EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION
THEATRE
School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design
Department of Theatre
FA / THEA 2050 3.0 SECTION A
INTRODUCTION TO DEVISED THEATRE I
FALL 2020 / WINTER 2021

COURSE CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

Offers students an introduction to the devising of original theatre in a collaborative setting. Through classroom exercises and the creation, rehearsal and presentation of devised and interpreted performance projects, the participants will explore the essential questions and investigative tools of the theatre practitioner. Practical studio course. Prerequisites: FA/THEA 1010 3.0, FA/THEA 1100 3.0, and FA/THEA 1200 6.0, and/or permission of the Theatre Department. Open to Theatre majors only. Co-requisites: FA/THEA 2141 3.0 and FA/THEA 2410 6.0

INSTRUCTOR(S)

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Robertson-Palmer, Sean</td>
<td>Sec. A / STDO / F</td>
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SPECIAL FEATURES

YORK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THE ARTS, MEDIA, PERFORMANCE AND DESIGN
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE COURSE OUTLINE THEA 2050: Introduction to Devised Theatre Fall 2020 Course Calendar Description: This course offers students an introduction to the devising of original theatre in a collaborative setting. Through the creation, rehearsal and presentation of devised and interpreted performance projects, the participants will explore the essential questions and investigative tools of the theatre practitioner. Practical studio course. Prerequisites: FA/THEA 1010 3.0, FA/THEA 1100 3.0, and FA/THEA 1200 6.0, and/or permission of the Theatre Department. Open to Theatre majors only. Time and Location: Please note that this is a course that depends on remote teaching and learning. There will be no in-class interactions or activities on campus. Lab: Tuesday 11:30 am-2:30 pm Lecture: Friday 1:30 pm-4:30pm Instructor/Format/Term/Contact Info: Sean Robertson-Palmer 317 Centre for Film and Theatre seannp@yorku.ca Office hours: by appointment Special Features Expanded Course Description THEA 2050 3.0 Introduction to Devised Theatre I offers students an introduction to the devising of original theatre in a collaborative setting. Through classroom exercises and the creation, rehearsal, and presentation of devised performance projects, the participants will explore the essential questions and investigative tools of the theatre practitioner. Collaboration, commitment, curiosity, and effective communication are the foundations of this rigorous curriculum. The course also introduces key genres and histories of devised and experimental theatre, and students engage in critical discussions of the aesthetics and ethics of these forms. Organization of the course: The course is structured around several devising modules, each focusing on a different tradition of devised theatre. The module will begin with readings, a lecture, or discussion of this tradition. It will be followed by a devising project in which students will compose a performance piece in that particular medium. This class will have both synchronous components (everyone meeting together at the same time) and asynchronous components (students working independently on their own time). Outside of scheduled
class time, students will be expected to complete reading and writing assignments, as well as review documents and lecture material provided by the course director. Synchronous components of the course include rehearsal, presentations, class discussion, small group activity, case studies, and writing exercises, just to name a few. Classroom instruction, supervised rehearsal, and scheduled showings will primarily take place on Fridays (lecture days). Here, students will develop performance techniques, investigate compositional aspects of their projects, receive feedback on generating, sequencing, and performing devised material. A mandatory rehearsal lab is scheduled for Tuesday each week to provide students with a structured time and space to plan, rehearse, and devise. (Students will not always receive formal instruction on Tuesdays.) Full participation in classes and rehearsals is an integral component of this course. Although we have scheduled a lab to assist with the playmaking projects, the devising assignments will require several hours of rehearsal and creation outside of lecture and lab times. By signing up for the class, students are agreeing to regularly schedule and be present at all of these outside rehearsals. Technical requirements for taking the course: In order to fully participate in the course, students are expected to have access to Zoom and Moodle, preferably through your York U. email address. Students will be asked to appear on video to participate in discussions. A stable, higher-speed Internet connection, along with a computer, webcam and microphone (and/or a smart device with these features) will be required. If a student is unable to meet these requirements, please contact the course director ASAP. A way to determine internet connection and speed: there are online tests, such as Speedtest that can be run (https://www.speedtest.net/) Useful links describing computing information, resources and help for students: Student Guide to Moodle https://lthelp.yorku.ca/student-guide-to-moodle Computing for Students Website
http://elearning-guide.apps01.yorku.ca/ Learning Skills Services https://lss.info.yorku.ca/online-learning/
Zoom@YorkU User Reference Guide
https://staff.computing.yorku.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/03/Zoom@YorkU-Best-Practicesv2.pdf Important information for students admitted to the Devised Theatre Sequence: Maintaining your status: Admission into each subsequent Devised Theatre class is on the basis of a 'B' grade standing in the pre-requisite class. Any student who leaves the DT series of courses, for whatever reason, even if in good academic standing, is not guaranteed a spot in subsequent terms, and will be expected to re-audition to re-enter. Original coursework: Class work in all Devised Theatre courses must be distinct and separate from THEA 3290 6.0 Playwriting and New Play Dramaturgy I, THEA 4290 6.0 Playwriting and New Play Dramaturgy II, and playGround presentations. Other courses in second year: Highly recommended courses include THEA 2410 6.0 History of Visual Sources and THEA 2141 3.0 Introduction to Design for Theatre. It is also strongly recommended that students in Devised Theatre take courses that fulfill their in-out requirements in 2nd year. In particular, students should consider taking non-theatre courses that will enhance their understanding of performance creation (see course listings in other departments in the School of the Arts, Media, Performance, and Design). This sequence also requires immersion in the history and theory of devising, and this grounding is provided through readings and assignments on collaborative playmaking and contemporary experimental theatre. Students in the DT sequence are strongly advised to take specified courses in theatre production and design, as well as theatre history and theory courses in order to gain the interdisciplinary knowledge that is essential for devised theatre makers. AMPD and non-AMPD courses are required for degree completion and will enable students to develop breadth and interdisciplinary skills. Working within the requirements of the Specialized Honours BA degree, students are free to pursue a particular focus in third year or continue to learn about all areas of theatre. Students may apply to assistant direct an unmounted department production in third year: THEA 3070 3.0 Performance Practicum I for the fall term or THEA 3071 3.0 Performance Practicum II for the winter term. Applications will be made available to prospective third year students at the end of the winter term. Topics and Concepts Readings: 1. Readings as assigned Schedule: Fall Semester Students are expected to be present on all Tuesdays for rehearsal lab from 11:30am-2:30pm unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. Unit 1: The Art of Devising Fri. Sept. 11 Introduction to the Course Fri. Sept. 18 What is Devised Theatre? Reading: Deirdre Heddon and Jane Milling, “Introduction” Fri. Sept. 25 Bridging Form and Content/ Thinking Compositonally Reading: Junction Avenue Theatre Company. Tooth and Nail Fri. Oct. 2 Tooth and Nail Composition Presentations Fri. Oct. 9 Documentary & Verbatim Theatre (Lecture/Conceptualization) Readings: Moisés Kaufman/Tectonic Theatre Project, The Laramie Project Fri. Oct. 16 Documentary & Verbatim Theatre (Rehearsals) Fri. Oct. 23 Fall Reading Week Fri. Oct. 30 Documentary & Verbatim Theatre (First Pass) Fri. Nov. 6 Documentary & Verbatim Theatre (Second Pass) Fri. Nov. 13 Site-specific Smartphone Plays
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 topics that will no doubt provoke strong emotions and cause discomfort. We feel that the diverse experiences they 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 sociopolitical goals of their devising work — apply basic techniques of devising theatre to creating their original pieces — apply improvisation techniques to enhance communication and spontaneity — enhance their conceptual and performance skills in their assigned theatre projects - gain a deeper understanding of “process” and its centrality to devised theatre - develop confidence in their communication and collaboration skills in a group setting - develop their ability to offer and receive effective critical feedback about their own work and that of their classmates GRADED ASSESSMENT Evaluation: A. Class Participation 30% -interest, commitment, effort; risk-taking, initiative; collaboration, cooperation, respect; engagement with course readings and contribution to class discussions; Tooth & Nail compositions, application of devising fundamentals in class exercises; growth B. Devising Projects - Documentary & Verbatim Theatre 35% - Site-specific Smartphone Plays 35% ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Attendance Policy: Students are reminded that Department of Theatre rules require attendance at all classes. There is no differentiation between excused and unexcused absences - an absence is an absence and will affect your chances of success in this course. All classes and outside rehearsals with classmates and are mandatory. Failure to attend all classes and outside rehearsals will result in either academic penalty or a request that the student withdraw from the class. Any student who is absent without prior arrangement with the instructor may have 2% deducted from the final grade for each absence (two late arrivals is the equivalent of one absence.) Three absences (excused or not) will result in course failure. If a student is going to be considerably late or miss a class for any reason, the student must contact the course director prior to the beginning of that class. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused late or absent. Part-time jobs or outside employment in theatre-related endeavours do not count as excused absences. The only exception is crew call for a matinee performance of a department production, and the instructor must be informed well in advance about the conflict. Class Presentations: Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Absences have a profound effect on scene partners and group members. Accordingly, class presentations for this course must be performed on the due dates specified for the assignment, as indicated in the class schedule. Missed Class Presentation Penalty: Missed class presentations on the due date will be penalized with a grade of zero for the absent student. Exceptions to the missed class presentation penalty for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., may be considered but will require supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor’s letter). The instructor will attempt to reschedule the missed class presentation to facilitate group members affected by an excused absence. Due to the collaborative nature of this studio course, make-up assignments will not be scheduled. Assignment Submission: Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, assignments for this course must be received on the due date specified for the assignment. Assignments must be handed in during class time via Moodle. Late Assignment Penalty: Assignments received later than the due date will be penalized 3% per day (including weekends), unless you have arranged for an extension. Assignments that are more than one week late will not be accepted unless special permission has been granted. If you anticipate having difficulty completing an assignment on time, please contact the course instructor for an extension (although don’t expect to receive one if you email them the night before an assignment is due). Exceptions to the lateness penalty for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., may be entertained but will require supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor’s letter). Dress Requirement: Comfortable clothes and shoes in which you can move freely. IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS Reminder: Students must maintain a 5.00 (C+) grade point average in their major (i.e. all Theatre courses) to remain in good academic standing in the department. Check the grade point average calculator at the following link if you have any questions: http://ampl.yorku.ca/current-students/academic-resources/gpa-calculator/? 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 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. AMPD has establish complementary
procedures for the investigation and resolution of alleged violations of the Senate Policy involving students
in AMPD degree program courses at the undergraduate level. THE ACADEMIC HONESTY PROCESS An
Overview A. Investigation 1. The person discovering the suspected violation will notify the course director.
The course director should not meet with the student or discuss the case at this point. 2. The course director
will notify his or her department Chair, providing all documentary evidence. 3. The Chair will consult with
the Manager, Faculty Governance & Policy. It will then be determined whether there has been an infraction,
and if so, whether it is minor or more serious. In either case, if there has been an infraction, an exploratory
meeting will be held (Part B, below). A case is minor where the infraction is small in extent, can reasonably
be construed as an error on the student’s part, and where there appears to be no intent to deceive. 4. If, on
consultation, it is determined that an infraction has taken place, the Manager will place a “flag” in the
student’s file, block enrolment activity in the course, and investigate whether there is a prior history. If it is a
repeat offence, then the matter must proceed directly to a formal hearing (Part C, below).
B. Exploratory Meeting If Minor: 1. The department Chair will conduct an exploratory meeting, attended by the course
director and the student. If there is more than one student involved, each should be met with separately. Each
may bring a representative. 2. If the student admits to a breach of academic honesty, a suitable penalty — not
exceeding failure in the course — will be agreed upon. 3. In all cases, outcomes are reported to the Manager,
Faculty Governance & Policy. Where a penalty is imposed, a joint agreement is signed by both parties, and
approved by the Associate Dean Academic. If Serious: 1. The Manager, Faculty Governance & Policy will
chair an exploratory meeting, attended by the course director and student and their representatives. 2. If the student
admits to a breach of academic honesty, a suitable penalty — not exceeding failure in the course —
will be agreed upon. The Associate Dean, Academic may be consulted on a penalty, if necessary. 3. A joint
agreement is signed by both parties, and approved by the Associate Dean, Academic. C. Formal Hearing A
formal hearing by AAPPCC will be held in cases where: a) It is not the student’s first offence. b) The student
neglects to attend the exploratory meeting and it is found that there are grounds to proceed with a charge of a
breach of academic honesty. c) The student admits to a breach of academic honesty, but no penalty can be
agreed upon. d) The student does not admit to a breach of academic honesty. For further information on the
penalties for academic misconduct, please see AMPD’s Policy on Academic Honesty. As approved by
AMPD Faculty Council, March 21, 2018 COUNSELLING & SUPPORT SERVICES Personal Counselling
Services (PCS) aims to help York students realize, develop and fulfill their personal potential in order to
maximally benefit from their university experience and manage the challenges of university life. Students
come to PCS because of a wide range of concerns including, but not limited to: depression, anxiety, abuse,
stress, self-esteem, relationship issues, eating and body image as well as issues related to sexuality. PCS
provides: • Short-term individual, couple, and group counselling services to York University students •
Personal development workshop and workshop series • Crisis intervention for York students • Consultation
to the York Community regarding students in distress/crisis and issues related to mental health in general •
Critical incident response debriefings and consultations • Clinical training for graduate students in
Psychology, Social Work, and Psychotherapy Learn more about other York University resources related to
mental health and wellness at York. The Centre for Sexual Violence, Response, Support & Education
coordinates supports and resources for all members of the community that have experienced sexual violence,
receives disclosures and complaints, facilitates safety planning, and assists survivors through the complaint
process. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual violence and is in need of support, the Sexual
Violence Response Office (SVRO) can help. Please call 416-736-5211 or find them online at yorku.ca/svro.
You shouldn't ever feel guilty or be made to feel guilty about reporting a problem. COURSE-RELATED
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 6, 2020 Last date to drop a winter term (W) course without receiving a grade: March 12,
2021 Last date to drop a full year (Y) course without receiving a grade: February 5, 2021 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 Additional information: • Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities • 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. • Important University Sessional Dates (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/ • "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. 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.

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

Moodle @ York University