

Course Syllabus

THTR 350: Theatre for Youth I

Instructor: Deb Currier

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Winter 2018

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A note from Imran Khan, President of the India chapter of ASSITEJ, the International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People:

Our world seems to be fast becoming a space where segregating between cultures, people, races and genders has become the call of the hour. Politicians of some of the biggest and oldest democracies are winning campaigns based on hate speeches. At a time where we need to be inclusive some are opting to be exclusive.

As an artist, a responsible citizen, a father and above all, a human being I wonder, was this the world I inherited? Is this the world I created? Where did we go wrong? What am I leaving behind for my children? What world will we leave behind for our children? Do they deserve to live in a place where what binds us together is not love, but a forced oppressive order, that wants to ensure that we live in ghettos, with people of 'our' kind? But what is my kind? What is the other kind?

Somewhere I feel the time is passing for only dialogue and discussion to be the one source dealing with such cracks in our human foundations and what we need is action.

TIFLI (Tifli means Childhood, is ASSITEJ India's International TYA festival) thus is our attempt to create a world where acceptance, tolerance, sharing and caring become our keywords.

TIFLI means childhood

Tifli is our attempt to journey back into our childhood, to find that child within us, who possessed a heart of gold. A heart that was [without] malice and love loaded. A heart that looked for friends and searched for dreamers, and never wanted a rationale behind friendships and never made us chose sides on the basis of caste, colour, race or gender. *Tifli* is our action to help heal this world. By the time you'll be reading this message we must have already started the process of searching that child inside us, through performances, through art, through next generation and more importantly through dialogues.

Let's celebrate childhood!! Let's revisit the child in us!!

Imran Khan

A human who wants to live with all of you.



Required Texts for this Course:

Theatre for Children by David Wood with Janet Grant

Theatre for Young Audiences: A Critical Handbook ed. by Tom Maguire and Karian Schuitema

Recommended Text: Theatre Games for Young Performers by Maria C. Novelly

Course Goals

- To explore the philosophy, literature and techniques of creating theatre **for** and **with** youth K-8th grades
- To gain an understanding of the special skills and knowledge required in youth theatre
- To strengthen theatre for youth skills in communication, adaptation, directing and performing
- Making connections, finding meaning and acquiring creative pedagogy skills for future classroom/community teaching and learning in a global context
- To build understanding of the global context of TFY
- Effectively interact and communicate interculturally within the context of TFY

Departmental Learning Outcomes/Skills met in this course:

- Analyzes and interprets dramatic literature and performance from the standpoint of designer, performer, director, playwright or critic
- Knowledge of the role of theatre in shaping our past, present and future
- Functions effectively as a member of a collaborative team in the preparation and realization of a [public] performance

Course Requirements and Expectations

- Regular attendance – each day is worth 5 points for attendance and participation.
- Participation in all class discussions and activities
- Completion of readings, assignments, observations, midterm and final projects
- Turning in all written portions of assignments typed and on time on Canvas- **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED. No exceptions!** Now go back and read the first part of this bullet point again.
- All reading assignments are to be completed by class time on the date assigned in the syllabus

Assessment

Please take the initiative to keep the instructor aware of your efforts and progress!

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Participation/Attendance: 95 pts (5 pts *per class meeting***)

Interactive Story: 20 pts

RT Director's Checklist: 40 pts

Final Reader's Theatre Script: 30 pts

RT Group Performance: 20 pts

Web Research Project 25 pts

Final Applied Lesson Project: 70 pts

TOTAL: 300 pts

Letter equivalents are determined by dividing the top half of the total points for any assignment into 4 equal lettered "zones." The same is true for the final total, which is how I will ultimately arrive at a letter grade to report to the university. So...

300-263 = A range: 300-276 = A; 275-263 = A-

262-225 = B range: 262-250 = B+; 249-237 = B; 236-225 = B-

224-186 = C range: 224-212 = C+; 211-199 = C; 198-186 = C-

185-150 = D range: 185-173 = D+; 172-160 = D; 159-147 = D-; 146 and below = F

** *You will be participating in one or more classmates' projects, and your commitment to their projects as much as yours will count toward (or against) your participation grade.*

Working Course Schedule: THTR 350

Date	Topic	Assignments/Reading Due
1/10	Introductions, etc....	Be thinking about a short story to make interactive!
1/12	Definitions and discussion	READ: <i>Theatre for Children</i> pp.1-37 Special Guest: Melani Lyons from Dandylyon Drama, Seattle http://dandylyondrama.org/
1/17	Interactive Stories	
1/19	Perform Interactive Intros	READ: Forward & Ch 1 in <i>TFY Handbook</i>
1/24	Reader's Theatre (RT)	Due on Canvas: Interactive Story Assignment READ: <i>Theatre for Children:</i> 38-61, "Suddenlies..." <i>RT groups</i>
1/26	Class starts at 4:00pm!	Creative Story Drama; READ: Ch 3 in <i>TFY Handbook</i>
1/31	Class starts at 4:00pm!	Due for class: <i>working script & copies for everyone in your group!</i>
2/2	RT Rehearsal/Coaching, <i>Deb will be there at 4:00pm,</i>	Due on Canvas: RT Checklist
2/7	RT Rehearsal/Coaching	
2/9	RT Rehearsal/Coaching	Due: All props and costume pieces for RT piece – bring to class!
Saturday 2/10		Seattle Children's Theatre trip! 10:00am-6:00pm
2/14	RT performances	Due on Canvas: Final RT script
2/16	Creative Play & Interculturalism	READ: Chapters 5 & 7 in <i>TFY Handbook</i>
2/21	Learning Through Participation	READ: Ch. 10 in <i>TFY Handbook</i>
2/23	Web Research Project	Due on Canvas: Web Research Project (class does not meet)
2/28	Adaptations	READ: <i>Theatre for Children:</i> 125 – 152, "Adaptations"
3/2	Immersive Theatre	READ: Ch 11 in <i>TFY Handbook</i>
3/7	Devising/Applied TFY	
3/9	Devising/Applied TFY	
3/14	Devising/Applied TFY	
3/16		READ: <i>Theatre for Children:</i> 221-236 "Twice as Difficult, Twice As Rewarding"

Final exam: Wednesday 3/21, 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm
Final Applied Lesson Plan Due ON CANVAS BY 3:00pm!!

NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED (in case you missed it)

Explanation of Assignments

Grading rubrics for each assignment are on Canvas in each assignment tab. Consult the rubrics while completing the projects to make sure you are following the same guidelines you will be graded on.

Interactive Story: This will be *no longer than 3 mins* when performed (about 1 page typed, 12 pt font...). Submit on Canvas under “assignments.” *You will only be performing the introduction of characters*, but you need to write the whole thing out. See sample script on Canvas. Submit on Canvas under “assignments.”

Reader’s Theatre:

- **Director's Checklist:** Please see description below. Submit on Canvas under “assignments.”
- **Final Reader’s Theatre Script:** This is the scripted version- what your actor/readers will perform from- which will look more like a play script than a prose piece (see sample R.T. script on Canvas). Submit on Canvas under “assignments.”
- **RT Group Performance:** You will perform your script, complete with props and various small costume pieces, for the class on the assignment due date.

International Web Research Project: You will research two different TFY organizations or producing companies via the internet. One from the United States *and one from an international (non-U.S.)* organization. You will complete the worksheet provided on Canvas and turn it in online on the due date. Be prepared to present/discuss your findings in class!

Final Project/ Devised Activity: Please see accompanying information page. Submit on Canvas under “assignments.”

THTR 350 Director’s Checklist

In complete sentences (typed, paragraph format with corresponding numbers to identify your answers), please identify and explain the following elements contained in your reader’s theatre script. Remember, not all elements of the checklist need be present in your script, but try to incorporate as many as you can into your interpretation of the piece you have chosen. Please include the entry number *even if there are none of those elements* (ex: “4. Life and Death Situations: There are none in this story.”) **If you need a “refresher” on specific definitions of these elements, refer to pages 38-61 in *Theatre for Children*.**

1. Story
2. Theme (fantasy within reality, myth/legend, old wine in new bottles, anthropomorphic, contemporary, quest, toys/inanimate objects, worlds, etc)
3. Characters
4. Life and Death Situations
5. Language and Silence
6. “Suddenlies”
7. Humor
8. Audience Participation
9. Scale
10. Puppetry
11. Magic within the Plot
12. Colorful Look on Stage

13. Lighting (what you would do if given the opportunity)
14. Sound
15. Music
16. Climaxes and Cliffhangers
17. Justice and Fairness
18. Taboos

TFY Web Research Project

Find and research two different TFY companies or organizations, one in the U.S, and *one international (non-U.S.)*, and answer the following questions.

- Full name of company or organization
- Physical Location
- Web address
- Name and contact info of person in charge (Artistic Director, Education Director, President, CEO, etc.)
- Main philosophy or purpose of company or organization (mission statement, usually)
- Recent productions or conferences: titles, themes, images: What was the most recent production or conference held by this company/organization? Describe it here.

Your Opinions – explain and defend them well with supporting evidence!

- What is your opinion of the quality of the work produced by this company/organization?
- Does their mission seem to match what they are doing?
- Does this company/organization produce meaningful TFY?
- Does this company/organization have an internship program?
- Would you want to work for this company/organization? Why or why not?
- What questions do you have for this company/organization after researching the website?

Final Applied Lesson Project

Goal of Assignment: To design a complete applied lesson plan/workshop for a specific age group *between grades K-8*.

Scope of Assignment: Each project will include (but not be limited to)...

1. A clear and concise **bridge-in activity**
2. A **physical and/or vocal warm-up** activity designed to engage the body and mind in preparation for the main event.
3. A **main event:** this is the “meat” of the applied lesson. What we have been doing in class as activities leading to performance of *original* material scripted by the participants are good examples. There are also many ideas included in your supplemental text *Theatre Games for Young Performers* as well as other library “finds and treasures.” The end result is a piece that can be shaped for actual performance in a showcase by the participants.
4. A **cool down or bridge-out activity:** you may combine a cool-down and a bridge-in if the one activity successfully provides closure to the main event activity as well as “returning” your participants to the here-and-now.
5. A **final summary** of expected outcome and goals of your specific project. This should include a projected length of actual workshop (since we will not have time to do them in class, I’d like to know

what time-frame you would work in if you could), the age-range you are working with, the maximum/ideal number of participants and expected leader involvement (participatory? side-coaching? autocratic? democratic? etc.)

Details

1. **The project will be typed and complete when turned in on Canvas by 3:00 pm, March 21, 2018.***
2. **Please prepare a *2-3 minute oral presentation* of your project** to present to the class during the final meeting. This goes by QUICKLY! You will be graded on the thoroughness of the typed and turned-in project (the in-class little presentation is for everyone's benefit and will aid me in understanding your typed version, but will not be graded).
3. The project is worth 70 points and should be the pinnacle, the culmination, the zenith of your studies in this course – meaning, tie in as much as you can from the course as a whole when designing your devised project! eff
4. ****You must turn in the final project on time in order to pass the course.*** This means turning it in on Canvas before you come to the final!