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Fall 2000
Chaminade University of Honolulu
DRAMA 205 - - Acting Workshop

Instructor: Justina T. Mattos
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Class Location: Eiben Hall Conference room
Class Hours: T-Th 11:00 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.
Office Hours: T-Th 10:30-11:00a.m.
Office Location: Eiben Hall 118

Course Objectives:

This course is open to all Chaminade students; it has no prerequisites and no previous acting experience is necessary. Through this course students will gain a basic understanding of the principles of acting through improvisation, theatrical exercises, monologues and scene work.

Requirements:

Although this class does not require a textbook or a great deal of writing, it does require personal discipline and collaborative commitment. Theatre is a highly collaborative art form in which each participant is dependent upon many other people to make the whole thing work. In an acting class, at least one other person (and usually more) depend on you to be totally present and prepared for class. This necessitates the following requirements:

Attendance:

Perfect attendance is your goal. Missed acting classes are impossible to make up, so absence or tardiness is strongly discouraged. After 2 absences our final grade will automatically be lowered one full letter grade and will continue to go down for each additional absence. ALWAYS make certain that both your instructor and your scene or project partners know prior to class if you will not be there. Being late for class 3 times constitutes 1 absence. You will also be required to meet outside of class with scene and project partners, so be prepared to give time for this.

Clothing:

Dress for maximum freedom of movement. You will be sitting, lying, sometimes rolling on the floor, so dress accordingly. Wear flexible shoes or remove shoes for exercises. If this requires you to bring a change of clothing, do so. If your monologue or scene requires special clothing, come prepared for quick changes.

Supplies - - Always bring to class the following:

- Your syllabus
- something to take notes on
- a calendar for scheduling
- a pencil with eraser
- a copy of your scene/monologue (once these have been chosen)
- any necessary props or costumes for your monologue/scene work
- an open mind and enthusiastic attitude

Reading and Writing Expectations:

Each student will be required to read a minimum of two plays for this class: the play from which their monologue is selected and the play which contains their final scene. Students will be expected to turn in a type-written "Play Report" on each of these two plays. In the process of searching for the perfect monologue and scene to perform, some students may end up reading many more than two plays. Students can earn extra credit points for this extra reading by turning in a type-written report on each play they have read, utilizing the same format that is used for the required reports.

Course Outline/Schedule:

T 8/2 Course Introduction, theatrical improvisations - "getting to know <u>you</u> "	Th 8/31 Improvisations - "getting to know you"
T 9/5 theatrical improvisations - "getting to know <u>you</u> " & building ensemble	Th 9/7 theatrical improvisations - "getting to know <u>you</u> " & building ensemble
T 9/12 Monologue choices due Improvisations - building ensemble	Th 9/14 Improvisations - building ensemble & monolo <u>ue</u> work
T 9/19 Character Biography due monologue work and improvisations	Th 9/21 monologue work and improvisations
T 9/26 Off-Book monologue work and improvisations	Th 9/28 monologue work and improvisations
T 10/3 Play Report due monologue work and improvisations	Th 10/5 monologue work and improvisations
T 10/10 Monologue "dress rehearsal" with class feedback	Th 10/12 Monologue "dress rehearsal" with class feedback
T 10/17 Midterm - Monologue Performances	Th 10/19 Midterm - Monologue Performances
T 10/24 improvisations, discuss final scenes, choosing a scene <u>partner</u>	Th 10/26 improvisations, discuss final scenes, choosing a scene <u>er</u>
T 10/31 Scene choices due, improvisational exercises	Th 11/2 scene work and improvisational exercises
T 11/7 Character Biography due, scene work and improvisations	Th 11/9 scene work and improvisations
T 11/14 Play Report due, scene <i>work</i> and improvisations	Th 11/16 scene work and improvisations
T 11/21 Off-Book scene work and improvisations	Th 11/23 HOLIDAY - HAPPY THANKSGIVING!
T 11/28 scene <i>work</i> and improvisations	Th 11/30 Last day to turn in Extra Credit work scene <i>work</i> and improvisations
T 12/5 scene "dress rehearsal" with class feedback	Th 12/7 scene "dress rehearsal" with class feedback
Wednesday, December 13, 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. FINAL SCENE PERFORMANCES AND HONORING CLASSMATES !!!!!	

Grading:

Your work during the term will be graded according to the following points scale: 90-100=A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, 59 & **below=F**. Grading will not be based on "talent," but rather on commitment, discipline, respect for the art, and an honest effort to grow as an artist. Your work will be evaluated as follows:

Monologue Play Report	20%
Monologue Performance	20%
Scene Play Report	20%
Scene Performance	20%
Class Participation & Growth	10%
Other Written Work	<u>10%</u>
	100%

As explained above, attendance can have a **substantial impact** upon your final **grade**, so make the effort to come to class on time every time. Your final grade for the semester will be one of the following:

- A Outstanding teamwork and creativity, and an unusual degree of intellectual initiative.
- B Superior work done in a consistent and intelligent manner.
- C **Average** grade indicating a competent grasp of the subject matter and an adequate degree of creative effort.
- D Inferior work of the lowest passing grade.
- F Failure to grasp the minimum of the subject material; no credit given. This grade is also given for failure to withdraw officially from the course.
- I Incomplete. Student has been unable, for a valid reason, to complete the course work according to the assigned schedule. The issuance of an "I" grade is not automatic. Prior to reporting of grades a contract must be made between the student and the instructor for the completion of the course. Sufficient time must be allowed to permit completion of the work, evaluation, and reporting of the final grade within 90 days after the end of the term. This limit may not be extended. If a new grade is not submitted by the instructor prior to the **deadline**, the **alternate grade (indicated in the contract)** will be **recorded**.

Some Suggested Sources to get you started:

- Beard, Jocelyn. *The Best Men's Stage Monologues of 1990*. Newbury, VT: Smith & Kraus, 1991.
- Beard, Jocelyn. *The Best Women's Stage Monologues of 1992*. (Also available 1990 or 1991). Newbury, VT: Smith & Kraus, 1993.
- Beard**, Jocelyn & Kristin Graham. *The Best Stage Scenes for Men From the 1980's*. Newbury, VT: Smith & Kraus, 1991.
- Beard, Jocelyn & **Kristin** Graham. *The Best Stage Scenes for Women From the 1980's*. Newbury, VT: Smith & Kraus, 1991.
- Handman, Wynn. *Modern American Scenes for Student Actors*. NY: Bantam Books, 1980.
- Heniford, Lewis W. & Samuel Elkind. 11213/4 *For the Show: A Guide to Small-Cast One-Act Plays*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1995.
- Hooks, Ed. *The Ultimate Scene and Monologue Sourcebook*. NY: Back Stage Books, 1994.
- Schulman, Michael & Eva Mekler. *The Actor's Scenebook*. NY: Bantam Books, 1984.
- Shengold, Nina. *The Actor's Book of Contemporary Stage Monologues*. NY: Penguin Books, 1987.
- Small-Cast One-Act **Guide** Online*. <http://www2.scescape.com/heniford/welcome.htm>

Guidelines for Written Work:

General Instructions:

1. Papers should be typed, **double-spaced**. If using a computer, use font size 12.
2. In the upper left corner of the first page include the following information:
 - Your name
 - Couse name
 - Instructor's name
 - Type of assignment
 - date
3. Provide an interesting title to grab the reader's attention. The title should be centered at the top of the first page, below the obligatory information in the upper left corner and above the body of your paper
4. Always proof-read for spelling, grammar and punctuation before turning in your work.
5. Turn your work in *on-time*. Late work will not be accepted. You are welcome to turn your work in early for feedback and the opportunity to re-write for a higher grade before the due date.

"Play Report" Assignment:

Read the entire play that your monologue/scene is from and type (double spaced) a 2 to 4 page paper covering the following points:

- 1) Give a 1 to 2 paragraph summary of the events of the entire play.
- 2) Choose one character to focus on, and describe everything that this character says about him/her self. Provide at least one quote as an example.
- 3) Discuss everything that other characters and the stage directions say about your character. Provide at least one quote to support what you are saying.
- 4) Write at least one paragraph on your own thoughts about the character - - things you have discovered by reading "between the lines" of the text.
- 5) Write another paragraph specifying three questions that you still have about the character.
- 6) Provide a concluding paragraph which sums up your thoughts about the play and the character.

The Course Outline/Schedule shows when the final version of this paper is due. Late work will not be accepted. If you choose to turn it in before your due date you have the opportunity to receive feed-back and do revisions on it before the final version is due, which can help you to get a better grade.

Extra Credit:

The best way to learn to fully appreciate theatre is to experience it outside of the classroom. For this reason there are a **variety** of Extra Credit options available to you. With 5 extra credit points you can raise your final grade by a full letter. Fewer **than** 5 extra credit points will not have such a substantial impact on your grade, but can help to give your grade the boost **it** needs if you are on the borderline. The extra credit options are:

1 point	-	Reading a play and writing a <i>Play Report</i> beyond the two required for this course.
1 point	-	Seeing a play and writing an Acting <i>Critique</i> .
3 points	-	Acting in a play (Instructor must approve this for extra credit).
2 points	-	Off-stage participation in a play (Instructor must approve this for extra credit).

Your extra credit work must be at B level (80 points) or above in order to receive an extra credit point. In other words: shoddy, careless work thrown together at the last minute will probably not **earn** you an **extra** credit point and are therefore probably not worth bothering to do. Remember that no extra credit work will be accepted after November 30th.

Extra Credit Play Report:

If you choose to write additional Play Reports for Extra Credit, follow the same format as outlined above for the required Play Reports. Extra Credit Play Reports should be on full-length plays. Two one-act plays can be equivalent to one full-length play as long as you write a separate paper on each one-act play.)

Extra Credit Acting Critique:

Watch a play and write a 2-4 page paper focusing on the **acting** of 1 actor in the play. Evaluate their performance **based** on what you have learned in class and your own life experience. Consider the following points:

1. Was the performer believable in this role? Why or why not? How does the actor use physical appearance/costume to enhance their role?
2. How did the actor use his/her body and voice to reveal the character's Given Circumstances: age, health, personality, social status, emotional/mental state, etc.?
3. What was the actor's level of concentration and/or kind of energy in performance? Was the actor's pace and timing appropriate for the character and situation?
4. What did the actor bring to his/her role that was not provided by the playwright? You should not focus on the **playwright's** work: HOW something is said or done is more important than WHAT is said or done since **the** actor generally **provides the "how"** to the playwright's "what."
5. Did the actor use a particular gesture or bit of business that told you something important about his/her **character**? Explain.
6. How did the actor handle entrances and exits? Were they appropriate to the scene?
7. How did the actor reveal the hidden dimensions of the **character**, if any?
8. What did this character want? (What was his/her objective?) Did the **actor** understand and pursue this?
9. Did you as an audience member care about the character?
10. If the actor played more than one role, how did s/he differentiate between them?