EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION
THEATRE
School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design
Department of Theatre
FA / THEA 3050 3.0 SECTION A
DEVISED THEATRE IN PRACTICE I
FALL 2017 / WINTER 2018

COURSE CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

Rigorously develops the processes and skills of devising and interpreting theatre works within a collaborative context. In classroom exercises, and through the rehearsal and performance of assigned performance projects, students will explore and practice the creative approaches of the theatre practitioner. Practical studio course.

Prerequisites: Grade of B or better in FA/THEA 2051 3.00, and permission of the department. Open to majors only. Note: Plus rehearsal hours. Co-requisites: 3200 3.0 Modern Theatre and Society

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INSTRUCTOR(S)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Section / Format / Term</th>
<th>Contact Email</th>
<th>Contact Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McMackon, Allyson</td>
<td>Sec. A / STDO / F</td>
<td><a href="mailto:amcmackon@yorku.ca">amcmackon@yorku.ca</a></td>
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SPECIAL FEATURES

School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design
Department of Theatre

THEA 3050 3.0 Devised Theatre in Practice I
* Fridays 8:30-11:20am (ACE 207/09)
* Tuesdays 2:30-5:20pm (ACE 207/09)

Instructor/Format/Term/Contact Info Course Director: Allyson McMackon email amcmackon@gmail.com
* Office Hours: by appointment only.
TA: Stephen Lawson

Special Features THEA 3050 3.0 Devised Theatre in Practice I builds upon the course work for THEA 2050 and THEA 2051 offering students an opportunity to develop a body of knowledge and skills for devising theatre. Through classroom exercises, workshop-like labs, training sessions and the creation and presentation of solo and paired work, participants will explore essential questions and investigative tools of the theatre creator. Collaboration, experimentation, communication and curiosity are the foundations of this rigorous curriculum. Students will engage in creation and critical discussion of aesthetic and practice. This term’s work focuses on developing a creative process and probing the need to create and possible roles within that
creative process.

**Topics and Concepts** THEA 3050 is based on a curriculum of hard skills and focuses on developing a process, making solo work and work in small groups. The development of a creative process is essential to any theatre practitioner and students will be exposed to the kinds of questions and engagement professional theatre makers encounter. The foundation of the work is Grotowski-based source work as a means to develop discipline, skill and creative connection to practice. It will develop points of departure for creation and prepare for the physical nature of theatre making that dominates contemporary devised practice. The source work will be augmented by workshops in Voice, Lighting Design, Acting and Playwrighting and Interdisciplinary work led by special guests. Methodologies for practice will also include: physical and vocal improvisation, River and Wheel work (Grotowski-based) Laban, Neutral Mask, Authentic Movement, Gesture (the gestus), Physical Architecture and other methodologies to take the student from question to impulse, to action, to character, to composition, to compositions, narrative and more fully realized work.

THEA 3050 is organized into training sessions, labs, workshops and presentation days. In general, training days will be held by Allyson McMackon and lab sessions led by TA Stephen Lawson. The will be special workshops and panels in September. The following *schedule* is subject to change:

**September ~ Skills**
Sep. 8 ~ Introduction with Allyson
Sept. 12 ~ Devising Panel/Workshops with Stephen, Hume Baugh (actor/writer) and Michelle Ramsay (Lighting Designer)
Sept. 15 ~ Training with Allyson
Sept. 19 ~ Workshop/Lab with Stephen
Sept. 22 ~ Voice & Movement with Guest Matthew Rossoff
Sept. 26 & 29 ~ Training with Allyson (solo piece assigned Sept. 29)

**October ~ Making A Solo Composition with Skills**
Oct. 3 ~ Lab with Stephen (work on solo piece)
Oct. 6 ~ Training with Allyson
Oct. 10 ~ Lab with Stephen
Oct. 13 ~ Training with Allyson
Oct. 17 ~ First Pass at Piece (Allyson & Stephen) *no grade*
Oct. 20 ~ Training with Allyson
Oct. 24 ~ Solo Showings (Allyson & Stephen)
Oct. 31 ~ Training with Allyson (assign partnered piece)

**November ~ Making a Partnered Piece**
Nov. 3 ~ Training with Allyson
Nov. 7 ~ Lab with Stephen
Nov. 10 ~ Training with Allyson
Nov. 14 ~ Lab with Stephen
Nov. 17 ~ Training with Allyson
Nov 21 ~ First pass at Partnered Work (Allyson & Stephen) *no grade*
Nov. 24 ~ Training with Allyson
Nov. 28 ~ Lab with Stephen
Dec. 1 ~ Partnered Showings & Last Class

There is no mandatory reading in this course, but it is highly recommended that students read:

- Allain, Paul. Grotowski’s Empty Room.
- Artaud, Antonin. The Theatre and it’s Double.
- Brook, Peter. The Empty Space.
- Chamberlain & Yarrow. Jacques Lecoq and the British Theatre.
- Richards, Thomas. At Work With Grotowski on Physical Actions.
- Tharp, Twyla. The Creative Habit.
- Torpokov, Vasily. Stanislavsky in Rehearsal ~ The Final Years.

**Learning Outcomes with Examples** The specific objectives of this course are that the student be able to:

- Develop a variety of skills physically, vocally, dramaturgically, directorially the begin creating a creative process. How? Studio work, training, labs, access to guests, the creation, witnessing and critical discussion of in-class presentations.
- Articulate their artistic goals. How? Through studio work, critical and collaborative discussion, lab sessions and journaling.
- Enhance their conceptual understanding of performance through on-going studio work, dramaturgical analysis, journaling and critical discussion.
- Gain a deeper understanding of process and it’s centrality to Devised Theatre. How? Through studio work, collaboration, labs, training sessions, critical feedback and research topics as assigned.
- Develop the ability to offer and receive effective critical feedback about their own work and that of their classmates. How? Through on-going discussion, interaction and respectful sharing.
- Develop confidence in their communication and collaborative skills. How? Through studio work, offering feedback, journaling, presentations.

**Graded Assessment**

- Attendance 15%
- Studio Work (Participation, Technique, Risk Taking) 30%
- Journal # 1 (due October 24) 10%
- Solo Piece (October 24) 10%
- Journal # 2 (due December 1) 10%
- Partnered Piece (December 1) 10%
- Growth 15%

**Additional Information** Attendance is Mandatory. Students should come to class wearing clothing they feel comfortable moving in. Any conflicts and concerns must be discussed with the Course Director.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS**

**A Note on Challenging Content**
One of the central educational goals of the Theatre Department is to produce socially conscious artists — artists who are aware of and capable of participating in challenging dialogues about social injustice and inequality. This means that our courses, public events, and productions often grapple with difficult subject matter, including sex, violence, terror, and illness (among other topics). While these presentations will no doubt provoke strong emotions and cause discomfort, we feel that the diverse experiences they promote are also essential to the development of our students’ critical faculties, empathy, and understanding of the world. Rather than warning our students in advance about every potentially uncomfortable topic that they might encounter in the course of their studies, we instead encourage students to meet them head on in the classroom, in rehearsals, and performances, and to engage in civil and compassionate debate about the possibilities and effects of staging difficult knowledge.

If you require an accommodation related to your participation in Theatre experiences, please ensure that you share relevant documentation with your course director. Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

**ACADEMIC POLICIES / INFORMATION:** The Senate Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy Committee (ASCP) provides a Student Information Sheet that includes:

York’s Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures / Academic Integrity Web site
Access/Disability
Ethics Review Process for Research Involving Human Participants
Religious Observance Accommodation
Student Code of Conduct
Alternate Exam and Test Scheduling

“20% Rule” - No examinations or tests collectively worth more than 20% of the final grade in a course will be given during the final 14 calendar days of classes in a term. The exceptions to the rule are classes which regularly meet Friday evenings or on Saturday and/or Sunday at any time, and courses offered in the compressed summer terms. Final course grades may be adjusted to conform to Program or Faculty grades distribution profiles. http://secretariat.info.yorku.ca/files/CourseInformationForStudentsAugust20121.pdf

Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy - The Senate Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy stipulates that (a) the grading scheme (i.e. kinds and weights of assignments, essays, exams, etc.) be announced, and be available in writing, within the first two weeks of class, and that, (b) under normal circumstances, graded feedback worth at least 15% of the final grade for Fall, Winter or Summer Term, and 30% for ‘full year’ courses offered in the Fall/Winter Term be received by students in all courses prior to the final withdrawal date from a course without receiving a grade.

**The Key Points of York’s Policy on Academic Honesty**

York’s Senate Policy on Academic Honesty affirms and clarifies the general obligation for all members of the University to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty.

In particular, the policy:
- Recognizes the general responsibility of all faculty members to foster acceptable standards of academic conduct and of students to be mindful of and abide by such standards;
- Defines the types of conduct that are regarded as offences against the standards of academic honesty, including plagiarism, cheating, impersonation, and other forms of academic misconduct;
• Defines the penalties that can be imposed on a student who is found to have committed plagiarism or any other form of academic misconduct;
• Outlines the procedures for dealing with students who are accused of violating the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. **Note: a lack of familiarity with the Senate Policy cannot be used as a defence by those accused of academic misconduct.

**Range of Penalties for Plagiarism**

When verified, violations of academic honesty may lead to the following penalties – imposed *singly or in combination* depending on the severity of the offence:

- Written disciplinary warning or reprimand
- Required completion of an academic honesty assignment
- Make-up assignment, examination or rewriting a work, subject to a lowered grade
- Lower grade on the assignment, examination or work
- Lower grade in the course
- Failure in the course
- Permanent grade of record
- Notation on transcript
- Suspension from the University
- Expulsion from the University
- Withholding or rescinding a York degree, diploma or certificate

If the offence is a second or subsequent one for the student, or is in combination with another offence, the Senate Policy recommends consideration of a severe penalty.

For further information on the penalties for academic misconduct, please see York's Senate Policy on Academic Honesty.

**HARASSMENT GUIDELINES:** Sexual harassment is not anyone’s favourite topic, but we ask you to take a few minutes to read this section carefully. These guidelines explain what sexual harassment is, and what it is not, in the context of the Department of Theatre. We also hope to decrease any chance for misunderstanding surrounding activities, such as costume fitting, that are absolutely essential to the teaching and craft of theatre. What should you expect? What are the warning signals that something might be wrong?

As we know, theatre reflects life; and life has its share of sex, violence, murder, insanity, cruelty and terror, as well as romance and hilarity. To teach students to evoke an empathetic response in audiences involves the simulation of physical violence and dealing with strong emotions in the classroom, in rehearsals and in performances. Clearly, we cannot avoid these topics, so we meet them head-on in the classroom.

The York policy lists "unnecessary touching or patting" as behaviour indicative of sexual harassment. However, in the Department of Theatre, touching routinely happens in acting/directing classes and in costume fittings.

In acting, voice and movement classes, students will be touched in the abdomen, diaphragm area, rib cage, chest, spine, back, shoulders, limbs, neck and head to assist the student in proper breathing, relaxation of tensions, alignment or similar instruction. At no time should a teacher, without the student’s permission, touch those parts of a student’s body that would normally be covered by a two-piece bathing suit. At no time
in an acting class will a student be asked to remove intimate apparel.

The removal of clothing, however, is integral to a costume fitting. Getting changed into or out of a costume is done in the privacy of a closed fitting room, but then the costume designer and/or the cutter building the costume will have to touch the costume (and therefore the student in the costume) anywhere that it needs fitting. The costume may also include undergarments that are not the student’s (e.g. corsets for women), that require the removal of the student’s own undergarments, and costume undergarments also require fittings. No students will be asked to put on or remove any item of underclothing in the presence of any other person.

A danger signal in physical contact could be unnecessarily prolonged touching, or touching body parts not involved in the current teaching. Students who feel uncomfortable about touch from the teacher, staff member or another student have a responsibility to speak to the teacher about opting out, or to discuss the problem with York’s Centre for Human Rights, South Ross, Suite 327, 416-736-5682 / TTY: 416-650-8023, rights@yorku.ca

As well as physical contact, there is also psychological contact and gender harassment. Sexual harassment can occur with no physical contact at all: psychological contact can therefore be a more difficult area to ascertain than physical contact since it involves words, intonations or body language. Theatre training must deal with sex. For example, some of the discussions needed in acting classes are of a sexually explicit nature. There is no way for students to fully explore the nature of acting without being honest, to some level, with their personal lives.

Gender harassment consists of derogatory or degrading remarks directed towards members of one gender or sexual preference group. These are most often directed at a woman, women in general, or homosexuals. Gender harassment is definitely sexual harassment.

If you feel that sexual harassment may have occurred, speak to the teacher, the class rep, your faculty advisor, or to the Centre for Human Rights, South Ross, Suite 327, 416-736-5682 / TTY: 416-650-8023, rights@yorku.ca

Sexual assault awareness and resources information is available on the York website and we encourage you to also carefully review this information.

*You shouldn’t ever feel guilty or be made to feel guilty about reporting a problem!*

**DISPUTES:** The following steps are the steps to be taken in the event of unresolved issues within the class:

- If your class has a tutorial leader or studio instructor, speak to your instructor first.
- If unresolved, speak to the Course Director.
- **If unresolved, contact the Chair of the Department at thechair@yorku.ca.**

**IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY SESSIONAL DATES** (where you will find classes and exams start/end dates, reading/co-curricular week, add/drop deadlines, holidays, University closings and more.

http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates/index.htm

Manage my Academic record http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/
Last date to drop a fall term (F) course without receiving a grade: November 10, 2017
Last date to drop a winter term (W) course without receiving a grade: March 9, 2018
Last date to drop a full year (Y) course without receiving a grade: February 9, 2018

DEGREE STATUS – BA AND BFA: All students accepted into the Department of Theatre in the School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design (AMPD) enter as Specialized Honours BA Theatre-Theatre Studies majors. The first year is a program common to all Theatre students, and offers courses in Acting, Production/Design and Performance Creation & Research. At the end of the first year, there is a selection process (either by audition or interview) to proceed into the various areas of interest.

POLICY REGARDING LOSS, DAMAGE AND THEFT OF PERSONAL EQUIPMENT AND BELONGINGS: The School of Arts, Media, Performance & Design at York University will not be held responsible for the loss, damage or theft of personal equipment or any other personal belongings that are left in studios, classrooms, storage areas or any other space within the School. It is each individual’s responsibility to take care of their own property. Under no circumstances will the School incur liability for loss, damage or theft of such property.

Please take all reasonable measures to protect your personal belongings. If you do experience loss, damage or theft of personal property, please report it immediately to the Department of Security Services at (416) 736-5333 or extension 33333 from any University phone.

ROOM BOOKING POLICY: Rehearsals for mainstage productions take precedence when assigning rooms, followed by faculty assigned work. Personal projects, including playGround, will be considered only if space allows.

First-year Theatre majors are not eligible to book studios.

Adopt professional standards by agreeing on a rehearsal schedule with group members and by having one group member do the arranging of the space in advance. Please ensure that the floors and walls are clean. All garbage must be removed. Please treat the studios with respect.

The studios are available only within the following hours: Mon-Fri 8:00am-10:00pm and Sat-Sun 10:00am-6:00pm

All spaces must be booked one week in advance and will be accepted only until 4:00pm on Thursday the previous week.

Requests will be confirmed Friday by 4:00pm.

Requests must be sent by e-mail only to rehearse@yorku.ca

Include your full name, student ID, program, brief explanation of what the space will be used for and what kind of space you need (studio / classroom / big / small).

Requests must be submitted each week for a room unless special arrangements have been made.
You cannot “claim” a space by writing in your name or the course name in an empty slot on the weekly schedules posted outside each space (exception – Light Lab CFT 153).

Spaces must be returned to neutral at the end of each booking session. There will be a picture of what “neutral” is in each studio.

The sign-off sheet must be checked and signed at the end of your studio time. If you enter a space and find it not “neutral”, please e-mail rehearse@yorku.ca.

Anything left behind in the spaces after your booking will be thrown out.

**Procedures for use of studios after-hours:** These procedures are designed to enhance the safety of authorized students when working alone in one of our studios after-hours - Monday through Friday from 11:00pm to 6:30am, and Saturday/Sunday from 10:00pm to 8:00am.

An After-Hours Use form will be completed and emailed to University Security at: scc@yorku.ca;

Be advised of the University’s emergency protocols (e.g. contact 911 in the event of a life threatening situation) and University Security’s urgent number (416.736.5333);

Contact University Security non-urgent number - 416.650.8000 - upon arrival and departure.

**SITE-SPECIFIC PROJECTS:** All site-specific theatre projects anywhere on campus must be cleared by the course director, York University’s Security Services, and the department or governing body of the proposed site. This request should be made in writing at least three weeks in advance of the date required.

All public spaces on Campus require contact with the Office of Temporary Use of University Space - http://tuus.info.yorku.ca/space-room-reservations-forms/

The course director will also need to complete a “Temporary Use of University Space Application and Notification Form” and submit it two weeks in advance of the date required.

For ALL site specific work, the course director must send the request to security@yorku.ca outlining where and when the work is to take place.

**Please note:** at no time shall any form of replica, prop, or real weapon (handguns, rifles, shotguns, swords, daggers, knives, etc) be used in any site specific work.

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Many courses utilize Moodle, York University’s course website system. If your course is using Moodle, click here to access it.

**Moodle @ York University**