

**Marlborough School**  
**Fine Arts: Performing Arts Department**  
**Theatre IV: Spring 2015 – Period I**

Ms. Bauer  
Office: C216  
Phone: 323.935.1147 x 625  
E-Mail: Gleason.Bauer@marlboroughschool.org  
Office Hours: By appointment

**HEIGHTENED PERFORMANCE TRAINING**

**Course Expectations and Curricular Outline**

Outline is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and/or posted on the website.

This course concentrates on the special skills required for performing heightened language and classical texts. Focusing on Shakespeare and the physicality of language, the class offers training in vocal work, scansion, text analysis, interpretation, and character building. Diverse influences at play in the class include Patsy Rodenburg's Circles of Awareness and Vocal Work, Scott Kaiser's Orchestration exercises, the teachings of Stephen Wangh and John Barton, as well as the Actor Training Method of Tadashi Suzuki. Students may also work on a variety of other classical, heightened and/or poetic texts. Students will be asked to keep and share a learning journal or Haiku personal page their experience and will be assigned a variety of readings and exercises to explore outside of class time.

**EXPECTATIONS**

Theatre is a 3-dimensional, whole body/mind/heart experience and for this reason can be incredibly fun. Paradoxically, it also requires a great deal of internal discipline. While I encourage us to enjoy the pursuit of this deep play, I will demand, at all times:

- Best effort
- A supportive and honest atmosphere
- Heightened awareness
- A rigorous dedication to being fully present in the moment
- Full participation
- Accountability without excuses or denial
- Respect for self, others and the learning environment.

Ideally, this class will be a unique experience – one that challenges you to move beyond your current understanding, not only of Theatre, but also of who you are and of what you are capable. In order to be successful in this class, you must demonstrate a willingness to be open and to expanding yourself intellectually, as well as emotionally and physically. Together we will create a positive, trusting learning environment, one in which we are each emboldened to take risks, embrace uncertainty, ambiguity and paradox, and even occasionally to fail brilliantly.

### **Attendance and Class Participation**

This is an experiential course. Therefore, classroom participation is crucial to understanding. The work we will do in these classes is an interdependent endeavor and the absence and/or tardiness of one student affects us all. Furthermore due to the ensemble nature of the course, it may not always be possible to make up missed class work. COMMUNICATION IS KEY. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to communicate with me to obtain missed notes or assignments, and to make arrangements with collaborative partners. Arrangements for make-up work must be made **prior** to the Acknowledged Absence or the **first day** you return to school after an Excused Absence. Work cannot be made up if missed due to an Unexcused Absence. If you are only absent part of the day, work is still due as assigned.

Students are expected to commit fully in class. This includes participation in exercises and discussions, as well as incorporating critique and feedback from me, your self, and occasionally, your peers into your work. It also includes being ready to work at all times. Observation is a key means of working and learning in the Performing Arts. If you are not speaking or performing, you are still working. Your attention supports the ensemble of performers. You are expected to be actively supportive and always ready. Everything that you do is part of the Work. This perhaps, above all else, requires the most inner and outer discipline. Be ever mindful and alert.

### **Attendance Policy**

There are three types of absences recognized in the *Marlborough Student Handbook of Expectations*:

*Excused Absence* is an absence due to illness, injury, bereavement, or other school-approved legitimate reasons. For this class, *Excused* means that your grade will not be affected if you miss the Evening of Performances or Dress Rehearsal as long as you make up the missed performance according to the make-up procedure listed below. If you fail to follow the make-up procedure, your grade will be lowered for the semester in which the absence occurs.

*Acknowledged Absence* is an absence due to appointments, family trips and other scheduled activities. In this class, *Acknowledged* means that you are expected to plan ahead and schedule around the Evening of Performances and Dress Rehearsal dates. Acknowledged Absences include college visits, pre-college testing, participation in a Marlborough athletic event and participation in a Marlborough club event, etc. For an absence to be considered an Acknowledged Absence you are required to file written notification with the Division Director and with me at least one week before the absence (see the *Student Handbook of Expectations*, Academic Policy on Attendance). If you miss the performance because of an Acknowledged Absence, your grade will be lowered for the semester in which your absence occurs. If it is deemed that every effort has been made to honor your commitment to the performance, you will be allowed to use the make-up procedure to ameliorate any grade reduction you may have received for an Acknowledged Absence.

*Unexcused Absence* is an absence due to truancy, suspension, and other unacceptable reasons. *Unexcused* in this class includes missing the Evening of Performances or Dress Rehearsal for what would normally be an Acknowledged Absence without following the protocol listed above. If your absence from the performance or dress rehearsal falls in this category, your grade for the performance will be a "0" for the semester in which the absence occurs and you will be asked to withdraw from the class. There will be no make-up accommodations for an absence in this category.

### **Make-up Procedures**

In Theatre IV, a classroom performance is used as an assessment for your final grade, just as a paper test would be used. It is equivalent to a Semester Exam, 15% of your grade. Other classroom presentations and the Shakespeare Competition are equivalent to unit tests, 15% of your grade. In order to make up for a missed performance or presentation, you will need to make up any rehearsal time missed (including the time you are asked to sit out when your group is rehearsing, planning for your absence) and you will need to perform at an approved function. Normally, this make-up performance would be done as a solo. Other performance possibilities will be considered and you are welcome to discuss them with me. Remember that your grade will remain lowered until you have fulfilled the assessment opportunity for the semester in which the performance was missed. Your lowered grade will become permanent if the make-up procedure is not followed by the end of the quarter in which your absence occurs.

### **Attendance Policy before a Performance**

You must attend ALL of your classes on the day of a performance or rehearsal to be allowed to participate in that performance or rehearsal.

### **Tardiness**

Class begins and ends on time. Punctuality is essential. Tardiness to class is distracting and alters the group dynamic. After three instances of unexcused tardiness, your daily grade will be reduced by two points. After four instances of unexcused tardiness, your daily grade will be reduced by three points, and so on. If you are on campus, and not in your class (i.e., the Infirmary, a meeting with another teacher, etc.), it is *your responsibility* to let your teacher know where you are. You will be allowed into class only by presenting a note explaining your tardiness. This note must be signed by the teacher with whom you were meeting, or by an administrator who can vouch for your whereabouts and reason for being tardy.

### **Additional Requirements**

**Learning Journal** – Students are required to keep a hard-copy journal or Haiku personal page. Assignments will be given on a regular basis, but when they are not, the student is still encouraged to create entries tracking individual artistic process and the experience of the class. Entries usually will be due on Thursday. If there is no class on Thursday, the entries are due the last day of the week on which we have class, unless otherwise notified.

**Dress** - Students are expected to dress appropriately for class – clothing that allows for fluid movement and that can be worn to work on the floor is required. The clothing needs to fit you in such a way that it does not require continual fixing

during class. You will be asked to work without shoes. (If this is a problem, please make certain to speak with me outside of class immediately.) Because of the explorative nature of the class (both personal and physical) as well as for safety reasons, students are discouraged from wearing jewelry and other personal enhancements. Students will be given an additional 3 minutes after the period-starting bell to dress as well as an additional 3 minutes prior to the period-ending bell to return to uniform.

**Hair** - Hair must be secured in such a way that it allows full view of the face and does not require fixing during class.

**Silence/No Chatter** – The studio is a space for training and creation. There is to be no socializing within the studio. Please limit talking to that which is necessary for and relative to class. Warming up vocally and physically is highly encouraged.

**Cleanliness of Space and Dressing Room** – The studio and dressing rooms must be kept clean at all times. If you enter the studio and there are items cluttering the workspace, it is your responsibility to remove them and to make the space clean and open for training. Please do not enter the studio with anything other than water, your journal, a writing implement and any assignments that are due that day. Small bags, books, shoes and additional clothing should be neatly stored in the cubbies underneath the counter in the Dressing Room. Items found elsewhere will be placed in Lost and Found. **BACKPACKS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE DRESSING ROOM** and immediately will be removed to the Lost and Found regardless of where they are placed.

**General Decorum** - Students are to refrain from the use of cell phones, the consumption of food, gum and any beverages other than water during class. It is expected that interruptions and coming and going will not occur, especially due to the nature of the class. If you have a specific need, please talk to me in advance.

### **Office Hours and E-mail Policy**

Please feel free to e-mail me with questions and/or concerns throughout the semester. You are also encouraged to make personal appointments with me at any point in time to discuss class work, receive personalized attention or support and/or to discuss whatever is on your mind. The most effective way to set up an appointment is to e-mail me at [Gleason.bauer@marlboroughschool.org](mailto:Gleason.bauer@marlboroughschool.org) using your own Marlborough e-mail address. Provide me with your free periods and suggest a few options of possible meeting times and I will respond to you within 24 hours or by the end of the next business day. Please note that if you e-mail me over the weekend, I may not respond to you until the following Monday, unless it is an emergency.

## ASSESSMENTS/REQUIREMENTS

I will evaluate student learning with the following graded activities:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Percentage of Grade</u>
<b>Class Participation</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Journal</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Play Reading Responses</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Performance Responses</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Performance Projects</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Shakespeare Competition</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Final Classroom Presentation</b>	<b>15%</b>
	<b>100%</b>

**Class Participation** – Each student will be awarded ten points for daily class participation based on the following guidelines:

- Appropriate dress – 1
- Appropriate hair – 1
- Maintaining silence in the space before class and during any breaks - 1
- Maintaining the tidiness of the space - 1
- Punctuality - 1
- Engagement and Effort – 5

*Please note that your class participation is a full 50% of your grade.*

**Learning Journal** - All students will either need to purchase and keep a learning or maintain a personal page on our Haiku class site.

**Play Reading Responses** - In addition, you will need to choose a total of six Shakespeare plays to read throughout the semester: three during the third quarter and three during the fourth quarter. You will be required to post your responses to these plays on the website. You are highly encouraged to use the website as an on-line forum for discussion of these responses as there will be little time to discuss them in class.

**Performance Responses** – You will need to see all of the Marlborough School Theatre, Dance, Instrumental and Choral Music Concerts throughout the semester, as well as at least one outside performance (preferably Shakespeare) and provide informal responses in your journal. Please go through and note these dates now in your calendar. Be sure to share this information with your parents and let them know that your attendance at these events is a requirement of the course. In addition, make plans now for the outside performance that you will see.

**Performance Projects** – As part of this class, you are required to perform in the preliminary **Shakespeare Competition**, which will be held during Office Hours and for one hour after school on **Thursday, February 5. You are REQUIRED to participate in these qualifying rounds and to stay for the one-hour feedback session after school.** Please communicate this to your parents now. The finalists from the preliminary competition will go on to compete in the **Shakespeare**

**Competition ASM on Monday, February 9.** In addition to the Competition, you are also required to participate in a final assessment performance. This final presentation may be open to the larger Marlborough community.

**Late Assignments:** All assignments and presentations submitted past due will be marked down by one-third of a grade for every day they are late. Please see the *Student Handbook of Expectations* for policies affecting the grading of assignments that are more than five days past due.

**Required Readings/Viewings:** In addition to the six Shakespeare plays, students may be given handouts and/or links to required reading and/or video clips throughout the semester as applicable.

### **STUDENT LEARNING GOALS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING HABITS OF HEART AND MIND**

Students will:

- ~ Develop greater body/mind awareness, presence, discipline, control and sense of self in relation to space and others.
- ~ Deepen their ability to work creatively and consensually within an ensemble environment.
- ~ Deepen a set of extraordinary internal and group listening skills.
- ~ Explore and develop a personal warm-up appropriate to classical and heightened text.
- ~ Gain an experiential understanding of the value of precision.
- ~ Deepen their artistic practice within a variety of contemporary and classical performance training techniques.
- ~ Further develop and articulate a personal artistic aesthetic.
- ~ Continue developing the capacity to tolerate ambiguity, paradox and to embrace the unknown.
- ~ Nurture and deepen their connection to internal creative impulse.
- ~ Learn to appreciate and handle heightened text and blocking as containers for personal energy and artistic impulse.
- ~ Learn to analyze the given circumstances of the play through textual analysis and determine how these circumstances translate into playable actions.
- ~ Learn how to develop character based on the balance between personal artistic input and the external information provided by classical text and direction.
- ~ Broaden their knowledge of Shakespeare's works and the context within which he wrote.
- ~ Develop greater habits of persistence in the face of internal resistance and external challenges.
- ~ Deepen the ability to assess personal artistic process and progress.
- ~ Deepen self-confidence.

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- ❖ What are the demands of classical and heightened text?
- ❖ What was the world of Shakespeare and how can I embody it?
- ❖ What is Character? What is the matrix of my own character as a human being?
- ❖ What is my own personal aesthetic?
- ❖ What makes a Shakespearean play good/interesting/worthy of production?
- ❖ What is paradoxical about acting classical texts?
- ❖ What are the elements of theatrical performance?
- ❖ What tools does a classical performer need?
- ❖ What is the work of a classical performer? And where else does it manifest?
- ❖ What am I noticing?
- ❖ Who am I and how am I changing?
- ❖ How can I apply what I am learning here to my life outside of the studio?
- ❖ What do I want to get out of this class? And how is this changing as my learning deepens?

## CURRICULAR OUTLINE

Please note that the units are not of equal length and will be facilitated in direct response to the students' progress as an ensemble.

**~ Journals are due each Friday. If there is no class on Friday, entries are due the last class day before the weekend.**

**~ Make sure to mark your calendar with all of the Performing Arts Department dates of performance as you are required to include informal reviews of these productions in your journal.**

**~ You will need to include responses to at least six Shakespearean plays – three during the third quarter and three during the fourth quarter. Please make sure to plan accordingly so that you are not attempting to read these plays in the final weeks of each quarter.**

### **UNIT ONE: Deepening Awareness and Developing Personal Practice**

- Circles of Awareness
- Personal Warm Ups for Heightened Text – Body, Breath, Support, Voice, Speech
- Listening

### **UNIT TWO: Monologue Preparation for the Preliminary Shakespeare Competition – Thursday, February 5.**

- Orchestration – Speech Measures, Punctuation and Operative Words
- Focal Points

- Images
- Spoken Subtext
- Actions
- Objectives

### **UNIT THREE: Further Sonnet, Monologue & Scene Work**

- Cold Readings
- The Givens – Physical structures that shape the story
- Imaginative Exploration