

2018-19 Spring

HART1022 Introduction to Acting (1 credit)

Course Instructor: Mr. Acty Tang (Email: acty.tang@gmail.com)

Program Officer: Vickie Wong (Rm 6401, Tel: 2358-5791; Email: vickiewong@ust.hk)

Time: Mondays 10:30am-12:20pm

Venue: CYTG009

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

This course introduces the basic principles of acting developed by Russian maestro Stanislavsky. Through applying these principles in a series of practical exercises, students will have an experiential understanding of the theory and practice of theatre arts. The in-class activities can give students a refreshing stimulus to both body and mind, unleash their imagination and develop their inborn ability of acting further.

Students will also be guided to appreciate the art of an actor by watching a theatre performance. Discussion and analysis will be focused in both historical and current theatre practices. Upon the completion of this course, students will have an elementary understanding of contemporary theatre arts.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students are expected to be able to:

1. Describe and apply the basic principles of naturalistic acting in performance and appreciation
2. Identify the significance of naturalistic acting style in contemporary theatre
3. Identify their own strengths and weaknesses for naturalistic acting style
4. Enhance their communication and collaboration skills

Course Schedule and Outline

| Lesson | Date | Topic | Match- ing ILO |
|----------|----------------|--|-------------------|
| 1 | 4 Feb | Introducing Naturalistic Acting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of Konstantin Stanislavski’s “System” and his legacy, in the context of aesthetic developments in western theatre in the 19th and 20th centuries, and implications for acting in modern theatre. - What is a script? Overview of fundamental elements to the dramatic structure, and what to look out for when reading a play script. | 1, 2 |
| 2, 3, 4 | 11, 18, 25 Feb | The Actor’s Work on Oneself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Psycho-physical work to lay the groundwork for acting truthfully; exploring elements of Stanislavski’s system such as relaxation, concentration, the “magic if”, sensory perceptions, actions and reactions. - Complementary voice training throughout the course. | 1 |
| 5 | 4 Mar | Script Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students will have read a short one-act play before this lesson. - Identifying and analysing elements in the script such as given circumstances; objectives/obstacles/tactics; through-line of action; beats; subtext. - Preparing scene work; identifying key focuses to aid the actor. | 1, 2 |
| 6, 7 | 11, 18 Mar | Sense Memory (Emotional Recall); Presentation of Short Scene <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore how sense memory aids the truthfulness of performance, and apply to the scene to be presented - Presentation and feedback of scene work | 1, 3, 4 |
| 8, 9, 10 | 25 Mar | Imagination; Building a Character <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In consultation with the instructor, students choose the play script to be worked on for their final presentations. - Consolidate elements of the System previously explored. - Textual and psycho-physical work towards realising a character. - Rehearsal exercises for exploring the imaginative world of the play. | 1, 3, 4 |
| 11, 12 | 15, 29 April | Dress Rehearsals and Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore tempo-rhythm and its effect on the scene. - Deal with practical logistics for the scene presentation. - Showings and feedback. | 1, 3, 4 |
| 13 | 6 May | Final Scene Work Presentations and Reflections | 1, 3, 4 |

Assessment Tasks

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| <p>Attendance (10%) & Course participation (10%)</p> | <p>Active participation in the in-class practical exercises and discussion.</p> <p>Students arriving 10 minutes after the beginning of each session will be counted as late. Being late or leaving early for more than 10 minutes twice will be counted as one absence.</p> <p>Students are required to attend at least 70% of the classes; i.e. students may not be absent for more than 3 sessions, for any reasons such as illness or other university functions.</p> <p>If a student is absent for more than 3 sessions, they will <u>not</u> participate in the Final Scene work presentation assessment, since this task depends on continual class participation and group work. The student will be assessed individually using the same criteria, and will not be supervised in their preparation.</p> |
| <p>Script Analysis (30%)</p> | <p>Present evidence of analytical preparations towards the final scene work presentation. The scene to be presented should be annotated with written notes on how it has been analysed. The document should also contain information on inspirational sources, such as written character biography and relevant background information of the play; collected reference images; references to source videos or songs/music that aided imagination; poetic and other forms of creative writing. Whatever the reference material, each should be annotated with brief written notes, showing how it influences a practical aspect of acting the scene.</p> <p>Due Date: 15 April. 10% of the grade for Script Analysis will be deducted per day after the due date. Submissions will not be accepted after 23 April.</p> |
| <p>Self Evaluation (20%)</p> | <p>At the end of the course, after the final performances, students are required to evaluate themselves and submit written comments. Reflections are based on elements of the System learnt in the course and how they have been applied in performance. Due Date: 14 May.</p> <p>10% of the grade will be deducted per day after the due date. Submissions will not be accepted after 20 May.</p> |
| <p>Final Scene Work Presentation (30%)</p> | <p>Students rehearse with their group members, under instructor's guidance, and perform the short scenes in lesson 13.</p> |

Required Reading Materials

Theory and Practice

Benedetti, J. (1998) *Stanislavski and the Actor*. Routledge.

Plays (An indicative list. One play will be chosen for final presentation)

Closer, by Patrick Marber

Whale Music, by Anthony Minghella

God of Carnage, by Yasmina Reza

Chinglish, by David Henry Hwang

Oleanna, by David Mamet

Bent, by Martin Sherman

Academic Honor Code

- You must observe and uphold the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty in all the work you do throughout your program of study.
- As members of the University community, you have the responsibility to help maintain the academic reputation of HKUST in its academic endeavors.
- Sanctions will be imposed if you are found to have violated the regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- Regulations for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (<http://publish.ust.hk/acadreg/generalreg/index.html>)