

## Intra-active Theatre

Instructors: Wende Ballew  
Reforming Arts, Inc.  
Spring Semester 2020

Mondays: 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM  
Whitworth Women's Facility

### **COURSE DISCRIPTION:**

Description: This course is an introduction to Intra-active theatre, a form of theatre that is informed by devised theatre and feminist theory in order to build connection, empathy, and resilience within oneself and community through theatre exercises, storytelling, dialogue, and eventually play creation. Students will gain a theoretical and practical understanding of the basic principles: self-actualization, relaxation, empathy, concentration, sense of community, vulnerability, resilience, use of voice, body movement, sense memory, spontaneity, self-awareness, privacy in public, imagination, visualization, truthful actions, objectives, tactics, endowments, sense of urgency and becoming together in the reality of the given circumstances. Students will explore these concepts through physical and vocal warm ups, improvisations, theatre exercises, object exercises, scene work, class discussions, self-evaluations, text exploration and written analysis. In addition to in-class exercises and play building we will read about the foundations of intra-active theatre and read examples of play styles. This is an academic course. We will have fun in class through theatre games but there will also be challenging homework assignments and reading requirements. However, there are no prior educational attainment requirements, i.e. a GED or high school diploma is not required for you to take this class.

### **Course Readings:**

Hagan, Uta. (1973). *Respect for Acting*. New York: MacMillian.

Boal, A. (2000). *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Igarss 2014. London: Pluto Books.

<http://doi.org/10.1007/s13398-014-0173-7.2>

### **Assigned Plays**

### **Articles**

## REFORMING ARTS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**Philosophy on Education and Learning:** Each Facilitator and participant is respected as both teacher and a learner. The women participating in this class are seen as experts of their own lives who will develop their own solutions to problems as they define them, not as passive participants needing to be “saved” by the facilitator.

**Anti-Racism/Sexism/Classism/Ageism/Heteronormism/Ableism:** Reforming Arts does not support oppression. Therefore, this curriculum is infused with ideology that recognizes the inherent dignity and equality of every person. No one is considered superior or inferior to others because of race, sex, gender identity, economic class, age, religious beliefs, sexuality, physical or mental characteristics, education level, or criminal justice classification. Therefore, participants

are encouraged to enter into discussions with an open mind and to listen to each other. An important part of maintaining such an environment is the commitment to protect the health and safety of every member of the class. Belligerent, abusive, profane, threatening and/or inappropriate behavior on the part of students is a violation of this compact. Students who are found guilty of such misconduct may be subject to immediate dismissal from the class.

### **Lock Down**

If a student misses a class because they were in lockdown, they will be required to provide a two page explanation of how their actions contributed to being locked down before returning to class. A student who receives a DR because of violence will be removed from the roster and required to reapply to the program.

## **CLASS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Attendance**

- You are expected to come to every class. More than two unexcused or three excused absences will result in a percentage reduction in your grade.
- If you miss class, it is **YOUR** responsibility to find out what you missed.
- **Please let me know—as soon as possible—if you will miss class.**

### **Missed Assignments**

- Missed in-class quizzes, insights, in-class assignments and activities **may not** be made up.
- Missed homework\written assignments due to an absence will not be made up without prior arrangements with the instructor or an excused absence (medical condition or court appearance, for example). Homework is due on the assigned date whether or not you are in class.
- Assignments are due at the beginning of class unless stated otherwise.
- Scenes **may not** be made up without documentation of an extreme medical emergency or other situation beyond your control.
- The instructor may choose to create new assignments and tests for students eligible for makeup work.
- All assignments must be completed and submitted in order to receive a passing grade.

### **Disability issues**

If you have any form of disability or impairment and need any special assistance, please let me know at the beginning of the semester. I cannot help you if you do not talk to me. I assure you that anything you tell me in confidence will remain in confidence.

### **Class Rules**

- Arrive **on time** and stay until dismissal.
- Bring your **textbook** and notebook to every class.
- Come to class **prepared** to take notes, participate, and complete activities/assignments.
- No **sleeping** or heads on the desk.
- **Engage!** Be an active learner.
- **Be respectful of your instructor and classmates and remain open to diverse perspectives. We are all different and we are all learning!**

- Be a courteous listener and present your ideas in a way that shows respect for your colleagues.
- Read the assigned material and be prepared to participate.
- **Keep copies of all your written work.**
- **Be BRAVE**

### **Class Participation**

- Learning the craft of acting requires collaboration, communication and a trusting ensemble. You are expected to conduct yourself in a mature and professional manner; focus, consideration and support of others in the group are paramount.
- Since expanding your sense of self is part of the acting process, a positive attitude and a willingness to expand one's comfort zone are expected and are part of completion of this class.
- An element of risk taking, initiative and willingness to fail are also expected.
- Some of the work in class will necessitate human contact. You will be allowed to step out of any exercise that raises significant discomfort. If you have problems with touch or with individuals in the class, please communicate this to the instructor outside of class.

### ***CLASS Agreement***

Together we will develop class agreements about our behaviors both inside and outside of the classroom. A major goal of RA is positive community building. To build community trust and a sense of safety is required.

**First \*Make your partner look good**

**by \*Saying YES**

**promoting \*Safety/Trust**

**releasing \*Energy**

**intensifying \*Being present/paying attention**

**facilitating \*Listening**

**supporting \*Spontaneity**

**encouraging \*Risk-taking**

**increasing \*Flexibility**

**fostering \*Sharing control and responsibility**

## **CLASS STRUCTURE**

### **WARMUPS**

We will begin each class with a warmup, both physical and vocal, in order to prepare to work with our bodies and voices in class. These exercises are standard for actors and we will try different techniques to solve different problems. Warmups are a way to clear your head, to loosen up and to be free to concentrate on the work to come. They also provide a way for a class to gel as a group of people who will be working together for the semester.

### **THEATRE GAMES, ACTING EXERCISES and IMPROVS**

After WARMUPS we will move on to some theatre games and improvisations. These are another way of learning to work together, a way of sharpening your instincts, going with your impulses and having fun. Improvs are a great way to explore environment, how our bodies encounter space, how we encounter other people and react to them. Our theatre games are drawn from the work of Viola Spolin and are used to explore WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? And WHY? The answers to these five questions are essential in approaching any character, any acting scene.

### **CHARACTER, TEXT, MONOLOGUE and SCENE WORK**

I like to draw on improvisation and observation of real people for students to begin to explore how a character is created. Students will create their own characters and monologues and present them to the class. We will then move on to monologues from plays. We will begin slowly, finding basic approaches to text and character, working together as a class, though students will be working on their own individual piece and presenting their work to each other. Each student should find their own monologue from a play. However, I will have possibilities for them to look at, if they are feeling unsure.

### **Course Requirements**

- 1. Attendance – 5 points**
- 2. Active Participation – 5 points**
- 3. Written Journal --** This is your acting, class, and assignment diary. It is an exercise in self-reflection meant to increase self-awareness. As an actor, you are the instrument, and so it is crucial to reflect upon your process. Feel free to write in stream-of-consciousness style. Write it to yourself for yourself -- not for me or to me. **Write two journal pages once a week** whether we have class or not and whether you are in class or not. You will turn this in to me every two weeks – see the course calendar for due dates. You will write these outside of class – however, I may occasionally provide time at the end of class to work on your entries. These will be graded on how well you relate your entries to acting. I will give you optional topics in class. However, you can always write about things we do in class. Additionally, I will be looking for you to write specifically about your

process for creating the urgency scene, the lip sync, the monologues, and the final scene. **10 points**

4. **Reaction Papers.** (*Due at the beginning of 5 class periods: 3 reactions papers must be submitted by mid-term, March 9*). Students are required to submit a 2-3 page typed, double-spaced reaction paper to the assigned readings **for 5 weeks**, so 5 Reaction Papers total are due. **You can decide which week's readings you'd like to respond to, and you can respond after we've discussed the readings in class.** The purpose of this assignment is twofold: (1) to use writing to enhance reading and (2) to provide points of reference for seminar discussions. Reaction Papers should be well-formed academic essays that make connections *across* the week's assigned readings, and, if possible, to your own particular interests. This means that you will discuss, in some way, all the readings assigned for a particular week in each Reaction Paper. To do this, you will need to read the materials well in advance and think about how they relate; i.e., find some thread that connects them. I'm not uninterested in where you go with a connection to your research interests, **but your paper should be well-grounded in the texts themselves. Be sure you are discussing issues raised in the texts and avoid lengthy tangents or reflections. I should be able to tell that you've really studied the week's readings. These can't be done the night before class. (25 possible points total-5 points each)**
5. **Solo Scenes:** You will prepare 2 short solo scenes: a 1 minute urgency scene (no speaking, but sounds always fine), and an animal study (using sounds and movements) which will be performed solo and then used in group improvisations. These exercises will not be graded. If you prepare the exercise and then do it in class, you will receive full credit.
6. **Two-person scene:** With a partner, you will prepare and present a scene, in which you are given nonspecific dialogue and asked to provide the given circumstances. You must provide the who, what, where, when, and why. Also, what are your characters doing immediately before the scene begins? **5 points**
7. **Monologue** from a play or book. You will find a monologue in a play or book and prepare a two – three-minute audition piece. This could also include a song but must include a monologue. **10 points**
8. **Lip Sync:** Twice during the quarter you will perform a song as if you are singing it. Think of it as your dream music video. You don't actually sing; you mouth the words realistically. Create a character, set a scene, and choreograph your movements. **5 points each (10 total)**
9. You will read one play per week. **5 points**
10. **Final devised scene:** Using a devising method we discuss in class, groups will perform a devised piece. **25 points**

## Evaluation

Students will be evaluated based on the quality and effort demonstrated in the submitted analyses, in-class assignments, and class discussions. Each student is encouraged to put serious and consistent effort into the class by reading slowly and often. It will take more than one reading to understand what the author means. Even though this is not a “credit-bearing” class, it is part of the certificate program and grades will be given and recorded. This grade should reflect each student’s understanding of the materials. This class will count as 3 credit hours towards the 47 hours required for this program.

### Grades

A	95 – 100	C+	77 – 79
A-	90 - 94	C	73 - 76
B+	87 – 89	C-	70 – 72
B	83 – 86	D	60 – 69
B-	80 – 82	F	59 and below

### Course Calendar

This calendar is tentative and may be amended. You will be notified of any changes.

Date	Main Topic	Readings* Due	Assignments Due
01/16	Introductions	Syllabus	
01/23	Concept and Identity, Substitution, Emotional Memory, Sense Memory	<i>Hagan</i> Intro, Ch. 1 – 5, Articles, play	Urgency Scene & Animal Scene, Journal
01/30	Improvisation, The Five Senses, Thinking, Walking and Talking, Reality	<i>Hagan</i> Ch. 6 – 10, Articles, play	Journal, Scene w/ a partner
02/06	Object Exercises, Entrances, Immediacy, Fourth Wall, Endowment, Talking to Yourself, Outdoors, Conditioning Forces, History, Character Action	<i>Hagan Part 2</i> Ch. 11-20, Articles, play	Journal
02/13	The Play, The Character, Circumstances, Relationship, The Objective, The Obstacle	<i>Hagan</i> Ch. 21 – 26, Articles, play	Journal
02/20	The Action, The Rehearsal, Practical Problems, Communication, Style, Epilogue	<i>Hagan</i> Ch. 27-29, <i>A Winter’s Tale</i>	Lip Sync
02/27	<i>History and Virtue</i>	Boal Ch. 1-2, Articles, play	Journal
3/05	<i>Antigone (Semester mid-point)</i>		Monologues
03/12	Action and More Action	Boal Ch. 3-4, Articles, play	Journal,

<b>03/19</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>		
<b>3/26</b>	<i>Mother Courage</i>		Lip Sync II
<b>4/2</b>	Laramie Project and Exonerated		
<b>4/9</b>	Intra-active theatre, Utopian Play and It Makes Me Think		Monologue II
<b>4/16</b>	TBA		
<b>4/23</b>	TBA		
<b>04/30</b>	TBA		Devised Scenes