

THFM 4441-001 (3 credit hours)

## THEATRE AESTHETICS

Fall 2013  
T/TH 10:00-11:15  
Room 3M57

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Office Hours: TBA

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will introduce students to some fundamental aesthetic concepts in the art of theatre. The chief purpose of the selection of classic and modern theoretical texts is to initiate and stimulate students to think about the ongoing debate among theorists about the nature of theatre and its function in society. We will read and discuss the most influential dramatic theorists – philosophers, poets, directors, playwrights – whose ideas continue to influence the art of theatre.

### COURSE AIMS

This course is aimed to extend students in the careful reading of philosophical texts and methods of critical analysis and exposition. Debating the sense of theoretical texts with other readers is a valuable means of testing our different points of view. We will learn not only to be critical of texts but of ourselves and of theatrical tradition in which we find ourselves.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The completion of this course should assist students in making progress toward developing the following attributes:

- describing the thought of thinkers in theatre aesthetics
- critically reflecting on strengths and weaknesses of each text from the course list
- applying some aspects of these theories to our contemporary life and theatre
- developing analytical and critical skills
- developing an engagement with the relevant theatre aesthetics issues in its interdisciplinary context
- developing a respect for ethical practice as well as for social responsibility

### REQUIRED TEXTS

Woodruff, Paul. *The Necessity of Theater*. Oxford University Press. 2009.  
Gerould, Daniel. *Theatre / Theory / Theatre*. New York: Applause.

**Additionally** students will be required to attend (at their own expense) and review **one** of the following theatre productions in Winnipeg: Zone 41/TPM production of *The Miser of Middlegate*, RMTTC Warehouse production of *Venus in Fur*, PTE production of *The Best Brothers*, and WJT's production of *Good Intentions*. The reviews shall relate to relevant texts and issues studied in the class.

### ASSESSMENT

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Test (October 3, 2013) .....   | 20%         |
| Essay (approximately 8-10 pages long; due October 31, 2013).....                   | 20%         |
| Review (due November 26, 2013).....  | 30%         |
| Seminar Presentations (periodically from September 12 through to November 7 )..... | 20%         |
| Participation .....  | 10%         |
| <b>TOTAL .....</b>   | <b>100%</b> |

This is a seminar course. The instructor is there primarily to lead a discussion in which all students are expected to participate. The seminar participation mark will be based on the quality of this participation. Full attendance is essential, and students must read the assigned material prior to the class.

**CONVERSION SCALE**

For the calculation of the final grade the following conversion table will be used:

|    |            |     |      |    |            |     |     |
|----|------------|-----|------|----|------------|-----|-----|
| A+ | 90 – 100%  | GPA | 4.5  | C+ | 65 – 69.9% | GPA | 2.5 |
| A  | 85 – 89.9% | GPA | 4.25 | C  | 60 – 64.9% | GPA | 2.0 |
| A- | 80 – 84.9% | GPA | 4.0  | D  | 50 – 59.9% | GPA | 1.0 |
| B+ | 75 – 79.9% | GPA | 3.5  | F  | below 50%  | GPA | 0   |
| B  | 70 – 74.9% | GPA | 3.0  |    |            |     |     |

Work not submitted will be graded as 0%.

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE****September:**

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Sept 5  | Introduction to course outline;<br>Seminar Presentation Sign-Up Sheet  |
| Sept 10 | Aristophanes, <i>The Frogs</i> (handout, section)<br>Plato, "Art as Imitation" (course reserve)                                      |
| Sept 12 | Aristotle, <i>The Poetics</i> (sections, Gerould 45-67)  |
| Sept 17 | G.E. Lessing, <i>Hamburg Dramaturgy</i> (Gerould 236-247)  |
| Sept 19 | F. Schiller, <i>The Stage as Moral Institution</i> (Gerould 250-254)<br><i>On the Use of the Chorus in Tragedy</i> (Gerould 255-261) |
| Sept 24 | A.W. Schlegel, <i>Lectures on Dramatic Art</i> (Gerould 268-275)   |
| Sept 26 | G.W. Hegel, <i>The Philosophy of Fine Art</i> (Gerould 316-326)  |

**October:**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Oct 1  | F. Nietzsche, <i>The Birth of Tragedy</i> (Gerould 339-350)  |
| Oct 3  | <b>Test</b>  |
| Oct 8  | Zola, <i>Preface to Therese Raquin</i> (Gerould 353-357);<br><i>Naturalism in the Theatre</i> (Gerould 358-367)  |
| Oct 10 | A. Strindberg, <i>Preface to Miss Julie</i> (Gerould 371-381)  |
| Oct 15 | V. Meyerhold, <i>The Fairground Booth</i> (Gerould 408-418)  |
| Oct 17 | E. Jonesko, <i>Experience of the Theatre</i> (handout)<br><b>Essay Questions Handout</b>   |
| Oct 22 | A. Artaud, <i>The Theatre and Its Double</i> (Gerould 435-443)   |
| Oct 24 | B. Brecht, <i>The Modern Theatre is Epic Theatre</i> (Gerould 446-453)<br><i>Alienation Effect in Chinese Acting</i> (Gerould 454-461)<br><b>Voluntary Withdrawal Deadline</b> |
| Oct 29 | A. Boal, <i>The Theatre of the Oppressed</i> (Gerould 464-473);  |
| Oct 31 | Jill Dolan, <i>The Dynamics of Desire</i> (course reserve); <b>Essay Due</b>   |

**November:**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Nov 5  | W. Soyinka, <i>Drama and the African World-View</i> (Gerould 477-482)  |
| Nov 7  | J. Grotowsky, <i>The Theatre's New Testament</i> (course reserve)  |
| Nov 12 | P. Woodruff, <i>The Necessity of Theater</i> , Part 1  |
| Nov 14 | P. Woodruff, <i>The Necessity of Theater</i> , Part 2  |
| Nov 19 | P. Woodruff, <i>The Necessity of Theater: The Art of Being Watched</i> , Part 3  |
| Nov 21 | P. Woodruff, <i>The Necessity of Theater: The Art of Watching</i> , Part 4   |
| Nov 26 | Closing discussion: Why theatre matters?<br>Which theories? Which theatre? .... and What is next?<br><b>Review due</b> |

## **CLASS NOTES**

1. Work submitted for evaluation must be either typed or text processed.
2. Late Assignment Penalties: No late assignments will be accepted, except in the case of documented illness and family affliction.
3. No unauthorized material or equipment may be brought with you to the final exam.
4. Please note that registering in this course commits you to the date and time of the course final examination. If you are aware of possible conflicts with that date, please see me immediately during the first week of the course, in case you need to register in another course to accommodate the conflict. For appeals for deferred exams, please see the *Calendar*.

## **"THE REAL THING" LECTURE SERIES**

The Department of Theatre and Film is presenting a series of six lectures which will be held on Wednesdays during the free period (12:30-13:20) in Theatre 1T15. Please note the dates in your diary **NOW**: Sept 18, Oct 23, Nov 13, Jan 15, Feb 12, Mar 12. This series will feature speakers from a range of areas in the performing arts: technical, performance, design, management, film, directing, playwrighting, etc. These speakers will specifically address issues related to "the business of the business."

Attendance at **ALL** lectures is **MANDATORY** for **ALL Honours students in Theatre (all areas), as well as students in: THFM-3101 Acting III: General, THFM-3110 Screen Acting, THFM-3701 Playwriting II, THFM-3801 Production II, and THFM-3920 Musical Theatre**. Two percent (2%) of the student's final grade in the core course (above) will be deducted **for each lecture missed** to a maximum of ten percent (10%). Please arrange your schedule **NOW** so that you are available for these lectures; attendance will be taken. **If you absolutely cannot attend, you must discuss this with your professor PRIOR to the event (don't call Patty).**

Attendance for potential Theatre Honours/majors and for Film majors is optional but highly recommended.

## **ORIENTATION ASSEMBLY**

Each year in September we hold an *Orientation Assembly* to introduce our new students to faculty and other students; to provide information about the department, its various activities and those of its professors; and to provide news about what's coming up. This year our *Orientation Assembly* will be held on **Wednesday, September 11, 2013, 12:30-13:20 in Theatre, 1T15**. **ATTENDANCE IS COMPULSORY** for all Majors and Honours students. Those considering Honours are strongly recommended to attend. All others are welcome and encouraged to attend.

## **SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with documented disabilities, temporary or chronic medical conditions, requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams (e.g., private space) or during lectures/laboratories (e.g., access to volunteer note-takers) are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (AS) at 786-9771 or email [accessibilityservices@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:accessibilityservices@uwinnipeg.ca) to discuss appropriate options. Specific information about AS is available on-line at <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility>. All information about a student's disability or medical condition remains confidential.

## **BUILDING SECURITY**

The Asper Centre for Theatre and Film (which houses the Department of Theatre and Film) is open from 8:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. weekdays. Students are permitted to be in the building between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. seven days per week (except statutory holidays when the University is closed) **BUT PLEASE NOTE:** outside of regular building hours, it is **MANDATORY** that everyone in the building **EITHER** carry an access card **OR** have a booking confirmation form in their possession (hard copy or electronic). **ALL EVENING STUDENTS in the building for classes MUST have an access card.** If a Security Guard checks and you do not have proper accreditation, **you may be evicted.**

These rules are in place to protect our students and our equipment; please respect them.

## **ELECTRONIC COURSE OUTLINE ADDENDA**

Students must check our website at <http://theatre.uwinnipeg.ca/tbooking.htm> and read the menu items called *Access Card/Building Use Policy* **AND** *Room Booking Instructions*. The link to the electronic *Online Room Booking Form* is also found at this location. Please read and note all instructions carefully.

## **GENERAL NOTES**

This course outline should be considered a guideline only. Time constraints and other unforeseen factors may require that some topics be omitted or covered in less detail than indicated.

Archival records such as videotapes, sound recordings, and photographs may be made or taken during class or lab times. The University uses such materials primarily for archival, promotional, and teaching purposes. Promotional use may include display at open houses or conferences, or use in advertising, publicity, or brochures. In reading and accepting the terms in this course outline, students acknowledge consent for such use by the University. Should a student not wish to convey such consent, s/he should withdraw from this course immediately.

The University of Winnipeg promotes a scent-free environment. Please be respectful of the needs of fellow classmates and the instructor by avoiding the use of scented products while attending lectures. Exposure to perfumes and other scented products (such as lotion) can trigger serious health reactions in persons with asthma, allergies, migraines, or chemical sensitivities.

Cellular phones **MUST** be turned off during classes and examinations; texting is **NOT** permitted in class.

Any student attending a test or final examination may be required to present proof of identity; photo identification is preferred.

It is the student's responsibility to retain a photocopy or computer disk copy of **ALL** assignments submitted for grading; in the event of loss or theft, a duplicate copy is required.

Students are strongly advised to read the section of the *University of Winnipeg Calendar* (found on-line at <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/cms-filesystem-action/pdfs/calendar/RegulationsandPolicies.pdf>) for information on Registration, Grading, Academic Misconduct including plagiarism, and Appeals.

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2013** is the final date to withdraw without academic penalty from courses which begin in September and end in November, 2013 (Fall 2013 Term).

## **STUDENT PARTICIPATION POLICY**

Theatre is a communal art form in which a number of interdependent artists and crafts people co-operate to create a work of art. This fact is necessarily transferred to the learning situation, and is reflected in

many of the Department's courses. Consequently, it is the Department's policy that students are required to: complete homework such as reading, line-learning, script analysis, prop lists, design drawings, etc.; attend classes; attend rehearsals both within and outside of class times; and, in short, to exhibit commitment towards the inevitably shared endeavours of our field of study.

Any student failing to fulfil these requirements is harmful to the progress of dedicated students and may, after due warning, be asked to withdraw from any individual Departmental course.

### **COURSE CONTENT NOTE**

#### **All Theatre and Film Classes**

Dramatic Literature depicts a wide variety of human action, both elevated and base, public and private, physical and psychological, sexual and non-sexual, etc. The Department of Theatre and Film will not undertake to censor the subject matter of dramatic works.

Students who have concerns about dealing with the full range of content and style in drama/film are urged to discuss these concerns with the course instructor.

#### **Performance-Related Classes**

Much of an actor's work is based upon actual experiences of life which become translated into fictional circumstances. Because of this, the teaching of acting may involve encouraging the student to examine personal and even intimate areas of life to help him or her access life experiences appropriate to the demands of the work.

Dramatic literature depicts a wide range of human actions, both elevated and base, public and private, physical and psychological, sexual and non-sexual, etc. Acting students must learn to simulate life truthfully in interaction with other students in the safety of the acting class and the rehearsal hall through exercises, discussions, and directions which address rather than avoid truthful, particularized, personalized action.

Performance classes often require strenuous physical activity. Classes may also involve physical interaction between students as part of class exercises or character development and occasional physical contact by instructors for purposes such as the demonstration of a technique or to make a posture correction. Students are responsible for wearing clothing appropriate to these activities.

Students who have concerns about dealing with the full range of actions and subject matter involved in drama are urged to discuss these concerns with their course instructor.