

Theater Department, UCLA
THEATER 138 - Special Problems in Performance Techniques:
Owning Shakespeare Summer Institute

Instructor: Rob Clare
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Office hours: By appointment

Time: Full-time, Monday-Friday, 9am-6pm (with evenings optional, 6pm-9pm),
August 3rd - 14th, 2020

Location: TBD

Course description:

This two-week, full-time, pre-eminently practical Summer intensive will focus on exploration and performance of the complex texts of Shakespeare, providing an eclectic overview of varying strategies and approaches that might most creatively be harnessed and deployed, in bringing them to fresh and vigorous life. Our work together on a range of materials will lead to informal presentation of selected sonnets and monologues, and also of scenes and/or speeches from one specific Shakespeare play, nominally *As You Like It*. Physical and vocal classes and exercises will be used in conjunction with judicious textual analysis, to advance the growth of the actor in his/her process. Shakespeare in Context classes will further support creative interpretation of the work, and will also illuminate its special relevance and resonance within our own day and age. The aim is for modern practitioners to achieve individually creative, interactive, and theatrically dynamic interpretations of figured and complex text, and ownership of same, while living truthfully under imaginary circumstances with conviction and spontaneity, today. Appropriate professional discipline and preparation will be expected, and observed. As well as by active participation, we learn through observation and support of our peers.

Specific Objectives within the class/rehearsal room:

- To engage and work creatively with elements such as complex vocabulary, and highly figured language
- To engage and work creatively with verse, both rhymed and unrhymed
- To understand 'scansion' in terms of individual creativity, and personal ownership
- To further develop the actor's imagination
- To further develop the actor's expressive strength
- To use and engage with specific issues such as direct audience address
- To learn to work more effectively on classical text away from rehearsal, and in advance of rehearsal

Broader Learning Competencies of the course:

Upon completion of this course, students will better be able to:

- Place the work of Shakespeare within its socio-historical context, and within that of the major Euro-centric classical theatrical eras
- Proficiently understand and perform heightened language, whether prose or poetry
- Organically and truthfully connect the voice and body with heightened language
- Demonstrate a deepened understanding of the text and the ability to translate it into contemporary language

- Develop and embody in-depth realization of Character as a tool towards Personalization
- Bring personal experience to the Given Circumstances of selected text(s)
- Creatively apply the teaching of the class within the contexts of rehearsal and performance/presentation
- Present performance material according to professional etiquette and standards
- Supportively enhance the work of the group through appropriate preparation, focus, receptivity and attention, and by active contribution to rehearsal and discussion

Assignments

Prior to the 2 week intensive, students will be required to learn one Shakespeare speech of their own choice, in order fully to participate in Acting Shakespeare Classes during Week 1

Students will also be required to read one Shakespeare play, nominally *As You Like It*

During the 2 week intensive, students will be further required to learn one Shakespeare sonnet, and scenes and speeches as assigned, in order fully to participate in class work and in 3 informal presentations during the two week intensive:

- **Week 1 Presentation of Assigned Sonnet** to be rehearsed in Poetry Reading Classes
- **Week 2 Presentation of Assigned Monologue** to be rehearsed in Monologues Classes
- **Week 2 Presentation of Assigned Scenes or Speeches** to be rehearsed in Assigned Scenes or Speeches Classes

If social distancing permits, students will also be required to go to see a professional production of a designated Shakespeare play during the weekend of August 8th-9th. The Assigned Scenes or Speeches rehearsed during Week 2 will be taken from that play, nominally *As You Like It*

Grading Structure

- 50% Active participation** in class activities including all assignments, rehearsals and presentations: to include elements such as quality of endeavour, progress made, contribution to discussion, attentiveness, supportiveness of peers' work, etc
- 25% Preparedness** for class presentations/performances, to include individual work away from the classroom as assigned and required, punctuality and time management
- 25% Informal Presentations**, applying the theory and teaching of the class as appropriate in practice. This mark will be subdivided as follows:
 - **5% Presentation of Assigned Sonnet**
 - **10% Presentation of Assigned Monologue**
 - **10% Presentation of Assigned Scenes or Speeches**

Grades

94-100 A, 90-93 A-, 87-89 B+, 84-86 B, 80-83 B-, 77-79 C+, 74-76 C, 70-73 C- ...59 and below, fail

Reading List

Besides individual sonnets and speeches, as assigned, the only reading required for this intensive course is one designated Shakespeare play, nominally *As You Like It*

Course Schedule

Please see the appended document, **Owning Shakespeare Summer Institute Schedule**

Rob Clare
Course Leader

