**Principles of Directing**

## Prof. Gabriele Vacis

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

Introduction to the role of director.

The role of theatre, film and television directors is changing significantly. The aim of the course is to grasp the changes in the role of the director. One of the elements of transformation is the increasingly marked difference between “entertainment” and “culture”, despite the increasingly strong presence of the culture of entertainment. In order to understand a phenomenon that is undergoing a transformation, the course will initiate project work on theatrical, film and television practices, ranging from entertainment to personal care. Clearly, the course will also cover historical and analytical elements that will support project work.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The most ancient author: Aeschylus. The most famous one: Shakespeare. A contemporary one: Cormac McCarthy. How must one *say* the things that they have written? What is the difference between the words that are written meant to be read and those that are written meant to be said? In Italian one says *to act*, but the English equivalent is to play, an activity meant for enjoyment. In this course students learn how to *play* with the words of the great authors. They learn how to use rhythms, tones and volumes knowingly. Using words but also through action.

Contemporary performance is assuming dimensions that were unthinkable only a few years ago. However, certain practices, such as the para-theatre, theatre as a social service, the theatre of community and inclusion, are developing dimensions even their 20th-century founders may not have dreamt of.

Technology is enabling the development of entertainment that physically involves the viewer. Performance times and spaces are changing radically.

On the other hand, theatre, with its technology, can finally afford to abandon its most spectacular features to entertainment, in order to focus instead on personal care.

Today, there are far more people who make theatre, dance or produce cinema and television than go to see theatre or dance, visit the cinema or watch television. The last decades of research have used theatrical techniques to integrate disabled people, to provide medical narrative, to restore disadvantaged suburbs etc. In their work, the most important contemporary artists no longer see social action as an ideological duty or a charitable offering. Inclusion is now the inspiration of many of the most innovative actors, directors and dramatists.

This development implies a radical change in the very figures of the actor, director and dramatist; a profound rethinking of their roles.

Of course, we must not succumb to misunderstanding: if we can all do theatre, then we no longer need artists, we are all artists. This is not so. New beauty is born from the understanding of artists and people. And this is true both for the large-scale productions that employs thousands of people on stage, and for the experiences of social inclusion and community theatre.

The course will cover the historical roots of the idea of theatrical practices at the service of people, with particular reference to Jerzi Grotowski.

In comparison, examples of forms of entertainment will be analysed, with particular reference to Olympic ceremonies.

These parallel examinations will highlight different levels of viewer engagement.

Students will then study the methods for approaching and training the attention and awareness of theatrical derivation in relation to their application in various contexts.

***READING LIST***

J. Grotowski, *Per un teatro povero,* Bulzoni Editore.

G. Vacis, *Awareness,* Bulzoni Editore.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Parallel studies will highlight different levels of viewer engagement. Students will produce direction projects and inclusion itineraries.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students will be assessed on the quality of their participation in lectures.

They will also be assessed on their projects and by means of tests on their ability to conduct real theatrical activities for personal care and development.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.