



THTR 575 CREATIVE PRODUCTION PROJECTS (4 Units) (Spring 2010) Section 63270D **Spring Semester 2011**

Instructors: Supervising Instructor: Dr. Velina Hasu Houston Professor of Theatre, Resident Playwright, Director of Dramatic Writing; Office Hours: M 10 am-12 pm (email confirmation please) or by appointment. Office: Drama Center 110. E-mail: greentea@usc.edu (preferred mode), Telephone: (213) 740-1292. Instructors: Oliver Mayer, Associate Professor of Theatre, Office Hours: Th 2-4 pm or by appointment. Office: CWT 2nd Floor. E-mail: omayer@usc.edu, Telephone: (213) 821-1545. Luis Alfaro, Assistant Professor of Theatre, Office Hours: TBA. Office: CWT. E-mail: luisalfaro@gmail.com.

Course Overview

Creative Production Projects functions as an advanced writing workshop that focuses on critical and deep development of plays that are centerpieces of students' thesis portfolios. The objective is reconsideration, reflection, and refinement of the plays in preparation for their presentation in the USC School of Theatre's Under Construction Festival in May 2010. In concert with intensive dramaturgy and interaction with actors, students will be expected to enhance and cultivate their plays towards greater professional promise.

Class Meetings

7-9:50 pm, Thursdays. MCC 112.

Required Texts

These books are not writing texts per se, but meaningful explorations of the development of character, creative process, writing in general, and story development as extrapolated from fairy tale re-tellings. It is our hope that we can form a common language in our thinking through these books and the assigned readings. In addition, over the course of the term, you will be asked to read certain plays that your mentors feel may help with challenges you face in your own respective processes. Students are also required to attend Blueprints' productions (3 plays as "texts" in performance).

The Empty Space by Peter Brook (Touchstone Books/Simon & Schuster), http://www.amazon.com/Empty-Space-Theatre-Deadly-Immediate/dp/0684829576/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1294478447&sr=1-1.

In Search of Duende by Federico Garcia Lorca (Bibelot), http://www.amazon.com/Search-Duende-Second-Directions-Pearls/dp/0811218554/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1294478398&sr=1-1.

Letters to a Young Poet by Rainier Maria Rilke. On-line at http://www.carrothers.com/rilke_main.htm.

Suggested Readings

The Presence of the Actor, Joseph Chaikin, TCG Books, ISBN 1-55936-030-5
The Soul's Code: In Search of Character and Calling, James Hillman, ISBN: 0446673714 (Character Development)
The Creationists: Selected Essays 1993-2006, E.L. Doctorow, ISBN: 0812975642 (Creative Process)
Six Memos for the Next Millennium, Italo Calvino, ISBN: 0679742379 (On Writing)
The Djinn in the Nightingales Eye, A.S. Byatt, ISBN: 0679762221 (Story Development)
The Art of the Story: An International Anthology of Contemporary Short Stories, Ed. Daniel Halpern, Penguin.
The Sound of Water: Haiku by Basho, Buson, Issa, and Other Poets, Ed. Sam Hamill, Shambhala.
Plays in One Act, Ed. Dan Halpern, Harper Perennial.
The Penguin Book of International Women's Stories, Ed. Kate Figes, Penguin.
Short Stories by Latin American Women: The Magic and the Real, Ed. Celia Correias Zapata, Modern Library.
The Vintage Book of Latin American Stories, Ed. Carlos Fuentes, Vintage Books.
Breaking Ice: An Anthology of Contemporary African-American Fiction, Ed. Terry McMillan, Penguin.
The Oxford Anthology of Modern Indian Poetry, Eds. Vinay Dharwadker and AK Ramanujan, Oxford University Press.
Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose, Mick Short and Michael H. Short, Addison Wesley Publishing.
The Ways of White Folks: Stories, Langston Hughes, Vintage Books.
The Oxford Book of Short Poems, Eds. P. J. Kavanagh and James Michie, Oxford University Press.
Readings in the Philosophy of Language, Ed. Peter Ludlow, The MIT Press.
A Walk in My World: International Short Stories About Youth, Ed. Anne Mazer, Publisher: Persea.

Japanese Death Poems: Written by Zen Monks and Haiku Poets on the Verge of Death, Ed. Yoel Hoffman, Tuttle.
Burnt Sugar Cana Quemada: Contemporary Cuban Poetry in English and Spanish, Eds. Carlson/Hijuelos, Free Press.
The Unforgetting Heart: An Anthology of Short Stories by African American Women (1859-1993), Ed. Kanwar, Aunt Lute Books.
A World Between: Poems, Short Stories, and Essays by Iranian-Americans, Ed. Persis M. Karim, Publisher: George Braziller.
Playwriting Brief and Brilliant by Julie Jensen
Three Uses of the Knife by David Mamet

Grading Guidelines

Academic integrity is important to the University. The student is urged to remember that professors do not “give” grades; students *earn* grades. Thus, a final grade is entirely up to the student with regards to the effort he or she chooses to expend to meet course requirements. Please note that this course provides a framework for development of one of the most important, if not the most important, script in your thesis portfolio. In preparing this play for the Under Construction Festival and for your portfolio, you are deepening your education about the art and craft of dramatic writing. As such, it is our hope that you invest in the process as fully as you can by not only working on your script with brilliant discipline and determination, but also by being present for your peers, reading the texts and plays required of you for the course, attending Blueprints’ productions and other plays, and engaging in life in ways that enrich your overall perspective as an artist. For this course to deliver its learning outcomes, you must engage in the process with vigor. Fifty percent of your grade will be determined by your weekly engagement in writing, reading, and peer evaluation (and, on the applicable weeks, your viewings of Blueprints’ productions). The remaining fifty percent of your grade will be determined by the quality of your finished script. The team of instructors will evaluate your work collaboratively.

USC’s definitions of grades: “A” for work of excellent quality, “B” for work of good quality, “C” for work of fair quality for undergraduate credit and minimum passing for graduate credit, “C-” as a failing grade for graduate credit, “D-” for work of minimum passing quality for undergraduate credit, “F” for failure, “IN” for incomplete work, *student-initiated after 12th week and only awarded under exceptional circumstances*. There will be three categories of grading:

Grading is determined on the following scale:

96-100%=A	88-90%=B+	81-84%=B-	75-77%= C	67-70%=D+	61-63%=D-
95-91%=A-	85-87%=B	78-80%=C+	71-74%= C-	66-64%=D	

[Failing Grade for Graduate Credit = C-]

When the average falls between two grades, the final grade will be weighted toward the positive end of the scale for students whose attendance and participation in class has been good, but will be weighted toward the negative end of the scale for those with poor attendance and participation.

Please note that the Final Exam is mandatory on a day and time set by the University. Please check the USC website for your exam date/time and schedule appropriately.

Pages may be emailed to the instructors for mid-week review, but students are responsible for work presented in the workshop including having copies available for others to read roles in their plays.

Policy Statements

The following are policies that must be included in all syllabi by mandate of the University of Southern California and/or the USC School of Theatre. Their inclusion assures that you have read and understand their substance.

Policy of Attendance, Tardies, and Absences

You are tardy if you arrive more than fifteen minutes late for class. Excused absences (due to illness, personal crisis, or familial matters) are allowed. Your grade will not be adversely affected unless you have more than three tardies and/or more than three absences. Because we operate as a workshop that requires engagement in process, missing part or all of class becomes problematic. After three tardies and or absences, your Weekly Grade (see Grade Evaluation section) will be lowered by 20 percent for any succeeding tardies or absences. (See guideline on grading in handbook, page 4.)

Academic Integrity

Dishonesty in any form harms the individual, other students, and the School of Theatre. Therefore, USC policies on academic integrity will be enforced in this course. Papers suspected of containing plagiarized material (the unacknowledged or inappropriate use of another's ideas, wording, or images) will be verified for authenticity by the School of Theatre through internet services. I expect you to familiarize yourself with the academic integrity guidelines found in the current SCampus (www.usc.edu/dept/publications/scampus).

Disability Services

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 am to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is 213-740-0776.

Communications Notice

Each student is required to maintain a USC usc.edu e-mail account, which is available free of charge. Each student is required to check his/her e-mail on a regular basis and definitely every Wednesday evening for any notices pertaining to class. The professor's e-mail is noted at the top of this contract.

Private Teaching Policy

A faculty member holding a full-time appointment may not accept for private instruction where a fee is charged any student who is currently enrolled in any USC School of Theatre course. This policy is established for your own protection as well as for that of the student, since the appearance of a conflict of interest is immediately established if the student studies privately with you for a fee at the same time that you will be called upon to give that student a grade in a course taught within the School or cast that student in a School production. It is in the best interests of all concerned to not even suggest the possibility of a conflict of interest. This policy is in keeping with the University's Code of Ethics, established March 2004, which states that we "recognize that the fundamental relationships upon which our university is based are those between individual students and individual professors; thus, such relationships are especially sacred and deserve special care that they not be... exploited for... personal gain."

Course Assignments

1/13. Introductions, expectations, overview course 5/5/5 and of Under Construction. First table reading: Cort Brinkerhoff. Peer/mentor dramaturgy. Readings assigned.

1/20. Guest Artist: David Henry Hwang.

1/27. Second table reading: Stephanie Swirsky. Peer/mentor dramaturgy. Readings assigned.

2/3. Collaborative workshop with students from the MFA in Acting program.

2/10. Writing workshop.

2/17. Collaborative workshop with students from the MFA in Acting program.

2/24. Writing workshop.

3/3. Collaborative workshop with students from the MFA in Acting program.

3/10. Writing workshop. Readings assigned.

3/17. USC Holiday. (USC spring recess)

3/24. Meet and Greet with assigned directors and New Works Festival producer.

3/31. Collaborative workshop with students from the MFA in Acting program.

4/7. Writing workshop.

4/14. Collaborative workshop with students from the MFA in Acting program.

4/21. Writing workshop.

4/28. Last day of class. Assessments, future directions.

5/5. Final Examination. 7-9 pm. Mandatory (University Mandate). Site TBD.