C. STYLES, FORMS, TECHNIQUES AND REVOLUTION: A THEATRE SURVEY COURSE

Lawrence Grimm, Adjunct Professor, Theatre

Thursdays, 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. Norris University Center

This course will feature a hands-on lecture demonstration on selected styles, forms, techniques and revolutions within the American Theatre with a unique lens on Chicago as a historical, definitive and impactful force. Following a sequential history with selected detours into influential styles and forms that are still being practiced amongst theatrical artists in our city and country today, this course will feature work by student and professional actors as well as create some participation points on stage for occasional and willing volunteers. Class includes supplemental viewings and readings, guest lecturers, and panel speakers.

NOTE: *To access supplementary material, go to our website NUalumnaecourses.org Under Course C, click on the Learn More button. Then click on the Course Materials button, which will take you to a Google Drive folder.*

Jan. 7 & 14 The Way of the Actor: Madness in the Method

Many have heard of The Method but how many understand and know what it actually is? Informed by Isaac Butler's *The Method: How the Twentieth Century Learned to Act,* we will take a journey from the Russian influences of Stanislavsky and Chekhov and the origins of *perezhivanie* (experiencing) (Jan. 7) to the divisive American interpretations of Meisner and Strasberg as the Method gets developed in the 40s and 50s (Jan. 14). We will witness the ways in which this emerging technique helped define what we know and love as contemporary naturalism in theatre, television and film. Sessions include live mini-performance demos of Chekhov and contemporary work.

Jan. 21 & 28 From Spolin to The Second City: Improvisation as an Institution

How did a pioneering social worker in the 40s working with immigrant populations in Chicago become the godmother of Improvisation for future generations? How did a group of intellectual misfits at The University of Chicago turn their theatre company into a national breeding ground and institution for American comedy? Using the local historical back drop of improvisation, we will explore the impetus for Viola Spolin gameplay at Chicago's Hull House in the 1940s to the modern conventions of improvisation today at Second City and beyond. Includes hands on demonstrations of games and exercises and participation opportunities with professional improvisors that invite play, spontaneity, and impulse as the calling cards for comedy, truth, and satire.

Feb. 4 Story Theatre: Paul Sills and Piven Theatre Workshop

The artistic cousin of improvisation as led by Paul Sills and Byrne and Joyce Piven (whose workshop is within a stone's throw of NU in Evanston), Story Theatre is the form that invites a balance between showing and telling, transformation and impulse, vision and revision. This session will include a brief Q and A on the form, its application in correctional facility settings and a hands-on opportunity to adapt and retell a classic folk tale within this treasured style of theatre.

Feb. 11 Viewpoints: Negotiating the Elements of Performance

In the late 1970s while a professor at New York University's Experimental Theatre Wing, Mary Overlie originated the Six Viewpoints (space, shape, and time among them) and introduced them to her colleague Anne Bogart. With the internationally renowned SITI Company and in collaboration with Tina Landau (Steppenwolf), this compelling physical training technique left psychological realism in the dust and created a formidable impact by integrating an acute awareness of the elements of performance for deepened risk, instinct, and ensemble building in theatrical storytelling.

Feb. 18 Michael Shurtleff and The Guideposts

Casting Director Michael Shurtleff spent years watching actors audition and as a result came up with his very practical 12 Guideposts for actors in auditions and beyond. An exploration of each of the guideposts will feature trade secrets you see on display amongst your favorite thespians. This session will feature student actors and professionals who have expertise in using the Shurtleff method that eternally asks every actor, "What are you fighting for and how are you going to achieve it?"

Feb. 25 From Storefronts to Steppenwolfs: A Brief History of Ensemble Theatre in Chicago

This special session will feature an interview with Mark Larson, Chicago's chronicler of the storefront and ensemble journey that put Chicago on the map. He is the author of *Ensemble: An Oral History of Chicago Theatre*. The discussion will highlight some of the key movements in the scene over the last 65 years, gleaned from over 300 interviews.

Mar. 4 The Play's The Thing: A Panel Discussion

A final panel discussion with beloved and distinguished local Actors, Directors and Artistic Directors who will address the question: *What does it take to make theatre of excellence in the Chicago style*? We will also open the discussion to answer your questions and inquiries on the hows and whys of what we do.