

SCHOOL OF ENGLISH FILM THEATRE and MEDIA STUDIES
THEATRE PROGRAMME
2008 COURSE INFORMATION SHEET

THEA 323 CRN 11364

SPECIAL TOPIC: VIRTUAL THEATRES

Course co-ordinator and teaching staff

John Downie 85FT Room 101, tel: 463 6826. Office hours posted on the door of Room 101, 85FT.

Willie Franco, av tutor, TBA.

Horst Sarubin, av technician, 77FT, Room 203, tel: 463 8950.

Theatre Programme Office, 77FT, Room 307, tel: 463 5359.

Class times and venue

Second trimester. Monday and Thursday, 10.00-12.50

Studio, 83 Fairlie Terrace

Course aims

This course will explore the performative possibilities when the live elements of theatrical presence are removed, and replaced, referenced, and augmented by digital av technology, in performance spaces, creating 'absent' performances.

Course objectives

By the completion of this course, students should:

- have a good understanding of how the corporeal and virtual aspects of performance relate and combine.
- have an appreciation of visual, auditory, and performative aesthetics.
- have gained first-hand experience of handling digital production hardware and software.
- have an outline knowledge of the historical and current influences of performance and intermedia arts as a critique of mainstream theatre production and performance.
- begin to have a more astute understanding of the mobile relationship between dramaturgy, scenography, and performance.

Course content (see attached timetable)

The teaching will centre around developing concepts of 'body', 'object', and 'field' (performer, costume & props, stage). Students will complete three practical production projects, two

individually, and one as part of a group. Students will also complete a piece of individual research work on relevant artistic models, from theatre, film, performance art, or media installation, present research outcomes in class session, and complete as an essay of critical writing. The final of the three practical projects will be completed as group work, further details for which will be given in class.

Required Texts (available at Victoria Books, Kelburn campus)

Rose Lee Goldberg *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present* Abrams NY 1988.
Michael Rush *New Media in Art* Thames and Hudson 2005.

Recommended Texts (available at the University Library)

Ed Freda Chapple & Chiel Kattenbelt *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance* Rodopi, Amsterdam & London, 2006
Gabriella Giannachi *Virtual Theatres* Routledge, London and NY, 2004
Matthew Causey *Theatre and Performance in Digital Culture* Routledge, London & NY, 2006
Anne Nicholson Webber *Upstaged: Making Theatre in the Media Age* Routledge NY 2006
Susan Broadhurst *Performance and Technology* MacMillan, London 2005
ed. Caroline A Jones *Sensorium: embodied experience, technology, and contemporary art* MIT Press, Cambridge, London 2006
ed. Jeffrey Shaw & Peter Weibel *Future Cinema: The Cinematic Imaginary After Film* MIT Press 2003
Steve Dixon *Digital Performance: a history of new media in theatre, dance, performance and installation* MIT Press 2007
ed Jackie Hatfield *Experimental Film and Video: an anthology* Indiana Univ Press 2006
ed. Alison Oddey & Christine White *The Potentials of Space; the theory and practice of scenography and performance* Intellect Books 2006
International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media Ovid Intellect Arts online.
Gunter Berghaus *Avant-garde Performance: live events and electronic technologies* Palgrave MacMillan 2005
ed Gough, Christie, Watt *A Performance Cosmology/testimony from the future, evidence of the past...* Routledge 2006
ed. Carver and Beardon *New Visions in Performance* electronic text
ed Lyons and Plunkett *Multimedia Histories; from the magic lantern to the internet* Univ of Exeter Press 2007

Assessment

There will be four assessable Assignments to the course:

- 1) Quick individual creative project, 'One Thing'. Due (in class) 17 July. Weighting 15%.
- 2) Digital Photographic Project, 'Stills'. Due (in class) 11/14 Aug. Weighting 20%.
- 3) Individual Research Project. Class presentation to be scheduled. Due 25 Sept as 3000 word essay. Weighting 25%.
- 4) Group installation project 'Wet/Dry'. Due 17 Oct, as completed practical project and written report. Weighting 40%.

More detailed description of these assignments will be given in class. If you wish to ask for an extension (eg, because of illness, or pressure of work), please do so well before the due date. Unless there are exceptional circumstances (eg, medical reasons, with medical note) work handed in late may be penalised, at the discretion of the course co-ordinator. Don't be flabby about work discipline; get used to hitting deadlines. All the projects must be satisfactorily completed for a grade to be awarded. If work is still outstanding by Friday 24 Oct, then the course will be judged incomplete, and graded accordingly .

Relationship between Assessment and Course Objectives

Each of the assessment tasks is designed to develop your skills in, and knowledge of, Intermedia Production. The first creative assignment, 'One Thing', encourages you to begin to think and use av digital equipment as an element of performance. The second creative assignment, 'Stills', encourages you to investigate the properties of a digital still camera, and to realize a presentational form from still images. The third Research assignment encourages you to read and write about Intermedia Performance practice as particular case studies. The fourth creative assignment, 'Wet/Dry', encourages you to develop work within in a group collaboration, applying your growing skills, knowledge, and critique of Intermedia Production.

Mandatory Course requirements

In order to pass the course, completion and submission of all assignments is required.

Attendance

As this is a practical production course, a very high rate of class attendance (90%) is expected, and absences will be noted.

Workload

It is always difficult to precisely specify the workload of courses which have a high practical and creative content. The university anticipates that you should be able to devote OVER 20 hours per week to a 36-point course at 300-level. Therefore you should probably expect to spend on average about 14 hours per week (ie. apart from class time) in reading, preparation, thinking, writing, workshopping, rehearsal, production. Pressure of work increases in the second half of the course, so please try to manage your overall university workload in relation to this.

In practical production work, it is vitally important that students support each other, in a collective and collaborative sense. Please **always** be prompt at classes and rehearsals, and **always** take full responsibility for tasks allotted to you, or for which you volunteer.

Communication

Any additional information, or changes to the course, will be announced in class, and posted on the course noticeboard, level 3, 77FT.

Safety

Safety on the premises of the Section of Theatre and Film is the responsibility of everyone who uses the facilities. While every effort is made to ensure that the premises are safe and hazard-free, performance arts always carry some risk, and we need the co-operation of all students and visitors in the following areas:

1. Any student or visitor who discovers an actual or potential hazard must report it without delay to either of the Programmes's Technical Officers, Jim Davenport or Ian Powell, or to a full-time member of the teaching staff. Written reports are appreciated when thought necessary.
2. All equipment used in the Programme's buildings must be handled in a careful and appropriate manner, and with due regard to safety. Any breakages must be reported as soon as possible.
3. It is the responsibility of individual students to read the safety notices relating to fire, earthquake, etc, and to carry out the provisions as indicated in the notices.

In addition, there are certain groundrules regarding conduct with the Section's buildings.

Smoking is not permitted in any interior space.

Alcoholic drinks are not to be brought onto the premises without the agreement of the Section Heads/Head of SEFTMS.

All students are expected to assist with security by making sure that doors are locked, windows closed, and heaters switched off before the buildings are vacated, and, if necessary, the security system activated.

We appreciate your co-operation on these matters.

General University policies and statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar available in hard copy or under 'About Victoria' on the VUW home page at www.vuw.ac.nz.

Student and staff conduct

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps are to be taken if there is a complaint. For information about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor or refer to the statute on the VUW policy website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct

The Policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/staffconduct

Academic grievances

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned; class representatives may be able to help you in this. If you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the relevant Associate Dean; VUWSA Education Coordinators are available to assist in this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievance Policy which is published on the VUW website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/academicgrievances

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html

Students with Impairments (see Appendix 3 of the Assessment Handbook)

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities the same opportunity as other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, please contact the course coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively, you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services (DSS) to discuss your individual needs and the available options and support on a confidential basis. DSS are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building:

telephone: 463-6070

email: disability@vuw.ac.nz

The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person is in the relevant prospectus or can be obtained from the School Office or DSS.

Student Support

Staff at Victoria want students to have positive learning experiences at the University. Each faculty has a designated staff member who can either help you directly if your academic progress is causing you concern, or quickly put you in contact with someone who can. In the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences the support contact is **Dr Allison Kirkman, Murphy Building, room 407**. Assistance for specific groups is also available from the Kaiwawao Māori, Manaaki Pihipihinga or Victoria International.

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

This programme offers:

- Academic mentoring for all Māori & Pacific students at all levels of under graduate study for the faculties of Commerce & Administration and Humanities & Social sciences. Contact Manaaki-Pihipihinga-Programme@vuw.ac.nz or phone 463 6015 to register for Humanities & Social Science mentoring and 463 8977 to register for mentoring for Commerce and Administration courses
- Post graduate support network for the above faculties, which links students into all of the post grad activities and workshops on campus and networking opportunities
- Pacific Support Coordinator who can assist Pacific students with transitional issues, disseminate useful information and provide any assistance needed to help students achieve. Contact; Pacific-Support-Coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone 463 5842.

Manaaki Pihipihinga is located at: 14 Kelburn Parade, back court yard, Room 109 D (for Humanities mentoring & some first year commerce mentoring) or Room 210 level 2 west wing railway station Pipitea (commerce mentoring space). Māori Studies mentoring is done at the marae.

Student Services

In addition, the Student Services Group (email: student-services@vuw.ac.nz) is available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/

VUWSA employs Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office (tel. 463-6983 or 463-6984, email at education@vuwsa.org.nz) is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building.

Timetable

Wk Mondays 10-12.50

Thursdays 10-12.50

Evenings/weekends

1 7 Jul
Corporeal & Virtual

10 Jul
Adam Gallery: German
video art

Weekend workshop
Cameras/edit
'One Thing' project

2 14 Jul
Image, continuity, narrative
Body, object, field

17 Jul
Assignment 1
'One Thing' **DUE**

Shoot & edit

3 21 Jul

24 Jul

	'Stills' project - intro	Creative process/ composition	Shoot & edit
4	28 Jul Montage/mise-en-scene	31 Jul Self < > Performer	Shoot & edit
5	4 Aug Language & Performance	7 Aug Myth & Ritual History & Politics	Shoot & edit
6	11 Aug Assignment 2 'Stills' <u>DUE</u>	14 Aug Assignment 2 'Stills' <u>DUE</u>	Shoot & edit
MID-TERM BREAK Research projects (Assignment 3)			
7	1 Sept 'Wet/Dry' - intro Installation, the kinematic	4 Sept 'Wet/Dry' - establishing projects and groups	
8	8 Sept Research Presentations (1)	11 Sept Research Presentations (2)	Shoot & edit
9	15 Sept Research Presentations (3)	18 Sept Research Presentations (4)	Shoot & edit
10	22 Sept Group Projects Lab	25 Sept Group Projects Lab Research essay <u>DUE</u>	Shoot & edit
11	29 Sept Group Projects Lab	2 Oct Group Projects Lab	Shoot & edit
12	6 Oct Assignment 4 'Wet/Dry' <u>DUE</u>	9 Oct Assignment 4 'Wet/Dry' <u>DUE</u>	-> Project Report <u>DUE</u> 17 Oct.