

COURSE SPECIFICATION
DOCUMENT

Academic School/Department:	CASS
Programme:	Performance and Theatre Arts
FHEQ Level:	4
Course Title:	Theatre and Community I: Me and my Shadows
Course Code:	THR 4110
Course Leader:	Dr. Michael Barclay
Student Engagement Hours:	120
Seminar / Practical Workshops:	30
Screenings:	3
Field Trips:	5
Performance/Rehearsals:	7
Independent / Guided Learning:	75
Semester:	Fall
Credits:	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

Course Description:

During interactive workshop sessions, students are introduced to the concept and practice of Forum Theatre, as devised by Augusto Boal, in his seminal text, *Theatre of the Oppressed*, as well as the book co-written with Peter Hall, *Towards a Poor Theatre*. Students will learn a series of techniques during which devised theatre is used as a mechanism for solving problems, during which they will have the opportunity to work as actors, spectators and directors. Through a range of simple class activities students will explore the processes of this approach to theatre, often adapted and built-upon by practitioners in theatre in education and theatre in the community. Through a close study of the formation and performance history of the British theatre company, *Cardboard Citizens*, students will discover how forum theatre is utilized today to improve the lives of some of the least privileged members of our societies. No previous experience of any of the practices is necessary and the

class content will reflect and adapt to the interests and concerns of each individual group of students. Students are assessed through the effort during participation in practical improvisations, and by presentations and a written reflection and not according to concepts of latent “talent”.

Prerequisites: None

Aims and Objectives:

The principal aim of this course is to enable students to discover and explore the genre of theatre known as Forum Theatre, and to encourage them to adapt that knowledge in their thinking and writing to social problems or situations of their own choosing. A further aim is to develop and improve stage and performance awareness, confidence, quick-thinking and response, improvised dialogue skills, flexibility of position taken during role-play, timing and spatial awareness. In order to achieve this, the secondary aim is for students to study and forge an understanding at appropriate level of the two key texts and regularly practice the basic techniques used in forum theatre practice. An affective aim is for students to acquire the skills to *enjoy asking questions and collaborating*, which will have a positive effect on other areas of study, confidence and wellbeing, and will enrich the successful student's experience of his or her degree as a whole.

Programme Outcomes:

4A(ii), 4B(i), 4B(ii), 4C(i), 4C(iii), 4D(i), 4D(ii)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification. This is maintained by Registry and located at: <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a broad understanding of the basics of forum theatre techniques, *to inform choices available for solving problems or barriers to achievement.*
- Use a range of “starting” strategies to warm up and relax the body and the imagination.
- Demonstrate the ability to give and receive appropriate feedback on each other's practice during workshops, directed at allowing the work to be more productive (achieve a definite, quantifiable result).

- Assemble a portfolio recording their own roles taken during improvisations and the outcome of this, through notes and reflection on learning, writing communicating effectively in given formats.
- Engage actively with texts, analyzing a range of information using pre-defined criteria, in order to generate and expand an awareness of the values and techniques under examination.

Indicative Content:

- Brief history of the emergence of Forum Theatre as proposed by Augusto Boal in the 1970s.
- Introduction to practical techniques of Forum Theatre and the role of the “spectActor”.
- Survey of practical applications of Forum Theatre in late 20th C and contemporary British theatre.

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board.

Teaching Methodology:

In the class of a maximum of twelve students, students will learn a series of short warm up sequences which will develop over the semester as their strength and agility increases. Through a series of group work exercises students will experiment with the basic approaches of forum theatre and its philosophy. Learning will focus around small-group tasks, including observation exercises, guided individual and small group improvisation exercises and workshops, small group and whole group presentations, reading and discussion tasks, pair-work, peer-review tasks and whole group feedback tasks.

Bibliography:

Indicative Texts:

Boal, A., *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Pluto Press, 1976.

Nicholson, H., *Applied Drama (Theatre and Performance Practices)*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

Kuppers, P., *Community Performance: An Introduction*. Routledge, 2007.

See syllabus for complete reading list.

Please Note: The core and the reference texts will be reviewed at the time of designing the semester syllabus

Change Log for this CSD:

Major or Minor Change?	Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or LTPC)	Change Actioned by Academic Registry
Major	Rewrite of Programme Outcomes	LTPC 30/5/14	
Major	Rewrite of Learning Outcomes	LTPC 30/5/14	
Minor	Updating of Indicative Texts	LTPC 30/5/14	
Major	Add Indicative Content which was not on original CSD	LTPC 30/5/14	