

AT505 RB Collaborative Theatre Practice I 3 credits

Content

In this class, you will collaborate in an ensemble with a visiting professional company (Bred in the Bone) and students from the School of Design, Management and Technical Arts (Lighting Design BA programme) to produce a technically-realised piece in one of the college's studio performance venues.

'Musicality' Project (Director: Matthieu Bellon Artistic Director of Bred in the Bone)

This process has two distinct phases: the training of the body (informed by Grotowski, Gardzenice and Song of the Goat), and a response to 'text', with an emphasis in each case on the musicality that derives from an impulsive reaction to partner / ensemble / instrument / space. The ensemble will employ live music, choral work and the 'natural percussion' of the venue. The process subverts conventional forms of musical theatre, while still drawing extensively on your singing, instrumentalist and compositional skills.

Bred in the Bone is a multi-national collective of theatre makers based in Brighton, UK and Paris, France. Dedicated to the practical exploration of the craft of the actor / musician / ensemble, company members share their diverse artistic and cultural traditions to unearth what is common in who we are and, fundamentally, how we relate to each other. Their roots in actor training are fundamental to their identity, underpinning their stand-point that aesthetics and techniques derive from a training, as opposed to the other way around. As such, they do not aim to develop a particular aesthetic or form, but to expose what is inherent, implicit and impulsive within each moment of performance – towards a collective sense of 'musicality'.

Originally an experiment in fusing cultures, languages, techniques and traditions, a then-untitled group of five people from three different countries stood in a room in Wroclaw, Poland in 2005 speaking text in a variety of languages, playing music and learning from scratch how to throw a ball to one another. This work, later titled *Unreal City* and featured as a conclusive case study in Dr David Roesner's, *Musicality in Theatre* (2014), fast became a base for Bred in the Bone's practice, combining Eastern and Western European theatre traditions to expose musicality as the sole unifying agent of theatre performance. That is to say, aesthetics, dramaturgy, technique, language and design became interchangeable, as long as the human actors and musicians present engaged with a common listening in each moment of performance. Far from an aesthetic, musicality became an embodiment or physical manifestation of the fundamental human relationship.

Over the last decade, they have hosted residencies and performed as a collective all over the world, from the *Grotowski Institut* in Wroclaw to the *Chora Cultural Centre* on Samothraki Island, Greece. They have worked most regularly alongside Theatre De Menilmontant, Paris, and Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance, London, to present more than 30 new pieces, along the way reimagining works by Euripides, Shakespeare, Edgar Allen Poe, T.S. Eliot, and Anne Carson among many others.

Written Assignment

In the Reflective Journal for this project, you should aim to reflect on the various strands of practical work in which you have engaged in Bred in The Bone's *Musicality* workshops. You should critically exam the techniques and methodology you have employed; identify links between other classes, rehearsals and staged work you have observed.

"The work on musicality seeks to liberate the actor from having to act in a pre-set aesthetic and looks instead at developing genuine engagement with whatever he or she is doing." (Matthieu Bellon) To what extent did your experience of working on the project embody this ethos? (2,500 Word Count)

Aims

This class aims to enable you to:

- consider the production demands of a devised text or adapted material and to develop vocal and physical performance skills in rehearsals to meet those demands
- consider the creative process in its social, cultural and political context with particular reference to post-war European experimental theatre (e.g. the principals of the Theatre Laboratory of Jerzy Grotowski).
- collaborate in a company process and to develop your creative and imaginative skills in the rehearsal period
- develop your abilities to reflect upon practice and to consider comparative approaches to performance work.
- relate your interrogation of other cultures to your own experience and creative process

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this class you will be able to:

- demonstrate a detailed practical understanding of specific performance demands within the ensemble and as a solo performer
- understand the importance of collaborative work in the company process
- understand the importance of context in the performance of a theatre text
- sustain and develop specific practical skills on a specific poetic / lyrical text
- respond to given stimuli in the creation and performance of your own work
- articulate Bred in The Bone's process of creating work
- identify and engage techniques for solo and ensemble creation of theatrical narratives based on Bred in The Bone's approach to 'musicality'

Assessment / Grading

The course is graded A-F.

Workshop Participation – 35%

Performance - 35%

Written Assignment (Reflective Journal) – 30%