

THEATER 228 / FALL 2011

SELF-PRODUCTION: THE CARTOGRAPHIC IMAGINATION

Monday & Thursday 1:10-3:50pm
'62 Center for Theatre & Dance — Design Studio

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office hours Thursday 11a-12n or by appointment

Course Syllabus

In today's theater world, self-production can be a vital, engaging, and necessary method of creating and producing theatrical works. This course examines theatrical self-production and the ways in which artists exploit this model in pursuit of their individual and collective ambitions. Through an examination of innovative, non-traditional models for performance creation, this class will form its own unique structure for developing and producing a new theatrical performance for public presentation. Operating within carefully chosen constraints, students will share equally in the administrative, artistic, and production roles of the presentation of their work on stage. Thus, a major emphasis of the course will be on experiential education, which provides an invaluable opportunity to encounter firsthand the highly complex relationship between artistry and production. To best advise and mentor students in all levels of design, direction and performance, the course will include additional guest classes with practitioners from the profession and other members of the Department of Theater who can help to provide the full range of skills necessary for students to realize their goals. Group presentations of the creative development process will provide opportunities for guidance, critique, and sustained mentorship on the path to a final performance.

This year, 228 will investigate the performance possibilities contained in the idea of The Map, and in the act of mapping space and spatial relationships. While the course will begin with maps as representations of physical and geographic space, it will also push the definition of mapping to include other sorts of visual representations of information (and the relationships between information) drawing from all disciplines as guided by the research and interests of the class.

Evaluation

Grading will be based on committed class participation, contribution to the collective work of the class, group and individual presentations, and self-evaluation. THEA 228 will make extensive use of a class WordPress site for the sharing of research and ideas, collaborating on the development of all aspects of the performance, documenting the process, and generally extending the conversation beyond the classroom. You will be evaluated on your participation on the site as well as in the classroom and production.

This class is structured so that your contributions to the overall quality of discourse are vital to the success of the class for you and for your classmates. Because of the collaborative nature of this work, you will learn as much by fully listening to and exploring new ideas with your classmates as you will through the individual completion of assignments. Students from a broad range of curricular disciplines are welcomed.

Grading Procedures

There are no formal grades given to projects or assignments throughout the semester, but individual mid-term evaluations will be scheduled to help you evaluate your progress in the class, as well as to provide a forum in which to raise any questions or concerns that you would like to express to us privately.

There will be a final project to consolidate your accumulated work, both on the WordPress site and off of it, into individual “director’s notebooks”. These books should each create a unique narrative of the course and resulting performance, based around the final script, and including visual and textual research, process documents such as writings, sketches, and production notes; as well as your annotations on the work and final commentary. These journals will be checked on periodically throughout the semester. They will be due on the last day of classes, Friday December 9th, and will be a significant factor in determining a final grade for the semester.

If at any point you are concerned about your academic standing you may meet with us privately during our office hours.

Honor Code

You are expected to adhere to the Williams College Academic Honesty and Honor Code as outlined on <http://www.williams.edu/resources/honor/honesty.php>. If you have any questions regarding the Honor Code and its relation to this course, please speak with me as soon as possible.

Attendance

You are allowed only one excused absence for the entire semester. You must, however, inform us in advance of the time and reason for such an absence, except in cases of illness or emergency. Commitments to extra-curricular activities are known in advance, and so are not considered “emergencies.” It will always be your responsibility to find out what was covered in any class that you miss, and to bring yourself up to speed with all assignments given.

Disabilities

Students with disabilities who may need disability-related classroom accommodations for this course are encouraged to set up an appointment to meet with the instructor as soon as possible and to contact the Dean’s Office at x4262 to insure that accommodations are provided in a timely manner.

Important dates:

This schedule is being kept intentionally flexible to allow Theatre 228 to develop in shape and form over the course of the semester; however, there are some hard and fast dates to keep in mind:

Sept 8 – Oct 6	Content generation period. This is the section of the syllabus that is most fleshed out, with projects and assignments that will investigate the possibilities of content and performance around the idea of Maps and Mapping.
Oct 29	Guest artist Ping Chong will visit class to discuss his career and process, in conjunction with performances of his show <i>The Angels of Swedenborg</i> in the MainStage as a part of the CenterSeries.
Oct 8-12	READING PERIOD
Oct 12-14	Midterm evaluations
Oct 13	Freeze on bringing in brand new content. All-class assessment of the material we have, and how to start focusing and shaping it. <u>DO NOT MISS THIS CLASS!</u>
Oct 17	Begin evening rehearsals in the Directing Studio
Oct 24	Set designs due to shop
Oct 17 – Nov 18	Rehearsal period (5 weeks)
Oct 31	Guest artists Brian Hastert and Kristen Sieh from The TEAM will visit class to discuss their development process for shows, in conjunction with performances of their new piece <i>Mission Drift</i> in the MainStage as a part of the CenterSeries. Rehearsals move into the AMT Costume information due to shop
Nov 9	Light plot due
Nov 19-20	Tech rehearsals (full days Sat + Sun)
Nov 21	1 st Dress rehearsal, may take place in the afternoon or evening rather than the usual 7-11p slot (due to Monday night class conflicts)
Nov 23-27	THANKGIVING BREAK It should be noted that we have an unusual schedule in that we will tech the show before break, go away for a week, and then return to have dress rehearsals and our performances. Please bear this in mind when making Thanksgiving travel plans, and bring any concerns to us ASAP.
Nov 27	Sunday night brush-up rehearsal, no or minimal tech Again, please bear this in mind when making travel plans.
Nov 28-29	Dress rehearsals Rehearsal on the 28 th may take place in the afternoon or evening rather than the usual 7-11p slot (due to Monday night class conflicts)
Nov 30 – Dec 3	Performances in the AMT, 4 total, Wednesday-Saturday nights
Dec 4	STRIKE (Sunday) — attendance is mandatory

iPads

This year 228 is participating in a pilot program being conducted by OIT on the use of iPads in the classroom. This means that each of you will be receiving an iPad 2 for the duration of the semester. We have integrated its use into the development process for the show, and will be discussing this further with you in the next few weeks.

To be clear: the iPads are not meant to completely take the place of your existing ways of working, taking notes, doing research or assignments. It is not meant to replace a full-featured computer, nor is it meant to push aside your trusty notebook or sketchpad and pencil. It is meant as a supplement, but as we have been working on this we have found many ways in which it can be a real timesaver and convenience, especially in a collaborative creative process like Theatre 228. Plus it's cool.

Two very important things:

- 1) The iPads are ON LOAN to you for the duration of the semester. Yes, you definitely have to give them back at our last class.
- 2) You are responsible for your iPads, as well as the accessories that come with them (charging cable, power supply, case and stylus.) Any loss or damage to the devices is your responsibility.

Since the potential damage or loss of an iPad is no small financial burden to shoulder, we have arranged for each of you to take out a short-term insurance policy covering the devices for the duration of the semester. This will cost \$20, and we will go over the paperwork and process for getting these policies in order. The cost of the insurance will be charged to your term bill, and in general be treated the same as if it were a book for the class that you needed to purchase.

Also, in order to activate the iPads you will need an iTunes account, and in order to get an iTunes account you will need a credit card. For anyone who does not have a credit card, arrangements can be made through the Dean's Office to provide you with one for the purposes of this class. We will be conducting a general technology survey during the first class to answer all of these questions and make whatever arrangements are necessary so that everyone can participate equally in this experiment.

Of course, if you have any questions or concerns about this, please do not hesitate to talk with either of us.

Media Mentor

Because of the iPads, WordPress, and other technologies we will be utilizing in this class, we will also have a student Media Mentor attached to the class as a part of OIT's Integrating Digital Literacies (IDL) program.

Our Mentor will be Ali Graebner '14 (akg2@williams.edu). She will provide in-class instruction and after class support for various technologies introduced utilizing the iPads. Additional support is always available at the Media Education Center (Jesup 316) during daily "drop-in" support hours.

<http://mec.williams.edu/>

Costs

There is one required book, Joseph Chaikin's *The Presence of the Actor*, which is available from Water Street Books. The intention is for all other texts to be made available digitally on the WordPress site with no additional cost to you.

There will be material costs associated with this class. However, they are hard to determine exactly, which is why there is no set lab fee. We are not ordering any art supplies specifically for the class at the outset, instead choosing to see what needs may arise during the course of the semester. Many basic materials are already available in the design studio, and may be used for any work associated with THEA 228. As the semester goes on we can order additional materials for your specific projects as needed, or you can acquire them on your own. Based on final expenses, a lab fee of not more than \$50 may be charged to your term bills. We will notify you towards the end of the semester what, if any, lab fees will be charged.

Xeroxing expenses (B&W and color) incurred while working on assignments related to THEA 228 will be covered by the department. Please note that this only covers copies made on the BizHub located in the Theatre Department offices, and this machine may ONLY be used for xeroxing that is directly related to work for THEA 228! If, at the end of the semester, the Xeroxing charges for THEA 228 are inordinately high, an additional cost may be added to the lab fees for everyone enrolled in the class.

The department machine is often in high demand, and all other uses of the machine will take priority over student use; additionally, the department machine should not be used after Corissa Bryant has left (typically 4pm) unless prior arrangements have been made, so please plan accordingly.

Please let us know if you foresee any issues with the costs associated with this class.

Xerox Machine

To use the department xerox machine, utilize the following codes:

Account: T228 (*N.B. capital "T"*)
Password: 11228

DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES give out these codes to anyone not enrolled in THEA 228, or involved in the production.

The Xerox machine can also scan and email images. You can either enter your own email address (slightly tedious) or use the class email address which is programmed into the machine as "thea228". To retrieve your images, log into Gmail with the following info:

Username: thea302
Password: ilovesetdesign

(Apologies for recycling the Gmail address from another class.)

Please note — the scans will be cryptically named, and may get grouped together in a single thread with your classmates' images. Please be sensitive to the shared nature of the account and do not delete any images not belonging to you (in fact, just archive them instead of deleting — megabytes are cheap.)

Costume stock

Over the course of THEA 228 you will access to our stock of costumes and costume elements for use in the development of the production, with the following rules:

1) Costume storage is only open and available on Mondays and Thursdays 10:00a-12:00p, and Fridays 2:00p-5:00p.

2) There will be a sign up sheet on the front door of the Costume Shop with 15 minute time slots. If you need a lot of items pulled that may take more than 15 minutes, you should block off more time. Be sure to sign up by **the day before** you want to pull from stock, so the shop knows in advance who is coming in and when. Please be respectful of other people's needs. We don't want a bunch of people showing up at once and overwhelming Samantha and Barbara.

3) Also, it will benefit everyone if you can send **both** Barbara and Samantha an email prior to coming in with a list of the items you are looking for. Their emails are Barbara.A.Bell@williams.edu and Samantha.E.Patterson@williams.edu

4) Students will check out needed costume articles and will be responsible for scheduling their return to the costume shop. If a student loses a costume, they will be charged the replacement cost of the article.

There are three separate areas for costume storage, two of which are not in the '62 CTD but in Greylock. Therefore, it is often not possible to just run into storage except when there is a scheduled time for the pulling and return of costumes. Thank you for understanding the needs of the costume shop and costume shop storage.

Props storage

You will also have access to our stock of props and furniture for use in the development of the THEA 228 production. A basic stock of items is kept in the props cage in the basement of the '62 CTD.

Please coordinate with Professor Morris about getting access to props storage. Also be aware that you will be responsible for arranging to return any props or furniture items borrowed from any of the three locations.

#	Day	Date	Where	In-class	Reading DUE	Project DUE	Prod sched
1	Thu	Sep 8	Design studio	Intro to class, overview of syllabus + production schedule. Survey for iPad setup. WordPress lesson.			START 5 WEEKS — Generate Material! (to Oct 13)
			62CTD comp lab				
2	Mon	Sep 12	Design studio	Look at 72 Maps in 72 Hours. Subway Stories in-class work.		• 72 maps/72 hours —> what, if anything, do they bring to class for this?	
	Tue	Sep 13 EVE 7-9pm	62CTD comp lab	Receive iPads! Lesson, overview of apps + settings.			
3	Thu	Sep 15	Design studio	Talk about Hashimoto Constitution. Look at Short Map Stories. Do Juxtapositions in class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read the U.S. Constitution • read "Narrative of the Constitution" • listen to Hashimoto Constitution 	• Short Map Stories (1-2 min perf from 1 or more maps)	
4	Mon	Sep 19	Design studio	Critiques of Short Map Stories + Juxtapositions. Discuss interests in roles to play (actor, designer, director, writer, etc). Discuss auditions and total number of performers. Present Tunnel Vision assignment.			
5	Thu	Sep 22	Design studio	Discuss Chaikin (NO DEM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chaikin, Joseph. The Presence of the Actor 		
6	Mon	Sep 26	Design studio	Tunnel Vision presentations. Mental Mappings Redux?		• Tunnel Vision (5 OCD maps of campus + presentation)	
7	Thu	Sep 29	Design studio	Ping Chong class visit. Talk about Video/Sound Mapping assignment. All in class to go over any needed technologies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some assignment to intro Ping Chong to the students 	FRI 9/30 7pm: Book Report synopses due	(Fri Sep 30) AUDITIONS? Sat Oct 1 AUDITIONS Sun Oct 2 AUDITIONS
			62CTD comp lab				
8	Mon	Oct 3	Design studio	Present Illustrated Lectures of Book Reports. Additional acting exercises from Book Report material.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read classmates' Book Report synopses 	• Book report illustrated presentation	
9	Thu	Oct 6	Design studio	Video/Sound Mappings presentation. CeltX demo.		• Video/Sound Mappings	
			62CTD comp lab				
Oct 8 - 11							
Reading Period							
Individual mid-term evaluations to be scheduled							
10	Thu	Oct 13	Design studio	PULL IT ALL TOGETHER Stop with new materials & review			STOP with new material!
11	Mon	Oct 17	Design studio				Start evening rehearsals (Directing Studio — 2 weeks)
12	Thu	Oct 20	Design studio				
13	Mon	Oct 24	Design studio				Oct 24: SET DESIGNS DUE

#	Day	Date	Where	In-class	Reading DUE	Project DUE	Prod sched
14	Thu	Oct 27	Design studio				
15	Mon	Oct 31	Design studio	The TEAM class visit			Start rehearsals in AMT (3 weeks to tech)
							Oct 31: COSTUME DESIGNS DUE
16	Thu	Nov 3	Design studio				
17	Mon	Nov 7	Design studio				Nov 9: LIGHT PLOT DUE
18	Thu	Nov 10	Design studio				
19	Mon	Nov 14	Design studio				
20	Thu	Nov 17	Design studio				
	Sat	Nov 19	AMT				Tech 10/12
	Sun	Nov 20	AMT				Tech 10/12
21	Mon	Nov 21	TBD				Dress #1 in afternoon • during class?
	Mon	Nov 21	TBD				Dress #1 in afternoon • 4-6/7 slot?
Nov 23 - 27							
Thanksgiving Break							
	Sun	Nov 27	AMT				eve: brush-up rehearsal
22	Mon	Nov 28	TBD				Dress #2 in afternoon • during class?
	Mon	Nov 28	TBD				Dress #2 in afternoon • 4-6/7 slot?
	Tue	Nov 29	AMT				eve: Dress #3
	Wed	Nov 30	AMT				eve: Performance #1 (OPENING)
23	Thu	Dec 1	Design studio				
	Thu	Dec 1	AMT				eve: Performance #2
	Fri	Dec 2	AMT				eve: Performance #3
	Sat	Dec 3	AMT				eve: Performance #4
	Sun	Dec 4	AMT				STRIKE
24	Mon	Dec 5	Design studio	228 performance feedback with external critics.			
25	Thu	Dec 8	Design studio	SCS + blue sheets. Postmortem.		Production Book due (hard copy)	
Dec 10 - 13							
Reading period							
Dec 14 - 19							
Finals							