



Theatre 2018-19 Syllabus

Faculty: Mr. Todd Ritter, Level 1, 2 and 4 Theatre Instructor
Ms. Emma Givens, Level 3 Theatre Instructor
Dr. Stephanie Poxon, CFA Director

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Class Commandments:

- Come each day filled with a sense of joy.
- Unless you hurt someone physically or emotionally, don't apologize.
- Turn your phones off and put them in your bags before the start of class.

Course Offerings:

Students can expect strenuous work in the following areas in each level of classes, making appropriate adjustments for proficiency levels:

- Acting: an understanding of concentration, stage vocabulary, personal identification, monologues, contemporary scene study, staging, character studies, vocal development.
- Movement: a knowledge of the physical areas of the stage, the use of the body in characterization, vocabulary, dance techniques and vocabulary, warm-up routines, and an understanding how the body functions as a tool for the actor.
- Improvisation: an exploration of the actor's personal identification with the factors of space and environment, development of qualities unique to his/her own being, ensemble work, development of creativity and movement, pantomime, slow motion, sound projection and simple staging.
- Creative Writing: the process of creative writing for use on the stage, radio or broadcast, promotional materials, and ensemble theatre pieces.
- Dramatic Literature: a survey of dramatic literature from Greek drama to the present day, various reading selections, and critical theory.
- Performance: the study and rehearsal of specific work as a result of classroom curriculum performed for a variety of audiences, preparation process and performance experience.

Class Expectations:

Students are expected to practice the following qualities at all times:

- Respect for others on and off the stage
- 100% participation at the appropriate times
- Remaining on task during independent and group work without constant supervision
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Come to class prepared to work, listen, and learn, with all appropriate materials
- Avoid interrupting the class or others with inappropriate talking or talking out of turn
- Listen to and follow directions given to you by your instructors

Your contributions to the positive learning environment aid in your learning as well as the learning of the entire class. This includes staying attentive to class activities as well as fully participating in all activities.

Guest Artists: We often ask professionals in our area to come to work with you so that you benefit from their expertise and experience. You are expected to show them total respect and your 100% willingness to learn from their experiences. You are also expected to know the information that they are bringing to you. You will want to take notes on this information, as it will be included on tests.

Grading:

*From the CFA student handbook:

“You have been chosen for a Specialty Center! We expect you to excel in your CFA classes. A CFA grade below a B will initiate a conversation about your commitment and dedication to your achievement in the arts. ...A grade point average (GPA) is calculated only on classes that students are enrolled in each grading period. **The minimum GPA expectation for all students is 2.7.** ...It is imperative that students and parents understand the importance of academic and artistic achievement.” Page 6

300% - Tests, Projects and Performances:

- Tests & Projects: Projects will be given throughout the year, use your time wisely. You will be tested on any information given in class during that time period. Test questions may and will be repeated over the course of the semester so review prior tests in order to stay ahead in class.
- Performance: This is a performance-based class, therefore a significant part of your grade will be based on your performances. Grading will be based on performance quality, personal growth and attitude. **Please note that rehearsals and performances are part of the curriculum, and therefore are mandatory.**

200% - Quiz:

- Quizzes may be announced or UNannounced. Quizzes will only cover the current unit of study.

100% - Daily and Dance Participation:

- Daily Grades: Class participation is vital. I will be looking for not only participation, but also attitude and dedication. Merely showing up for class does NOT constitute an “A.” A weekly average will determine your grade.
- Weekly Dance - Grades will be determined primarily by ATTITUDE, participation, and preparedness.

100% - Homework:

- Due to the nature of a performance based class, homework is no issued frequently. BUT when it is assigned, I expect it to be completed ON TIME.

300% - Theatre Log:

You must turn one log in PER QUARTER. I will no longer accept a theatre log from a performance that occurred more than 3 weeks prior to date it was turned in. Theatre logs are always available on my Quia site and you must turn in a ticket and program for the show. ALSO, if you have cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher and at least a B in my class by the end of MP3, you will be EXEMPT from your MP4 theatre log if you turned in the previous 3 Theatre Logs! You may turn one in if you think it will help your final grade.

Due Dates: MP1: Oct. 26, MP2: Jan. 18, MP3: Mar. 22, MP4: May 31

Tutoring for Mr. Ritter is available during 6th or 7th block or by appointment. Ms. Given’s tutoring is by appointment.

Late Policy

I will take off 5 points each school day that an assignment is late. **After 5 days**, I will no longer accept the assignment at all. At the close of a marking period, late work will no longer be accepted.

Attendance Policy

All make up assignments must be completed within three school days, if it is an excused absence. In order to get an excused absence note from attendance, you must bring a parent note within three school days. If you bring a note on day two, you only have ONE day to make up work. If you do not bring a note it is an unexcused absence, and you will receive a zero for that assignment. You will also receive a zero for that day as your daily grade. **It is the student’s responsibility to show your instructor your note.**

From the CFA Handbook (Page 5) In addition, attendance during the school day is mandatory during showcase tech week. Students are not permitted to sleep in or come to school late during Showcase Tech Week or Showcase Performance days. If a student is absent during Showcase Tech Week/Performance days, we will need a note from an attending physician to verify the absence. Otherwise, the student may not be permitted to perform in the Showcase.

Supplies

All levels should have workout clothes in their locker at **all times**. This includes sneakers, shorts, T-shirt, sweatshirt, and sweatpants when it gets cooler. In an effort to defray the cost of classroom supplies, I'm asking each level to bring the following:

- Level 1 – A pair of scissors, tissues and a box of colored pencils (not Prismacolor, they're too expensive)
- Level 2 – Tissues and a box of Band-Aids
- Level 3 – A marble composition book, tissues and two plastic tubs of baby wipes
- Level 4 – A marble composition book, tissues and two plastic tubs of baby wipes

Levels 3 and 4 should purchase makeup kits available at Premiere Costumes in Carytown. Premiere carries two types of makeup kits; basic (a small kit that provides a minimal amount of makeup) and deluxe (which includes a broader range of makeup foundations plus several other items). The basic kit is around \$20 and the deluxe kit runs around \$60. The deluxe kit is a pretty good value, but the basic kit can get you through the makeup class. If you have not purchased your makeup, go to Premiere over the summer so they can help you select the correct skin tone. I also recommend picking up a cheap fishing tackle box to use as a makeup box. It works just as well as the fancy department store makeup boxes (maybe even better) and it's much cheaper.

Summer Assignments

All Levels – Even though the year is over, doesn't mean you should forget about theatre. This summer I want you to see a play. There is PLENTY to see in Richmond and a good deal of it is FREE. I will have the theatre log form available on my Quia site all summer so submit one whenever you like and get it out of the way. My Quia site is <http://www.quia.com/pages/cfaritter.html>. For those of you without computer access over the summer, I have included the theatre log questions in this syllabus.

Level Two – I would like you to read one play (any time period) and write a full one-page summary. Also read *A Practical Handbook for the Actor* by Melissa Bruder (and more). I would also like you to create a visual interpretation on one chapter (1-7 your choice). This can be a collage, painting, sculpture, etc. Just be creative and have fun. Be prepared to discuss the book in September.

Level Three– You will read two plays. *She Kills Monsters*, by Qui Nguyen and *Medea* (digital copies are available via the level 3 page on Quia). You must also prepare a monologue from a play (that you also must read) that is appropriate for auditioning for a part you would like to play if you were to audition for *She Kills Monsters*. Also, write a two-page summary of the play your monologue is from and include in it the reason why you think that's an appropriate monologue 1) for you, and 2) for that specific audition.

Level Four– I would like you to read one play and write a full two-page (double spaced) summary of the play. Also read the first two sections of *Audition* by Michael Shurtleff. I have copies or you may purchase your own to make notes in it. I would also like you to write 6 journal entries. One entry on six of your favorite (or least favorite) guideposts. Be prepared to discuss the book in September. Feel free to read the rest of the book if you like, it's really good. Lastly, prepare a monologue for presentation in class the first week of school. The monologue must be new to you, from a published, American, 20th or 21st century play. The character for your monologue should be one you might reasonably be cast as (no dialects). The monologue may be no longer than two minutes (60 seconds if you plan to audition at VTA), and **must be memorized**.

Remember that there is a \$20 CFA Theatre Fee due at the beginning of the year. This fee goes a long way in paying for guest artists, supplies, and the scenery for the coming year.

2018-2019

Mark your calendars!

Theatre events are listed in bold and all students are required to attend the evenings listed below.

October

26 MP 1 Theatre Logs Due (THIS IS DURING VTA BE PREPARED!)

November

12 Fall Showcase Tech (Times TBA)

13 Fall Showcase Tech (Times TBA)

14 All Levels – 1st Dress (Times TBA)

15 All Levels – Final Dress (Times TBA)

16-17 CFA Fall Showcase 7:00 Show

19 CFA Open House

December

6-8 Drama Club – Play 7:00 Show

11-14 NEW EXAM WEEK!

January

12 Audition Seminar (Level IV ONLY)

18 MP 2 Theatre Logs Due

February

2 Theatre Auditions (Volunteers will be needed)

28 – Mar 2 Drama Club – Musical 7:00 Show

March

8-9 Dance Showcase

11-14 Theatre Showcase Tech – Times TBA

15-16 CFA Theatre Showcase – 7:00 Show

22 MP 3 Theatre Logs Due

April

1-5 SPRING BREAK

12-13 MT Showcase

16-18 TENTATIVE NEW YORK TRIP – DETAILS COMING SOON

May

3 Senior Theatre Showcase (Tech Schedule TBA)

10 Senior Musical Theatre Showcase

24 Senior Visual Art Showcase (Art Works Gallery)

31 MP 4 Theatre Logs Due AND Senior Dance Showcase

June

1 Friends of Center for the Arts Honors and Awards Picnic 11:00

14 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

Theatre Log

During the school year, you will turn in your theatre logs through my quia page. The summer theatre log is available online at www.quia.com/pages/cfaritter.html then follow the link to your particular class. However, if you do not have access to a computer over the summer, you may turn your summer theatre log in on paper.

Answer the following questions in **COMPLETE SENTENCES**.

Name of Theatre: _____ Title of Show: _____

Please score the following elements on a scale from 1-10. One is lowest and 10 is the highest.

1. Set Design- 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 - 10

a. Describe what you saw and comment on what was unique/innovative about the design and pieces on stage.

b. Describe how you think the set could have been better utilized or something you might change about the design and why.

2. Light Design- 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 - 10

a. Describe the lighting elements you observed that were strong

b. Describe the lighting elements you observed that could have been improved upon and how.

3. Costume Design- 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 - 10

a. Describe the most effective costume choices you observed and why.

b. Describe the least effective costume choices you observed and why.

4. Sound Design- 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 - 10
 - a. Describe the overall sound design and the strongest elements and why. Include information about sound effects, microphones, and recorded music.

 - b. Describe the weakest aspects of the sound design and why.

5. Performance- 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 - 10
 - a. Cite the strongest performances you observed and why they stood out to you.

 - b. Cite missed opportunities with performance you observed and cite why you feel the choices were not as strong as they could have been.

6. Overall look and feel of the production- 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 - 10
 - a. Do you feel the director was successful in building a clear vision for this production? In what ways?

 - b. In what ways could the look and feel of this production be improved?

Total Score: /60

Parents and Guardians,

In an attempt to increase communication, and since *some* of my students *occasionally* forget to mention important dates, I am asking that you read the attached pages and sign this paper. Keep the calendar and put it on the fridge so that you can keep track of all of the upcoming events this year. Thanks, and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact us via email or phone.

Student Name

Email Address

Cell Phone

Parent/Guardian Name

Email Address

Preferred Phone #

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date