

REBECCA HOLDERNESS

THEATRE 570 - 801 2008 Acting Technique III-A

Monday/ Wednesday 2:00- 5:00PM KSE 508

Rph2@uwm.edu, Office hours: Friday 12-1

"A foot in the mud, an eye on the stars and a dagger in the hand" (Peter Brook as quoted by Jan Kott)

Acting 111-A is course of study in the techniques of acting Classical, Verse, and/or heightened text. The acting of this nature of performance text is a fundamental skill and study for the actor. The actor who is equipped for and able to perform pre- modern text well will find that s/he has the skills to pursue any dramatic text where a strong language sensibility is combined with high, energy action. A memorable performance of classical text will feature clarity of thought, emotional transparency, and humanity combined with a deep level of physical and vocal stamina, expertise and embodied imagination.

This course divides into several main foci: creating a personal connection of a classical role, developing an understanding of the world of the plays through research and text analysis, and exploration experience with character, dramatic action and actor/audience relationship in classical and verse text.

The course intends to remove the sense of distance sometimes created by heightened text in the "feeling" of action and circumstance. We will come to see the characters of Shakespeare and other authors as familiar as Tennessee Williams, as passionate and colloquial as a character created by Quentin Tarantino, as topical as Saturday Night Live and as sexy and magical as "True Blood"

The course goal is to develop in the student skills of personalization of text, creation of classical character and active embodied use of verse text in scene work. The student will also explore and synthesize perceptions of the author's world in performance. The course goal also includes basic skills in research, textual analysis, and familiarity with verse structure. It also includes challenges in verse comedy and text arising from a culture of violence.

The students will pursue readings, performance, and creative projects during the period of the course. Course outcomes include the ability to handle the demands of creating performance with classical text under pressure and are tested both through writing and through performance. At the completion of the course the student will have:

- Experienced Shakespeare, Wilde, Coward, Stoppard and others Tested through monologue and scene work
- Read FREEING SHAKESPEARE'S VOICE/Linklater and SHAKESPEARE OUR CONTEMPORARY/Kott and the criticism of John Lahr tested through class performance and In class written exam
- Two or more roles learned and performed
- Practical exposure to The Folio and concepts about interplay of printing/text scholarship and acting issues.
- Presentation on Grand Guignol, traditions of Revenge Tragedy and their reflection in violence on film.

Students will participate in the evaluation process several times throughout the semester. Please read the attached schedule and criteria for evaluation carefully and ask questions *early* in the semester,

Criteria for Evaluation

- Classroom Work: Personal growth and consistency, focus, impeccable attendance, personal input, collaborative endeavor, and fearless creativity are stressed.
- Foundations in thought and action: Presentation of research in class and reading tests.
- Final Project- presentation of the "Comedy of (bad) manners scene in class
- Journal (non-graded)

You are requested to keep a journal documenting your experiences related to this class, but also to other thoughts, ideas experiences, performances, drawings or other visual and aural media. This course is about tools of thought, shifting paradigms of creation and inspiration- you may find your journal of great use.

Class guidelines

Attendance - Active Participation in the Class. If you sustain an injury or are ill during your enrollment in this course, you are required to be present and observe and take notes unless the injury occurs during class and needs immediate attention. Doctor's excuses will be handled on a case-by-case basis established by the parties involved. Excused or unexcused, this class is based almost entirely on class participation and progression.

Scene work: As the final project is a scene and requires that you work with a partner, you are expected to be responsible to your partner and the class as a whole. Please show for up prepared for all rehearsals, and be willing and supportive collaborator.

Assignments:

This course is carefully structured. You are required to accomplish all readings projects on time. You will not be permitted to be unprepared. There will be no opportunity to make up classes, papers, or exams. Being unprepared ever will be considered reason for probation in the course. Be prepared to work.

Policy on lateness: Any students who arrive more than 5 minutes after class has begun will be marked tardy. Three tardiest equal one absence. There are no permitted absences.

Classical Text: Class Plan/Assignments:

See attached GRID

Digest of Assignments and Required Texts:

- Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, scene and assigned class work exploring text forms, analysis, character construction and text in performance (30%)

- Beaumont and Fletcher, *Pilaster*, Scene performances work focusing on Choreography and violence on stage. (15%)
- A 10 minute Presentation in Class discussing a contemporary film which features violent or comic action from the reference point of Classic Revenge Tragedy. (10%)
- Reading, Selections from Linkelater, *Freeing Shakespeare's Voice*, John Lahr's *Coward the Playwright*, and Jan Kott, *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*, (15%)
- In class presentation of a scene from Coward, Wilde, Stoppard involving extensive primary source research and development of characters grounded in both style and language. (40%)

Required Texts:

Shakespeare, Hamlet- a single play edition- Arden Preferred.

Jan Kott, *Shakespeare our Contemporary*

Freeing Shakespeare's Voice; Kristen Linkelater

The Complete Works of Shakespeare

Supplement to UWM FACULTY DOCUMENT NO. 1895,

October 21, 1993 Revised March 16, 2006C. University Policies

Students with disabilities. Verification of disability, class standards, the policy on the use of alternate materials and test accommodations can be found at the following:

<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC/SACltr.pdf>

Religious observances. Policies regarding accommodations for absences due to religious observance are found at the following:

http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S1.5.htm

Students called to active military duty. Accommodations for absences due to call-up of reserves to active military duty should be noted.

<http://www3.uwm.edu/des/web/registration/militarycallup.cfm>

Incompletes. The conditions for awarding an incomplete to graduate and undergraduate students can be found at the following:

http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S31.pdf

Discriminatory conduct (such as sexual harassment). Definitions of discrimination. Harassment, abuse of power, and the reporting requirements of discriminatory conduct are found at the following:

http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S47.pdf

Academic misconduct. Policies for addressing students cheating on exams or plagiarism can be found at the following:

<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/conduct.html>

Complaint procedures. Students may direct complaints to the head of the academic unit or department in which the complaint occurs. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the head of the department or academic unit in which the complaint occurred or to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy.

Grade appeal procedures. Procedures for student grade appeal appear at the following:

http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S28.htm

Final examination policy. Policies regarding final examinations can be found at the following:

http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S22.htm

Final grades will be assessed on the following scale

A	95-100 points
A-	92-94 points
B+	90-91 points
B	89-83 points
B-	82-80 points
C+	79-77 points
C	76-72points
C-	71-70 points
D	69-65 points