

THEA 221/321 Special Topic: Devising Theatre for Social Change

Trimester 3 2014

17 November 2014 to 19 December 2014

20 Points



Alexander Hanson and Chipu Chung in *Talking to Terrorists*

“Change the World: It needs it.” Brecht

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 17 November 2014 to 19 December 2014

Last piece of assessment due: 19 December 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**

Tuesday and Thursday	10.00am -10.50am	FT77 102
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Workshops

Tuesday and Thursdays	11.00am – 2.00pm	FT77 102
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OR

Wednesdays and Fridays	11.00am – 2.00pm	FT77 102
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Workshops begin in WEEK 1. Please register for workshops via the THEA 221/321 site on Blackboard: go to “Tutorial Sign Up” and then follow the instructions under the “S-Cubed Log In” link. Please read the instructions carefully. Tutorial rooms will be listed on S-Cubed, Blackboard and on the noticeboard outside the administration office, 83 Fairlie Terrace.

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course Coordinator:	Kerryn Palmer	kerryn.palmer@vuw.ac.nz	463 7445	FT81 205
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Course Administrator:	Cathy McCullagh	cathy.mccullagh@vuw.ac.nz	463 5359	FT83 202
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COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any additional information, or changes to the course, will be announced in class, posted on Blackboard, posted on the Theatre Programme notice boards on Level 3 of 77 Fairlie Terrace, or sent via email.

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.

PRESCRIPTION

Students will explore the potential of theatre as a tool for social change. They will examine examples where theatre has been used to transform the lives of individuals and communities around the world and they will learn different ways to devise and create their own work.

COURSE CONTENT

Students will examine ways that theatre can be used to help make Social Change. Discussions will be centred around the key ideas: Is theatre still relevant? Why does theatre matter? Can we use it as a tool to change the world?

Students will also explore different methods of devising theatre. This will be done through practical exploration, and presentations and discussion with Theatre Practitioners. Written reflection and analysis will supplement in-class critical discussion, but the main assessment will be in the form of a showing of a devised piece of theatre inspired by the discussions and learnings in the course.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. understand and discuss how theatre is used throughout the world as a tool for social change;
2. identify and investigate NZ companies and individuals that have made or are engaged with making this type of theatre;
3. develop and practice a variety of methods to devise their own work;
4. analyse and critique devising processes used by other companies and individuals;
5. develop skills in critical writing and self-reflection
6. **(300 level)** demonstrate advanced skills in the research and practice of devised performance and further develop and hone expertise in at least one aspect of the conception and execution of a performance
7. **(300 level)** write a detailed and comprehensive review of devising processes as a guide for future devising projects.

TEACHING FORMAT

The course is delivered through two one-hour lectures and two two-hour workshops per week. This course is practical in nature therefore demands consistent commitment and collaboration. Please wear loose, comfortable clothing which won't restrict your movement when physical exercises are scheduled.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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

- submit the assignments, on or by the specified date, subject to provisions for late work
- attend at least 9 workshops.

WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 20-point course is 200 hours over the trimester. Therefore you should expect to spend considerable time outside classroom hours engaged in reading, preparation, thinking devising and rehearsing creative projects, and writing. Some students can pass (though not necessarily well) on less, and some will need or want to do more.

ASSESSMENT**200 Level**

Assessment items and workload per item	%	CLO(s)	Due date
1 Creative Contribution , as documented in your Reflective Journal . Students will contribute in one or more creative roles to the	50%	1, 2, 3, 5	Ongoing

	development and performance of an original devised performance piece, up to 15 minutes long. Contribution will be assessed based on the quality of contributions to the creative environment, and documented in the journal, approx. 2000-3000 words. (More specific criteria will be discussed and set in class, including post-production critique and self-assessment.)			
2	Performance Critique: A constructive and detailed response to one of the other devised pieces, approx. 1000 words.	20%	4,5	19 December
3	Production Blog: Students will contribute to a blog for the proposal and discussion of creative ideas. You will be expected to comment <i>before</i> 1 lecture/workshop per week (5 in total) and then <i>after</i> , in a way which engages with/responds to others' ideas. (Detailed criteria and assessment procedures will be circulated in class and on Blackboard. <i>Expected contribution will be the equivalent of 2000 words.</i> Assessment will consider both contributions and feedback on others' contributions.)	30%	1,2,3	Weekly

300 Level

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Creative Contribution , as documented in your Reflective Journal . (This will be an important resource for writing your critique and reflection.) Students will contribute in one or more creative roles to the development and performance of an original devised performance piece, up to 15 minutes long. 300 level students will demonstrate advanced expertise in at least one aspect of the devising process. Contribution will be documented in a journal (approx. 2000-3000 words) and assessed based on the quality of contributions to the creative environment. (More specific criteria will be discussed and set in class.)	50 %	1, 2,3,5, 6	Ongoing
2	Advanced Critique and Reflection of own work: A constructive and detailed review and reflection of your devised piece. (Approx. 2000 words)	20%	5, 7	19 December
3	Production Blog: Students will contribute to a blog for the proposal and discussion of creative ideas. You will be expected to comment	30%	1,2,3	Twice Weekly

<p><i>before</i> 10 lectures/workshops, then <i>after</i>, in a way which engages with/responds to others' ideas. Detailed criteria and assessment procedures will be circulated in class and on Blackboard. <i>Expected contribution will be the equivalent of 2000 words.</i> Assessment will consider both contributions and feedback on others' contributions.</p> <p>300 level students will be assessed on their feedback to peers and leadership (e.g. in directing and moderating the blog discussions) in addition to the content of their own contributions.</p>			
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Assignment 1 (50%): Creative Contribution, as documented in your **Reflective Journal** on a devised project. Students will contribute in one or more creative roles to the development and performance of an original devised performance piece. (300 level students will **demonstrate advanced expertise** in at least one aspect of the devising process.) Working in small groups, students will devise a short piece of theatre that has at its core a form of theatre for social change. They will regularly reflect on this process in a journal (either online or in book form). Assessment will be individual, based on a) the product (presentation), b) The individuals input into the group's work c) A self-assessment of their own work during the process and d) a post-production critique.

Rationale:

- 1) This project develops a full suite of creative, critical, and communication skills.
- 2) This project facilitates the development of skills specific to the discipline and practice of devising theatre
- 3) To gain a full understanding of the devising theatre, you need to *experience* it, not just observe and write about it.
- 4) Students will be able to critically assess the project and also their own work in relation to it.

Assignment 2 (200 LEVEL) 20%: Performance Critique

A constructive and detailed response to one of the other devised pieces. You will practise your performance analysis techniques by submitting a 1000 word response to one of the other group's performances, as presented in week 5. There will be an option to share these critiques with fellow classmates.

Rationale:

- 1) Practising writing and analysis skills often is the most effective way to improve skills and enhance learning and retention.
- 2) You will pay closer attention to performances if you plan on writing about them, and you will remember more about them when you write about them.

- 3) This will help you train yourself to watch for form, not content.
- 4) Getting and responding to feedback from a peer will help you understand how your work is received, reduce your dependency on the approval and authority of teachers, and lead to greater creative autonomy.

Assignment 2 (300 LEVEL) 20% Advanced Critique and Reflection of own work:

A constructive and detailed review and reflection of your devised piece.

This will include: A report (similar to the feedback you would give Creative New Zealand if you completed a project for them), including:

- Did you achieve what you set out to and how did it go?
- What were the challenges and successes?
- Do you see the potential of this project being developed further?
- What influenced you in terms of other companies, research, readings we have explored in this course?
- A printed copy of the script, design concepts and budget.

Rationale:

- 1) Practicing writing and analysis skills often is the most effective way to improve skills and enhance learning and retention.
- 2) You will pay closer attention to the process of the project if you have to write about it.
- 3) Having a detailed review of the process will help you when you come to do another project.
- 4) This will help you train yourself to watch for form, not content.
- 5) Training in how to review your process is helpful for when feeding back to funding entities.

Assignment 3: Production Blog: (30%) Students will contribute to a blog for the proposal and discussion of creative ideas. You will write 5 (200 level) or 10 (300 level) short written responses to assigned readings and in-class content as preparation for the weekly lectures/workshops. It will work like this:

- 1) Every Friday I will post a question (in class or on Blackboard) related to the next week's assigned readings/ workshop/lecture topics. You will post a short (300 words MAX) response to this question on Blackboard before the following week's workshop/lecture. After the workshop/lecture you will have 24 hours to post a short reflective follow-up: how did the workshop/lecture discussion affect your ideas about the topic? Which member of your group offered the best response to the question?
- 2) Each entry will be marked out of 5 as follows: 1 mark each for on-time submission of a) the response, and b) the follow-up reflection; 1 mark for answers that demonstrate exceptional critical

engagement with the reading/question; 1 mark for reflections that articulate how your initial position has shifted in response to the seminar discussion/performance; 1 mark for responses (or reflections) that make significant connections between the material at hand and the broader concerns of the course and the discipline.

- 3) Each week you can earn up to five points. The instructor may award bonus points for responses that the class deems particularly good or helpful to everyone's comprehension of the material.

(NB: 300 level students will be assessed on their feedback to peers and leadership (e.g. in directing and moderating the blog discussions) in addition to the content of their own contributions.)

Rationale:

- 1) Develop better communication skills; regular practice at expressing your ideas and responding to feedback will help you improve communication and critical thinking skills more effectively.
- 2) Regular interaction with classmates will enhance workshop participation and build on in-class activities.
- 3) Discussion and collaboration skills are increasingly common and valued in the workplace;
- 4) Regular critical reflection enhances learning, development, and retention.

Due: Submitted and marked weekly from Weeks 1 through 5.

1. **Group work:** Group work in this course is mandatory, as its learning objectives include an emphasis on collaboration skills. However, the assessment for all projects is individual.
2. **Peer assessment:** The Performance Critique assignment is NOT a peer *assessment* assignment. Your skills at writing feedback will be assessed, but you will not give or receive summative assessment to/from your peers.
3. **Marking criteria** for each assignment are distributed and discussed in class.

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.

Hard-copy assignments are submitted in the drop slot outside the administration office: 83 Fairlie Terrace. Attach an assignment cover sheet, found on Blackboard or outside the administration office.

Your marked assignment will be handed back by your tutor in workshops or during their 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. To apply for an extension, email your Course Coordinator before the assignment is due. If granted, your Course Coordinator will inform you of the new due date. Tutors cannot grant extensions. **No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after 2pm Friday 19 December 2014** (as the drop slot will not be cleared until mid-January 2015).

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.

SET TEXTS

THEA 221/321 Student Notes available from vicbooks

You can order student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz.

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.

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

- 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 221/321 COURSE PROGRAMME

Week	Workshop	Reading	Lecture 1 Tuesday 10-10.50	Lecture 2 Thursday 10-10.50
1 (17-21 Nov)	Practical Exploration of different forms of change-making Theatre (Choose groups)	<i>*Theatre for, by and with Young People</i> <i>*Remembering Histories</i> <i>*Setting The Scene</i>	Why Theatre? *Relevance *Social Change Different methods of Theatre: Eg: Street, Community Verbatim, Playback, Theatre in education Theatre as therapy	Company Visit
2 (24-28 Nov)	Practical methods of devising theatre (Decide on Form) Begin Rehearsals	<i>*Poetics of the Oppressed</i> <i>*Crossing Boundaries and the struggle for language</i>	Theatre of the oppressed – Boal NZ Companies	Devised Theatre Methods
3 (1-5 Dec)	Rehearsals	<i>* Beginnings – how and when to start</i> <i>*Devising and Political Theatre</i>	Devised Theatre Methods	Devised Theatre Methods
4 (8-12 Dec)	Rehearsals	<i>*Rehearsal Techniques</i> <i>* Site Specific Work</i>	Company Visit	Company visit
5 (15-19 Dec)	Presentations		Ways to make a difference	Reflection