

Instructor: Merideth Taylor
Spring Semester 2009
MWF 1:20-2:30
Syllabus
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TFMS-350 MOVEMENT II

“Physicality informs . . . We first see a body.” (Decroux)

As theatre artists we must be engaged in the pursuit of the articulation of ideas and feelings visually in an imaginative theatrical language. This course is designed to aid students in that pursuit. Though it will carry forward the objectives of Movement I, the work will be designed more specifically for students interested in performance.

Objectives:

- To build upon concepts and skills acquired in Movement I
- To explore methodologies for physicalizing a character, dramatic moment, or idea
- To address theatrical style issues
- To provide basic techniques in stage combat, mask work, and physical comedy
- To provide opportunities to integrate movement and text work
- To foster the ability to work effectively as an ensemble

Methods:

A daily warm-up (including a variety of conditioning and body awareness exercises); creative exercises exploring a number of approaches to movement characterization and physicalization (e.g. Effort/Shape, Image Theatre, Psychological Gesture, Commedia delle'arte, animal and mask studies); physical comedy exercises; contact improvisation; unarmed combat exercises; period style exercises; scene work; reading assignments (hand-outs), research, rehearsal, critiques of productions.

Major units: stage combat, neutral and character masks, physical comedy. Each unit will culminate in a performance project, and the final project will incorporate work from all three units.

Student Responsibilities:

1. Attending all classes promptly, physically and psychologically prepared for work. **Absences in excess of three will have a negative effect on final grade, as will a pattern of tardiness.**
2. All performance work, reading assignments, and written work presented by due date. Lines and choreography must be memorized by due dates. Late papers will not be accepted.
3. Being dressed appropriately--Hair out of face, no clothes that restrict movement or obscure body lines, no heavy or dangling jewelry, no beeping watches, skirts, or jeans!
4. Maintenance of the space--No street shoes, food, beverages, or gum.
5. Contributing to the *esprit de corps* and success of the course through active participation in discussions, willingness to engage the material, and demonstrated respect for your own and others' work.

Written Assignments :

- Written movement critique of *Polaroid Stories* (Due 4/24).
- Mask character autobiography
- A written self-evaluation of accomplishments and growth over the semester, due the last day of class or no later than 5/7.

Final Exam Period: 5/4 2-4:15 PM or on Theatre Night TBA (This will be a performance final.)

Spring Break: 3/16-3/20

Special Events:

Department of Dramatic Arts Main Stage productions

- *Polaroid Stories* auditions: 1/23 Bruce Davis Theater
- *Polaroid Stories* performances: 4/9-11 and 4/16-18 at 8 PM, and 4/11, 4/19 at 2 PM BDT

Capoeira workshop – March 9, Time TBA

Student generated productions will include a number of White Room productions and films.

NOTE: Students are **strongly** encouraged to audition for productions and attend all productions, relevant special workshops, and lectures!

Grading based on:

Attendance, promptness, energy investment, focus, growth of movement skills and awareness, evidence of preparatory work outside class, quality of performance work, contribution to group discussion, quality of written work, fulfilling all student responsibilities listed above, team work, and willingness to play. All performance work will be evaluated according to evidence of adequate preparation (rehearsal!) and the student's ability to grasp and apply concepts and techniques learned in class.

Since the majority of your grade is based on the quality of your in-class work, **you are encouraged to meet with me individually several times during the semester to assess your standing.**

A = Outstanding, superior, excellent work (no problems in the areas of attendance or promptness).

B = Good, strong, solid work (good attitude, attendance, grasp of skills, etc.)

C = "Average," satisfactory, or uneven (inconsistent--some weak areas--some strong) work.

D = Several weak areas (serious problems with attendance, completing assignments, etc.).

F = Failure to rise to the challenge.