UPDATED SYLLABUS OCT. 17 2007

MANHATTANVILLE COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF DANCE & THEATRE

DTH 1000 CREATIVE PROCESS (W)

Professor Ara Fitzgerald
Professor Hannah Fox
Professor Zac Moore

“All the world’s a stage.” William Shakespeare

COURSE DESCRIPTION Creative Process is a foundation DTH entry-level course that provides students with both theoretical and experiential exploration of creativity and the performance process. The course will introduce a series of vocabularies, tools, points of reference to enable students to grow in understanding and practice in the performance of dance & theatre. The vocabularies include: improvisational forms, ensemble techniques and theatre games, Viewpoints, breath and speech, elements of design, dance and choreography, study of play texts, exploration of the relationship between performance and society, and methods of critical evaluation. Performance goals include: specificity of action, spontaneity and focus. The course will include attendance at three departmental productions, as well as at a NY theatre trip. The term will culminate with a composition/project created by the students using the techniques taught during the semester. A series of readings and written responses are an integral part of the course.

Creative Process is a writing intensive course.

TEXT Readings for the course are on electronic reserve.
Please note: The password for DTH 1000 Creative Process is 1000.

REQUIREMENTS

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION (50%) Your presence and active participation in workshops and discussion is essential. More than 2 unexcused absences will lower your grade. LATENESS: Two latenesses will be counted as an absence. Habitual latecomers disrupt the class and may not be permitted to enter the class. Be on time to class. The doors are locked 10 min. after class begins.

Absence from class due to participation in extra-curricular activities is not an excused absence and will lower your grade. Students are expected to arrange their schedules so that priority is given to curricular, i.e., grade bearing courses and productions.

PAPERS and QUIZZES (30%) In addition to the text, responses to various readings and videos will be assigned.

MIDTERM PAPER (20%) 5-7 pp. Based on NYC production, discussing performance elements, such as Lighting, set design, direction, script, acting, staging, dance/movement, choreography, music/sound, concept. Due 10/29.
WRITTEN RESPONSES Instruction for written responses to all these events are attached to this syllabus. For full credit, read and follow instructions carefully.

NUMBER ALL ASSIGNMENTS WITH THE HOMEWORK NUMBER AND THE DATE THEY ARE SUBMITTED. All papers must be typewritten, double spaced, with one-inch margins. See DTH Handbook for instructions on written work. Students may choose one paper for late submission (due one week after assignment is due—not applicable to midterm paper), otherwise, LATE PAPERS WILL LOSE A THIRD OF A GRADE FOR EACH DAY’S LATENESS. (Example: C to C- for one day late.)

ATTENDANCE AT NYC PRODUCTION is a required assignment for the course. Cost of theatre ticket: $35. Directions for travel into the city will be provided. See the Instructor if cost presents a difficulty.

ATTENDANCE AT Mville DANCE AND THEATRE SEASON which includes two fall theatrical productions, the Dance Concert and Visions Series. (Admission $5; Visions Series, free) It is your responsibility to plan ahead to attend these events, which count as assignments. Reservations for DTH events are necessary and can be made by calling the Box Office at X7175

USHERING Students are required to usher at one departmental production over the term. Ushers may not watch the show the night they serve. See Michael Lounsbery, Technical Director in the Tech Office, Brownson to sign up to usher. Watch the callboard outside the Tech Office in Brownson Hall for any changes.

CLOTHING, ETC Street shoes and sneakers worn outside the studio are NOT allowed on the dance floor. You may work barefoot or in dance shoes. Wear rehearsal or exercise clothes, which will allow you to move freely. No tight jeans, skirts, baseball caps, hats, etc. Inform the instructors of any injuries or specific difficulties with movement. Food, drinks (except H2O) and chewing gum are prohibited during class. Silence cell phones before class begins.

CHECK SYLLABUS REGULARLY
SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>PLACE</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 8/27 M DS</td>
<td>Syllabus Introduction to the Creative Process Play in the Perpetual Present HW #1 Due 8/30 Read article on Viola Spolin and write 2-3 pp discussing what in your consideration are three of her most salient points.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/29 DTH Dept. Meeting</td>
<td>Required for Majors and Minors. All interested students welcome. 3-4 pm Little Theatre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 8/30 R DS</td>
<td>Workshop: Spolin/Theatre/Ensemble Games HW Read Corrigan, What is the Theatrical Event? PP 8 -32 for next class 9/6 HW#1 Spolin paper due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9/3 LABOR DAY NO CLASS

3. 9/6 R DS Discussion: The Elements of Performance
   Quiz on Corrigan
   NYC Performance $$ due 9/24
   HW#2: Read Tharp pp 3·11,29-32, 78·90
   Write a 1-2 page letter to Ms. Tharp. Consider what you
   learned from the article as it relates to the creative habit
   in your life. Ask her a question. Due 9

4. 9/10 M DS Clown Workshop
   HW#2:Tharp letter due.
   HW: Read articles by Csikszentmihayli (chik-sent-mi-
   halee), Nachmanovitch & McCaslin by 9/13.
   HW#3: Write-4pp paper-compare and contrast the
   articles. Draft due: 9/17

5. 9/13 R DS Clown Workshop
   HW: Write a summary or outline of each of the articles
   (Csikszentmihayli, Nachmanovitch & McCaslin) to
   bring to class 9/17. What are the components of play,
   creativity and improvisation as discussed in each article?

6. 9/17 M DS Discuss Articles.
   HW: Read Bogart, Terror Disorientation and Difficulty;
   and Landau, The Viewpoints and Composition.

7. 9/20 R DS Writing Workshop -Prof Mekuria
   Quiz on Viewpoints
   HW: Read Corrigan, The Performer & the Audience,
   pp 83-111
   NYC Performance $$ due next class.
   HW#4: Draft of Compare and Contrast Paper due 9/24

8. 9/24 M DS Viewpoints Workshop
   NYC Performance $$ due
   HW#3 Draft of Compare and Contrast due.

9. 9/27 R DS Viewpoints Workshop with David Barlow, Guest Artist
   Hw#4 Revision of paper due 10/1
   HW: Read Lighting Article (Handout- not ERES) by 10/1

10. 10/1 M DS Guest Lecturer: Prof Linda Szmyd, Dance Historian
    Hw#4 Revision Due
    HW: Read Corrigan Space and Design

11. 10/4 R DS Lecture Demo with Prof. Rothchild on Space & Design
HW #5 Reflective Process Paper 2-3 pp
We have explored various performance “vocabularies” in our workshops. Reflect on these as tools in the creative process. How do these workshops relate to the readings? Last paragraph, a subjective response to the term thus far: What key elements of the creative process have you discovered? What challenges have you met? Have the elements in the course changed your perspectives in any way? How? Be specific. Due 10/9

10/8 COLUMBUS DAY NO CLASS

12. 10/9 Tuesday DS Video: The Way Things Go
HW: see DTH Production #1 “The Improv Show” EX
Theatre (see Calendar of Events for details)
RESERVATIONS NECESSARY

13. 10/11 R DS Lecture Demo with Prof Ken Rothchild on Space & Design
HW: Read Lighting handout

14. 10/15 M LT Lighting Demo- Michael Lounsbery
HW: Read Turner, From Ritual to Theatre. Read closely and list the four major aspects of his theory of Social Drama. And read: Corrigan, The Living Theatre, pp 187-196. Rebecca Ostriker, Theatre of Living

10/17 VISIONS Guest Artist Series: My Brooklyn Hamlet
7pm Little Theatre Free

15. 10/18 R DS Discuss Performance and Society
Video: Signals Through the Flames

16. 10/22 M DS Prep for NYC PRODUCTION
Plan to leave campus by 5:30pm Thursday.
Midterm Paper HW# 6: 5-7 pp Discuss at least five Performance Elements in the NYC Production. Relate to class work and include at least 5 cited passages from readings, program, etc. This is not a review (hit or pan) but a set of observations based on the term’s work. The final paragraph or two should contain your own subjective response to the event - what you liked and didn’t like and, most important, WHY? (Example: I liked it because it reminded me of my own family dynamics. I didn’t like it because if reminded me of my own family dynamics. Then be specific in offering details and examples.)
Due 10/29
10/24 DTH Dept. Meeting

Required for Majors. All interested students welcome. 3-4pm Little Theatre

17. 10/25 R DS

Meet with director and cast of DTH Production #1 “The Improv Show”

18. 10/29 M DS

Discussion: NYC Performance. HW#6 Midterm Paper due

19. 11/1 R DS

Workshop in Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal) and Playback Theatre Prof Fox and Moore
HW: See DTH Production #2 “Juana La Loca” Little Theatre
(See Calendar of Events for details) RESERVATIONS NECESSARY

20. 11/5 M DS

Meet with director and cast of “Juana La Loca”
HW: Memorize Shakespeare Handout

11/7 VISIONS

Visions Guest Artist Series: Drama Therapy Demonstration & workshop with Craig Haen Dance Studio 2pm Free

21. 11/8 R DS

Workshop: Shakespeare

22. 11/12 M DS

Shakespeare Lecture: Prof Posnick
HW Read Schraeder, What is Dance? Martha Graham, A Modern Dancer’s Primer for Action

23. 11/15 R DS

Dance Technique Class
HW # 7 Choose one dance video from reserve in Library Write 3pp. Discuss the video in relation to the readings and Prof Szmyd’s lecture due 11/19

24. 11/19 M DS

Composition

25. 11/22 THANKSGIVING

NO CLASS

26. 11/26 M DS

Work on Final Projects HW 1.5 minimum rehearsal of final projects outside of class.

26. 11/29 R DS

Work on Final Projects HW See DTH Production #3 Dance Concert- Little Theatre (See Calendar of Events for details)
RESERVATIONS NECESSARY

27. 12/3  M  DS  Meet with guest choreographer and cast of Dance Concert  
HW #8  Final reflective essay on the term-  
What did you learn about creative process?  
What did you learn about performance?  
What were you most satisfying moments?  
What were your biggest challenges?  
How did you overcome them?  
Which aspect(s) of performance would you like to pursue?  
WHY?  
What would you change for future students?  
Due 12/6

28. 12/6  R  DS  Perform Final Projects  
Final Reflective Essay due  
Last Class
SUGGESTED SELECTED READING LIST:
Ackerman, Diane, Deep Play, Random House, 1999
Bogart, Ann, A Director Prepares, Routledge, 2001
Brook, Peter, The Empty Space
Goffman, Erving, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, Doubleday Anchor, Garden City
Between Theater and Anthropology, U. of Pennsylvania Press, 1985

ENJOY!

DEPARTMENT OF DANCE AND THEATRE
OUTLINE AND NOTES FOR WRITTEN RESPONSES

GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN RESPONSES:
Use the following outline when writing responses to readings, videos, productions, etc.

1. OBJECTIVE description of the content of the reading or event. (30%)
Sample topic sentences:
   In this article Martha Graham discusses essential elements of dance.
   This class presented the theory and practice of Viewpoints, a system of performance training.
   Members of The Living Theatre spoke about the history and political orientation of their radical theatre and invited the audience to participate in a series of exercises.

2. RELATION OF THE READING TO CLASS WORK. (50%)
Sample topic sentences:
   The elements of the reading which most clearly apply to our class work are: concentration, cooperation and non-judgmental leadership. (Give specific examples.)
   The Living Theatre exercises challenged us to invent new ways of communicating without familiar language, reinforcing the ensemble work we have done in class. (Give specific examples.)

3. SUBJECTIVE or personal responses. (20%)
   Your own ideas, opinions, comments, preferences and perspectives.
Sample topic sentences:
I’ve noticed that certain sections of this video clashed with the values I received in my home. This made me very uncomfortable.

I disagree with Peter Brook on the issue of protest through theatre. You get more flies with honey than salt. (Support your opinion with specific examples.)

Even though I didn’t expect to enjoy this play because I had never seen a political play before, I did enjoy the creativity of the performers and the chance to see a new kind of theatre. I also realized that in some way every action can be seen as a political statement.

WORDS TO AVOID: The following list contains general superlatives and other words, which keep your writing from depth and specificity. Avoid them.

interesting, wonderful, fun, boring, incredible, awesome, terrific, nice, very, stupid....

NOTE ABOUT PERFORMANCE REVIEWS: When writing responses to performances, focus primarily on how the performance relates to our work in class. You need not write a rave review or a “pan”. If you were impressed, what specifically impressed you? If not, what specifically was missing. These are not “newspaper reviews”, but expressions of your developing critical awareness.

More to come...