

Module: Acting Methods - Epic Theatre by AME

Code: PFA2003

15 credits at level HE5

Description and Purpose of Module

This module is designed to enable learners to study and practise an approach to acting that is based on the principles of Epic Theatre and may be interpreted broadly to include any approach that seeks to break naturalistic illusion on stage and present narrative with some historical/political perspective.

Indicative Syllabus Content

1. The origins and nature of Epic Theatre

Origins and aims: e.g. the anti-realism movement in Germany and elsewhere; definitions of Expressionism, the reaching after epic/historical scale in Reinhardt, political motivation in Piscator and Brecht, the use of documentary material and 'living newspaper' media techniques.

Developments and influence: e.g. European and American developments; the impact of Epic theatre techniques on other practitioners; extensions of expressionism.

Essential characteristics: e.g. physical scale and historical sweep; factual documentary sources/political purposes, the use of multi-media, demonstration and detachment, episodic structure; music and song, heightened energy, urgency, physicality of playing, working principles and practices for the Epic Actor.

2. Technical and rehearsal skills

Key principles and practices: e.g. anti-realism; the actor as demonstrator, the actor as narrator, use of 'gestus', breaking the 'through-line' – each scene for itself, multiple role playing, political contextualisation, relationship with the audience, working from documentary sources.

Rehearsal techniques: e.g. storytelling, documentary reporting, gestus, images direct address, heightened physicality, props and costume.

3. Performance

Physical expression: e.g. posture, gesture, dynamics, rhythm and energy, flexibility, use of space. Vocal expression: range and use of voice, tone control, inflection articulation and clarity, projection, register. Investment of energy: interaction and response, detachment, communication of ideology, relationship with audience.

4. Reflection and evaluation

Critical vocabulary: analysis of self and ensemble – both process and performance. Audience response: awareness of feedback. Strategies for growth: identification of skills and techniques for improvement.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

A high level of autonomy is encouraged within this module, comprising of a combination of tutor-led lectures and workshops prior to a practical engagement in the rehearsal process with Epic Theatre texts and methodologies. The module will culminate in a practical performance to an audience in which learners have the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding gathered through the research and rehearsal process. This performance will be also supported by a research portfolio containing a detailed investigation of the learner's findings and also a working logbook that contains reflections of their working processes into the development of the work and an evaluation of their performance. Further assessment will be through tutor observation of rehearsal practise.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

	Learning Outcomes when you have successfully completed this module you will:	Assessment Criteria to demonstrate that you have achieved the learning outcome you will:
1.	Investigate the origins and nature of Epic Theatre as a specific genre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the origins and define the essential features of the genre, and broad development. • Show understanding of the essential characteristics of the genre as they affect the actor.
2.	Explore and apply technical and rehearsal skills appropriate to an actor working towards the realisation of Epic Text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use rehearsal flexibly and creatively as a workshop for the development of performance skills and techniques appropriate to the genre. • Apply techniques to create and realise one or more roles in performance in an appropriate style.
3.	Take part in the performance or rehearsed material in an Epic theatre style.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present work in performance employing appropriate and effective physical expression. • Present work in performance employing appropriate and effective vocal expression.
4.	Undertake reflection and evaluation of process and performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the effectiveness of the process and produce strategies for development. • Maintain and use a working log to facilitate and document the acting process.

Assessment

Your achievement of the learning outcomes for this module will be tested as follows:

Type	PRA	PRE	CW
Description	Performance presentation	Performance	Portfolio - log
%age	20	50	30

Final Assessment	N	N	Y
Learning Outcomes	1	2,3	4

Prerequisite Module(s)

There are no prerequisites for this module.

Barred Combinations

No restrictions apply.

Indicative Reading

Barba, E. and Savarese, N. (2005) A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology: The Secret Art of the Performer. London: Routledge

Roose-Evans, J. (1970) Experimental Theatre. London: Routledge

Styan, J.L. (1981) Modern Drama In Theory and Practice: Expressionism & Epic Theatre. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Thomson, P. and Sacks, G. (2006) The Cambridge Companion To Brecht. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Willett, J. (1977) The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht. London: Methuen

Module Type:	STAN
Module Length:	1
Host Subject Group:	Theatre and Film Studies
Version Number::	0.1

Activity Log

User Name	Date Accessed	Action
mt1	14/01/2010 17:10:30	added
Admin	01/07/2010 10:53:02	Ammended
mn2	01/07/2010 11:19:47	Ammended
mn2	01/07/2010 11:47:05	Ammended
mn2	01/07/2010 12:07:49	Ammended
mn2	01/07/2010 12:09:01	Ammended
mn2	01/07/2010 14:57:03	Ammended
mn2	01/07/2010 14:59:41	Ammended
Admin	01/07/2010 17:05:04	Revalidated
Admin	01/07/2010 17:11:42	Ammended
Admin	01/07/2010 17:13:29	Revalidated
at2ext	02/12/2010 18:34:51	Ammended
Admin	26/01/2011 16:30:17	Revalidated

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