

Courses for the Certificate in New Play Performance

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 ground work for longer, more substantive work.

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 SITI 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 in order to facilitate interdisciplinary interaction, collaboration and ensemble work. It also forms the foundation for group script creation and devised work.

THEA 565: ENSEMBLES IN COLLABORATION (2)

Department

All students enrolled in the Certificate in New Play Performance will be required to perform in at least one, but no more than two, Hollins Playwright's Festival readings. This course is designed to guide performance students through the process of collaboration from the initial table read with the playwright through final performance. The course affords performers an opportunity to debrief their experiences with an experienced theatre professional with expertise in best practices. Performance students are encouraged to serve as readers for festival season and selection and are invited to sit in on the casting session for Festival--at which time they will be able to make preferences known, hear frank discussions of casting needs by directors and playwrights, as well as having input on final casting decisions. Such transparency can be challenging, but is extremely instructive for all concerned.

Summer II

THEA 532: PERFORMANCE AS PROFESSION (4)

Henke

Nuts and bolts practical instruction in how to manage your career as a professional performer, and how to showcase your experience as someone experienced in new play development. A practical guide to managing your career as a performer. How to present yourself professionally, audition successfully, be selective in choosing opportunities, and make smart choices in the real world. Subjects covered include headshots, portfolios, agents, internships, showcase performances, working in other mediums like film and television, demo reels, and Actors Equity.

THEA 537: ADVANCED PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUES (4)

Bergman

Intense and rapid training in a variety of performance techniques and styles with an emphasis on applications to new play development. Building on prior experiences in performance, this course will guide students through intensive instruction in mask work, character creation, movement, improvisation, commedia and other performance techniques with an emphasis on how to apply them to working on new plays.

THEA 541: PERFORMING FOR OTHER MEDIA (4)

Department

Designed to be taken in conjunction with the MFA playwright's course **Writing for Other Media**. Performance Certificate students in this class will be given training in performing new work in front of the camera as opposed to on the stage. Attention will be given to how this training compliments performing new work in front of a live audience, and prepares the student for work in film, television and webcasts. As part of the course, certificate students will rehearse and perform in an original web series created by the MFA playwrights and "broadcast" in weekly installments on the Playwright's Lab You Tube Channel. The course will culminate in the production of an "audition reel."

THEA 565: ENSEMBLES IN COLLABORATION (2)

Department

Repeated each summer. (See previous description)

THEA 574: ADVANCED SCENE STUDY (Creative) (4)

Henke

This course provides guided instruction in selecting, preparing and performing two-person scenes from contemporary texts. Through this advanced training in scene study, performers will be better prepared to apply these specific performance strategies to interpreting the evolving characters and contexts found in new plays still under development in rehearsal. This course builds on the foundational courses Playscript Analysis and Ensembles in Collaboration, taken during the first year of the program.