

Courses for the Certificate in New Play Directing 2023-2024

Summer I

THEA 510: PLAYSRIPT ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM (4)

Department

Intensive critical analysis of the playscript as a blueprint for production covering representative texts from a range of theatre styles, genres, and periods. Plays are considered in both their original historical/cultural context as well as implications for contemporary audiences. Course covers major approaches to dramatic criticism and the tools used in theatre research.

THEA 520: NARRATIVE THEORY AND DRAMATIC STRUCTURE (4)

Ristau

Introduction to the basics of storytelling and the creation of dramatic texts using both organic and formulaic models with an emphasis on the one act play. Students will learn to observe the world for meaning, build characters, place characters in settings, write monologues, create dialogue between characters, and lay the groundwork for longer, more substantive work.

THEA 524: DIRECTING NEW PLAYS (4)

Taylor

Focused instruction on directing and rehearsal techniques with particular emphasis on approaching the new play when the playwright is attending rehearsals. Students who complete this course will have the confidence to determine whether problems lie in the unfinished text or in the performer's approach to the play and how to come up with practical ways to differentiate between them.

THEA 561: DIRECTORS AND PLAYWRIGHTS IN COLLABORATION (2)

Ristau

Guided instruction leading up to the public presentation of a staged reading of a new play in Festival. All students enrolled in the certificate in New Play Directing will be required to direct a reading in the Hollins Playwright's Festival. This course is designed to guide directing students through the process of collaboration with a playwright and includes practical exercises to ensure the playwright and director are on the same page. Monday meetings function as a kind of production meeting for the festival readings and will include Festival playwrights. Wednesday sessions are open only to the directing students to discuss their process and problems under the supervision and guidance of the instructor. Repeated each summer.

Summer II

THEA 517: DESIGN ON A DIME (4)

Robert

An introduction to design principles as applied to the production and presentation of new plays. Design areas covered will include scenic, costume, lighting, and sound design as well as graphic illustration. This course will also be an introduction to stage scenery and construction. As part of the course, each student director will create two separate design palates based on the play they are directing in Festival, one envisioned with an \$800 budget and one with a \$20,000 budget. In this way, the director prepares for the possibility of staying connected to a project as it moves from a small studio theatre to the main stage of a larger venue. Playwriting students who take the course as an elective, but who are not directing in Festival, will work with the instructor to select a text as the basis for their designs--ideally, one of their own original plays.

THEA 522: VIEWPOINTS AND COMPOSITION (4)

Siebel

A six-week intensive in the ensemble building techniques of Suzuki and Viewpoints training as developed by Anne Bogart and the SIT company. This course is an introduction to a method of actor training which is primarily concerned with uniting the human body and the theatrical text by uncovering the actor's innate expressive abilities through rigorous physical training to heighten their emotional and physical power on stage. The Viewpoints training grew out of the post-modern dance world and enhances the performer's ability to deal with time and space by breaking those broad areas into six specific categories which facilitate ensemble creation of bold, theatrical work through strong physical, intellectual, emotional, and artistic choices. This course is required for directors and performers and is encouraged for playwrights as an elective to facilitate interdisciplinary interaction, collaboration, and ensemble work. It also forms the foundation for group script creation and devised

work.

THEA 561: DIRECTORS AND PLAYWRIGHTS IN COLLABORATION (2)

Ristau

Repeated each summer. (See previous description)

THEA 576: COMPANY CREATION AND MANAGEMENT (4)

Robert

An introduction to the structure of the non-profit theatre and how-to guide for creating a new company dedicated to the production and presentation of new plays. Concepts covered include arts administration, crafting a mission statement, forming a board of trustees, filing for non-profit status, legal issues and potential liabilities, fund raising, publicity, contracts, rental agreements, and other aspects of producing new work as part of a season or just a single showcase.