



## FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

### INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF **MODERN LETTERS**

*Te Pūtahi Tuhi auaha o te Ao*

### CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAMME CREW 353/THEA 309: WRITING FOR THEATRE 20 POINTS

**TRIMESTER 1 2014**

#### **Important dates**

**Trimester dates:** 3 March to 2 July 2014

**Teaching dates:** 3 March to 6 June 2014

**Easter/Mid-trimester break:** 18 April to 4 May 2014

**Last assessment item due:** 16 June 2014

**Study week:** 9 – 13 June 2014

**Examination/Assessment Period:** 13 June to 2 July 2014

**Withdrawal dates:** Refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds](http://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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats).

#### **Class times and locations**

This course consists of twelve workshops. These will take place 1-4pm on Mondays in room 102, 16 Waiteata Road, Kelburn Campus.

#### **Names and contact details**

Workshop convenor	Gavin McGibbon
Room	Room 404, 16 Waiteata Road
Hours on campus	TBA
Email	<a href="mailto:Gavin.McGibbon@vuw.ac.nz">Gavin.McGibbon@vuw.ac.nz</a>

## **Communication of additional information**

Any additional information will be given to students at the workshops or conveyed by email.

## **Prescription**

This course provides grounding in the art and craft of writing scripts for live performance. Students will develop an understanding of structure, theatricality, story, character, action dialogue and scene construction.

## **Course learning objectives (CLOs)**

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. Write scripts that are tailored to the considerations and unique dynamic of theatre.
2. Create engaging narratives and characters in order to write a compelling stage play in the standard format.
3. Understand and employ the basic tenets of playwriting including story structure, character, plot, dialogue, humour, and subtext.

## **Teaching format**

This course involves the practical writing and study of writing for the theatre. In the first half of the course, you will study the process of creating a stage play, and the various different approaches you can take. Students will be given weekly analysis and writing exercises, some of which will be discussed and workshoped in class. In the second half of the course, students will present and workshop parts of their final folio. Students will be encouraged to take on constructive criticism from the workshop convenor and their fellow students as they rewrite for the final folio.

## **Punctuality**

The workshops begin promptly. Students need to be seated in the workshop room a couple of minutes before the start.

## **Mandatory course requirements**

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

- attend all classes. As the course consists of numerous workshops and the discussion of each other's work, absences are unfair to others and affect the workshop process. A single absence due to extenuating circumstances would usually be excused; further absences would make it unlikely that you would pass the course.
- complete all the prescribed exercises, and contribute to the workshop discussion
- hand in your final folio on Monday 16 June 2014, with a second copy for the external examiner.

If you do not meet these requirements, your folio may not be assessed and you may automatically fail the course.

## **Workload**

It is difficult to assess the workload for this course. It is expected that you will work on your writing every day. Full-time undergraduates should expect to spend about 200 hours across this course (this figure includes the workshop hours). This consists partly of writing, reading stage plays and fellow students work and attending the theatre.

## **Assessment**

Assessment is based on the portfolio you submit at the end of the course. Participation in class during the trimester will be taken into consideration; a thoughtful response to your classmates' work is of paramount importance.

Two typewritten or printed copies of your final folio must be submitted by Monday 16 June 2014 to the IIML. Two examiners (the workshop convenor and one external examiner) will read each folio. After assessment is completed, one copy will be returned to you with your reports and one copy will be kept by the IIML in their archive.

CREW 353 is assessed on a pass/fail basis only. If you pass the course, you will received Grade P (ungraded pass).

## **Submission and return of work**

Your final folio should be submitted on Monday 16 June either to the Administration Office at the IIML,(Room 402, 16 Waiteata Road), or at the folio hand-in function (location to be advised).

Once the examination process is complete, approximately one month after 16 June, one copy of your folio will be returned to you, along with the examiner reports.

## **Materials and equipment and/or additional expenses**

Photocopying will be an additional expense for you. When your work is being workshopped by the class, you will need to bring thirteen copies and hand them out the week before.

## **Set texts**

There is one set text for this course, a Course Reader (Student Notes) which includes a range of examples of creative nonfiction writing from here and overseas. Otherwise our course texts will be produced, week by week, by members of the workshop group.

The Course Reader will be sold from vicbooks: [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz).

## **Recommended reading**

Students are encouraged to read *The Playwright's Guidebook* by Stuart Spencer and *The Playwright's Process* by Buzz McLaughlin.

## 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:
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## 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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism)
- Aegrotats: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats)
- Academic Progress: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress) (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates)
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: [www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin)
- Grades: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades)
- Resolving academic issues: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications)
- Special passes: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications)
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy)
- Student support: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support)
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability)
- Student Charter: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter)
- Student Contract: [www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract)
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library/resources/subjectcontacts.html>
- Turnitin: [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)
- University structure: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure)
- VUWSA: [www.vuwsa.org.nz](http://www.vuwsa.org.nz)

*The school may include additional websites if appropriate, for example links to qualification-specific or discipline-specific style guides and graduate attributes.*

## Workshop Schedule

March 3<sup>rd</sup> *What is Theatre? What do we expect from it? The Nature of Story*

March 10<sup>th</sup> *Character. Who and why?*

March 17<sup>th</sup> *Monologue and Action*

March 24<sup>th</sup> *Beginnings*

March 31<sup>st</sup> *The Construction of a scene*

April 7<sup>th</sup> *Workshopping 1-6*

April 14<sup>th</sup> *Workshopping 7-12*

**April 28<sup>th</sup> - May 4<sup>th</sup> Trimester Break**

May 5<sup>th</sup> *Dialogue, “you talking to me?” and Writer’s Rights*

May 12<sup>th</sup> *Complexity/Rewriting and Working with a Director*

May 19<sup>th</sup> *Workshopping 1-4*

May 26<sup>th</sup> *Workshopping 5-8*

June 2<sup>nd</sup> *Workshopping 9-12\**

\*As this is Queen’s Birthday holiday, the class will need to agree whether to meet on this date or on an alternative date.