

UofT / GER 340H / Winter 2015
German Theater Production
-Preparation-Rehearsal-Staging-

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Class meets on **TR 6-8 @ BR 200**



COURSE OUTLINE

After a fiercely comical production of Dürrenmatt's *Physicists* (2010) and a weirdly scary one of *Drakul(j)a* (2013), this year's project is an adaptation of **Günter Grass' *Hochwasser***, a slightly absurd play about humans and rats stranded in a house together. Outside, there is rain, nothing but rain. Waters are rising, and soon Noah and his family find themselves confronted with a flood of biblical proportions that threatens to devour humans & beasts alike. While strange visitors invade the house, two rats, soaking wet, are trapped on the roof and reflect on God and the world. "Rats are humans too," one of the characters claims – and, sure enough, when the humans are finally forced to head to the roof, they gradually turn into rats themselves...

The course consists of classroom sessions, theater workshops, rehearsals & public performances. It's held entirely in German. It focuses on reading, interpreting, contextualizing, rehearsing and staging German plays. In the process, you become familiar with the different steps of a theater production – from read-through to dress rehearsal to the actual performance, as well as the various responsibilities that go along with any theater production, such as playbills, programs, costumes, set, sound & lights and dramaturgy. The course focuses on the German language through repetition & creative practice.

The course initially meets twice a week, on Tue & Thu at 6pm. During the seminar phase (weeks 1-2) sessions last two hours, but during the rehearsal stage (weeks 3-10), they are bound to last longer. Be aware that during the final weeks a theatre production requires considerable time involvement. While we won't meet during reading week, a lot of work has to be completed during that time! As a payback, the class concludes after week 11, and there won't be any final exam!

STUDENT PROFILE

This course addresses students who enjoy engaging with language creatively. No prior acting experience is required, but intermediate German language skills are necessary, as the course is conducted entirely in German. (GER 300 should be taken concurrently or have been taken before; native speakers are welcome.) Individual tasks vary: Some participants will predominantly be acting, others will do more backstage work. Tasks will be determined during the first two weeks.

Note: This could be the most engaging and rewarding class you ever take, but be cautioned: The nature of this project requires a high level of commitment from all involved. Eleven weeks are a short time to read/prepare/rehearse/stage a theatre production in a foreign language. Since this is a group endeavor, we have to be able to rely on each other unconditionally to make this work. If you feel



uncertain whether you can commit fully to the project, this is not the right course for you. If you are a student who regularly misses class sessions, this is not the right course for you. Check the detailed timetable to make sure you know what time commitment will be expected from you. Here is the deal: You have two weeks to decide if you want to stay in this class. Whoever shows up for week three, cannot drop the class at a later point!

The course can accommodate only 20 participants. If it fills up before you can register, you should still attend the first sessions, since some students are bound to drop the course. If you miss the first weeks (whether you're registered or not), you can't take the course.

... Questions? Feel free to contact me!

EVALUATION

Preparation & Active Participation	20%
Two Written Assignments	20%
Project Journal & Final Reflections	20%
Production & Performance	40%

Explanation: Regular attendance is absolutely required. There will be ongoing tasks (preparation). In class, students are expected to not only actively participate, but to proactively seek out tasks and to make themselves useful (participation). One written assignment is on character and backstage work; the other for the program. Students keep a weekly project journal and compose production reflections (to be handed in in week 12). *Production & performance tasks* will be discussed and distributed early in the semester.

DETAILED TIMETABLE

SEMINAR PHASE

#01	Jan 06 (T) 6-8pm	Course Introduction: class-play-group
#02	Jan 08 (R)	Classroom Session: assigned reading 1 (play act 1)
#03	Jan 13 (T)	Classroom Session: assigned reading 2 (play acts 2-3)
#04	Jan 15 (R)	Classroom Session: assigned reading 3 (Stanislavski-Brecht)

INITIAL REHEARSAL STAGE

#05	Jan 20 (T) 6-9pm	Read-Through with assigned parts / Production Meeting
#06	Jan 22 (R)	Theatre Workshop: character work & creating a scene
	Jan 23 (F) evening	Theatre Outing: venue & play t.b.a.
#07	Jan 27 (T)	Rehearsal /
#08	Jan 29 (R)	Rehearsal / Character Profiles
#09	Feb 3 (T)	Rehearsal
#10	Feb 5 (R)	Rehearsal
#11	Feb 10 (T)	Rehearsal
#12	Feb 12 (R)	Rehearsal [1 st round completed]
	Feb 17/19	Reading Week: some rehearsals will be scheduled during this week, and after this week actors have to have their parts memorized!
#13	Feb 24 (T) 6-9pm	Rehearsal / YouTube Clips / Program & Poster Layouts
#14	Feb 26 (R)	Rehearsal / Character Blurbs
#15	Mar 3 (T)	Rehearsal [2 nd round completed]
#16	Mar 5 (R)	Rehearsal: complete run-through / Poster / Sound

INTENSIVE REHEARSAL STAGE

#17	Mar 10 (T) 6-10pm	Rehearsal: 1 st half / Program Draft
#18	Mar 12 (R)	Rehearsal: 2 nd half
#19	Mar 17 (T)	Rehearsal: complete run-through / Completed Program
#20	Mar 19 (R)	Rehearsal: complete run-through [also on F, Mar 20 if required]
#21	Mar 22 (S) 4-9pm	Tech Run & Dress Rehearsal

PERFORMANCE STAGE

#22	Mar 22 (S) 5-10pm	Performance 1 (7pm)
#23	Mar 23 (M)	Performance 2 (7pm)
#24	Mar 24 (T)	Performance 3 (7pm) & Last Night Party
	Mar 31 (T) 6-9pm	Performance Screening (confirmation pending)