THEA-5778-Y Beyond the Proscenium:
Radical Acting, Directing, and Design in the
Post-Internet Age
M 1:30-3:30 WRIGHT THEATRE
Open to all theater 3rds

Instructors:
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Student hours by appointment

Course Overview:

This is an immersive course designed for actors, performers, directors, designers, and writers who seek to push the boundaries of theater and embrace the bold world of post-internet aesthetics, where theatre and performance meet cutting-edge digital and networked methods. You'll investigate innovative approaches to contemporary theater, exploring new ways of storytelling that embrace technology's boundless possibilities. Through engaging exercises, thought-provoking readings, and inspiring discussions, you'll explore the fusion of theater with immersive multimedia elements, AI, video mapping, motion capture, 3D scanning/rendering, game engine, and networked liveness.

The course is divided into sections that each unveil a unique aspect of post-internet performance. You'll gain the vocabulary and skills needed to thrive in this digital era, from mastering performance, directing, and designing with cameras to working with networked storytelling and AI.

Through flash labs and composition days, you'll collaborate with peers to create original projects that synthesize the techniques, vocabulary, and skills introduced during the course. This dynamic workshop environment encourages you to take creative risks and unlock your limitless artistic potential. "Beyond the Proscenium" invites you to embrace the ever-evolving theatrical landscape

First Semester - Liveness and Digital

- Section 1 will be a brief introduction to the structure of the course.
- Section 2 will develop the vocabulary and skills needed to perform, direct, and design with stationary cameras.
- Section 3 will focus on working with handheld cameras
- Section 4 will introduce the student to live compositing and immersive video worlds
- Section 5 students will create a short project that synthesizes the techniques, vocabulary, and skill sets introduced during the course.
- Section 6 will be a brief introduction to the Spring semester and the concepts of IRL/Digital/Post-Internet
- Section 7 will be an exploration of working on post-internet time/space strategies
- Section 8 will be an exploration of working with materiality

Links to Important Online Documents
- **Discussions Folder**
- **Readings Folder**

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
This class is an opportunity to explore avenues outside of traditional production modes and beyond each student's individual discipline. We will focus on the process of creating an ensemble-driven theatrical language that integrates disciplines and current technologies.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
- Generously and actively participate in an ensemble and devised creations.
- Confidently participate in productions with intentionality that use cross-disciplinary approaches.
- Develop productive collaborative relationships.
- Gain confidence in their ability to articulate and support their artistic choices.
- Learn from key critical texts about multimedia theater.
- Broaden their creative skillset.
- Develop an understanding of the current theory and practice around Post-Internet and New Aesthetic.
- Gain a working knowledge of artists working in Post-Internet structures.
- Developed a toolkit for creating new work using Post-Internet aesthetics and multimedia strategies..

Please note that the evaluation criteria are subject to adjustment based on the instructor's syllabus and specific course requirements.

Areas	Excellent	Good	Sufficient	Fail

Attendance	Demonstrates consistent attendance and active participation in all class sessions and rehearsals.	Attends most class sessions and rehearsals with active engagement in discussions and collaborative activities.	Regularly attends class sessions, but may have occasional absences with satisfactory participation when present.	Exhibits excessive absences without valid reasons, significantly impacting learning and group dynamics.
Collaboration	Actively collaborates with peers, contributing valuable ideas and fostering a positive and creative environment.	Collaborates effectively with peers, contributing to group dynamics and showing openness to new perspectives.	Participates in group work but may occasionally struggle with fully engaging in collaborative efforts and dynamics.	Demonstrates poor collaboration skills, hindering progress and negatively affecting group cohesion and creativity.
Reading	Demonstrates a deep understanding of assigned readings, incorporating insights into class discussions and work.	Shows comprehension of assigned readings, actively participating in discussions and relating concepts to performances.	Engages with assigned readings and participates in discussions, but may occasionally lack thorough analysis or insights.	Fails to complete assigned readings and lacks meaningful contributions to class discussions and assignments.
Discussion	Actively engages in thought-provoking discussions, offering insightful contributions and facilitating dialogue.	Contributes to class discussions with relevant points and engages with peers' ideas to promote meaningful conversations.	Participates in class discussions, but may occasionally need encouragement to share thoughts and ideas with the group.	Rarely participates in class discussions, making minimal contributions and hindering the overall exchange of ideas.

Research	Conducts thorough research on topics related to post-internet aesthetics, effectively integrating findings into projects.	Conducts research on relevant topics, incorporating findings into assignments and demonstrating a solid understanding.	Engages in research efforts but may occasionally lack depth or full integration of findings into course assignments.	Demonstrates minimal effort in conducting research, resulting in incomplete or irrelevant information for assignments.

Grading Scale:
- Excellent: Consistently exceeds expectations, demonstrating exceptional engagement and mastery of course content in all areas.
- Good: Meets expectations, showing a strong level of competency and active involvement in course activities and discussions.
- Sufficient: Meets minimum requirements, demonstrating basic competency and participation, but may have occasional areas for improvement or growth.
- Fail: Does not meet minimum requirements, exhibiting significant deficiencies in multiple areas, hindering learning and progress.

The instructor will provide specific feedback and guidance throughout the semester to support students' progress and development in each area. Your passion for exploring post-internet aesthetics and commitment to collaborative ensemble performance will shape your journey in this course.

Reading List:

- Klich, Rosemary, and Edward Scheer. *Multimedia Performance*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Haraway, Donna Jeanne. *Cyborg Manifesto*. Camas Books, 2018.
- Causey, Matthew. *Theatre and Performance in Digital Culture: from Simulation to Embeddedness*. Routledge, 2009.
- Steyerl, Hito. "In Defense of The Poor Image." *The Wretched of the Screen*, Sternberg Press, 2013, pp. 31–45
- Eckert, Stephen M. "Post Internet Performance ." *Currents 2017*, Contemporary Performance, 2017.

Further Reading
- Kwon, Miwon. *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*. MIT Press, 2004.
- Lange-Berndt, Petra. *Materiality*. Cambridge: MIT, 2015. Print.
- Coleman, Beth. *Hello Avatar: Rise of the Networked Generation*. MIT, 2011.

- *New Aesthetic New Anxieties* is the result of a five-day Book Sprint organized by Michelle Kasprzak and led by Adam Hyde at V2_ from June 17–21, 2012. http://v2.nl/publishing/new-aesthetic-new-anxieties
- Vidokle, Anton. *The Internet Does Not Exist*. Edited by Julieta Aranda and Brian Kuan Wood , Sternberg Press, 2015.
- Betancourt, Michael. *Automated Labor: The 'New Aesthetic' and Immaterial Physicality,* CTheory, Theory Beyond the Codes: tbc048, http://ctheory.net/articles.aspx?id=717
- Cornell, Lauren, and Ed Halter. *Mass Effect: Art and the Internet in the Twenty-first Century*. Cambridge: MIT, 2015. Print.
- Govan, Emma, et al. *Making a Performance: Devising Histories and Contemporary Practices*. Routledge, 2008.
- Georgelou, Konstantina. *The Practice of Dramaturgy: Working on Actions in Performance*. Valiz, 2017.
- Salter, Chris. *Entangled Technology and the Transformation of Performance*. MIT Press, 2010.
- Etchells, Tim, et al. *Certain Fragments: Texts and Writings on Performance*. 1st ed., Routledge, 1999.
- Oddey, Alison. *Devising Theatre: a Practical and Theoretical Handbook*. Routledge, 2015.
- Cheng, Meiling, and Gabrielle H. Cody. *Reading Contemporary Performance: Theatricality across Genres*. London: Routledge, 2016. Print.
- Abbas, Basel, et al. *You Are Here: Art after the Internet*. Edited by Omar Kholeif, Cornerhouse and Space, 2014.
- Berry, David M. "New Aesthetic." *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 26 July 2012, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Aesthetic.

Requirements for students:

Community Agreement→

Contribute and Participate:
Engaged participation is essential throughout the class. Students are expected to actively engage in the learning and creation process and to demonstrate the acquisition of skills taught throughout the class. Specifically, you will learn the basics of the media taught, and demonstrate how to creatively interact with them in a theatrical setting.

All students are expected to fully participate in every aspect of this course.
- Wear comfortable shoes and clothes that allow a full range of motion. Much of the work we'll do in class will require physical movement.
- Cell phones and any electronic devices must be turned to the *off* position and put away at the beginning of class. Students who answer their phones or insist on text messaging during class will be asked to leave promptly and counted absent for that day. *Students awaiting an emergency call should talk to the professor prior to class to discuss need and protocol*.

Presentations:
Students will participate in group presentations on artists or companies working in contemporary theater practice and research topics.

Read:
The course requires all students to complete the assigned reading. Students must post two discussion questions for each reading and participate in lively and inquisitive discussions.

Course Policies
By maintaining your enrollment in this course, you agree to these terms. These guidelines help create a safe, supportive, and productive atmosphere for artistic work. Your adherence to these policies allows all the students in the class to enjoy the fullest potential of our work together.

Community Standards
As a condition of enrollment in this component, I expect you to positively contribute to the community in order to fully engage in the intellectual life of this classroom. Let's work to make this a safe space for expression and self-identification. Students are expected to treat *everyone* with respect, regardless of race, country of origin, disability, physical appearance, age, gender identity and expression, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or marital status. Lack of respect and harassment includes offensive comments related to any protected personal characteristic, deliberate intimidation, sustained disruption of speech, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention. Violations of this agreement are subject to a response from the professor and the school administration.

Care
Our art form often engages with difficult subjects, not just intellectually but emotionally. It is important to engage in rigorous discussion and even disagreement in the process of creating work. It is also imperative that you engage in discussion with care and empathy for the other collaborators. Aim to disagree without becoming disagreeable. Let us not shy away from the hard discussions. Let us work to create a safe space so that we may live our true selves and engage and confront the uncomfortable, the political and emotional issues of our times. Critically examining and assessing our most basic assumptions and values is not just one of the tasks of theater and performance but is an activity vital to living an authentic life. I urge you to listen more than you speak and show care for your fellow students. Let us work together to ensure a classroom environment that supports your taking these intellectual and emotional risks.

Attendance
You are allowed **one** absence for the semester. If you have professional or personal obligations (such as an interview or a family trip), plan accordingly. Advanced notification of your "free" absence is appreciated (though not required). This "free" unexcused absence may not be taken on a day when you or your classmates are presenting a performance (noted with an asterisk on the course calendar). **Students are considered absent if they arrive after 1:45am.** Repeated tardiness and absence will be reflected in your evaluation.

Tardiness
Class begins and ends on time. You are late if you arrive after class begins (i.e. after the published start time).

Syllabus Change Policy
This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice. If changes are made, an updated syllabus will be posted on google docs.

STUDENT RESOURCES:

Campus Safety
SLC's campus security are on-call 24/7 to handle situations that could be dangerous or harmful to any member of the campus community.
914.395.2209 – Westlands Desk
914.395.2222 – Emergencies Only

The following college resources are available to help students thrive in their coursework as well as navigate the campus. **Students must take the initiative to access these resources as needed:**

The Library's Research Assistance and Tools: students can meet with a research librarian and access wonderful research resources through this site

Learning Commons: offers academic coaching for time management, organization, note-taking and effective reading; individualized writing support; peer tutoring in math, science, and some languages; workshop series on a variety of academic support topics

Health and Wellness Center: provides compassionate, confidential care for students' medical and psychological health concerns

***Access and Disability Services:** The director of Access and Disability Services works individually with students with disabilities to assure that they have equal access to the full range of opportunities at the college

Dean of Studies Office: helps students and dons navigate academic policies; serves as a resource referral for students

DEI@SLC: the college offers a number of programs and resources pertaining to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging

*REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS: If you have a disability that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, coursework, or assessment of the objectives of this course, you may be entitled to reasonable accommodations. Please contact **Access and Disability Services**. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Sarah Lawrence College and the College will make reasonable accommodations when appropriate and necessary.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

Week 1 (Sept 4)

M: <u>Overview of class & The Body, The Lens, The Frame</u>
- Brief Introductions
- Go Over Syllabus
- Introduction To The Double Event
- Cinematic Language
- Framing
- Shot Marks and Zooming
  - Super closeup
  - Close up
  - Midshot
  - Farshot
  - Zoom
  - Puppeteering
  - Passing objects

Read: Steyerl, Hito. "In Defense of The Poor Image." *The Wretched of the Screen*, Sternberg Press, 2013, pp. 31–45**.**

DUE: Post two discussion questions by Sept 10 at 11:59pm

SECTION 2 - LIVE VIDEO/STATIONARY CAMERAS

Week 2 (Sept 11)

M: <u>Poor Image & Stationary Camera's Flash Lab</u>
- **Discuss:** <u>In Defense of The Poor Image</u>
- Flash Lab - Chimera - Stationary Camera group-creation. Create a short image using both cameras to embody the stationary camera concepts.
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Watch Videos:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyML8xuKfoc (Shot Sizes)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQNiqzuXjoM (Angles and Framing)

SECTION 3 - LIVE VIDEO/HANDHELD CAMERAS

Week 3 (Sept 18)

M: <u>Live Video - Handheld Camera Work</u>

- Hand-Held Exercises
- Near Shot
- Far Shot
- Close Up
- Snorricam
- Zoom
- Dolly/Pan

Angles/Framing
- Framing - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQNiqzuXjoM
- Single Shot
- 2 shot
- 3 shot…
- Over the shoulder
- Point of View (POV)
- Angles - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLfZL9PZI9k
- Single Shot
- High Angle
- Low Angle
- Dutch/Tilt
- Bird's Eye

Watch this video on Cuts. Just watch the first video on the page (there is no need to watch the other two). The page also describes the cuts.
https://nofilmschool.com/2018/05/cuts-101-here-are-9-most-essential-transitions-editing
- Standard
- J-Cut
- L-Cut
- Cross-Cutting
- Jump Cut
- Cutting on Action
- Match Cut
- Cutaways

Week 4 (Sept 25)
  M: Story Through Edit and Shot
  - Flash lab Prompt: Cuts, composition, framing, and angles. Create a short sketch thinking to embody these concepts and techniques theatrical (ie. manually and through the grid of zoom)
  - Story Through Edit and Shot Outline

Week 5 (Oct 2)
  M: Working from text Day 1
  - Prompt: Work with the concepts and strategies of handheld and stationary cameras to create a short piece using a published text.
  - Group Creation

Week 6 (Oct 9)
>   **M:** <u>Working from text Day 2</u>
>   - Group Creation
>   - Professor Feedback

Week 7 (Oct 16)
>   **M:** <u>NO CLASS</u> - Study Days

Week 8 (Oct 23)
>   **M:** <u>Working from text Day 3</u>
>   - Group Creation
>   - Professor Feedback

Week 9 (Oct 30)
>   **M:** <u>Working from text</u>
>   - Group Creation
>   - Showing and Group Feedback

SECTION 4 LIVE COMPOSITING AND IMMERSIVE VIDEO WORLDS

Week 10 (Nov 6)
>   **M:** <u>Dramaturgy of the mediated space & live compositing and immersive video</u>
>   - Group walkthrough and discussion of the dramaturgy of media space
>   - [Dramaturgy of Space/Media Outline](#)

SECTION 5 SHORT END OF SEMESTER PROJECT

Week 11 (Nov 13)
>   **M:** <u>Flash Lab - Dramaturgy of the Space/Media</u>
>   - Prompt: Break into groups and create sketch using some of the key concepts of the [Dramaturgy of Space/Media Outline](#)

Week 12 (Nov 20)
>   **M:** <u>Short End of Semester Project</u>
>   - Prompt - Work with the dramaturgy of space/media to create a short piece. You can use a published text, found text, or devise your text.
>   - Questions - how does the size of the image, relationship of the image to the body, and point of view of the image affect work to support or deconstruct the story?
>   - Group Creation

Week 13 (Nov 27)

M: <u>Short End of Semester Project</u>
- ● Group Creation
- ● Professor Feedback

Week 14 (Dec 4)
    M: <u>Short End of Semester Project</u>
- ● Group Creation
- ● Professor Feedback

Week 15 (Dec 11)
    M: <u>End of Semester Project</u>
- ● Group Showings and Feedback
- ● Self Eval Due in class - https://forms.gle/JhjHs6rLu1tXYSXw9

Read: Eckert, Stephen M. "Post Internet Performance ." *Currents 2017*, Contemporary Performance, 2017.

Winter Break

SECTION 6 OVERVIEW AND DEFINING IRL/DIGITAL/POST INTERNET

Week 1 (Jan 29)
    M: <u>Overview of Spring Semester - IRL v Digital v Post Internet</u>
- ● Time
- ● Materiality
- ● Site
- ● Collaboration

READ: Eckert, Stephen M. "Post Internet Performance ." *Currents 2017*, Contemporary Performance, 2017.
FURTHER READING: Causey, Matthew. *Theatre and Performance in Digital Culture: from Simulation to Embeddedness*. Routledge, 2009.

Week 2 (Feb 5)
    M: Discuss Eckert, Stephen M. "Post Internet Performance ." *Currents 2017*, Contemporary Performance, 2017.
- ● Show - 📄 Examples_Post_Internet_Strategies
- ● Time Break Down
- ● Time Flash Lab

READ: Neiva Santos, Ivone & Azevedo, Jose. (2019). Space-time compression and hyperlocalisation: the new flâneurs. Comunicação e Sociedade. 35. 259. 10.17231/comsoc.35(2019).3142.

SECTION 7 WORKING WITH TIME/SPACE

Week 3 (Feb 12)
> **M:** Time/Space
>> ● Discussion IRL, Digital, Post-Internet
>> ● Strategies
>> ● Prompt: Make time a force in the narrative or strategy for performance. Can you embody, loop, scrub, or glitch? Can you embody being both simultaneous and asynchronous? Can you embody a fragmentation that converts a place into an endless number of perspectives that do not give rise to a single sense of place but to several personal senses, contributing to a non-linear and fragmented perception of space and time (i.e. one place, many selfies)? *Do not make the work about time, make it OF time.

Week 4 (Feb 19)
> **M:** Time/Space
>> ● Group Creation

Week 5 (Feb 26)
> **M:** Time/Space
>> ● Group Creation
>> ● Professor Feedback

Week 6 (March 4)
> **M:** Time/Space
>> ● Group Creation
>> ● Professor Feedback

Week 7 (March 11)
> **M:** SRING BREAK

Week 8 (March 18)
> **M:** Time/Space
>> ● Group Creation
>> ● Professor Feedback

Week 9 (March 25)
> **M:** Time/Space
>> ● Group Presentations and Feedback

WATCH: James Bridle, Waving at the Machines, on the key ideas of the New Aesthetic
https://vimeo.com/32976928
READ: https://anti-materia.org/new-materialities-in-the-digital-age-text

SECTION 8 WORKING WITH MATERIALITY

Week 10 (April 1)
    M: <u>Materiality</u>
- Discussion IRL, Digital, Post-Internet
- Strategies
- Flash Lab Prompt: Create A Sketch Using One Of The Strategies Of Post-Internet

Week 11 (April 8)
    M: <u>Materiality</u>
- Present Flash Lab
- Discussion
- Break Into Group For Group Creation

Week 12 (April 15)
    M: <u>Materiality</u>
- Group Creation
- Professor Feedback

Week 13 (April 22)
    M: <u>Materiality</u>
- Group Creation
- Professor Feedback

Week 14 (April 29)
    M: <u>Materiality</u>
- Group Presentations and Feedback

Week 15 (May 6)
    M: <u>Wrap Up</u>
    <u>Self Eval Form -</u> https://forms.gle/hDY1Gw69t5jvoHPM6