Course Overview

Directing II: Directing Studio is a course designed to build and expand upon knowledge of staging theatrical works developed in Directing I. This course puts particular focus on developing the director’s applied skills through intensive scene work, and also seeks to extend the director’s awareness of contemporary directors and directing theories. Class projects include the analysis and staging of scenes from the contemporary realistic theatre, as well as forays into the realms of non-realism and style. The course culminates in a final project consisting of a twenty minute one-act play for public performance.

Instructor Info
Jonathan Cole
Playhouse 305
503/375.5305
jcole@willamette.edu
http://willamette.edu/~jcole/
office hours by appointment

Assignments

Paper Projects

Rehearsal Observation
You will attend two working rehearsals of either Earnest or Driving/Influence to observe the director in rehearsal, and will write a two page paper engaging questions raised in your observation. Please take careful notes regarding the director’s work with actors, how s/he organizes the space, his/her time, etc. This is not a judgment of another’s work; rather it should prompt you to reflect on your own journey as director, and illuminate potential areas of overlap between your process and another’s. In other words, use this as an opportunity to identify things you’ll be using in your own work, as well as things you’d never do. As always, the why question is of significant import.

Groundplans
You have a groundplan due for each scene project this semester. Drawings should be done in \( \frac{1}{4} \) inch scale, and should clearly indicate the position of furniture, entrances and exits, and acting areas.

Unit Breakdown
This is a copy of your one-act script, clearly divided into individual acting beats and larger working units. Each larger unit must be labeled with a line from the play or another descriptive phrase. This assignment will not be turned in, but will be graded during your final project check-in meeting. Note: Each of the two scenes you select in class must also be given a working title using the guidelines above. This “unit title” is due with the completed groundplan for each scene.

Play Analysis
This is a free-form analysis which is part of the preparation of your workbook for the final project. You may use any format you wish (consult handouts from Directing I or see me for guidelines), but your analysis must include complete world-of-the-play information, as well as the formative elements of your concept presentation (image research, musical selections, etc.). This will be graded as part of the final project check-in meeting.
Concept Presentations
You have 20 minutes of class time to present each of your concepts in their “wildest dream” phase, with an additional 10 minutes to address changes that must be made to adapt each play to the actual conditions of laboratory performance. Your classmates and Jon will roleplay your production team for the first two presentations; the third will be presented to the faculty.

Research Presentation & Packet
This is an In Contact With the Gods-style document and accompanying presentation. You are to research a prominent director and prepare a 6-8 page summary of their working style, relevant bibliographical material, and media samples. You will have 20 minutes to present your findings in class.

Manifesto
You will write an approximately eight page manifesto which details your beliefs regarding what the theatre is. It should be personally revelatory (in all senses of the term), and I expect you to be brutally honest about your likes and dislikes, dreams and fears. The manifesto will be distributed to all in the class, then we’ll talk about them. The manifesto starts with a one-sentence personal definition of the theatre, and gets progressively more tawdry from there. More specific guidelines will be discussed in class.

Rehearsal Schedule
This is a rehearsal schedule for your final project. It is to be complete, accurate, and you MUST notify Jon immediately when anything changes. The rehearsal schedule must include one hour of rehearsal per week that Jon can attend. Jon’s schedule, which is constantly updated, is available at: http://ical.mac.com/kingcole/combined. It is up to you to consult my calendar when scheduling the weekly rehearsal you’d like me to attend.

Journal
This is a catch-all of ideas, notes, thoughts, etc. It may be organized in any fashion you wish, and should focus on your work as a director in class and rehearsal. An excellent journal will include text and media. Feel free to mark confidential passages; I will not read them. The journal will be graded twice: once at your final project check-in, and with the complete workbook at the end of the term.

Workbook
This is a complete and impeccably organized director’s workbook for the final project. It will be examined during your final project check-in, and will also be turned in at the end of the term. Please see the handout from Terry John Converse’s Directing for the Stage for a guide to producing a director’s workbook.

Self-Evaluation
This is a 2-3 page non-academic review of your work on the culminating project. Please identify areas of strength and weakness; it should give a selective account of each stage of the process developed from notes you’ve taken along the way.

Practical Projects
The Maids scene
This project is intended to allow you to explore strategies for directing texts that are not based in realism. It will be presented in class in rough draft and final draft forms, with feedback and workshop time between showings. It will be presented in the round.
Crave scene

This project is intended to allow you to delve more deeply into directing strategies for the contemporary non-realistic theatre. It will be presented in class in rough draft and final draft forms, with feedback and workshop time between showings. This will be presented either in the spatial configuration of your choice (arena, thrust, proscenium) or in a found space within 5 minutes transit time of campus.

Final Project

This is a one-act play, no longer than 20 minutes in length, taken from any period, playwright or culture. Due to end-of-term scheduling constraints, I would strongly encourage you to limit cast size to no more than four, though you are welcome to use a larger cast if you deem it possible/necessary. As with D1, you must bring in two choices per week until you find something. The first two are due Tuesday, 9/4. The time deadline will be strictly enforced; it is your responsibility to make sure the run time stays under 20 minutes. You may take a slightly longer script and cut it, but you must be absolutely certain that the show doesn’t run long. The plays will be performed in two evening showcases which will occur onstage in the Smith Auditorium. The arrangement of the space is up to you. If you and your classmates can procure another space, you are welcome to use an alternate space. Any alternative space must be secured by November 1.

Policies

Attendance

Theatre is a collaborative art. Since so much of the process of learning about directing involves interacting with your peers in class, attendance is mandatory. After two absences, your grade will drop one full letter. Each additional absence will continue to lower your grade. Four absences will constitute an automatic failing grade of F; two tardies equal one absence.

Participation

Participation is crucial in a course like this; your active, thoughtful participation is actively sought and encouraged. Your participation score will be based on the following criteria: your willingness in discussion to engage your own questions and listen respectfully to others, having any reading or written assignments fully prepared on time, and your willingness to bring supportive energy to class each day.

Due Dates

No late work will be accepted.

Costumes and Props

Some WU theatre costumes and props may be available to students in Directing II. It is up to you to secure permission from Jon first and the relevant supervisor (Chris or Bobby) second. Use of these materials is a privilege, not a right, so get your requests in early.
Required Texts

Recommended Text

Evaluation
This is a subject which forces subjective evaluation, both in terms of product and of process. If you are ever unclear about grading procedures or grades earned, see me immediately.

The grading breakdown is as follows:
- Paper Projects  40%
- Practical Projects  50%
- Participation  10%

The attendance policy adjustment, where applicable, will be applied to your final grade at the end of the term.

Extra Credit
There are three possible extra credit assignments from which to choose. The extra credit assignment score will replace the low score of your choice. You may do one of the following: a complete sound design, set design or lighting design for your final project play. This is to be fully executed except for the final build. If you're interested in doing one of these projects, ask Jon for more details.
## Course Schedule

### Week 1
- **Tues 8/28**: Course Introduction, Play Discussion: *The Maids*
- **Thurs 8/30**: *The Maids* cont’d

### Week 2
- **Tues 9/4**: Concept Presentation 1
- **Thurs 9/6**: Augusto Boal

### Week 3
- **Tues 9/11**: Boal cont’d
- **Thurs 9/13**: *The Maids* rough draft scenes & feedback

### Week 4
- **Tues 9/18**: Boal applied
- **TBA**: Afternoon session: Boal’s techniques in practice
- **Thurs 9/20**: *The Maids* final draft scenes & feedback

### Week 5
- **Tues 9/25**: So what is all this Viewpoints stuff, anyway?
- **Thurs 9/27**: Bogart cont’d

FYI: *The Importance of Being Earnest* runs 9.28-10.7

### Week 6
- **Tues 10/2**: Bogart applied
- **TBA**: Afternoon session: Bogart’s techniques in practice
- **Thur 10/4**: Discuss *Crave*

### Week 7
- **Tues 10/9**: Research Presentations & Packet due
- **Thurs 10/11**: *Crave* cont’d

*Crave* scene selection, unit title and groundplan due
Week 8
Tues 10/16 Concept presentation 2
Thurs 10/18 Studio work/checkin
One Act choices due: submit 2
Manifestos due

Week 9
Tues 10/23 Crave rough draft scenes & feedback
Thurs 10/25 Manifesto Day!
10/25-10/28ish One Act Auditions
One Act Sides + Groundplan Due

Week 10
Tues 10/30 Crave final draft scenes & feedback
Thurs 11/1 Concept Presentation 3 Dry Run & Feedback
TBA Concept Presentation 3 final: to faculty

Week 11 • WORKBOOK DRAFT DUE*
Tues 11/6 Troubleshooting & tips
Thurs 11/8 Troubleshooting & tips
*Workbook draft due on Friday, 11/9. Schedule an appointment with Jon to go review it together.
FYI: Driving Under the Influence runs 11.9-11.18

Week 12
Tues 11/13 Troubleshooting & tips
Thurs 11/15 Troubleshooting & play discussion

Week 13
Tues 11/20 Troubleshooting & play discussion
Thurs 11/22 NO CLASS: Thanksgiving holiday

Week 14
Tues 11/27 Troubleshooting & play discussion
Thurs 11/29 Troubleshooting & play discussion

Week 15
Mon 12/3 Showcase loadin and tech: times TBD
Tues 12/4 Showcase Presentations; 7 and 9:30 pm
Thurs 12/6 Feedback, course evals & wrap up. Meet somewhere fun?

Week 16
There will be no class meeting during finals week.
Turn in your promptbooks and self evaluations to Jon by Wednesday, December 12 at 5 pm.