

Directing Workshop (ART 3386-001)
Spring Semester 2011

Instructor: Ya'Ke
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Office hours: Monday 5:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.
Class meets: Monday/Wednesday 7:00 P.M. – 9:50 P.M. in FA156

Course Description:

The goal of this workshop is to develop the ability and self-confidence to articulate and translate from the page to the screen the narrative and the corresponding visual/aural structures of a scene or short film. Broadly speaking, we will be concerned with the role of the director in narrative filmmaking and the director's storytelling and aesthetic responsibilities. The investigation of the director/actor relationship will be our priority and the course's primary area of focus. Casting, rehearsal technique, acting theory and process, and staging issues will be explored in depth. Readings, exercises, screenings and other assignments are designed to sharpen the director's narrative and visual awareness.

Course Requirements:

Cast, rehearse, shoot and edit two three-to-four-minute scenes. Prepare shot lists, overhead shooting diagrams, lined scripts and storyboards for both scenes.

Participate fully in all classes and labs. Offer specific and constructive critiques of your fellow directors' efforts. The workshop is designed to help you to clarify what you want as directors, how to get it, and how to recognize when you've gotten it. Your critiques should reflect not how you would cover a particular scene or handle an acting problem; rather, your critiques should suggest ways that your fellow directors might achieve their own goals.

Arrive on time at all classes and labs and keep up with all assignments. Your presence and active participation are critical elements of a successful workshop environment. Your grade will go down half a letter grade per absence, unless there is a documented emergency. Your grade will go down one third of a letter grade each time you are late to class.

You are also required to go and see at least one play in the DFW area. You must bring me back the playbill and ticket for the production.

The Two Scenes:

Your two scenes must be taken from published plays or produced screenplays. They cannot be something you have written. Both scenes should have two characters. The choice of material for each scene must be approved in advance of casting. You may not cast your class mates or friends in your scenes unless those individuals have significant acting experience. Under no circumstances may you act in one of your scenes. Scenes will be rehearsed at least three times outside of class and then brought into class to be performed and discussed. The final step will be to shoot and edit the scene, and present your cut to the class. Your focus in working on these scenes should be on process, not result. These scenes are individual, not group, projects. You should strip down production values to the bare minimum necessary to demonstrate an understanding of the directorial and performance issues at stake in the scenes.

Grading:**SCENE 1 (2-4 minutes)**

In class scene presentation 1	25 pts
Shot list 1	2.0 pts
Storyboard 1	2.0 pts
Lined Script 1	2.0 pts
Overhead Shooting Diagram 1	2.0 pts
Actor Headshot /Resume	2.0 pts
Playbill/Ticket	5.0 pts

Total: **40pts**

SCENE 2 (3-5 minutes)

In class scene presentation 2	30 pts
Shot list 2	2.0 pts
Storyboard 2	2.0 pts
Lined Script 2	2.0 pts
Overhead Shooting Diagram 2	2.0 pts
Actor Headshot /Resume	2.0 pts

Total: **40pts**

Class participation and promptness: 20 pts

Class Total: **100pts**

There will not be a final exam**Required Text (available at the University Co-op and at amazon.com):**

Directing Actors, by Judith Weston

Changing Direction, by Lenore DeKoven

Recommended Texts:

Rabiger, Michael	<u>Directing: Film Techniques and Aesthetics</u> (Focal Press, 2003)
Hagen, Uta	<u>A Challenge for the Actor</u> (Scribner, 1991)
Bruder, Cohn et al	<u>A Practical Handbook for the Actor</u> (Vintage, 1986)
Katz, Steven	<u>Film Directing: Shot by Shot</u> (Michael Wiese Prods., 1991)
Katz, Steven	<u>Film Directing: Cinematic Motion</u> (Michael Wiese Prods., 2004)
Weston, Judith	<u>The Film Director's Intuition</u> (Michael Wiese Productions, 2003)
Travis, Mark	<u>Directing Feature Films</u> (Michael Wiese Productions, 2002)
Kagan, Jeremy	<u>Directors Close Up: Interviews With Directors</u> (Focal Press, 2000)
Block, Bruce,	<u>The Visual Story</u> (Focal Press, 2001)
Brook, Peter	<u>The Empty Space</u> (Touchstone, 1996)
Ball, William	<u>A Sense of Direction</u> (Drama Publishers, 1984)
Clurman, Harold	<u>On Directing</u> (Fireside, 1997)
Sherman, Eric	<u>Directing the Film: Film Directors on Their Art</u> (Acrobat Books, 1976)

Attendance:

All faculty members of the film/video program share the following attendance policy. Attendance is required to ALL scheduled classes. However we do understand that there are occasions when absence is necessary and excusable. In accordance to university policy religious holidays are excusable as is illness with a written note from a physician. The student is responsible for notifying the professor ahead of class if the absence is unavoidable. Unexcused absences over two days, including any absence in which the professor and student do not communicate in writing before the absence will result in the following grade reductions.

Third day absent will result in reduction of one letter for the final semester grade.

Fourth day absent will result two letters off the final semester grade.

Fifth day absent will result in automatic failure of the class.

The student is responsible for any work missed during an absence, including any handouts given in class and any demonstrations. It is not the responsibility of faculty to re-teach what the student has missed. Student should be aware that if a demonstration is missed they might not be allowed to utilize that equipment. Attendance is also mandatory for all critiques whether the student has completed the work required or not. Consistent lateness will also have a detrimental effect on the student's final grade. If you are more than ten minutes late you will be counted as absent.

Grading:

All assignments must be turned in on the due date. **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED**, unless there are unforeseen circumstances. This must be discussed with the professor and only in rare circumstances will it be accepted.

Americans With Disabilities Act:

The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 93112—The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act- (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide “reasonable accommodation” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty at the beginning of the semester (within one week) and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels.

Academic Dishonesty:

It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University.

“Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.” (Regents’ Rules and Regulations, part One, Chapter VI, Section 3, Subsection 3.2, Subdivision 3.22)

An exception to the definition of scholastic dishonesty is collaboration amongst students in the film/video classes. On some assignments in this class you will be required to work with other students as a group. On other assignments, assigned as individual projects, you may wish to enlist the help of someone in the class to assist with camerawork, lighting, audio, etc. This is in no way considered cheating but rather collaborative effort to produce a polished, professional video project. Collaboration is necessary to satisfactorily succeed in this class and it is encouraged that students assist others in this class and other film/video classes at UTA in order to advance their own expertise. Please be aware however, that if you ask for assistance with something you are unfamiliar with you are required to gain and show expertise in that skill upon completion of the project. Do NOT use classmates to do things you simply do not have the time or desire to do.

“Some directors, and very famous ones, still fear actors instead of embracing them as comrades in a task. The director must know how to stimulate, even inspire the actor. Needless to say he must also know how to make an actor seem no to act, how to put him or her at their ease, bring them to that state of relaxation where their creative faculties are released....all in all he must know enough in all these areas so his actors trust him completely.”

--Elia Kazan

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

January 19th:

Introduction to the course, discussion of syllabus and schedule, split into groups
History of the Profession
The director's critical fields of knowledge
The role and responsibilities of the director
Acting Exercise: A & B

Handouts: sides for audition workshop; Acting Terms

Assignment:

Read Weston, pps. 1-12, pps. 235-244

Choose material for first scene

Note: All readings and other assignments are for the following class.

WEEK 2

Jan 24th :

Audition/Casting Workshop: *techniques, etiquette, goals*
Handout: Sample actors' resumes and *Do The Right Thing* script.

Assignment:

Read "Do the Right Thing" scene and prepare a written analysis using Weston's categories and charts.

Read Weston, pps. 163-234, 302-307

Note: Completed charts or simple written analysis is due in class on Jan 28th

Note for all groups: Choices for first scene must be e-mailed by noon on Friday (1/29) by 5:00

Jan 26th:

GUEST: Linda McAlister, Agent, LM Talent

How to effectively communicate with Agencies.
What does the DFW acting pool have to offer.

WEEK 3

Jan 31st :

Script analysis: beats and bits, facts, events, questions and spines
Script analysis exercise: "*Do the Right Thing*"

Handouts: Frank Daniel's script analysis glossary

Acting Exercise (if time permits): Lies or Truth

Assignment:

Read Weston, pps. 245-279

Feb 2nd :

The rehearsal plan

Rehearsal strategies

When and why actors (and directors) resist rehearsal

The Supplemental Materials

Acting Exercise: Mock Rehearsal (if time permits)

Assignment

Read Weston, pps. 13-47

Read Weston, pps. 49-89, 141-161

Read Weston, pps. 91-139

Read Ball, "Objectives"

WEEK 4

February 7th :

Playable direction: action, images, facts, objectives

Unplayable direction: attitude, emotion, quality, result

Listening and moment-to-moment work

Personalization: sense memory, emotional recall, substitution

Acting Exercise: Improvisation of given circumstances

Physical State of being exercise

Listening Exercise

Assignment: Group A only: Prepare supplemental materials for first scene

February 9th:

SPECIAL SCREENING/DISCUSSION AT UTA ROSEBUD THEATER

WEEK 5

February 14th :

Group A presents rehearsed scenes.

Due: overhead shooting diagrams, shot lists, lined scripts, storyboards (Group A)

February 16th :

No Class.

WEEK 6

February 21st :

Group B presents rehearsed scenes

Due: overhead shooting diagrams, shot lists, lined scripts, storyboards (Group B)

Assignment: Group C only: Prepare supplemental materials for first scene

February 23rd :

Group C presents rehearsed scenes

Due: overhead shooting diagrams, shot lists, lined scripts, storyboards (Group C)

Assignment: Group D only: Prepare supplemental materials for first scene

WEEK 7

February 28th :

Group D presents rehearsed scenes

Due: overhead shooting diagrams, shot lists, lined scripts, storyboards (Group D)

March 2nd

Group A presents shot scenes.

WEEK 8

March 7th

Group B presents shot scenes.

March 9th :

Group C and D presents shot scenes.

WEEK 9

Spring Break (3/14-3/18)

Have fun and be safe!!!!

WEEK 10

March 21st

Film Screening: GREAT SCREEN PERFORMANCES ...

March 23rd :

Communication issues and arguing with actors (don't)

Learning to praise

Sex, violence, drugs, alcohol

Children and non-professionals

Improvisation: benefits, pitfalls, strategies.

Assignment:

Read Weston, pps. 281-295

Read Dekoven, pps. 114-137

Note for all groups: Material for second scene must be chosen by March 30th e-mailed to me by 5:00!!!

WEEK 11

March 28th :

Action labeling Exercise: Film Analysis of *Sherry Baby*

Note: We will watch film in class and discuss the throughline and possible life needs of principal character. We will then watch a particular scene and attempt to identify the scene needs of each character and also the moment –to-moment (action verbs) of each character.

March 30th :

No Class. Prepare Casting call for second scene.

WEEK 12

April 4th:

One-on-One meetings about second scene.

April 6th:

Rehearse Scenes.

WEEK 13

April 11th:

Group A presents rehearsed scenes.

Due: overhead shooting diagrams, shot lists, lined scripts, storyboards (Group A)

Assignment: Group B only: Prepare supplemental materials for second scene

April 13th:

Group B presents rehearsed scenes.

Due: overhead shooting diagrams, shot lists, lined scripts, storyboards (Group B)

Assignment: Group C only: Prepare supplemental materials for second scene

WEEK 14

April 18th :

Group C presents rehearsed scenes.

Due: overhead shooting diagrams, shot lists, lined scripts, storyboards (Group C)

Assignment: Group D only: Prepare supplemental materials for second scene

April 20th :

Group A presents rehearsed scenes.

Due: overhead shooting diagrams, shot lists, lined scripts, storyboards (Group D)

WEEK 16

April 25th:

Group A screens second filmed scenes

April 27th:

Groups B screens second filmed scenes

WEEK 17

May 2nd:

Group C presents second filmed scenes.

May 4th:

Group D screens second filmed scenes.

Course-instructor evaluations

Final discussion