

THEA 304 Directing

Trimester 2 2014

14 July to 16 November 2014

30 Points



Falk Richter's 2006 production of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, at the Schaubühne, Berlin. [Image source: Cover of Gale, Maggie B & John F. Deeney (Eds.) *The Routledge Drama Anthology & Sourcebook: From Modernism to Contemporary Performance*. London & New York: Routledge, 2010. Print.]

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 14 July to 17 October 2014

Mid-Trimester break: 25 August to 7 September 2014

Last assessment item due: 17 October 2014

Withdrawal dates:

Refer to 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.

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Lectures

Monday and Wednesday 10.00am – 12.50pm 93 KP

Performances of all directing projects will occur in **Week 9** [24 – 27 September] of Trimester 2 in 93 KP.

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course Coordinator:	Bronwyn Twedde	bronwyn.twedde@vuw.ac.nz	463 6852	FT77 301
Teaching Staff:	James Davenport	james.davenport@vuw.ac.nz	463 6842	FT77 310
Course Administrator:	Cathy McCullagh	cathy.mccullagh@vuw.ac.nz	463 5359	FT83 202

Some classes will be taken by guest directors. 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, posted on the course noticeboard, level three, 77 FT, and/or posted on Blackboard. It is the student's responsibility to regularly check the noticeboards, Blackboard and their email. It is also your responsibility to ensure that Bronwyn has your *current* contact details. Bronwyn will endeavour to respond to emails from students within 2 working days. If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to 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
- iv) engage with a number of workshops run by Bronwyn, Jim and invited practitioners.

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, Cathy McCullagh.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

- Submit all assignments, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work)

Due to the intensive nature of the work, a very high level of attendance at classes is expected. 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, which is approximately 14 hours per week outside of class time working on your projects. The hours estimated below per project are only approximate, especially as the projects are inter-related.

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.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Directing Project: 10 minute play [= approx. 68.5 hours' work]	30%	1, 2	Completed by pack-out in week 9 [27 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 [27 Sept]
3	Director's workbook: Documentation and analysis of your directing project [maximum 5,000 words] [= approx. 68.5 hours' work]	30%	2, 4	Workbook instalments due: 4pm, 22 August & 17 October
4	Research presentation on a major theatre director: 20 minute presentation plus 10 minutes Q & A time [= approx. 45.5 hours' work]	20%	4	In class on: 6, 8 or 13 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 practical skills in script analysis, running rehearsals, working with design and directing actors. 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.

Hardcopy assignments are submitted in the drop slot outside the administration office: **83 Fairlie Terrace**. Attach an assignment cover sheet or extension form, found on Blackboard or outside the administration office. Remember to fill in your tutor's name.

Your marked assignment will be handed back in class or during office hours. Any uncollected assignments can be picked up from the Programme Administrator after the last day of teaching. Assignments will be held in the Administration office until the end of the following trimester. You need to show your student identification to collect marked assignment from the Administration office.

EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

Extensions

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted. If you require an extension, you must complete an extension request form (available on your course Blackboard site) prior to the assignment due date. This must be accompanied by relevant documentation (e.g. a doctor's certificate) where appropriate. Tutors cannot grant extensions. **No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after Friday 14 November 2014.**

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.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT AND/OR ADDITIONAL EXPENSES

Students should wear clothing to class in which they can move freely. Students who prefer to present a hard-copy workbook will need to buy a visual diary for this purpose (minimum size A4).

SET TEXTS

There are no set texts or student notes to buy for THEA 304. Instead, a selection of key readings will be made available on the 304 Blackboard site, as well as recommendations on topics specific to the plays selected by the students.

RECOMMENDED READING

Practical advice on directing:

- Katie Mitchell, *The Director's Craft – A Handbook for the Theatre*. London: Routledge, 2008.
- 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.
- Rebecca Schneider & Gabrielle Cody, eds: *Re: Direction*. London: Routledge, 2002.
- Shepherd, Simon. *Direction: Readings in Theatre Practice*. Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012.

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

Enhancements made to this course, based on the feedback of previous students, will be covered during the course. Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

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
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats

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- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute:
www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: 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
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz
- School website: www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms

THEA 304 COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1	Mon 14 July	Introduction/History & Role of the Director
	Wed 16 July	Script Analysis
Week 2	Mon 21 July	Research & Conceptualisation
	Wed 23 July	Auditions & Casting
Week 3	Mon 28 July	Planning Rehearsals
	Wed 30 July	Running Rehearsals
Week 4	Mon 4 Aug	Directing practice: Starting points
	Wed 6 Aug	Directing practice: Starting points

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Week 5	Mon 11 Aug	Directing practice: Methodologies
	Wed 13 Aug	Directing practice: Methodologies

Week 6	Mon 18 Aug	Lighting & Sound Design [JDav]
	Wed 20 Aug	Theatre Design [JDav] & Production Problem-Solving

**FRIDAY 22 AUGUST, 4PM: FIRST INSTALMENT OF DIRECTOR'S
WORKBOOK DUE**

Mid Trimester Break: Monday 25 August to Sunday 7 September 2014

Week 7	Mon 8 Sept	Directing practice: Shaping performance
	Wed 10 Sept	Directing practice: Shaping performance

Week 8	Mon 15 Sept	Managing Tech & Performance Processes [JDav]
	Wed 17 Sept	The Director's Role After Opening

Week 9	Mon 22 Sept	Guest Director
	Wed 24 Sept	Guest Director

PERFORMANCES WEDNESDAY 24 – SATURDAY 27 SEPTEMBER

Week 10	Wed 29 Sept	Production Debrief [Season A]
	Wed 1 Oct	Production Debrief [Season B]

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

Week 12	Mon 13 Oct	DIRECTOR PRESENTATIONS [9, 10, 11, 12]
	Wed 15 Oct	Final round-up/Conclusions

**FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER, 4PM: FINAL INSTALLMENT OF DIRECTOR'S
WORKBOOK DUE**