

PERIOD ACTING II (THEATRE 482) – SPRING 2018
TUESDAY/THURSDAY 1:00 – 2:50
NFAC 283

INSTRUCTOR: STEPHEN TROVILLION SMITH
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OFFICE: NFAC #171
OFFICE HOURS: 2:30 – 3:30 FRIDAYS

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completing this course, you should be able to:

- analyze the historical and social contexts that created and defined comedy of manners from the 17th through the 20th centuries and use this knowledge to create authentic characterization;
- effectively utilize Restoration costuming (the language of the fan, use of the cane and snuff box, etc.) and understand its social function and subtext in order to create authentic characterization and period movement;
- effectively utilize the 19th and 20th century variations on costume and “style”, including the element of farce;
- consistently make interesting, comic and fully physicalized choices when creating a character;
- maintain contact with a scene partner while using subtext, heightened language, and a presentational acting style;
- create a performance using a process-based method that is not simply geared to result but to exploration and risk; and
- work collaboratively using the theatrical vernacular (including period movement) to facilitate achievement of these objectives.

COURSEWORK

- We will begin with oral presentations on the Restoration period, including topics of Political History, Social Life, Theatrical Architecture, Language and Aesthetic.
- We will present the reports and then work with our costumes while prepping for our first assigned scenes from the Restoration period (THE RELAPSE).
- Scene work will progress as follows:
1st showing – To include blocking, physical business, relationship, character/costume physicality. Discuss and/or modify character choices; work scene; receive notes. *A typewritten breakdown of the scene, including a character analysis with external, physical, social, psychological, and personal planes of the role, will be handed in at the first showing.*

COURSEWORK CONTINUED

2nd showing – Analysis of integration of notes; discussion of effectiveness of choices. *Scene breakdown (planes of the role) reflecting studio exploration and notes will be handed in for evaluation. As always, the paper will be evaluated as a blueprint for the scene presentation; i.e., how well do the character choices reflect the research, how well are the movement techniques integrated, how well are class notes integrated and finally, how many of the choices made on paper can be seen on stage.*

- You will be allowed to pick your second scene partner and scene. You should choose from among the 19th and 20th century stylists, either comedy of manners or farce. Your scene choices should come from the following plays:
Feydeau – *A Flea in Her Ear; Not by Bed Alone; The Dressmaker*
Wilde – *The Importance of Being Earnest*
Coward – *Fallen Angels; Hay Fever; Blithe Spirit; Private Lives; Ways and Means*
Shaw – *Pygmalion; Arms and the Man; Major Barbara*
Orton – *What the Butler Saw; Loot*
The same scene showing procedure will be followed as in the first scene.
- After scenes are assigned, we will work as an ensemble; all actors will be prepared to work every class session, either performing or providing objective feedback for the work performed.
- We will concentrate on learning a process, not pushing for result. Class work will be evaluated in terms of depth of exploration, risk and growth – how successfully realized the result becomes is of secondary importance.

SCENE REHEARSAL POLICY

It is up to you to determine how much time you need to present a memorized scene with carefully considered choices and effective staging. It is recommended that at least four hours are necessary to present an adequate first showing and the same amount to integrate the notes from the first showing before presenting the final performance of the scene. If you feel that your scene partner is not fulfilling their obligation in some way during the rehearsal process (not showing up, not being prepared, etc.) you should speak first to them and then to me. *If you do not do so and your performance suffers, you may not come to me afterwards and ask for a grade accommodation.*

COSTUME, WEAPON AND PROP BORROWING POLICY

We will have a specific time to borrow costumes. You must not miss this appointment! If you wish to borrow an additional prop or weapon for a scene, I must first approve the object to be borrowed and then you must send an email to Cece for the costume piece, Jared for the weapon and/or Sarah for the prop. I must be copied on the email. You are responsible for following any additional procedures set by Cece, Jared and/or Sarah, especially affecting safe storage and timely return of the object borrowed.

GRADING

Grading will be based on:

1. Studio work with costumes, ensemble participation, acquisition of skills, demonstrated growth - 40%
2. Restoration Scene (RELAPSE) Planes of the Role paper and performance – 25%
3. 19th and 20th Century Stylists Scene (Wilde, etc.) Planes of the Role paper and performance – 25%
4. Oral Presentations – 10%

ABSENCE POLICY

You are allowed two absences per semester. These excused absences are to cover illness or family emergency. These absences are in addition to official university holidays and university condoned religious holidays. Following the second absence, your grade will be lowered one grade level for every additional absence.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

This class may require physical contact. You should be aware that you may be physically touched by others in the class and/or by me. If this is an issue for any reason, you must let me know and I will make an accommodation. It is your responsibility to initiate this process and a reasonable accommodation will not affect your grade.

OFFICE HOUR

I have an office hour on Fridays from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. You may schedule an appointment if this time conflicts with your schedule. Please do not consider a meeting confirmed until we have spoken in person or by email (ssmith@uwsp.edu).

EMERGENCY AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

- See UW-Stevens Point Emergency Procedures at www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures for details on all emergency response at UW-Stevens Point.
- See safety procedures at <https://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/preparedness/default.aspx>
- We will discuss safety procedures for fire and tornado in class.

Text

The Relapse by John Vanbrugh