

FUTURE STAGES
WINTER/SPRING 2014

MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY 9:30 – 11:50

LOCATION: STUDIO 201 ON BRADDOCK AVE.

COURSE NUMBERS:
54405 UNDERGRAD ACTORS
54460 UNDERGRAD DESIGNERS
54736 GRAD DESIGN I
54835 GRAD DESIGN II
54836 GRAD DESIGN III
54784 GRAD DIRECTING I
54822 GRAD DIRECTING II

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ASSOCIATE PROF. LARRY SHEA
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course combines options from the School of Drama in a unique configuration: through working collaboratively across disciplines, students will investigate innovative approaches to contemporary theater and new ways of storytelling. Contemporary techniques for media integration will be explored through exercises and studio work, readings and discussion, blog postings, and viewing of major artist's work.

In the first quarter students will discover ways media can expand performance, including live video feed, interactive softwares such as "Kinect" and Isadora, digital imaging, green screen, "Pepper's Ghost" and more. We will undertake short studio scenes and exercises in order to gain 'hands on' experience working with these tools, and in the process expand the possibilities of theater.

In addition, students will pair up and report on an artist, using visual excerpts and extrapolating on reading. We will focus on these artists' approaches to deeply integrating technology into performance.

In the second quarter, directors, designers, and actors will work in groups using an assigned source text to generate original ideas, images, texts, and material. These collaborations will culminate in a performance at the semester's end.

The course is open to graduate directors, senior actors, and graduate designers. Undergraduate designers as assigned. All others by permission.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This class is an opportunity to explore avenues outside of traditional production modes and beyond each student's individual discipline. We will focus on the process of truly creating a theatrical language, which integrates disciplines.

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- Confidently and professionally participate in productions that use cross-disciplinary approaches.
- Develop productive collaborative relationships from directing, designing, and acting perspectives.
- Gain confidence in their ability to articulate and support their artistic choices.
- Learn from key critical texts about multimedia theater.
- Use these tools to broaden their creative repertoires.

Requirements for *all* students:

Contribute and Participate: (65% of final grade.)

Engaged participation is essential throughout the class. Students are expected to actively engage in discussions and in the rehearsal process, and to demonstrate acquisition of skills taught throughout the class. Specifically, actors, designers, and directors should all understand the basics of the media taught, and demonstrate how to creatively interact with them in a theatrical setting.

Read, Write, and Talk: (35% of final grade.)

Check the Blackboard for readings, which will also be announced in class. The course requires all students to complete the assigned reading. Students should participate in lively and inquisitive discussions of this reading, and **MUST post a response weekly on the class Blackboard.**

In addition, throughout the semester students will be asked to report on a major artists' work. Demonstrate thorough research, an overview of the artist's oeuvre, and provide visual examples.

Artists:

Gob Squad "Super Night Shot" (2003) and "Western Society" (2013)

Robert LePage "Needles and Opium" (1993), The Ring Cycle (2011-2013)

Annie Dorsen "A Piece of Work" (2013)

Chunky Moves "Connected" (2011), "An Act of Now" (2012)

The Builders Association "Super Vision" (2005), "Sontag: Reborn" (2012)

Dumb Type "OR" (1999)

Ralph Lemon "Come Home Charley Patton", Part 3 in Geography Trilogy (2005)

..and more

Attend: All students are expected to come to class on time and prepared. **One unexcused absence will be allowed, any subsequent absences will result in a drop of 1/2 a letter grade.**

Grades:

The University Grading Standard is as follows:

A	4.0	Excellent
B	3.0	Good
C	2.0	Satisfactory
D	1.0	Passing
R	0.0	Fail

Graduates may receive +/-

Undergraduates may not receive +/- for the final grade.

Reminder: Check the Blackboard for readings and blog posts, which will also be announced in class

January 13 Monday 9:30-11:50

Presentations by Weems, Sissons, Shea, and Miller

Review syllabus

In class reading: Marshall McLuhan, *The Medium Is the Message*

Assignment for Wednesday:

Step #1: You are the curator. Choose a quick sample from your everyday life of how you connect digitally to a person or a group, and prepare to share it with the class. Samples can be drawn from Instagrams, Face Book, various Apps, surveillance devices (such as drones and other cameras) and any other interface between you and other people through digital tools. Prepare to show and talk about it for 2-3 minutes. Tell us how this interaction affects you personally -- when it ends are you fulfilled, aggravated or indifferent? How would it be different if it were "face to face"? Bonus: If you have had an interesting interaction with someone in this class please focus on that.

Assigned reading for Wednesday Jan 15:

"Student Addiction to Technology" New York Times

"You Love Your iPhone, Literally" New York Times Sept 10, 2011

*"NSA Collecting Phone Records of Millions of Verizon Customers Daily",
The Guardian June 5, 2013*

Jan 15 Wednesday 9:30-11:50

Discuss readings

Each student gives a brief class presentation

Assigned reading for Monday Jan 20:

Excerpts from Liveness by Philip Auslander

Group #1 prepares report on Gob Squad

Jan 20 Monday

Discuss Liveness by Philip Auslander

Complete student presentations as necessary

Jan 22 Wednesday 9:30-11:50

Group report on Gob Squad

Step #2 In small groups, stage one of your personal digital interactions.

Lay it out spatially, identify performance style, and discuss text choices.

Assigned Reading for Monday Feb 3:

The Artwork of the Future Richard Wagner

Starting from Zero Ariane Mnouchkine

Excerpts from Postdramatic Theater, Hans-Thies Lemann (1999)

Group #2 prepares report on Robert LePage

[PLAYGROUND Sunday Jan 26-Sat Feb 1]

Feb 3 Monday 9:30-11:50

Group report on the work of Robert LePage

Discuss reading

Step #3 Groups identify a classical text to combine with current 'scripts' (i.e. romantic Instagram is combined with an excerpt from *Romeo and Juliet*)

Feb 5 Wednesday

Group work on combining texts

Introduce live video feed as a means of expanding design opportunities and enhancing the expressive qualities of the work.

Assigned reading for Monday Feb 10:

Excerpts from The Distraction Addiction by Alex Pang (2012)

Additional reading TBA

Feb 10 Monday

Discuss reading

Continue work on live video feed. Demonstrate uses of screens -- front projection, rear projection, Textaline.

Feb 12 Wednesday

Actors come at 10:30

Set up tech, then groups experiment with integrating live video feed into their sketches.

Group #3 prepares report on Annie Dorsen

Feb 17 Mon

Group report on the work of Annie Dorsen

Demonstration of Kinect interactive software.

Feb 19 Wednesday

Actors come at 10:30

Set up Kinect, groups experiment with their small sketches

Feb 23 Monday

Demonstration green screen and "Pepper's Ghost"

Feb 26 Wednesday

Actors come at 10:30

Incorporate new tech and continue work on their small sketches

March 3 Monday

Wrap up

March 5 Wednesday

Wrap up
Introduce primary text for next quarter

[MID SEMESTER] Spring Break March 9-16

SECOND QUARTER – Directors, designers, and actors will work in groups using an assigned source text to generate original ideas, images, texts, and material. These collaborations will culminate in a performance at the semester's end.

Detailed Syllabus TBD

Class resumes Monday March 17 (Mondays and Wednesdays 9:30-11:50)

[April 10-11-12 F-Sa Spring Carnival; No Classes]

April 28 Monday FINAL SHOWINGS – all students must be in attendance

April 30 Wednesday FINAL SHOWINGS – all students must be in attendance