

Beacon Charter High School for the Arts

Fall, 2016

Course Syllabus

Senior Theatre: Directing/Playwriting

Instructor: Jason Robert LeClair

Jason Robert LeClair has his Masters in Art Education from the University of Florida and is an Honors graduate of the Massachusetts College of Art and Design with a Bachelors of Fine Arts in Media and Performing Arts. He has been teaching the art of theatre in all aspects since 1999. Working in professional theatres as technical director, community theatres as artistic director and consultant, as well as high schools across the state, he has earned a solid local reputation for excellence. President of the Rhode Island Theatre Education Association from 2010 – 2014 and Director of International Thespians Troupe 7444, Mr. LeClair continues to work in the realm of arts education encouraging the collaborative nature of the theatrical arts.

Contact Info: jleclair@beaconart.org

Office Hours: By appointment

*“The fun for me in collaboration is, one,
working with other people just makes you smarter; that's proven.”*

- Lin-Manuel Miranda

Course Description: This course was developed to enhance the Student Artist's understanding of two key elements central to the production of theatre; directing and playwriting. In directing, student artists will learn to seek and pursue a vision for a show based on their interpretation of the script. In Playwriting, student artists will develop stories that can translate from page to visual storytelling with action and dialog.

Course Goal: Student artists will study excerpts from texts on directing. These opinions and theories will help them to develop a deeper understanding of the conceptual collaboration involved in directing a play. They will also study the finer points of mechanics involved in directing such as scheduling, staffing, casting, etc. As a playwright, student artists will develop an understanding of plot, character, conflict, rising and falling action, climax and resolution. Within that developmental understanding the student artists will translate stories into living works of art.

Essential Skills:

- 1.) Student artists will develop skills in effective script analysis from the perspective of a director.
- 2.) Student artists will learn the art of playwriting through practical experience starting with scenes and growing into a ten-minute play.
- 3.) Student artists will develop skills in collaboration and creation through the generation and direction of plays.
- 4.) Student artists will develop a deeper understanding of their own method and approach to the art of theatre in the aspect of chief collaborator.
- 5.) Student artists will read and examine/extrapolate the concepts used by playwrights to develop their work.

National Standards Covered:

TH:Cr3.1.HSIII

- a. Refine, transform, and re-imagine a devised or scripted drama/theatre work using the rehearsal process to invent or re-imagine style, genre, form, and conventions.
- b. Synthesize ideas from research, script analysis, and context to create a performance that is believable, authentic, and relevant in a drama/theatre work.
- c. Apply a high level of technical proficiencies to the rehearsal process to support the story and emotional impact of a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

TH:Pr5.1.HSI

- a. Practice various acting techniques to expand skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

TH:Pr6.1.HSI

- a. Perform a scripted drama/theatre work for a specific audience.

TH:Re8.1.HSI

- a. Analyze and compare artistic choices developed from personal experiences in multiple drama/theatre works.

b. Identify and compare cultural perspectives and contexts that may influence the evaluation of a drama/theatre work.

TH:Re9.1.HSI

a. Examine a drama/ theatre work using supporting evidence and criteria, while considering art forms, history, culture, and other disciplines.

TH:Cn11.1.HSI

a. Explore how cultural, global, and historic belief systems affect creative choices in a drama/theatre work.

Grading System:

Per Beacon Charter High School for the Arts Faculty Agreement, all courses utilize the following formula to calculate the final course grade:

45% Major Assignments (projects, papers, performances, power-points)

35% In Class Work (quizzes, journals, discussions, participation in rehearsals)

20% Homework

Needed by Student: binder with loose leaf paper **or** notebook, pen, **AGENDA** (electronic or otherwise), **professional** attitude and willingness to **work hard**, **respect** for self, fellow actors, instructor and theatre space.

UNITS COVERED:

The Silent Seven

Understanding Movement

Creating convincing characters

Understanding the collaborative process

Structuring a script

Thirty/One/Five/Ten - Creating Short works

ASSESSMENTS: Students will be required to:

1.) The Silent Seven

a.) workshop each of the seven exercises in different groups

b.) respond in the weekly journal to the questions from the instructor

c.) participate both on and off stage.

2.) Understanding movement

- a.) Create paperwork associated with blocking
- b.) Analyze a play based on the script using the silent seven as a guide
- 3.) Director's Journal
 - a.) one entry weekly (observational unless otherwise instructed).
 - b.) checked by instructor every Thursday – entered on Google classroom
- 4.) Midterm - MLA paper: Review of a Professional Performance (guidelines enclosed).
- 5.) Developing a script using time
30sec./1min./5min./10min. Script assignment
- 6.) Play: Student choice
 - a.) written script analysis and director's notes/concept
 - b.) written director's journal
 - c.) performance of one scene
- 7.) Final 10 Minute Script. Or Director's book

Syllabus Agreement Sheet

I have read and understand the syllabus for Senior Theatre:
Directing and Playwriting.

Student Name (printed)

Date

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian e-mail address

Please return to Mr. LeClair by Thursday, September 1, 2016

PLEASE NOTE: This is a homework grade for September 1.

Use of Electronic Information Resources

Technology is a vehicle to access the most current and extensive sources of information which will prepare students for 21st Century careers. As such, school Internet access is a privilege for educational purposes only and will be revoked if any of the following conditions occur:

Students will not access or create offensive, profane, or pornographic files, plagiarize works or violate copyrights or trademarks, damage, alter, or modify hardware or software or attempt to bypass computer security, nor will they engage in behaviors that constitute cyber bullying.

I am aware of this electronic use policy and I will exercise sound judgment when using classroom technology and accessing the Internet. Furthermore, I understand that intentional misuse of technology/Internet access will result in disciplinary action against me.

Student Name (Print)

Student Signature

Senior Theatre: Directing and Playwriting - Fall 2016	Teacher - Jason Robert LeClair jleclair@beaconart.org	
Project: Professional Theatre Critique	Assigned Date: 9/1/2016	Due Date: 10/28/16
<p>Portfolio-Worthy Project Criteria <i>(use this area to summarize the essence of this project to include tools used, duration, & scope):</i></p> <p>Objective: To engage in a meaningful critique of a Contemporary theatre performance by a professional/semi-professional theatre company. There are several theatre companies locally that have full seasons available online. Trinity Rep, Epic Theatre, Gamm Theatre, Ocean State Theatre Co., Out Loud Theatre, Etc. (Play choice must be approved by Mr. LeClair).</p> <p>Standards <i>(use this area to list those standards assessed for this project using its key words and phrases):</i></p> <p>TH:Re9.1.HSII</p> <p>a. Analyze and assess a drama/theatre work by connecting it to art forms, history, culture, and other disciplines using supporting evidence and criteria.</p> <p>b. Construct meaning in a drama/theatre work, considering personal aesthetics and knowledge of production elements while respecting others' interpretations.</p> <p>c. Verify how a drama/theatre work communicates for a specific purpose and audience.</p>		
<p>Beacon Charter High School for the Arts Theatre Department</p> <p>Theatre Critiques/Reviews: A critique is an evaluation of a performance of a play or musical. The critiques should not only state your opinion of the production, but also back up your opinions with specific examples directly from the play. Use the format provided as a guideline in writing your review. Think of your review as a document that someone would want to read in a newspaper or magazine. Entice the read to go and see the performance or entice them to not see the performance. Regardless of your opinion back your thoughts up with specifics from the play. You should read the play before going to see it if possible in order to truly understand what direction the production team went in with the author's text</p> <p>***Note: Please keep your playbill after the performance. You will need this to complete the critique.***</p>		

