

**THR 870 – COLLABORATIVE STUDIO**

COURSE SYLLABUS

FALL 2013

TU TH 12:40-2:30

CLASSES HELD IN RMS. 10, 11, 12 &amp; 144 AUD

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M 12-1, Tu 2:30-3:30

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Creating productions in the areas of directing, acting, scene design, costume design, lighting design, and sound design within a collaborative setting. Practical application through area specified media.

**GOALS:**

- Create a fully supported definition of collaboration in order to create a cohesive production.
- To enhance vocabulary of collaborative communication in order to make you an open and valuable collaborator on any production.
- Explore and challenge the definitions of fellow artists in creating a production.
- To respect and understand each person's contribution (from actor to designer) and to understand how each person's contribution is valuable.
- Develop an understanding of presentation standards.
- Improve research methods through exploration of various historical genres and theatrical styles.
- Develop familiarity with those historical genres and theatrical styles as well as their attendant stagecraft.
- Improve communication skills, especially as they relate to creative collaboration.
- Improve critical assessment skills especially as they relate to the evaluation of your own working process.

To achieve these goals, we have arranged **three** projects for this course. Each project follows a similar production pattern:

- Discuss the play.
- Director presentations.
- In-class studios (or "charettes") The charettes will provide you with time throughout the process to work together with your group to refine specific project goals.
- Simulated production meetings.
- Informal presentations that will showcase your willingness to work collaboratively.
- Formal presentations that will test your synthesis of the overall production concept.
- Peer and instructor feedback following the presentations.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

You will be required to complete **three** projects in individually specified areas.

Each phase of a project's process will be discussed and critiqued in class – in fact will, on most days, *be* the class content. Your participation in these discussions is *very* important, and will be part of each project's grade. In other words, **your attendance and participation is required at all class sessions**. Portions of each project are due prior to the completion date. You will find it easy to complete these projects *if* you keep up with the weekly schedule of project progress. At certain project phases you will be asked to give formal and informal presentations of your work.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

- Day, Green, *American Idiot* (Libretto and score)
- Ibsen, Henrik, *Ghosts*
- Kushner, Tony, *The Illusion*
- Roznowski, Rob and Kirk Domer, Collaboration in Theatre: A Practical Guide for Designers and Directors

**STUDENT EXPECTATIONS:**

This course is about effective communication and collaborative thinking to create a cohesive production. It is expected that students will remain respectful and receptive to alternate ideas. The course can be frustrating at times as good ideas are jettisoned for more cohesive concepts. It will be paramount for this class to remain focused on the ways in which you and others communicate. Feedback is offered to pinpoint more effective ways to convey ideas through writing, speaking or design.

**PROJECT REQUIREMENTS:**

It is understood that not all members of the class will have expertise in the areas they are assigned. Please make your best effort to communicate your ideas within your design or communication vocabulary. Use your resources... you fellow graduate and faculty mentors.

Directors:*Preliminary Project Expectations:*

- Director's mise en scene (including premise) & Dramaturgical support,
- Research Mood Boards or PowerPoint Presentations,
- Script & Character Analysis,
- Directors must cast and rehearse scene work with actors performing in the style of the show (Blocking and interpretation must reveal premise).

*Final Project Expectations:*

- Constructive and Collaborative Response to design areas,
- Blocking for one scene with a scored script of that scene (scene must be approved by instructors),
  - Use outside actors or in-class volunteers,
  - Scenes must be memorized,
  - Scenes must demonstrate and communicate the premise within a cohesive style appropriate to the production,
  - Scenes will be produced in provided classroom space,
  - Director will coordinate this presentation.

Scene Designers:*Project Expectations:*

- Research Mood Boards or PowerPoint Presentations,
- Rough Groundplan/Thumbnail Sketches/Rough Model,
- Final Groundplan and Rough Section,
- A final mode of presentation to be approved by instructors (hand-crafted or virtual):
  - Scaled Full Color Model of all scenes,
  - Scaled White Model of all scenes and Color Renderings,
- Exact Color representation for production team TBD by each designer in accordance with instructors (i.e. paint samples for light lab).

Costume Designers:*Project Expectations:*

- Research Mood Boards or PowerPoint Presentations,
- Color scheme for entire show,
- Rough Sketches for the entire CAST and Chorus Plate of "Chosen" Scene,
- A final mode of presentation to be approved by instructors (hand-crafted or virtual):

- Full Color Rendered Costume Plates,
- Full Color Collage Renderings with fabric swatches,
- White Paper Dolls with Full Color Research and fabric swatches ,  
*Renderings include the primary characters and a Chorus Plate of “Chosen” Scene (primary characters to be approved by instructors),*
- Exact Color representation for production team TBD by each designer in accordance with instructors (i.e. Fabric samples for light lab).

#### Lighting Designers:

##### *Project Expectations:*

- Research Mood Boards or PowerPoint Presentations,
- Renderings/Sketches (conveying 4-6 interesting or challenging moments of the production that will be executed in the final presentations),
- Lighting Schematics (Angle, Color, Texture, Direction charts that support the renderings),
- Lighting for Director blocked scene,
- Cue sheets,
- Light plot (for primary lighting designers),
- Hook-up (for primary lighting designers),

#### Media/Sound/Magic/Special Effects/Engineering Designers:

##### *Project Expectations:*

- Research Mood Boards or PowerPoint Presentations,
- Storyboard/Soundscape/Drafting of images/sounds/engineering (hand-crafted or virtual);,
- Projected/animated/created “product” that enhances the story,
- Sketches, screenshots, sound bites, technical drawings, effects, etc.,
- Related contributions of specific areas within final presentation TBD by each designer in accordance with instructors.

**NOTE:** Since this is a class emphasizing collaboration – ALL DIRECTORS & DESIGNERS must actively share their work with the rest of the production team in a timely manner.

#### **CLASS ATTENDANCE:**

- Attendance is Mandatory. Being present and receptive to the information, discussions, and critique sessions presented in class sessions is essential to the successful completion of the course. More than one (1) absence will result in the lowering of your semester’s grade by half a grade point. (4.0 becomes 3.5, 3.5 becomes 3.0 and so on). Each additional unexcused absence will further devalue your final grade by another half a grade point.
- University sanctioned activities and religious holidays are understood with appropriate documentation prior to the event. If documentation concerning an absence due to an unforeseen life circumstance is provided, I will take it into consideration. However, we make no distinction between excused and unexcused absences.
- Late arrivals will equal one absence.
- Critique Days – Your grade will be negatively affected if you are not in attendance for your presentation or the presentations of your peers.
- Attendance will be taken at each session.
- Please be courteous to your instructors and fellow students by arriving on time.

#### **DOT CLASS/REHEARSAL/PERFORMANCE POLICY**

- Our primary focus is your education. Classes should take precedence over production. To ensure that this focus remain balanced we have instituted a “no class attendance means no rehearsal policy” for all BFA and MFA actors and Stage Managers.
- Every course has different attendance guidelines. This policy is related to the number of allowed absences in any THR or DAN class. If you exceed the number of allowed absences for any individual class, the Director of the production that you are involved with will be notified regarding the break of

policy and you will not be permitted to participate in that evening's rehearsal or performance. Please check the attendance policy carefully on all THR and DAN syllabi.

- As an example, most acting classes allow two unexcused absences. You may use these at any time and it will not affect your attendance at rehearsal or performance. If you miss class again and have exceeded your limit of allowed absences, you will not be allowed to attend that evening's rehearsal or performance. This is related to all THR and DAN classes.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

Week	Date	Topic	Reading/Assignment for next class
1	8/29	Introduction; Discuss Syllabus and Course Expectations; Discuss Production Teams and project expectations.	Create a list of three possible well-known shows for collaborative discussion. <i>Read <u>Collaboration in Theatre</u>: Part I</i>
2	9/3	Discuss <u>Collaboration in Theatre</u> : Part I; Review of collaboration and discussion of past productions. Collaborative Exercises.	Read <i>The Illusion</i>
	9/5	Discuss <i>The Illusion</i>	Director Presentations for <i>The Illusion</i>
3	9/10	Director Presentations for <i>The Illusion</i> (30 minutes each)	Bring Materials for Design Charette
	9/12	<i>The Illusion</i> Design Charette I	Note: All meetings will be observed for feedback regarding communication.
4	9/17	<i>The Illusion</i> Teams A, B & C Public Production Meetings (30 minutes each)	Bring Materials for Design Charette
	9/19	<i>The Illusion</i> Design Charette II	Prepare for Presentations
5	9/24	<i>The Illusion</i> Teams A & B Final Presentations	Prepare for Presentations
	9/26	<i>The Illusion</i> Team C & Wrap up	Read <u>Collaboration in Theatre</u> : Part II
6	10/1	Discuss <u>Collaboration in Theatre</u> : Part II & Guest Panel Discussion <b>KIRK GONE</b>	Read <i>Ghosts</i>
	10/3	Discuss <i>Ghosts</i> ; Mini Team Meetings <b>KIRK GONE</b>	
7	10/8	Director Presentations for <i>Ghosts</i> (30 minutes each)	Bring Materials for Design Charette
	10/10	<i>Ghosts</i> Design Charette I	
8	10/15	Teams A & B Production Meetings R & K visit; Teams C & D – Work Session	Bring materials for Design Charette
	10/17	<i>Ghosts</i> Design Charette II	
9	10/22	Teams C & D Production meetings R & K visit; Teams A & B – Work Session	
	10/24	<i>Ghosts</i> Prep for Presentation	Prepare for Presentations
10	10/29	<i>Ghosts</i> Teams A and B Presentations (Watch out for Haunted AUD)	Prepare for Presentations

10	10/31	<i>Ghosts</i> Teams C and D Presentations (Watch out for Haunted AUD)	Read <u>Collaboration in Theatre</u> : Part III
11	11/5	<i>Ghosts</i> Wrap Up <u>Discuss Collaboration in Theatre</u> : Part III	Read <i>American Idiot</i> D2L: Post 3 links to video and choreography inspiration.
	11/7	Discuss <i>American Idiot</i> Discuss musical conventions and video inspirations	
12	11/12	Director Presentations for <i>American Idiot</i> (30 minutes each)	Bring materials for Design Charette
	11/14	<i>American Idiot</i> Design Charette I	
13	11/19	Teams A & B Production Meetings R & K visit; Team C – Work Session	
	11/21	Team C Production Meeting R & K visit; Teams A & B – Work Session	Bring materials for Design Charette
14	11/26	<i>American Idiot</i> Design Charette II and presentation preparation	Prepare for Presentations
	11/28	<b>No Class Thanksgiving</b>	<b>No Class Thanksgiving</b>
15	12/3 until 3:30p	<i>American Idiot</i> Teams A & B Final Presentations	Prepare for Presentations
	12/5	<i>American Idiot</i> Team C Final Presentation and Wrap-up	

**EXAM:** Tuesday, December 10: 12:45-2:00pm (Exhibition including Class Wrap-up and Evaluations)

#### **FINAL PRESENTATIONS:**

Presentations can be as creative as you wish them to be. Designers should be able to present their work intelligently, clearly and with passion for their process. Treat this as a presentation to cast or to producers. Directors should present their scenework with clear style and premise support. Presentations must not exceed 45 minutes. Set up and tear down is part of the allotted presentation time.

#### **PREP FOR DESIGN PRESENTATIONS AND CRITIQUE:**

- Each group will have 45 minutes to present their final projects. Come prepared to present!
  - Have all process and final project materials for presentation.
- **Scene Designers** remember to have a figure to help present scale in your design.
  - Be sure that you check with Ed, Mark W. and Jon regarding the use of Departmental Resources
- **Costume Designers** remember to indicate Act and Scene #'s including “Scene Title” when necessary for presenting costume changes within shows.
  - Be sure that you check with Karen and Angie regarding the use of Departmental Resources
- **Lighting Designers** will present using a rep plot that will be made available based on resources surrounding Departmental Productions. The rep plot must be restored after the conclusion of each final presentation.
  - Be sure that you check with Shannon regarding the use of Departmental Resources and exact use of the rep plot.
- **Media/Sound/Magic/Special Effects/Engineering Designers** remember to indicate Act and Scene including “Scene Title” when necessary. Must represent/simulate their work as clearly as possible using the departmental resources when available. All equipment must be restored after the conclusion of each presentation.
  - Be sure that you check with Alison, Jason, and Mark C. regarding the use of Departmental Resources

**BREAKDOWN OF FINAL GRADE:**

- Your overall grade is evaluated on six criteria: “attendance”, “participation”, and “application”, “quality of work”, “completion of work”, “overall portfolio of work.” Feel free to inquire about your grade standing at any time.
- Final semester grade will be based on attendance and whether or not you have met expectations appropriate to your understanding of Collaboration.
- Late work will devalue relative to the severity and cause of the lateness.
- Academic dishonesty will result in a course grade of 0.0.

**% BREAKDOWN OF FINAL GRADE:**

*The Illusion* - 30%

*Ghosts* - 30%

*American Idiot* - 30%

*Collaborative Assessment* - 10%

**GRADING SCALE:**

- |              |     |             |     |
|--------------|-----|-------------|-----|
| • 93%-100% = | 4.0 | • 73%-77% = | 2.0 |
| • 88%-92% =  | 3.5 | • 68%-72% = | 1.5 |
| • 83%-87% =  | 3.0 | • 60%-67% = | 1.0 |
| • 78%-82% =  | 2.5 | • 0%-59% =  | 0.0 |

**PRODUCTION TEAM ASSIGNMENTS:**

**THE ILLUSION**

**Team A**

Scene: CLAROSVELASCO

Costume: WHEELER

Lighting: HEAD

Director: HAUG

**Team B**

Scene: EUBANK

Costume: BECHTEL

Lighting: SHEYNERMAN

Sound/Magic/Special Effects:

GOEKE

Director: STEINBERG

**Team C**

Scene: IMHOFF

Costume: WILLIAMS

Lighting: CONOVER

Sound/Magic/Special Effects:

HUSTON

Director: HOBBS

**GHOSTS**

**Team A**

Scene: WHEELER

Costume: GOEKE

Lighting: HOBBS

Director: SHEYNERMAN

**Team B**

Scene: HAUG

Costume: CLAROSVELASCO

Lighting: EUBANK

Director: BECHTEL

**Team C**

Scene: STEINBERG

Costume: IMHOFF

Lighting: WILLIAMS

Director: HEAD

**Team D**

WILD CARD Collaborative

Duo—Divide your own

assignments. CONOVER &

HUSTON

**AMERICAN IDIOT**

**Team A**

Scene: BECHTEL

Costume: CONOVER

Lighting: CLAROSVELASCO

Media: STEINBERG

Director/Choreographer:

IMHOFF

**Team B**

Scene: WILLIAMS

Costume: EUBANK

Lighting: HUSTON

Media: SHEYNERMAN

Director/Choreographer:

WHEELER

**Team C**

Scene: HEAD

Costume: HOBBS

Lighting /Media/Engineering:

HAUG

Director/Choreographer: GOEKE