.

EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

Extensions

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted. To apply for an extension, email your Course Coordinator before the assignment is due. If granted, your Course Coordinator will inform you of the new due date. **No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after Friday 13 November 2015.**

Penalties

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.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT AND/OR ADDITIONAL EXPENSES

Students should wear clothing to class in which they can move freely. Students who prefer to present a hard-copy workbook will need to buy a visual diary or a folder for this purpose (minimum size A4). Students should also budget for printing/photocopying of short scripts each week.

SET TEXTS

There are no set texts or student notes to buy for THEA 406. Instead, a selection of key readings will be made available on the 406 Blackboard site, as well as recommendations on topics specific to the plays selected by the students.

RECOMMENDED READING

Practical advice on directing:

- Mitchell, Katie. *The Director's Craft – A Handbook for the Theatre*. London: Routledge, 2008.
- Tharp, Twyla. *The Creative Habit – Learn It And Use it For Life*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003.

Examples of key directors' practice:

- Schneider, Rebecca and Gabrielle Cody, eds: *Re: Direction*. London: Routledge, 2002.
- Shepherd, Simon. *Direction: Readings in Theatre Practice*. Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Enhancements made to this course, based on the feedback of previous students, will be covered during the course. Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

In week six or seven of the trimester your class representative will be invited to a meeting with the Programme staff. In week five your class representative will ask the class for any feedback on this course to discuss at this meeting.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin

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THEATRE PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE THEA406

- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute:
www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz
- School website: www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms

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THEATRE PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE THEA406

THEA 406 COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1 Fri 6 March Introduction: Directing Classic Texts

Week 2 Fri 13 Mar Working different theatrical spaces

Week 3 Fri 20 Mar Working verse 1

Week 4 Fri 27 Mar Working verse 2

Week 5 Fri 3 Apr NO CLASS: GOOD FRIDAY

Easter/Mid Trimester Break: Friday 3 to Sunday 19 April 2015

Week 6 Fri 24 Apr Working Chorus

Week 7 Fri 1 May Working historical costume & props

Week 8 Fri 8 May Selection of translations

Week 9 Fri 15 May Rehearsal for directing project 1

Week 10 Fri 22 May Rehearsal for directing project 1

Week 11 Fri 29 May Rehearsal for directing project 1

Week 12 Fri 5 June Rehearsal for directing project 1

Mid-Year Break: Thursday 2 to Sunday 12 July 2015

Week 13 Fri 17 July **Directing Project 1 presentations**

Week 14 Fri 24 July Adaptations and contemporisations

Week 15 Fri 31 July Directing commedia dell'Arte

Week 16 Fri 7 Aug Management of productions

Week 17 Fri 14 Aug Directing project 2 (*Tartuffe*): practice and analysis 1

Week 18 Fri 21 Aug Directing project 2 (*Tartuffe*): practice and analysis 2

Mid-Trimester Break: Monday 24 August to Sunday 6 September 2015

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THEATRE PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE THEA406

Week 19	Fri 11 Sept	Directing project 2 (<i>Tartuffe</i>): practice and analysis 3
Week 20	Fri 18 Sept	Directing project 2 (<i>Tartuffe</i>) presentation: 1pm Mon 14 Sept Reflection on <i>Tartuffe</i> projects
Week 21	Fri 25 Sept	Rehearsal for directing project 3
Week 22	Fri 2 Oct	Rehearsal for directing project 3
Week 23	Fri 9 Oct	Directing Project 3 Presentations
Week 24	Fri 16 Oct	Conclusions