

Department of Dramatic Arts 2012/2013
DART 4F56: Advanced Studies in Theatre
“Collaborative work in one or more theatre productions” LL 5 hours weekly.

Instructors: *Sonia Norris (D2); Gyllian Raby (D3).*

Office Hours: *Tuesday 11a.m.-1 p.m; any time by appointment.*

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Phone: *905 688 5550 x 3221*

Time & Location of course: **Tuesday 3-8 p.m. Rooms 107 and 103.**

Course Description:

4F56 is always a class where students collaborate in a theatre ensemble, or group of ensembles, to self-produce existing or new works.

This year's course will explore a specific genre of theatre, working with scripted material by a playwright selected by the instructors. The first semester, with Ms. Norris, will investigate character, acting, production, and design elements, based on the world of the play. Concept work will be presented at the end of the D2 semester. The second semester, with Ms. Raby, will involve the rehearsal and production of the full work.

Course Objectives:

1. Students learn an ensemble process to imaginative research for character, environment, manners, mores and ideologies of a dramatic world. In this process:

- a) **assumptions are deconstructed;**
- b) modes of **communication between** spatial **design**, image, sound aesthetic and **performance** are explored;
- c) a high quality bar is set by the group and the instructor for **high quality production values** and high professional **organizational standards;**
- d) a **flexible ego and team outlook** is fostered in an atmosphere of curiosity, rigour, perseverance, and stamina .

Following this class, students should be able to plan and mount their own fringe festival production.

The class plan is to fully research and to develop a production as a single production ensemble. Under direction from the instructor, students will be expected to research and create scenes singly and in various groupings. Students should apply to take the course with a particular production role in mind (details are below). Working in their specialty roles, group members will all a) participate in developing the vision for the production; b) take on a production role; the ensemble members produce the show themselves (see production committee details below). The bulk of the work will occur in the second semester (see schedule below). Students in 4F56 commit to time management that will enable full participation without jeopardizing their work in other courses.

Enrolment:

The course has a limited enrolment of 16. The project can hold 10-15 performers, 2-4 designers or technicians or stage managers and 1 assistant-director (role descriptions below). Pre-requisites for actors are the successful year-end audition (students wishing to act must audition). Pre-requisites for production roles usually include the third year course in the particular area (e.g. the lighting Y class for LX design; 3F61 for set and costume design; 3P42 for Stage Management; 3P53/4 for dramaturgy and assistant directing) or permission of the instructors.

In preparing assignments, there may be cross-over between roles. For example, writers and technicians act as performers in order to communicate the material they are proposing—or vice versa. Flexibility, willingness, and communication at each step of the process is important.

Roles in the Ensemble

Actors must commit to a level of mental availability and physical fitness that will enable them to sustain a demanding scene at full energy. Actors must be willing to break past habits and to take creative risks. Ability to work physically with imagination is a requirement. Ideally, actors should be capable of running 5kms, forward and backward rolls, handstand, cart-wheel in both directions.

Roles will be cast by the instructors with in-pu from the director/design team. Roles held in D2 will probably not be reprised in the April production.

Designers, Media Artists and Technicians/Stage Managers (referred to collectively below as Designers...) must commit to researching design histories, and to extensive image collecting, materials exploration, sketching, model building, lighting and media experiments and resource-finding hours. Designers... will present and/ or react to a conceptual design preliminary on Tuesday October 16 2012 and a preliminary design model/renderings on Tuesday November 27 2012. Final designs deadlines will fall at the end of January 2013. Designers... will prepare extensive paperwork preparing the cues, sets, props and costumes for both shows. Designers... will manage the production as crew heads, running the committees who are task- delegated to achieve the technical aspects of the production.

Assistant Director, Dramaturge must commit to researching resources and organizing research groups, maintaining the ensemble's library of information, and overseeing the copying and distribution of materials for the ensemble. Directors... will direct actors of the ensemble at various points in the process but the shaping and polishing of scenes will be the responsibility of the instructors. Dramaturges will help develop the mission of the ensemble and help to target its audience. If necessary, the dramaturge will locate script versions, secure permissions cut, construct, and arrange text, find songs, pictures, stories, videos, help the designers, and help the director with script issues.

Production Committees:

Note that, regardless of their role in the ensemble, **ALL** 4F56 members commit to be producer-members of the ensemble, who take on 20 hours of specific production tasks outside their specialized role. The production work and the decisions made by the troupe constitute an important part of the collective experience. Although Department Production staff will contribute support and supervision and may be available for limited shop construction, students will be responsible for most of the actual work. (Committee members will assist in: stage management; design: wardrobe organization & execution; set construction; lighting and media hang/focus; publicity/front of house and volunteer management; purchasing and transport). The expected breakdown of the production committee work hours is: 5 hours in D2 semester and 20 hours in the D3 semester. Students will be responsible to log their hours.

Schedule:

The production demands of 4F56 should fall somewhere between third year class expectations and the demands of a main-stage.

Classes are 3-5 studio hours weekly, with 3-4 hours preparation/research/homework time expected most weeks. Sometimes this will be "banked" towards production. As with most studio classes, there will be frequent presentations: in 4th year performance students anticipate weekly group assignments and rehearsals. As part of their agreement when registering for the course, students are asked to keep available for all Saturdays, Mondays and Wednesday nights from March onwards, since larger group rehearsals will be needed in the second semester. There can be some flexibility, but good ensemble members make themselves easy to work with.

FALL (in-class presentation)

This schedule is an outline subject to change. However, the posted rehearsal space will be booked for Saturdays 10-3 and after the last studio class Monday and/or Wednesday nights. Some changes will be necessary (around exams or other university commitments) but, in order to achieve the group's desire to work as an ensemble, members' initial commitment to the minimum group hours below will be important.

The Fall class schedule requires the standard 50-60 in-class hours with varying weekly assignments of 3 to 5 hours. In weeks 9 and 10 (Tuesday November 06; Tuesday November 13) there will be no assignments and the hours will be banked for week 11 (Tuesday November 20): 5 hours of production committee work outside class, in addition to rehearsal and theatre set-up that will prepare for the in-class presentation.

There will be 4 hours theatre set-up starting at 10 a.m. Saturday November 24.

There will be two rehearsals of 2 or 3 hours apiece in the morning and afternoon of Sunday November 25.

Students will organize so they are not called to the three sessions in their totality.

The final week of semester 1 thus requires 24 hours: 15 hours in addition to regular class / assignment time .
The in-class presentation will receive advisory support only from production staff.
The student ensemble will call and run the planning meetings and rehearsals.
Peer evaluations will be completed at the same time as course evaluations and end emailed to the instructor, as a part of ensemble contribution.

WINTER (full production. Theatre TBA)

The Winter class schedule requires the standard 50-60 in-class hours with varying weekly assignments of 3 to 5 hours. In weeks 6 and 7 (Tuesday February 5; Tuesday February 12) and in reading week there will be no assignments and the hours will be banked for weeks 10, 11, 12 (Tuesday March 05; Tuesday March 12; Tuesday March 19) and production week (March 25- 29).

There will be 3 hours rehearsal in the evening of **Monday March 04 OR Wednesday March 06** and 7 hours rehearsal on **Saturday March 09** (*not all students will be called to all rehearsal hours). In rehearsal and production committee, students will commit 8 hours in addition to regular class hours.

There will be 3 hours rehearsal in the evening of **Monday March 11 OR Wednesday March 13** and 7 hours rehearsal and/or production committee call on **Saturday March 15**. (Again, students will commit 8 hours in addition to regular class hours).

There will be 3 hours rehearsal in the evening of **Monday March 18 OR Wednesday March 20** and 7 hours rehearsal and/or set construction call on **Saturday March 23**.

There will be 3 hours rehearsal in the evening of **Monday March 25 OR Wednesday March 27** . There will be no call on **Saturday March 30**.

The week of **April 08**, after classes finish, is *Production Week: Get In, Cue to Cue, Tech, Present.*

Two 10 out 12 hour days will be called for the entire ensemble. Approximately 7 additional hours will be required for set-up
Expect a 10 out of 12 hour day for cue to cue **Tuesday April 09** and tech runs **Wednesday April 10**.

The opening of the show is TBA but there are likely to be Thursday, Friday, Saturday performances, **April 11,12,13**.

The debrief, reflection and strike, involving all students, will occur **Sunday April 14**.

Production week of semester 2 is thus expected to require 27 hours not including public performances and strike.

Development of specific production committee deadlines will be the task of the students, with advice and supervision from the instructor and departmental production staff.

Required Texts:

DART 4F56 Course Ware II. "The Indie Theatre Guide to Production". Available in Bookstore.

Potential Script :

Robert Schencken: The Kentucky Cycle

Marks Breakdown:

Semester 1

Artistic Contribution through semester 1:	10%
Artistic Achievement in semester 1 presentations:	10 %
Ensemble Contribution:	20%
Research	10%

Semester 2

Artistic Contribution to semester 2 production:	15%
Artistic Achievement in final production:	10%
Ensemble Contribution in developing production:	15%
Production Committee work: imagination, reliability, timeliness:	10 %

Total: 100%

Artistic Contribution grade includes effort, resource development, demanding from and generously enabling collaborators, polishing work and “raising the bar” of production values.

Artistic Achievement grade: includes inspiration, personal growth, self-challenge, ability, and creation, in equal parts.

Ensemble Contribution: includes openness, listening (i.e. ability to work *in the zone*, maintaining a supportive morale in the face of process anxiety.

Research in writing and presentation is divided between project assignments and in-class work. This grade reflects analytical insight and consistent effort to deepen meaning through research. Written assignments should be presented according to departmental standards: typed MLA format with proper citations.

Production Committee responsibilities are assessed according to preparation, execution, follow-through. Grades will be given according to peer/ instructor evaluations (these are 50/50 weight in assessment).

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By registering for the class students commit to the spirit of the schedule posted on the DART board wiki page (reproduced below). While the specifics might change due to adjustments in production schedule, the deadlines will reflect the two presentation dates: exploration work presented in class December 03 2012 and final production presented in either Studio 103, 107 or another space chosen by the ensemble April 11, 12,13,14, 2013.

Participation and Attendance:

In addition to classes, attendance at ensemble group rehearsals and contribution to discussions, of research topics, and of scripted scenes, is important to the shared work that is core to this class.

Lateness and Sickness:

In the “professional” mindset we are trying to emulate, lateness for rehearsal or with work assigned is not acceptable. If students fall through on assignments three times or are consistently late, they will be asked to leave the course. If the date to drop without academic penalty has already passed, the instructor will decide on a solution that best protects the work of the other students in the ensemble.

Illness can strike at the worst of times and our manner of dealing with it is an important coping mechanism relevant to our artistic work. Students who miss a production call or production week rehearsal due to sickness will be dependent on the judgment of the instructor. Work responsibilities or roles may be removed in order to best alleviate the pressure that a “no show” places on other members of an ensemble. Grade penalties will be decided by the instructor and commensurate with circumstances.

Departmental Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend all studio classes; 2% per absence will be deducted from the final, overall grade in the class. Students who miss more than five classes over the full D1 duration will be unable to complete the course.

Requirements for Written Assignments:

1. All research assignments must adhere to MLA style, in-text citation.
2. All written assignments will be marked with attention to style, grammar, and spelling. Students who receive 60% or less on a written assignment are encouraged to attend a writing workshop offered by the Student Development Centre.

Materials Required:

A \$45 materials fee will be charged to students' accounts. This covers a small part of production resources used, from dry cleaning to paint, to print costs.

Field Trips:

At this time no field trips are scheduled for DART 4F56.

Important University Dates 2012:

Thursday September 6: First day of Fall/Winter Session, duration 1 and duration 2, day and evening sections, Undergraduate program.

Monday October 08: Thanksgiving Day. University closed (no classes); library closed (see Dec. 3)

Friday November 2: Last date for withdrawal without academic penalty for duration 2 courses.

Thursday November 29: Last day of lectures, Fall Term, duration 2 courses. Make up day for Thanksgiving Day duration 1 and duration 2 classes. The schedule will be that of a Monday.

Tuesday December 4: Reading/snow day.

Monday January 02: First day of Winter Term, Undergraduate programs.

Friday January 18: Last date for withdrawal without academic penalty for duration 1 courses.

Monday February 18: Family Day. University closed (no classes) (see April 12).

Monday February 18: to Friday Feb. 22: Reading Week.

Tuesday February 19: President's Holiday. Administrative offices closed; Registrar's Office and library open.

Friday March 29: Good Friday: University closed.

Friday April 8: Last day of lectures for duration 1 and duration 3 courses.

Monday April 11: Make-up day for Family Day (duration 1 and duration 3 classes). The schedule will be that of a Monday.

DARTboard

Access the Student Resource page on <http://dartboard.pbwiki.com/> for information and updates.

Late Policy and Penalty:

Extensions will be given only in extreme circumstances and must be accompanied by supporting medical documentation. The University requires that a student be medically examined in Health Services, or by an off-campus physician *prior* to an absence due to medical reasons from an: exam, lab, test, seminar, assignment, etc. Brock's Medical Exemption Policy and the appropriate medical certificate can be accessed at:

<http://www.brocku.ca/healthservices/exemption.php> Departmental policy: Late assignments with no medical documentation will be deducted 5% a day. No assignment will be accepted after 7 days.

Academic Integrity:

Brock University has established an Academic Integrity Policy. For details see <http://www.brocku.ca/academicintegrity/> The Academic Integrity Policy provides members of the University community general notice of appropriate academic behaviours and identifies prohibited academic conduct.

Note: Plagiarism is academic misconduct and penalties shall be imposed. In all assignments, you are required to cite all work and ideas which are not your own.