Fall 2015

THTR 1220 Introduction to Theatre (Fall & Winter 6cr)

THTR 2150 Theatrical Techniques: Onstage (Fall & Winter 6cr)
(ask about auditions!)

THTR 2160 Theatrical Techniques: Backstage (Fall & Winter 6cr)
(ask about interviews!)

THTR 2170 Specialized Practical Training 1 (Fall 3cr)
(Course held at PTE – ask about special permission)

THTR 2490 Specialized Practical Training 3 (Fall & Winter 3cr)
(Course held at PTE – ask about special permission)

THTR 2610 Special Studies: Stage comedy (Fall 3cr)
(Johnson)
The course will examine stage comedy as a form of theatre, a form of entertainment, and way of looking at the world. To do this, we will study about a dozen plays, half pre-twentieth century by the likes of Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Moliere, and Shaw, and half written by playwrights from the 20th & 21st centuries, such as Tom Stoppard, George Walker, Morris Panych, and Neil Labute. Along the way, we’ll also look at some theories of comedy, the psychology of laughter, the cultural context of comedy, and the political impact of comedy, as well as glance at other sources of humour and comedy: TV, film, cartoons, jokes, farts, pratfalls, and verbal wit. Come prepared to work hard and to laugh a lot.

THTR 3460 Theory of Drama and Performance (Fall 3cr)
(Kerr)
The very attempt to merge multiple creators to eff the ineffable for multiple viewers/listeners, to, in short, create an ephemeral solidity night after night makes theatre an ideal testing ground for our ability to communicate and for the possibility of any authentic communication at all. In this class, we will examine a small number of plays in their context: materially, theoretically, and aesthetically. We will analyze each play as a cultural artifact and as a blueprint for production, combining these two perspectives to construct our own theoretical understandings of and potential performances of the work. In doing so, we will focus on the overlapping discourses of theory and practice in order to test each against the other. At the same time, we will focus on the overlap between traditional theories of drama (such as those of Aristotle, Stanislavski, Brecht, and so on) and drama in relation to literary and cultural theories (such as semiotics and feminist and post-colonial theory, and so on) and how each can inform the other.

THTR 3470 Text and Performance – Commedia (Fall 3cr)
(Johnson)
Commedia developed in Renaissance Italy, and spread throughout Europe as the most popular comic form. Bawdy, irreverent, and endlessly inventive, this is the theatre of Pantalone, Arlecchino, and Columbina. It combines extravagant plots, stock comic characters, stylized clowning, and improvisation. Students will learn
something about the form, make a commedia mask in the prop shop, learn how to use it in the studio, develop a commedia character, and play that character in a commedia scenario.

Winter 2016

THTR 2470 Fundamentals of Dramatic Analysis (Winter 3cr) (Smith)
Good plays are not written for the stage, but with it. Writing a play involves the playwright’s apprenticeship in a practical, collaborative process. A thorough study of a play will correspondingly involve not only an understanding of textual problems (of the structure and characterization and style which the playwright envisions) but also of the problems which are encountered by the actor, director, dramaturg, and designers. Our goal in reading a play will be to imagine it in rehearsal, and to engage its potential for realization.

THTR 2480 Theatre History (Winter 3cr) (Johnson)
Is there life after cinema? This course looks at some of Theatre’s attempts to re-invent itself as a revolutionary art form after film replaced it as the most popular form of mass entertainment early in the 20th century: wildly inventive, playful, grotesque, argumentative, silly, and often wonderfully bizarre. Dada, Surrealism, Expressionism, Theatre of Cruelty, Epic Theatre, Theatre of the Absurd, In Yer Face: the plays, the theatres, and the fascinating theatre artists behind all the “ism”s.

THTR 2600 Special Studies; British Drama 1930–present (Winter 3cr) (Groome)
This course examines the major developments in British drama from the 1930s to the present through the study of approximately 14 representative texts, including works by Coward, Rattigan, Osborne, Wesker, Orton, Pinter, Hare, Stoppard and Churchill. We will establish the form and concerns of the drama in the 1930s through the early 1950s and then consider the major shift that took place in the mid-1950s with the work of John Osborne. Major forms such as “kitchen sink” drama, absurdist theatre, and epic theatre will then be studied. The course will necessarily involve considering the different social, political and economic contexts in which the works have been produced. We will also view productions of several of the works on DVD & video.

THTR 3620 Special Studies; Advanced Directing: Style and Genre (Winter 3cr) (Kerr)
This course will build upon the fundamentals of direction learned in Theatrical Techniques: Onstage THTR 2150. It will expand on the basics of working with actors, text analysis and use of space (particularly composition, focus and picturization (including a focus on the use of lights and sound)). It will also introduce ways to work with the entire production team. At the same time, the course will introduce working on the individual needs of particular genres and styles such as farce, epic, naturalism, Comedy of Manners, and absurdism. Ultimately, we will examine the particular mixes of style and genre used by individual playwrights such as Caryl Churchill, David Mamet, Judith Thompson, Martin McDonagh, and Tom Stoppard or others proposed by the class.

THTR 3630 Practicum 1 (Winter 3cr) (Ask about projects & special permission)