

## THEA 304: Directing

Trimester 2 2015

13 July to 15 November 2015

30 Points



*Seagull*, Oregon (USA) Shakespeare Festival, 2012

Photo by Jenny Graham

### IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 13 July to 16 October 2015

Mid-trimester break: 24 August to 6 September 2015

Dress Rehearsal & Performances: 21-26 September 2015

Last assessment item due: 16 October 2015

Withdrawal dates:

Refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds](http://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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats).

### CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Monday and Wednesday                      9.00-12.00 noon                      KP93 101

Performances of all directing projects will occur in **Week 9** [Wed- Sat 23 – 26 September] of Trimester 2 in 93 KP. Note also there will be mandatory dress rehearsals for each season Mon-Tues 21-22 September.

### NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

**Course Coordinator:** Megan Evans                      megan.evans@vuw.ac.nz                      463 9793                      FT77 303

**Course Administrator:** Cathy McCullagh                      cathy.mccullagh@vuw.ac.nz                      463 5359                      FT83 202

All students will be allocated a mentor for their directing project.

### 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 check Blackboard and their email regularly. If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, you **must** 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

A practical study of fundamentals of theatre directing, with particular emphasis given to script analysis and working with actors.

### COURSE CONTENT

During the **class** components of the course, each student will:

- i) explore some approaches to theatre directing
- ii) gain practical experience by directing scenes from selected playtexts
- iii) present their research work on twentieth century directors to the class

Students should wear comfortable clothing, which allows movement, to all classes. Cell phones are to be turned off during classes.

During the **production** components of the course, each student will

- i) direct a selected playscript, in all aspects from casting to final public performance, over an intensive rehearsal period
- ii) collaborate on production work for their season as a whole (planning & paperwork, organising their actors' contribution to technical management, publicity)
- iii) compile a workbook to document and analyse creative and production work.

## COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course *should* be able to:

1. realise a theatre piece from play text to full production in front of an audience
2. analyse their own directing practice in order to improve their work
3. collaborate on technical aspects of theatre production
4. examine, contextualise and analyse the history and methodologies of theatre directing, with an aim to apply this analysis in their practice

## TEACHING FORMAT

The course consists of two practical workshops per week. In addition to this students are expected to rehearse outside of class time leading to their production of a 10 minute directing project. Students will be responsible for booking their own spaces for rehearsals through the Theatre Programme Administrator.

## MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Due to the intensive nature of the work, a very high level of attendance at classes is expected—TWO of the 20 scheduled class sessions may be missed without penalty. Any additional missed classes must be justified by a medical certificate or equivalent documentation.**

## WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 30-point course is 300 hours over the trimester or 20 hours per teaching week. However, the intensive practical nature of this course means that there will be periods during production work (in particular, the weeks just prior to week 9 performance season) when this will be concentrated. 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.

NO THEATRE WORK OUTSIDE OF YOUR THEATRE COURSES MAY BE TAKEN ON WITHOUT EXPLICIT WRITTEN PERMISSION BY THE COURSE CO-ORDINATOR BEFOREHAND.

In addition, the ethos of this course will be co-operative and collaborative – a small production company operating over three months. For much of the time, each individual will be reliant on group support, and will need to offer the same support and co-operation to others, to ensure the success of all the creative objectives.

The time estimations for assessment completion listed below can only be very rough estimates.

## ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
The time estimations for assessment completion listed below can only be very rough estimates. Consider your own individual working process and adjust accordingly.				
1	Directing Project: 10 minute play Written component: Why this play? Why this scene? [500-700 words, 10%] [= approx. 68.5 hours' work]	30%	1, 2	Written component DUE 4pm 24 July  Completed by pack-out in week 9 [26 Sept]
2	Production work: small production tasks towards the performance seasons, as required [= approx. 45.5 hours' work]	20%	3	Completed by pack-out in week 9 [26 Sept]
3	Director's workbook: Documentation and analysis of your directing project [maximum 5,000 words] [= approx. 68.5 hours' work] Installment one: detailed script analysis, casting decisions, floor plan, rehearsal plan [20%] Installment two: rehearsal journal, reflective practice [10%]	30%	2, 4	Workbook instalments DUE 4pm, 21 August & 16 October
4	Research presentation on a major theatre director: 15 minute presentation plus 10 minutes Q & A time [= approx. 45.5 hours' work]	20%	4	In class on: 5, 7 or 12 or 14 October

All work is individually assessed. Specific marking criteria for each assessment task are included in the detailed task briefs (given out in the first class and posted on Blackboard). **All assessment will be internal. There is no final examination.**

### Relationship between assessment and learning objectives

The **directing project** develops your skills in realising a theatre piece from play text to full production. This process includes the development of your creative imagination, plus critical skills in script analysis, and practical skills in organising and running rehearsals, working with directing actors and handling technical elements. The keeping of a **director's workbook** enables this process to be the subject of reflection and

analysis. The workbook is also designed to develop good habits in documenting your work and developing your own philosophy as a theatre artist.

The **study presentation on a major theatre director** develops understanding of the history and methodologies of directing. **Production work** develops skills in technical theatre production and the ability to work collaboratively.

### 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.

All assignments for this course are submitted via Blackboard. Electronic assignments are submitted as a MS Word file through Blackboard. How to name your file and step-by-step instructions can be found on Blackboard in the "Assignments and Turnitin" section.

Your marked assignment will be found on Blackboard in the same section.

### 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. Tutors cannot grant extensions. **No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after Wednesday 11 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.

### SET TEXTS

Mitchell, Katie. *The Director's Craft: A Handbook for the Theatre*. London: Routledge. 2009

You can order student notes and textbooks 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).

### RECOMMENDED READING

Practical advice on directing:

- Twyla Tharp, *The Creative Habit – Learn It And Use it For Life*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003.

Examples of key directors' practice:

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

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- Rebecca Schneider & Gabrielle Cody, eds: *Re: Direction*. London: Routledge, 2002.
- Shepherd, Simon. *Direction: Readings in Theatre Practice*. Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012.
- Anne Bogart, *A Director Prepares*. London & New York: Routledge, 2001

History and styles of directing

- Christopher Innes and Maria Shevtsova, *The Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Directing*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

### 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

Student feedback on University courses may be found at

[www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php).

Previous students have desired faster turn around with marking and feedback. To facilitate this, all assessments will be submitted and graded via blackboard.

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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism)
- Aegrotats: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats)
- Academic Progress: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress) (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates)
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: [www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin)
- Grades: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades)
- Resolving academic issues: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications)

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- Special passes: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications)
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute:  
[www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy)
- Student support: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support)
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability)
- Student Charter: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter)
- Student Contract: [www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract](http://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](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)
- University structure: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure)
- Victoria graduate profile: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile)
- VUWSA: [www.vuwsa.org.nz](http://www.vuwsa.org.nz)
- School website: [www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms)

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**THEA 304 COURSE PROGRAMME**

Week 1	Mon 13 July	Introduction/History & Role of the Director
	Wed 15 July	Script Analysis
Week 2	Mon 20 July	Research & Conceptualisation
	Wed 22 July	Auditions & Casting
Week 3	Mon 27 July	Planning Rehearsals
	Wed 29 July	Running Rehearsals
Week 4	Mon 4 Aug	Directing practice: Starting Points—World of the Play ( <i>Seagull</i> )
	Wed 5 Aug	Directing practice: Starting Points—World of the Play (your scene)
Week 5	Mon 10 Aug	Directing practice: Methodologies (inside out— <i>Seagull</i> )
	Wed 12 Aug	Directing practice: Methodologies (inside out—your scene)
Week 6	Mon 17 Aug	Scenography & Production Problem-Solving [JD & NZ]
	Wed 19 Aug	Directing practice: Methodologies (outside in)
<b>FRIDAY 21 AUGUST, 4PM: FIRST INSTALMENT OF DIRECTOR'S WORKBOOK DUE</b>		
<b>Mid Trimester Break: Monday 24 August to Sunday 6 September 2015</b>		
Week 7	Mon 7 Sept	Directing practice: Shaping performance
	Wed 9 Sept	Directing practice: Shaping performance
Week 8	Mon 14 Sept	Managing Tech & Performance Processes [JD & NZ]
	Wed 16 Sept	The Director's Role After Opening
Week 9	Mon 21 Sept	No Class – Mon/Tues Evening Dress Rehearsals
	Wed 23 Sept	No Class – Evening Performances
<b>PERFORMANCES WEDNESDAY 23 – SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER</b>		
Week 10	Wed 29 Sept	Production Debrief [Season A]
	Wed 1 Oct	Production Debrief [Season B]



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Week 11    Mon 6 Oct        **DIRECTOR PRESENTATIONS** [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]  
                  Wed 8 Oct        **DIRECTOR PRESENTATIONS** [6, 7, 8, 9, 10]

Week 12    Mon 13 Oct        **DIRECTOR PRESENTATIONS** [11, 12, 13, 14, 15]  
                  Wed 15 Oct        **DIRECTOR PRESENTATIONS** [16, 17, 18] **& Course Wrap-up**

**FRIDAY 16 OCTOBER, 4PM: FINAL INSTALLMENT OF DIRECTOR'S WORKBOOK DUE (submitted via Blackboard, may be a scan of a handwritten Visual Diary but must be legible)**