



The University of Florida- School of Theatre and Dance  
 MFA Company Acting Workshop  
 TPP 6145 (0566): Period Styles of Acting  
 Fall 2017/ TRF Period 4-5 (10:40-12:35) CON G-14  
 Office Hours: MW 12:50 – 1:40pm and by appointment  
 Dr. Judith Williams, Nadine McGuire Pavilion Room 210/ 273-0511  
 email: [jwbw@ufl.edu](mailto:jwbw@ufl.edu)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course may most accurately be described as Period Styles of Acting. Students will be introduced to and guided by the instructor’s particular approach to classical performance styling. The approach is designed to enhance the imaginative artistry of the student and to develop awareness and capabilities for heightened performance techniques.

**MAJOR TEXTS:**

1. Harrop, John and Sabin R. Epstein. *ACTING WITH STYLE: 3<sup>RD</sup> Edition* (Allyn and Bacon, 2000).
2. Various period plays

**OBJECTIVES:** Experience performance of various acting styles from Greek through Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries. Work on creating a marketable actor practicing Business speech or “Standard American” dialect and implementing the principles of period stage movement. Develop a familiarity with classic dramatic literature. Develop ensemble and cooperative, creative skills. Gain knowledge of the major theatre innovators and their effect on the theatre world, in particular their effects on acting and styles of presentation of dramatic works. Apply research and study of various Period Styles to presentation of scene work.

**EXPECTED OUTCOME:** It is expected that students will leave the class with the confidence in their abilities to research, analyze, score a script, as well as to rehearse and perform classical roles with a particular flair for “heightened style”. Students should develop appreciation for the eloquence and style of formal language, an understanding and respect for period research, and a joy and confidence in playing such roles. A major objective is to prepare the student for “real world” possibilities beyond the completion of his/her course of study.

\*Students must have a flexible, “can do” attitude toward this work, as our purpose is to explore numerous techniques and to develop a personal process for the creation of a role in various period styles, rather than perfecting one or two styles.

**ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY:** This is an experiential class. You are expected to be in class daily and be on time. “The University recognizes the right the individual professor has to make attendance mandatory. After due warning, professors may prohibit further attendance and then assign a failing grade for excessive absences.” Remember that Grad students don’t miss classes!

**DECORUM:** Your work in class is a major part of your grade. This includes your classroom and out of class rehearsal decorum, because it strongly impacts the quality of instruction for you and your partners. You are expected to show respect for yourself, your partners, and the art and craft of theatre. You are also expected to respect the spaces in which we work by preparing the space for work and clearing it after you finish working. Part of learning the acting process is also learning how to act professionally. Unprofessional conduct will not be tolerated.

\*\* Food and drinks (except bottled water) **are not permitted in class.** Eat before or after class, not in class!!! No hats please, unless they are part of a costume for a scene.

**CELL PHONES AND BEEPING ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** These must be turned off before the beginning of each class. It is strongly recommended that they be turned off before entering the classroom.

**REQUIRED DRESS:**

***Acting:*** Since this is a class in period performance, it will be necessary for women to have a floor length skirt for all class work. Men should have some type of rehearsal jacket for certain scene work. Everyone will be required to wear hard soled shoes for class work. Shoes with a slight heel are preferred for men during 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Century work. Women may use “character shoes” as the best option.

**WRITTEN WORK:** All papers and written assignments must be typed and presented before the rehearsal and performance rounds of each scene. LATE ASSIGNMENT AND PAPERS WILL BE GIVEN ONLY PARTIAL CREDIT. Expect written assignments to be graded as Graduate writing assignments. All acting assignment work should be placed in your hard covered period styles binder following evaluation on assigned dates and for fuller evaluation at the end of the semester.

**MAKE UP WORK:** Performance assignments must be performed for the sake of your partner. You will not be able to receive a “make up” grade except under extenuating circumstances at the judgment of the instructor(s). Because the course depends on the co-operation of partners in scene work, it is imperative that work be presented ON TIME. In the event that an absence is known in advance, you must make arrangements to present the work early.

**PRODUCTION VIEWING:** Attendance at SoTD theatre productions is required for all students enrolled in this course. Graduate students are allowed comp tickets to each main stage production. This term’s main stage productions include:

***1984***

Co-produced with the Hippodrome  
September 1-21  
See [thehipp.org](http://thehipp.org) for times  
The Hippodrome State Theatre

***The Seagull***

Directed by Tim Altmeyer  
September 21 – October 1  
Tuesday-Saturdays at 7:30pm, Sundays at 2:00pm  
Nadine McGuire Black Box

***Kiss Me Kate***

Directed by Tony Mata  
October 27-November 5  
Tuesday-Saturdays at 7:30pm, Sundays at 2:00pm  
Constans Theatre

Critique: Write a two page paper focused solely on the strengths and weaknesses of the performances. Papers are due the first class after the production closes

You are required to see the first two Hippodrome productions and to write a 2-page paper. The critique should focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the performances. Please be specific. It is due the Monday after the production closes. You are also encouraged to attend outside performances at Acrosstown Repertory Theatre, Gainesville Community Playhouse, Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, and productions presented by the Florida Players student group.

### **The Hippodrome State Theatre Fall 2017 season**

**1984**

By George Orwell

Co-produced with the UF School of Theatre + Dance

September 1-24

### ***The Legend of Georgia McBride***

By Matthew Lopez

October 13-November 5

### ***A Year with Frog and Toad***

Book & Lyrics by Willie Reale, Music by Robert Reale

November 24-December 17

### ***A Christmas Carol***

Adapted by Janet Allard and Michael Bigelo Dixon

November 25-December 22

**TEACHING METHOD:** There will be assigned readings and discussions of text materials, practical exercises, character studies, research of historical elements relevant to the playing of period plays and styles. There will also be the traditional coaching/working of scenes. The unique nature of period styles acting requires a different vocal and physical vocabulary for each style, which must be in place before the character can be fully created. Therefore, particularly in the rehearsal round, you will often be directed in order to realize the style. This can be frustrating when you are simultaneously trying to acquire the style skills and to create your character. Every effort will be made to distinguish between coaching and directing. Your responsibility is to be willing to try the notes, suggestions, and directions in a collaborative fashion.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** Full participation in class exercises.

**REHEARSALS:** Students are expected to prepare and rehearse scenes outside of class for in class performances.

**PERFORMANCES:** Various solo and partner/ensemble scenes including commedia improvisations, monologues and scenes from dramatic literature will be evaluated for grading purposes. **Scene work not prepared for presentation dates will receive a maximum grade of 60% for the remaining entire assignment, provided all follow through preparation work is done and the scene is fully work-shopped.**

**NOTES:** All students are expected to take daily notes as well as notes on their text book reading, work in class, and observation notes from their colleagues' scenes. All course work should be kept in a hard cover binder, separated and labeled according to each period style covered during the course.

**GRADING:** Grading will be evaluated by each instructor separately for Acting and Movement, and will be based on methods and requirements listed above, as well as quality of work, approach, enthusiasm, development, completion of all assigned work, and the student's ability to express written and oral knowledge concerning the course topics. Final grades will be based on above criteria, evaluation and assessment of each student's attitude toward the work, and the individual development of each student throughout the semester.

**A notebook /binder of all assignments, scene work, research, etc. reviewed for evaluation and grading purposes due on Monday, December 4<sup>th</sup> and delivered to Dr. Williams' office..**

The scenes will be performed in two rounds. Both rounds must be performed on the scheduled day. Before a scene may be performed in class, the play, scene and character analysis and the scoring of the scene must be given to the instructor. There are no exceptions to this rule.

The minimum requirements for Rehearsal round one are:

1. Thoroughly memorized lines!!!  
No acting or in depth critique can take place while you are searching for the next line.
2. Simple, logical blocking.
3. Intelligent, action oriented objectives for each beat, tactics and obstacles.
4. Emotional and physical choices.
5. All choices should evolve out of your research and understanding of the current style being studied.

The expectations for Performance round two are:

1. Scene must have a sense of rhythm and movement.
2. Blocking must reflect emotion and style of the play.
3. Heightened and clarified objectives, tactics, and obstacles.
4. Refined emotional and physical choices.
5. Evidence that suggestions from round one have been carefully incorporated.

It is also imperative that you keep up with the reading assignments and factor into your schedule adequate out-of-class rehearsals. Round one requires at least four hours of focused rehearsal. Round two requires four to six additional hours. Learning of all lines must be done in preparation for the rehearsal round.

Analysis and Score/ Rehearsal and Performance Rounds

Scene 1 Greek	5/5
Scene 2 Commedia del l'arte	5/5
Scene 3 Neoclassical Racine exercise and Restoration Scene	5/5
Scene 4 Realism-Ibsen	5/5
Scene 5 Fantastic Realism- Chekhov	5/5
Scene 6 Epic Style- Brecht	5/5
Scene 7 Absurdist- Beckett, Pinter	5/5
2 Hippodrome productions and critiques	10
Period reports and critiques	10
Participation and Attendance	<u>10</u>
TOTAL POINTS	100

**SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS:** Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** All students are required to abide by the Academic Honesty Guidelines which have been accepted by the University.

The academic community of students and faculty at the University of Florida strives to develop, sustain and protect an environment of honesty, trust and respect. Students are expected to pursue knowledge with integrity. Exhibiting honesty in academic pursuits and reporting violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines will encourage others to act with integrity. Violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and a student being subject to the sanctions in paragraph XIV of the Student Code of Conduct. The conduct set forth hereinafter constitutes a violation of the Academic Honesty Guidelines (University of Florida Rule 6C1-4.017).

Student Code of Conduct is available at: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php>

Course Schedule – The last day of the semester for the class is December 1<sup>st</sup>. We will present our final work for the faculty on December 5<sup>th</sup> during our class period.

## GUIDELINES FOR CRITIQUE PAPERS

1. The paper should meet all requirements of mature, college-level writing: clarity, sophistication in thought process, originality of approach, organization, careful transitions, and syntax.
2. “The superior play report, like other works of art or research, is chiefly a transformation of personal experience into verbal form, and should retain a personal and unique style. In its simplest terms, the paper is a personal reaction to the production: what you like, relate to, are affected by and the valid reasons why you feel or think as you do. Support with specific examples.” (Yeaton) Assume the reader will disagree with you.
3. Your paper should contain an introduction, body, and conclusion. Because it is only 1 ½-2 pages long, you must select, be specific, focused and careful. Let the reader know where you are going, what you have chosen to pursue.
4. Choose one (or two if they fit logically together) aspect of the play or production to deal with. Work in depth not in breadth. If you choose an aspect of the play to discuss, be certain your paper is not pure literary analysis but reflects your response to the production. (The written text of a play is only one-half the experience.) In reading papers, it must be obvious that you saw and comprehended the production. If you choose to relate the production to your own life, experiences and beliefs, be sure the center of the focus remains the production and not your life. If you choose to relate the production to comments made by director, actors, or designers, make sure the center of focus is what you saw in the production and not what you heard in class.
5. Look inside yourself for the unique. Be original. Think, probe, explore. Remember that the paper is your response, your personal in-depth insight into the performance, substantiated by specific illustrations.
6. Be clear. Use no general statements. Always illustrate your ideas with interesting vivid, carefully chosen examples. That does not mean beginning a sentence, “An example of this would be...”
7. Remember that careless wording, structure or pedestrian content can only result in a mediocre paper. Think. Analyze. Dig. Choose your vocabulary to say exactly what you mean. Use colorful images and language. Write richly, passionately or analytically. Don’t be dull.
8. Remember what you really feel. What you think or care about deeply will make an interesting paper. Choose any subject that you can probe meaningfully.
9. Type, if possible. If not, please double space and write or print with great clarity. Present your paper in the best possible way. Play titles are underlined. Note spelling of playwright.
10. Write up your paper as carefully as you possibly can. Use a dictionary or spell check, if you can’t spell. Proofread. This should be a mature, intelligent, thoughtful literate paper.

## 1. PLAY ANALYSIS- Use this outline format.

1-Theme, 2-Central Conflict, 3-List key events in Rising Action 8-10, 4-Climax, 5- Denouement

2. **SCENE ANALYSIS** is a written discussion of the following points, all of which should be clearly labeled and covered adequately:

- A. Given Circumstances (Who, What, Where, When)—A clear description of what has happened to the character you are playing in the scene just before your scene begins. This description should include the emotional-mental state, and the physical condition of the character just before the scene begins. Evidence from the script should be offered where support is needed.
- B. Intention or Objective—A description of the character’s overall motivation, what he/she wants throughout the scene)—the character’s super-objective in the scene.
- C. Obstacle—A clear description of what is blocking the character from achieving his objective.
- D. The Score—On a photocopy of your scene, use [brackets] to mark beats, objectives, and tactics. A beat is a motivational unit that contains a short term objective. A transition is a change in objective that takes the actor from one beat to the next. Your objective is what you want to do to the other character. Your tactics are the physical actions you will use to accomplish each objective.
- E. Result—A brief statement of the outcome or resolution of the scene.

3. **CHARACTER ANALYSIS** is a written assignment that should be submitted along with presentations. Always write this section in the first person. It consists of the following aspects, each of which must be covered adequately. The more detailed the description or choices, the more vivid the character will become to you:

- A. Physical Description—A full description of the character, justifying characteristics where necessary with text references. This description includes information on the character’s age, what he/she looks like, what he/she must wear in the scene. It also includes more active dimensions like how the character walks, moves, sits, gestures, talks. Include Laban terminology in your physicality.
- B. Emotional Profile—A full emotional profile of the character including habitual disposition and specific moods in the scene.
- C. Relationships—What is his/her relationship to the other characters in the scene and to the central conflict in the scene.
- D. Back Story—Create a statement of the most important and influential details about the character’s past history based on the given circumstances but enhanced by your imagination..
- E. Secret- 1)Shared, 2) Private or “Uber”

**Graduate Period Styles of Acting – Fall 2017 Calendar**

**Week 1**                      **Aug 21-25**

- 8/22      Introduction to styles and assign Greek monologues and assign Greek reports. Presence- Focus of energy- Chakras- Qigong.
- 8/24      Perform Greek Monologues from Spring '16. Assign Greek scenes. Review Greek chapter in text and prepare Greek research report and handout for presentation on 8/31. Details for analysis papers and scoring.
- 8/25      Playing God

**Week 2**                      **Aug 28-Sept 1**

- 8/29      Greek Research Reports.
- 8/31      Techniques in Greek style (review scoring). Review Psychological gesture. Work 2-3 minutes of each scene.
- 9/1      Rehearsal round- Greek scenes- Critiques.

**Week 3**                      **Sept 4-8**

- 9/5      TBA
- 9/7      Workshop Greek Scenes. Assign Commedia characters and Commedia reports.
- 9/8      Performance – Greek scenes – Constans theatre – Critiques.

**Week 4**                      **Sept 11-15**

- 9/12      Commedia movement workshop guest – Professor Garland and construction of Lazzi workshop.
- 9/14      Commedia reports – Emphasis on character types.
- 9/15      Rehearsal Round – Commedia critiques. Assign Racine exercises and Restoration scenes and reports.

**Week 5**                      **Sept 18-22**

- 9/19      Workshop Commedia scenes – Emphasis on structuring Lazzi. Assign Great Acting Teachers Reports.
- 9/21      Neoclassical/Restoration reports.
- 9/22      Performance Commedia. French Fry Plaza. Critiques.

**Week 6**                      **Sept 25-29**

- 9/26      Perform Racine's Phaedra exercises.
- 9/28      Restoration workshop.
- 9/29      Rehearsal for Restoration scenes – Critiques.

**Week 7**                      **Oct 2-6**

- 10/3      Assign Ibsen/Chekhov scenes and reports. Great teachers' Report #1 Stanislavsky
- 10/5      Workshop Restoration scenes.
- 10/6      Performance restoration scenes – Critiques.

**Week 8**                      **Oct 9-13**

- 10/10      Performance Restoration Scenes - Critiques.  
 10/12      Realism/Naturalism reports, including exercises in manners and subtext.  
 10/13      Rehearsal Ibsen/Chekhov scenes – critiques.

**Week 9**                      **Oct 16-20**

- 10/17      Assign Brecht scenes and reports. Great Acting Teachers report #2/M. Chekhov  
 10/29      Workshop Ibsen/Chekhov scenes.  
 10/20      Performance Ibsen/Chekhov scenes – critiques.

**Week 10**                    **Oct 23-27**

- 10/24      Brecht reports and exercises.  
 10/26      2 Great Acting Teachers reports.  
 10/27      Rehearsal Round. Brecht scenes/critiques.

**Week 11**                    **Oct 31- Nov 3**

- 10/31      Assign Absurdist scenes + reports. Work two Brecht scenes.  
 11/2      Workshop rest of Brecht scenes.  
 11/3      Performance Brecht scenes – critiques.

**Week 12**                    **Nov 7-10**

- 11/7      Great Acting Teachers Report #5 + #6.  
 11/9      Absurdist reports.  
 11/10      Work Absurdist scenes.

**Week 13**                    **Nov 13-17**

- 11/14      Work Absurdist scenes.  
 11/16      Rehearsal round.  
 11/17      Work absurdist scenes.

**Week 14**                    **Nov 20-24**

- 11/21      Perform Absurdist scenes/critiques.  
 11/23      No class - Happy Thanksgiving!  
 11/24      No class - Happy Thanksgiving!

**Week 15**                    **Nov 27-Dec 1**

- 11/28      Plan jury scene selection.  
 11/30      Rehearse jury scenes.  
 12/1      Rehearse jury scenes.

**Week 16**                    **Dec 4-9**

- 12/5      Jury for faculty and students.