

Advanced Stage Voice and Speech: Shakespeare
Spring 2010; MW 3:00pm – 4:50pm SSP 204

Instructor – Thomas L. Cunningham
Office Hours – By Appointment, SSP 201

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Required Texts

- Speaking Shakespeare by Patsy Rodenburg
- Thinking Shakespeare by Barry Edelstein
- Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, *Othello*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Richard III*, and *As You Like It*— all for joint use with THEA 314
- Access to copies of *Antony and Cleopatra*, *King Lear* and *The Tempest*. All can be found online in various forms (including from the University of Sydney at this URL: <http://www.it.usyd.edu.au/~matty/Shakespeare/>)

Course Objectives

This course focuses both on reinforcing and strengthening work you have already done and providing you with a new set of skills that will enhance your work in the future. Some of the things we will accomplish include:

- Supporting text fully with breath, voice, and tone
- Using transatlantic speech
- Speaking both vowels and consonants in a heightened manner
- Analyzing rhetorical and poetic devices
- Playing with operative structure
- Accessing the imaginative and creative nature of the spoken word

As we begin this endeavor I remind you: Fear is the mind-killer! You must allow your fear to pass over and through you, until only *you* remain. Shakespeare's words are written with passion and commitment—we must embrace them and speak them without hesitation or reservation!

Grading

Your grade will be based on a combination of your written work, in-class participation/individual growth, and application of the craft to the texts of Shakespeare. In addition to these three major areas, your attendance, punctuality, and ability to focus on the work will also be considered!

Your final grade will be determined by the following:

Participation	25%
Professional Growth	
Attendance/Engagement	
Written Work	25%
Reading Responses	
“Hey! Listen to This!”	
Scansion and Scoring	
Performances	50%
Sonnets	
Monologues	
Read, Not Dead!	

Grading Scale

Written I will be evaluating your written work based on the content of your discourse and your synthesis of your readings. Your performance work will be graded based on Comprehensive application of the skills/areas of mastery we have covered up to the point of the performance. Altogether, your work will be considered on VCU's official grading scale:

A	100-90%
B	89-80%
C	79-70%
D	69-60%
F	59% and Below

Written Work

All written assignments should be type-written in a 12 – 14 point font face, double-spaced, and printed in black ink. Double-sided printing is fine! For Scansion work the body of the text should be type-written however your mark-up of the text may be done in pencil.

About **Reading Responses**: Discuss how the readings relate to your own personal artistic *struggle* with Shakespeare and his texts. Consider the ideas that Rodenburg and Edelstein pose. Digest those thoughts and regurgitate your own personal thoughts. Remember: it is always alright to disagree! Try to devote some thought to each of the chapters contained within a block of reading. They are all worthwhile!

About **“Hey! Listen to This!”**: Grab a friend, a coworker, or a complete stranger and say to them “Hey! Listen to This!” The objective of this assignment is to gain a fresh perspective on the work you are doing in class from *outside* of the classroom. Using any Shakespearean text we've worked on in class, you are working on independently, or that you have discovered a passion for, *speak the speech!* Take note of the reaction of your receiver. Prepare some specific questions to ask your receiver (questions relevant to your work on the text, and the areas you've been focusing on/struggling with). Four (5) of these responses must use feedback/impressions provided by a person from outside the class who listens as you present the text. Two (2) may use impressions gathered by listening to a recording of yourself as you speak the text. Use this as an opportunity to process new ideas about your text and assess how well you are communicating the Thought and Meaning to an audience! There are a total of seven (7) of these responses.

Performance Work

Over the course of the semester you will work on scenes and monologues from the five required plays. You will choose these scenes and monologues in your Acting studio. These will be worked-shopped on an individual/small group basis in the later part of the semester.

Prior to scene/monologue work we will explore the Prologue to *Romeo and Juliet* together in class. Each of you will individually scan and explore **Sonnet 60** and we will work through the piece as a group.

Another major performance assignment this semester is **Read Not Dead!** This assignment gives you the chance to experience a few lesser-seen texts, as well as a few of the more difficult texts in Shakespeare. You will divide into three groups, each choosing a text (*Anthony and Cleopatra, King Lear, or The Tempest*). You will then perform a highly edited, extremely-bare-bones, super-creative staged-reading of that text for the rest of the class. We will then discuss each of the texts as a class, allowing you to bring your insights as discoveries as the text's experts to bear!

The final performance for this course will be a Sonnet of your choosing, scanned, scored, and fully realized! This will be your opportunity to demonstrate your mastery over the text, and your willingness to work independently. I will also evaluate your final Shakespeare performance for your Acting Studio as part of your final grade of this course.

Elocution with Thomas

In keeping with departmental policy, you must wear black movement clothing during class times. Likewise you must remove all jewelry prior to the start of class. This includes earrings, bracelets, watches, and any piercings worn above the neck (this most certainly includes any *in* or *about* the mouth)! Dressing appropriately is a sign that you are ready to work and have come prepared to participate in the work we are doing.

In addition to appropriate dress, an appropriate attitude and comportment are necessary in maintaining a free and open environment in which to explore Shakespeare's text. You must show respect and support for the efforts of your fellow classmates. You needn't like them or even agree with them! But you must approach one another with the same grace and professionalism as you approach the *work itself*. So take turns speaking! Share the floor with others! Offer constructive feedback! Expand on one another's ideas, and always—*always*—put the work first while in the classroom.

The Sacred Space

In order to promote an atmosphere of learning and openness we will be designating our classroom space as our "sacred space." If you arrive early to the space, please use the time for silent reflection, meditation, or to warm-up physically and vocally for the day's work. You may speak, but please speak only of the work we will do here in Voice and Speech. Please stow your belongings out of the way, and have any materials you will need for the day's work on-hand. I encourage you to bring a spill-proof container of water with you into the space. All other food or drink should remain outside of our holy-of-holies. Please finishing eating or snacking prior to entering the space. All this does not mean we won't be having a riotously good time! On the contrary, it ensures we will remain focused on the work and be better able to experience the freedom and joy that it will bring!

Attendance

In keeping with the university attendance policy you are allowed a total of two (2) absences. Each additional absence will result in the loss of a **full letter grade**. Two lates (arriving after attendance has been taken) qualify as one (1) absence. If you arrive at class more than 20 minutes late you are absent. If you leave class early without being excused you are absent. As with all of your studio courses, your work in this class is tied directly to your attendance and punctuality! To put it simply: the most important part is showing up. A gentle reminder: *you* are responsible for all missed work due to absence.

Please notify me via e-mail (cunnigham@vcu.edu –note the misspelling of my name, that is intentional!) the moment you are aware of an upcoming absence.

Disabilities

If you have any visual, auditory, ambulatory, or learning disability it is your responsibility to inform me so that I can try to accommodate your needs! See The VCU Resource Guide for details.

Religious Observances

In accordance with University policy, if you want to observe a religious holiday of special importance you must provide advance written notification by the end of the second week of classes so that I can accommodate your needs.

Honor Policy

Please visit the VCU website or see the VCU Handbook to review the official university honor policy. Two university rulings you need be especially aware of: **1. The University requires that cell phones and beepers must be turned off while you are in the classroom.**
2. Firearms and knives are not permitted in the classroom or on campus.

VCU Alert and Campus Security

1. Sign up to receive VCU text messaging alerts [<http://www.vcu.edu/alert/notify>]. Keep your information up-to-date.
2. Know the safe evacuation route from each of your classrooms. Emergency evacuation routes are posted in on-campus classrooms.
3. Listen for and follow instructions from VCU or other designated authorities.
4. Know where to go for additional emergency information [<http://www.vcu.edu/alert>].
5. Know the emergency phone number for the VCU Police: 804-828-1234. Report suspicious activities and objects.

First-Week's Course Schedule

Date	What are we doing?	What did I read?	What is due?
19-Jan	Discuss the syllabus. Read, Not Dead assigned.		
24-Jan	The State of Readiness	pp.1 – 29, Rodenberg	Familiarize yourself with the Prologue
26-Jan	Prologue	pp. 30 – 68, Rodenberg	
31-Jan	The Givens, The Word	pp. 69 - 77	Reading Response 1 , 1-68, Rodenberg

I will provide a completed course-schedule for you by Wednesday of last week!

PROLOGUE

Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

SONNET 60

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,

So do our minutes hasten to their end;

Each changing place with that which goes before,

In sequent toil all forwards do contend.

Nativity, once in the main of light,

Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,

Crooked elipses 'gainst his glory fight,

And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.

Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth

And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,

Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,

And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:

And yet to times in hope my verse shall stand,

Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

Tentative Course Schedule

Date	What are we doing?	What did I read?	What is due?
19-Jan	Discuss the syllabus. Read, Not Dead assigned.		
24-Jan	The State of Readiness	pp.1 – 29, Rodenberg	Familiarize yourself with the Prologue
26-Jan	Prologue	pp. 30 – 68, Rodenberg	
31-Jan	The Givens, The Word	pp. 69 - 77	Reading Response 1 , 1-68, Rodenberg
02-Feb	Alliteration, Assonance, Onomatopoeia	pp. 78 – 83, Rodenberg pp. 1 – 8, Edelstein	Hey! Listen to This! 1
28-Jan	Rhythm, Pauses, Irregularity Scansion	pp. 84 – 102, Rodenberg pp. 49 – 70, Edelstein	
07-Feb	Line, Thoughts, Structure	pp. 103 – 120, Rodenberg	
09-Feb	Sonnet 60	pp. 71 – 102, Edelstein	Reading Response 2 , 69-120 (R), 49 – 70 (E) Hey! Listen to This! 2
14-Feb	Sonnet 60	pp. 155 - 200, Edelstein	Sonnet 60 Memorized
16-Feb	CLASS CANCELLED		
21-Feb	Sonnet 60		Sonnet Presentations
23-Feb	CLASS CANCELLED		Reading Response 3 , 155 – 200 and 71 – 102 (E) Hey! Listen to This! 3 [Turn Assignment in to my Box]
28-Feb	Antithesis, Rhyme, Prose	pp. 121 – 162, Rodenberg pp. 103 – 124, Edelstein	
02-Mar	Language Games	pp. 163 – 179, Rodenberg	Hey! Listen to This! 4
07-Mar	The Story, Location, Stage Directions	pp. 180 – 187, Rodenberg	
09-Mar	Read Not Dead: Antony and Cleopatra		Group Presentation
13-Mar - 20-Mar	SPRING BREAK		

21-Mar	Read Not Dead: King Lear		Group Presentation Reading Response 4 , 121 – 187 (R), 103 – 124 (E)
23-Mar	Read Not Dead: The Tempest		Group Presentation
28-Mar	First Folio, The Soliloquy	pp. 188 – 190, Rodenberg	
30-Mar	The Imaginative Part I	pp. 191 – 216, Rodenberg	
04-Apr	The Imaginative Part II	pp. 217 – 225, Rodeberg	Hey! Listen to This! 5
06-Apr	TBA		Reading Response 5 , 188-225 (R)
11-Apr	TBA		
13-Apr	TBA		Hey! Listen to This! 6
18-Apr	Workshops		Schedule TBA, Monologues and Scenes Memorized
20-Apr	Workshops		Schedule TBA, Monologues and Scenes Memorized
25-Apr	Workshops		Schedule TBA, Monologues and Scenes Memorized
27-Apr	Final Scene/Monologue Dress		Solo and Partner Performances, Paperwork Reading Response 6, TBA Hey! Listen to This! 7
02-May	Scenes/Monologues Presented		
TBA	Individual Sonnets Presented		Sonnet Memorized and Performed, Paperwork
TBA	Maymont Frolic and Festivus		*Pending Weather

30-Mar	*Monologues		Hey! Listen to This! 6
01-Apr	Finish Monologues/The First Folio/Soliloquy	pp.188 - 190	Schedule TBA, Monologues and Scenes Memorized
06-Apr	The Imaginative Part 1 + 2	pp.191 - 125	Schedule TBA, Monologues and Scenes Memorized
08-Apr	*Shakespeare's Shapely Language	handout	Schedule TBA, Monologues and Scenes Memorized
13-Apr	Workshops		Schedule TBA, Monologues and Scenes Memorized
15-Apr	Workshops <i>Chicago Matinee</i>		Schedule TBA, Monologues and Scenes Memorized
20-Apr	Workshops		Schedule TBA, Monologues and Scenes Memorized
22-Apr	Workshops <i>Chicago Matinee</i>		Solo and Partner Performances, Paperwork Hey! Listen to This! 7
27-Apr	Monologues Presented		Sonnet Memorized and Performed, Paperwork
28-Apr	T's Final Rehearsal		
30-Apr	T's Final		
01-May	Maymont Mayday Frolic		Battle Cries!