DIRECTING

SPRING 2019

Professor: “C” Heaps (Dr. “C”)

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Class Location: Light Fine Arts 3

Class Time: MWF 11:55am-1:10pm, Lab, R 2-4pm

Office Location: Theatre Office, Light Fine Arts Basement

Office Hours: MT 3-5pm, R 4-5pm

**What is this course?**

This is a course in Directing. In the theatre, the director is responsible for unifying all of the aspects of a production by providing artistic vision, collaborating with designers, and mobilizing actors. While the director may different levels of authority and responsibility depending on the theatrical company they work in, they are an integral part of contemporary theatre.

**What will you be able to do by the end of this course?**

After taking this course, students should be able to:

* Analyze a play and make decisions about artistic **concept** and **theme**.
* Reference the works of directors of the past in their own work.
* Employ a variety of tools in the direction of theatrical pieces.
* Collaborate effectively with designers, dramaturgs and other members of a creative team.
* Manage actors integrally.

**What does this course “count” for?**

It is a Connections requirement for Theatre Arts majors, a Performance unit for the Theatre Arts minor, and an elective in the Applied Category of the Media Studies concentration.

**What texts are required for this course?**

Available at the college bookstore:

Ball, David. *Backwards and Forwards.*

Cole, Toby. *Directors on Directing*.

Majok, Martyna. *Cost of Living*.

Other short readings will be made available online through Moodle. They will always be added with at least a week notice before we discuss them.

**How will you be graded in this course?**

Evaluation will be determined by:

Participation: 20%

Domino Analysis: 10%

Play Reports: 25%

Oral Presentation: 10%

Directing Book: 20%

Scene Performance: 15%

\*Attendance in class and at events is mandatory and failure to do so will subtract points.

**GRADE %**

A 94%

A- 90%

B+ 87%

B 84%

B- 80%

C+ 77%

C 74%

C- 70%

D+ 67%

D 64%

D- 60%

F- Below 60%

**What will we be doing in class?**

* Learning about the history of directing.
* Reading one outside play per week (or just about) from a curated list and writing a brief weekly Play Report.
* Researching and presenting on a famous director.
* Casting and rehearsing a 10-minute scene for the end of the term 10-Minute Scene Festival.

**How do I write my play reports?**

Each week each student will post a brief play report on a play that you will read from a curated list, which is also posted on the Moodle Course Site.

* The play report is almost always due on Moodle by **class time** on Monday.
* Always choose plays that you have NOT read or seen before. You're on the true honor system. **Don't** choose plays you will read in other courses this term.
* All reports are Pass or Fail.
* None of the plays on the list is on Closed Reserve. Some are in our library, some are not. Find them wherever you can.
* Choosing a play not on the list is usually fine, just check with me first. Remember, one of the purposes of this assignment is for you to familiarize yourself with dramatic literature from different periods.

The format of the Play Report:

TITLE:  
AUTHOR:

YEAR THE PLAY WAS WRITTEN:

SETTING (Physical, Temporal, Emotional, etc.):

PROTAGONIST:

MAJOR CONFLICT OR MAJOR DRAMATIC QUESTION (no more than 1-2 sentences, i.e., " Will Oedipus find out who he is?” or "Will Stanley get Blanche out of his house?” When this question is answered, the play is over.)

CHARACTER DIMENSION (no more than 2 sentences, no more than 3 major characters):

THEMES/IDEAS (no more than 2 sentences):

LANGUAGE: (prose vs. verse? Translation? Rhythm? Imagery?)

THEATRICALITY: (use of spectacle? Disguise? Violence? Sex appeal? High stakes?)

PERSONAL RESPONSE (Did it move you, enlighten you, bore you, etc.?)

WHY IS THIS PLAY IMPORTANT (i.e., why is it on this list)?

ANYTHING ELSE?

You should be able to write this in **15 minutes** in the above outline form. Do NOT write a thoughtful essay, worry about your thesis, provide examples, etc. Do write in complete sentences with correct syntax. We will discuss the plays you’ve read in class on Fridays.

**How does our 10-minute Scene Festival work?**

This is the “final exam” for this course. You will cast it and rehearse it (Part of that rehearsal time will be provided during lab). No one may act in their own scene. **All** class members must be present for the festival in the Dungeon Theatre during our Final Exam time**. No early departures from course. Please do not ask.** Other details about our 10-Minute Play Festival forthcoming.

**What should I bring to class?**

Do bring:

Whatever work we are discussing in class.

Whatever method you have for taking notes

Yourself, actively engaged

Do NOT bring:

Homework from other classes

Disrespect for anybody present

**What about electronics?**

I love electronic devices. You probably do too. I'm going to assume you can act as adults and responsibly use (or not use as the case may be) your laptops. But know, if you use the technology to check your e-mail, stalk Facebook, or any other similar activity, you're primarily hurting yourself. Theatre is a live event; be grateful for the chance to have face-to-face time with fellow human beings. Being in your seat does not guarantee your presence, and we want you here! Also, if you are continually being too much of a disruption to the class, this privilege will be taken away.

**What about live theatre?**

Since plays are meant to be experienced in live performance, you are required to see the mainstage production:

**Twelfth Night**. You will see it during **Week 7, May 16-18 @7:30pm** and **May 19 @2pm** in the Nelda K. Balch Playhouse.

**Alphabet Soup of Policy**

**Attendance**

Attendance is absolutely essential to this course. Students are allowed TWO absences because life happens, but otherwise, people need to be in class, engaged, on time. After 2 absences for ANY reason, 2% of your grade will be deducted for each absence. **A documented medical excuse is required for an excused absence**.

**Communication**

I will communicate with the class via e-mail or Moodle announcements. I will answer your questions as soon as I can, but I may not check e-mails late at night or on the weekend.

**Disabilities Accommodation**

If you are a student with a disability who seeks accommodation or other assistance in this course, please let me know as soon as possible. Kalamazoo College is committed to making every effort to providing reasonable accommodations. If you want to discuss your overall needs for accommodation at the College, please direct questions to the Associate Dean of Students Office, (269) 337-7209. For more information, please see <https://www.kzoo.edu/student-life/students-with-disabilities/>.

**Honor Code and Academic Honesty**

This course operates under the **College Honor System**. That means: we treat each other with respect, we nurture independent thought, we take responsibility for personal behavior, and we accept environmental responsibility. **Academic honesty** is a critical part of our value system at K. When you borrow an idea, express the idea in your own words, thus thinking it through and making it your own, and acknowledge the source of the idea with the proper citation and reference, or, in certain situations, use the exact words of the source in quotation marks and acknowledge it with the proper citation, page number, and reference. Ideas raised in class are part of the public domain and, therefore, sources of the ideas need not be acknowledged. If you are ever in doubt about this, you must ask. For the full policy, see <https://reason.kzoo.edu/studev/policies/dishonest/>.

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will result in a score of zero points on the assignment, further disciplinary action from the Dean’s Office, and possible course failure. **No exceptions.** Be sure you are presenting your own work.

**Late Work**

All papers/projects/quizzes etc. are due in-class on the date indicated. There will be a penalty of a letter grade on the assignment for **each** day any aspect of any assignment is late (including the day which it is due and weekends). Extensions can be granted on a case-by-case basis, typically only for medical excuses or absolute personal emergencies. If you haven't learned to time manage course work, production work, social commitments, etc., please make that a goal for yourself this term.

**Learning Commons**

The Learning Commons is a network of peer support available to help you with a variety of skills and disciplines. The Writing Center, Research Consultant Center, and Center for New Media Design are on the first floor of Upjohn Library. Our English as a Second Language and Learning Specialist support programs are located there as well. The Math-Physics Center is in Olds Upton Hall. It is my observation that students who frequent these centers generally learn more and receive higher grades, so I encourage you to use them early and often. You can find more information about each of these centers here: <https://reason.kzoo.edu/learningcommons/>.

**Participation**

In order to be eligible to receive the full participation component, **you must never be late**. You must always be prepared to participate in class. This means:

1. Arriving on time.
2. Reading all assignments carefully.
3. Preparing notes and questions on the readings or topic.
4. Contributing regularly and thoughtfully.
5. Advance discussion without monopolizing it.
6. Use what others are saying - agree/disagree respectfully.
7. All of the above also applies to your Workshop Group feedback in Moodle (see Workshop and Feedback Procedure below).

**Sensitive or Controversial Content**

*Some of the plays we will read contain content that some may consider controversial.* If at any time you truly find such material so offensive that you cannot participate in discussion or complete an assignment, please let me know. If you like, you may tell me by note or email. Please communicate with me if you are experiencing any problems in the course.

**Weekly Breakdown**

**Week 1 – Working with Yourself**

Monday, April 1

* Introduction

Wednesday, April 3

* LECTURE: Thinking About Thinking
* READING: *Backwards and Forwards*, Part One – pp. 1-36

Friday, April 5

* QUIZ: Syllabus Quiz
* READING: *Cost of Living* by Martyna Majok
* READING: *Backwards and Forwards*, Part Two – pp. 39-59
* ASSIGNMENT: Play Report (*Cost of Living*)

**Week 2 – Working with the Script**

Monday, April 8

* LECTURE: History of Directing (Every Monday we will have a discussion about the history of directing)
* PRESENTATION: Max Reinhardt
* READING: *Backwards and Forwards*, Part Two – pp. 60-78
* READING: *Directors on Directing*, pp. 296-310

Wednesday, April 10

* READING: *Backwards and Forwards*, Part Three – pp. 81-96
* LECTURE: Action and Structural Analysis

Friday, April 12

* LECTURE: Root Action Statement
* ASSIGNMENT: Domino Analysis of *Cost of Living*
* ASSIGNMENT: Play Report (Week 2)

**Week 3 – Working with the Script (continued)**

Monday, April 15

* READING: Directors on Directing, pp. 234-244, 333-350
* PRESENTATION: Bertolt Brecht

Wednesday, April 17

* LECTURE: Given Circumstances

Friday, April 19

* ASSIGNMENT: Play Report (Week 3)

**Week 4 – Working with Dramaturgs and Stage Managers**

Monday, April 22

* READING: *Directors on Directing*, pp.420-422, pp. pp. 119-124, pp. 226-233
* PRESENTATION: Peter Brook

Wednesday, April 24

* LECTURE: Thematic Statements

Friday, April 26

* ASSIGNMENT: Play Report (Week 4)

**Week 5 – Working with Designers**

Monday, April 29

* READING: *Directors on Directing*, pp. 138-163
* PRESENTATION: Gordon Craig

Wednesday, May 1

* LECTURE: Central Production Metaphor

Friday, May 3

* ASSIGNMENT: Play Report (Week 5)

**Week 6 – Working with Actors – First Rehearsals**

Monday, May 6

* READING: *Directors on Directing*, pp. 81-108
* PRESENTATION: Ariane Mnouchkine

Wednesday, May 8

* LECTURE: Table Work

Friday, May 10

* ASSIGNMENT: Play Report (Week 6)

**Week 7 – Working with Actors – Resolving Problems**

Monday, May 13

* READING: *Directors on Directing*, pp. 109-118, 198-204
* PRESENTATION: Konstanin Stanislavski

Wednesday, May 15

* LECTURE: Establishing and Maintaining Power Hierarchies
* READING: “Conflict Resolution” by Katz and McNulty

Friday, May 17

* ASSIGNMENT: Play Report (Week 7)

**Week 8 – Working with Actors - Blocking**

Monday, May 20

* READING: *Directors on Directing*, pp. 205-225
* PRESENTATION: Peter Sellars

Wednesday, May 22

* LECTURE: Techniques for Directing Movement

Friday, May 24

* ASSIGNMENT: Play Report (Week 8)

**Week 9 – Working with Actors – Games**

Monday, May 27

MEMORIAL DAY – ENJOY!

Wednesday, May 29

* LECTURE: Games for Actors and Non-Actors
* READING: TBD
* READING: *Directors on Directing*, pp. 245-278
* PRESENTATION: Augusto Boal

Friday, May 31

* ASSIGNMENT: Play Report (Week 9)

**Week 10 – Letting Others Do Their Work**

Monday, June 3

* READING: *Directors on Directing*, pp. 364-389
* PRESENTATION: Elia Kazan

Wednesday, June 5

* LECTURE: When Your Job Is Done

Friday, June 7

* Free Time for Final Work

**Exam Week**

No early departures from course (please don’t ask). Audience invited.

Monday, June 10

* PERFORMANCE: 1:30-4pm
* ASSIGNMENT: Director’s Book, due by 5pm