

# Viewpoints/Hess-2012

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## Viewpoints Training: Creativity in Time and Space

This six hour course will introduce the core principles of Viewpoints Training, the ground breaking physical actor training created by Anne Bogart and the SITI Co. so necessary for young artists learning to create in our visual culture. You will love experiencing this empowering approach to actor training. We will use the principles of Viewpoints, which will be experienced by all in group exercises, to create improvisations, traveling through process to artistic product in a meaningful way.

Professor Richard E. Hess has been the Chair of the Department of Drama at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) since 1994 and is a lifelong student of movement based actor training and directing.

Please come dressed and ready to move for class in bare feet and shorts and T-shirts or footless leggings or sweat pants and T-shirts. (No jeans, jewelry, hoodies, or loose hair please.)

## Viewpoints Training

The Viewpoints is a technique of improvisation which grew out of the post-modern dance world. It was first articulated by choreographer Mary Overlie who broke down the two dominant issues performers deal with - time and space - into six categories. She called her approach The Six Viewpoints. Since that time, Anne Bogart and the *SITI* Company have expanded her notions and adapted them for actors. The Nine Viewpoints allows a group of actors to function together spontaneously and intuitively and to generate bold, theatrical work quickly. It develops flexibility, articulation, and strength in movement and speaking, and makes ensemble playing a reality.

## The Nine Viewpoints

### Time

**Tempo**- how fast or slow something occurs

**Duration**- how long or short something lasts

**Kinesthetic Response**- an instinctive movement occurring immediately because of an outside trigger that happens in the absence of time

**Repetition**- repeating anything in time in the field around you



### Space

**Shape**- lines, curves, a combination of lines and curves, either alone, with others, or with architecture

**Spatial Relationship**- how close or far an actor is from others or the architecture

**Architecture**-everything around you that defines the space from floor to ceiling and side to side

**Topography or Floor Pattern**- real or imagined or created patterns that dictate movement possibilities

**Gesture**- a movement with beginning, middle and end, either realistic and daily or expressionistic

We study Viewpoints training to learn how to create in time and space, how to be builders.

- each student will have the opportunity to work alone and in groups before the class and teacher for feedback

- we will unlock a sense of wonder and discovery by

experiencing the use of your whole, true, honest, simple self in a wide range of training and performance situations

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## Exercises

Present-Open-Grounded

4 part gesture- give your heart

Salutes to the sun- simultaneous (time) unison (space) action versus technical correctness

Very slow/Slow/Medium/Fast/Very Fast

Tempo Runs- Very slow/Slow/Medium/Fast/Very Fast- in place

Anyone May Lead- Runs to the center/collapse/return- shared impulses

Jump-Stop-Reverse- Kinesthetic response

Lanes- Walk/Run/Find the air/Find the ground/Stop

Flow

- 5 Flow objectives.

1) Go through the space between people

2) Following

3) Change tempo

4) Change direction

5) Start/Stop

Go through spaces (explore negative space)

Work off people (respond to positive space)

Repetition (follow)

Architecture

A/B 20 moves

Circle- Clump- Straight Line

Open Session

Make your work expensive

Composition assignment

### The open assignment:

Take care of everything the audience sees. As a group you will be staging a fluid piece where you must solve transitions a vista.

Create a 4-5 minute theatrical composition.

You must use the following 'plot' line:

- A meets B
- Something happens
- A loses B
- A gets B back

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Your job is to let your imaginations run wild as you stage the above with no boundaries of right and wrong.

Composition Ingredients:

- A surprise entrance
- 20 consecutive seconds of:   slow motion violence  
  group dancing  
  filled silence
- Someone sings a song
- A broken expectation
- We should something in public we don't normally see in public
- Revelation of character
- Revelation of space
- Revelation of prop

The collaboration begins.

Lesson Plan Example:

**SPRING AWAKENING** composition assignment:

Take care of everything the audience sees. This time you will be staging a fluid piece where you must solve transitions a vista.

Create a 5-7 minute theatrical composition, to be presented on location within 10 minutes from Room 3650. You may use a tour guide, or narrator, or 'convention' to move us from place to place. You must use the following 'plot' line:

- A couple meets
- A union is created
- A conflict arises
- There is a brawl
- Someone (many) is (are) killed
- Peace is restored

Your job is to let your imaginations run wild as you stage the above with no boundaries of right and wrong.

Composition Ingredients:

- Memorized text from given New York Times 'Lives' articles, used in any order, spoken as you wish, by anyone. Please use lots of text.
- A surprise entrance
- 20 consecutive seconds of:   silence  
  slow motion violence  
  sexual tension  
  passionate kissing
- Live Music: one solo ballad from the musical theatre repertoire, and one group number
- A broken expectation
- We should something in public we don't normally see in public

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- We should see a dream shattered
- Someone tells a joke (the only non-*New York Times* text allowed)
- A choreographed group dance
- Love
- Bonus: clothes are torn
- Water

Use prudence in choosing a location. Public awareness is a responsibility. Safety and cleanliness are important to me.

The collaboration begins . . . –Richard

Another Lesson Plan Example:

### **PICNIC** composition assignment

Take care of everything the audience sees. Take care of the audience.

Your job is not to stage our play. Your job is to let your imaginations run wild as you stage the plot below with no boundaries of right and wrong as influenced by our play.

### Plot

**A meets B**

**Something happens**

**A loses B**

**A gets B back**

Create a 5-7 minute theatrical composition to be seen in 3705 CC.

Text from **PICNIC**, from anywhere in the play, from any scene, used in any order, spoken as you wish, by anyone, regardless of actual casting. Please use lots of text.

Revelation of Character

Revelation of Space

Revelation of Prop

Surprise Entrance

15 seconds of silent yearning

15 seconds of sexual tension

15 seconds of sexual frustration

Music of the period, at least 2 songs, could be recorded or live. 1953 and backwards.

Favor the female perspective: Men are objects of desire for women

Someone shares a secret

Hal takes off his shirt

Bomber rides a bicycle

Millie drinks too much

Madge/Hal/Rosemary dance seductively

The collaboration begins . . . -Richard