



Faculty of Humanities

Department of Dramatic Arts

COURSE NUMBER: DART 4P51
TERM: Spring 2021
COURSE TITLE: Voice and Text

INSTRUCTORS: Martha Farrell (Voice) – mfarrell@brocku.ca
Tim Welham (Text) – twelham@brocku.ca

TIMES AND LOCATIONS:

Dates: Monday May 3rd to Saturday May 15th, 2021

Hours: 9:00am to 12noon

- The class runs six days per week, with no class on Sunday May 9th

Office Hours: By appointment

All classes are online, held synchronously through Zoom.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is a course focusing on acting the language of Shakespeare. It is practical in its philosophy and its application: wholly designed to give the aspiring actor a handful of tools with which to explore, personalize, and perform Shakespeare's text. It is not, therefore, a theoretical course or a study of Shakespeare as dramatic literature.

The work takes the form of two major sections, both integral to each other. Firstly, exercises in Text will allow the student to experiment with practical tools to decipher Shakespeare's language and make it their own. Meanwhile, exercises in Voice will encourage and enable the actor to develop those facets of their instrument that allow them to further access, experience and communicate Shakespeare's language.

Students come to the course from varying levels of acting training. Previous acting experience and/or experience with Shakespeare is not necessarily a path to success in the course. Process, Progress, and a corresponding commitment to the work are valued over Perfection.

Voice Work

Voice Work begins with breath and with the body – together, both form not only the foundation of a free and responsive voice, but that of an emotional and imaginative connection to the words the actor will speak. The Work will allow the actor to discover the possibilities of the vocal instrument as it relates to text and to performance. Each class will begin with a warmup, followed by classes focusing on such subjects as breath, breath and movement/the spine, vowels, consonants, meter and punctuation. This work is designed to give additional support to, and to complement the specific text exercises.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the two weeks, the student will demonstrate a stronger understanding of the connection between breath and sound, and how that breath is connected to impulse/thought and, therefore, to acting, immediate and "live." They will have learned techniques/exercises for doing a warm-up: one that prepares their body, breath and voice for the task of acting/ rehearsing; and they will be able to apply these exercises to their daily practice.

Text Work

The Text work will allow the actor to examine and apply the specific tools of language found in heightened text, through a series of exercises exploring areas such as Argument, Rhetoric (and supporting structures), Syntax, Particulars of Language (modifiers, meter, rhyme, etc.), and Address. Throughout, the exercises - in close tandem with the Voice work - will look to help the actor ingest or embody the language so that, ultimately, it comes from the artist as their own words.

Learning Outcomes

The student will gain practical tools to be able to better analyze, personalize, and act a piece of heightened text by breaking it down into its component structures. Through this exploration, they will uncover clues to character, emotional situation, argument, and thought progression. They will begin to discover a personal specificity in locating and expressing imagery in thought, and to apply a practical methodology of finding and playing 'action' through language. The overall goal is to find spontaneity and power in embodying heightened text and expressing themselves through it.

COURSE PREREQUISITES:

Please check your university calendar for the pre-requisites for this course.

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY:

As this course is entirely online, certain technologies are required outside the scope of a traditional classroom:

- 1) A Computer or Tablet able to run a recent version of a web browser such as Chrome, Safari or Firefox.
- 2) A reliable high-speed internet connection.
- 3) A webcam (internal or external) or similar device to stream video.
- 4) A microphone (internal or external) to record audio, and speakers or headphones.
- 5) Minimum floor space at home of approx. 8'x8' to move, stretch, and participate in exercises.
- 6) A Zoom account.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- 1) Complete Works of William Shakespeare – Each participant should have access to a Complete Works of Shakespeare. It can be any edition, including an electronic or website-accessed version should the student prefer. (Recommended print editions are the Riverside, Arden, Folger or RSC; a free online version can be found at the [Folger Shakespeare Online](#).)
- 2) Shakespeare Monologue – a hard-copy of which should be ready on the first day. A list of appropriate Shakespeare Monologues will be provided several weeks in advance of the course. The student will select one monologue from that list to work on during (and outside of) class, and eventually to present. The student is required to read the play of their monologue before beginning the course, and to be familiar with the meanings of words in the monologue. **The student is strongly *discouraged* from memorizing the speech before the course, and from developing a performance or "way to do it."** (It is our experience that this can only interfere with any exploration and experience the student may have.) It is also advised that the print is large enough to be able read from a distance.

SUGGESTED RESOURCE BOOKS:

There are no required textbooks. However, we recommend several books for reference:

- *The Oxford English Dictionary*
- *Shakespeare's Words* by David & Ben Crystal, 2002. (Free online at [shakespeareswords.com](#).)
- *Text in Action* by Cicely Berry, 2001.
- *The Actor Speaks* by Patsy Rodenburg, 2000.
- *Speaking Shakespeare* by Patsy Rodenburg, 2002.

DRESS:

Students should dress in clothing appropriate to a movement class (i.e. warm-up pants or other stretch clothing that will provide comfort and flexibility). Clothing should be "neutral"; logo-embossed clothing should be avoided. Students are encouraged to work in bare feet to make full use of contact with the floor. (Any footwear deemed to impede the work is discouraged.) Earrings, jewelry, and piercings should be removed for class for the student's safety. Students are also encouraged to use a yoga-mat for the floor work that will take place.

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:

All course communication will be done via email. Students should check their inboxes regularly. Zoom invites or changes to the daily schedule will be sent by 6:00pm the night before.

EVALUATION COMPONENTS AND DUE DATES

<u>EVALUATION COMPONENT</u>	<u>WEIGHT</u>	<u>DUE DATE</u>
Personal Conduct - Punctuality and readiness to work, appropriate dress, openness to process, focus and concentration.	10%	ongoing
Character Lists Assignment - Completion of the "Character Lists" exercise about the character from your chosen monologue.	15%	Saturday May 8th
Class Work - Exploration and application of the work, risk in exercises, participation in exercises and discussions.	50%	ongoing
Presentation of Monologue - Students must have memorized their monologue, and present it as a performance - as "a piece of acting"- having incorporated the voice and text work on their monologue both in and outside class. Further details of the Monologue Presentation will be explained on the first day.	25%	Saturday May 15th
	<u>Total</u>	<u>100%</u>

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTENDANCE AND GRADES:

Students are expected to attend all classes in order to pass this course. Students must be online and *ready to start* each morning at 9:00am. This is strongly maintained. Therefore, students are encouraged to sign-in and arrive several minutes before the actual start-time to get settled, do their own warmups, etc. Students will be marked down for absenteeism, lateness, or lack of readiness to begin. A **0.5%** will be deducted for any lateness, and a full **1%** for being absent without a supported or validated reason.

LATE SUBMISSION POLICY:

The penalty for late submission of assigned coursework (e.g., papers, assignments, weekly reflections, etc.) is **1%** per day, unless accommodations are required.

COMPASSIONATE MEDICAL ABSENCES:

If you require academic consideration because of an incapacitating medical condition, please inform your instructors, as soon as possible, of your inability to complete your work. Given our challenging times related to COVID-19, requests for extensions on assignments due to illness, or caring for others with illness, will be given case by case consideration for extensions. If you are unable to write a scheduled examination, or participate in a final performance due to an incapacitating medical condition, you must follow the process set out in the [Faculty Handbook III:9.4.1.](#)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The Work in this course will take place through individual exercises and discussions. The student's ability to verbalize changes and results of the various exercises is key to developing a relationship between oneself and one's work. The instructors encourage participation in feedback of the exercises because it's important for the actor to develop a language for talking about their work objectively. Participation in these discussions during and after the exercises is not a measure of how much one talks but rather how receptive and perceptive the student is, a measure of their focus in their own work and in that of the group.

The student is encouraged to risk: to commit fully to the work, to note changes, make adjustments and go further or deeper in each exercise, often (and by necessity) in their own time outside the class.

Above all, the course requires the actor to be "present": to be ready to work promptly, to commit themselves to the exercises, to ask questions, to focus on and share in the observations that take place around the exercises.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Academic misconduct is a serious offence. The principle of academic integrity, particularly of doing one's own work, documenting properly (including use of quotation marks, appropriate paraphrasing and referencing/citation), collaborating appropriately, and avoiding misrepresentation, is a core principle in university study. Teaching materials are intended only for the educational use of Brock University students registered in the course. Any distribution or publishing of teaching material (e.g. uploading material to a third-party website) is strictly prohibited unless the student has obtained the copyright owner's prior written consent. Any violation of copyright law or the University's intellectual property policies may be subject to sanction as academic misconduct, and/or under the Student Code of Conduct. Students should consult Section VII, "Academic Misconduct", in the "Academic Regulations and University Policies" entry in the Undergraduate Calendar, available at <http://brocku.ca/webcal> to view a fuller description of prohibited actions, and the procedures and penalties. Information on what constitutes academic integrity is available at <https://brocku.ca/academic-integrity/>

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY NOTICE:

All slides, presentations, handouts, tests, exams, and other course materials created by the instructors in this course are the intellectual property of the instructors. A student who publicly posts or sells an instructor's work, without the instructor's express consent, may be charged with misconduct under Brock's Academic Integrity Policy and/or Code of Conduct, and may also face adverse legal consequences for infringement of intellectual property rights.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION:

The University is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for all students and will adhere to the Human Rights principles that ensure respect for dignity, individualized accommodation, inclusion and full participation. The University provides a wide range of resources to assist students, as follows:

- a) If you require academic accommodation because of a disability or an ongoing health or mental health condition, please contact Student Accessibility Services at askSAS@brocku.ca or 905 688 5550 ext. 3240.
- b) If you require academic accommodation because of an incapacitating medical condition, you must, as soon as practicable, inform your instructor(s) of your inability to complete your academic work. You must also submit a Brock University Student Medical Certificate (found at <https://brocku.ca/registrar/toolkit/forms>). The University may, at its discretion, request more detailed documentation in certain cases. If you are unable to write a scheduled examination due

to an incapacitating medical condition, you must follow the process set out in the [Faculty Handbook III:9.4.1](#).

- c) If you are experiencing mental health concerns, contact the Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre. *Good2Talk* is a service specifically for post-secondary students, available 24/7, 365 days a year, and provides anonymous assistance: <http://www.good2talk.ca/> or call 1-866-925-5454. For information on wellness, coping and resiliency, visit: <https://brocku.ca/mental-health/>
- d) If you require academic accommodation on religious grounds, you should make a formal, written request to your instructor(s) for alternative dates and/or means of satisfying requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of any given academic term, or as soon as possible after a need for accommodation is known to exist.
- e) If you have been affected by sexual violence, the Human Rights & Equity Office offers support, information, reasonable accommodations, and resources through the Sexual Violence Support & Education Coordinator. For information on sexual violence, visit [Brock's Sexual Assault and Harassment Policy](#) or contact the Sexual Violence Support & Response Coordinator at humanrights@brocku.ca or 905 688 5550 ext. 4387.
- f) If you feel you have experienced discrimination or harassment on any of the above grounds, including racial, gender or other forms of discrimination, contact the Human Rights and Equity Office at humanrights@brocku.ca.