

Theatrical Intimacy: *Presentation*



Land Acknowledgement

The Loyola University Chicago community **acknowledges its location on the ancestral homelands of the Council of the Three Fires (the Ojibwa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi tribes) and a place of trade with other tribes, including the Ho-Chunk, Miami, Menominee, Sauk, and Meskwaki.** We recognize that descendants of these and other North American tribes continue to live and work on this land with us. We recognize the tragic legacy of colonization, genocide, and oppression that still impacts Native American lives today. As a Jesuit university, we affirm our commitment to issues of social responsibility and justice. We further recognize our responsibility to understand, teach, and respect the past and present realities of local Native Americans and their continued connection to this land.

Welcome

Maggie Bittinger

Senior Theatre Major

Minors in Musical Theatre, Dance, and Film+Digital Media

Gaby Labotka

Certified Intimacy Director

With demonstrations from Ema Kester, Gina Saglimbeni, Joseph Cunningham, Makenna Van Raelte

The Beginning

Fall 2020

- Costume practicum
- Jyrieka Guest discussed masking garments for intimacy in costumes
- Applied for a Second Stage project
- Advised to apply for a Provost Fellowship

2021

- Foundations of Intimacy 1 with IDC
- Planning the model and structure of my research
- Choreography, Mental Health First Aid, anti-racist theatre education

Spring 2022

- 3 day workshop
- Presentation
- Undergraduate Research Symposium

Theatrical Intimacy

You might know this already- but let's start with the basics anyway.



Theatrical Intimacy

- Simulated or stylized sex
- Nudity and hyper-exposure
- Intense or vulnerable physical contact
- Intimate physical contact
- Emotionally vulnerable or intense scenes



What is an Intimacy Director?

- Actor advocate
- Choreographer
- Consent based space
- Documentarian

Details + Practices



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Mouthwash Time!

Pillars

IDC

- Consent
- Communication
- Context
- Choreography
- Closure

Consent

- Freely given
- Reversible
- Informed
- Enthusiastic
- Specific

“

*You cannot consent
to a surprise*

Boundaries

- Physical
- Emotional
- Professional

Community Guidelines

- Brave space
- Speak from I
- Your boundaries are perfect exactly where they are
- Prioritize self-care: be gentle with yourself
- Reserve the right to speak in draft
- Treat others how they want to be treated
- Boundaries can change!
- We aren't entitled to an explanation
- **It can be weird!!**

Demo

Brought to you by Erinn and Riley

“

It's hard to know what your boundaries are when you've been told you shouldn't have any.

- Maya Herbsman

Communication

- Important to have information about scene from director and actors
- Context comes from communication
- Physical environment and costumes
- Actor safety
- Neutral language

Context

- Communication helps context
- Context informs consent
- Script + dramaturgical work
- Creates stronger storytelling
- Confusion or question? Take it back to context

Choreography

- Led by context
- Based in consent
- Written
- Repeatable
- Sustainable

Placeholders

- Tool used when blocking
- Instead of kissing while I'm blocking, we'll mark with hands
 - Or clothes removal, derogatory language
- Placeholder plan B that can be used mid show without telling SM + disrupting show
- We used them until Thursday night
 - Placeholder until masks off

Ingredients of Choreography

Opening + Closing Distance

Levels of Touch

Tempo + Counts

Shapes

Destination

Eye Contact

Weight Shifts

Breath and Sound

Scene 1: No Touch

Revolt. She said. Revolt again. by Alice Birch

REVOLUTIONIZE THE LANGUAGE (INVERT IT)

Scene 2: Touch

Revolt. She said. Revolt again. by Alice Birch

REVOLUTIONIZE THE LANGUAGE (INVERT IT)

Closure

- Intimacy needs to be contained
- Closure practices are important
- Separate character from self
- Boundaries with character and scene partner
- Self - care

Tools for Rehearsals and Acting Classes



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Power

Classroom Tools

Scene Selection

- Empower students to choose material
- Avoid intimate scenes
- Equip with intimacy choreography basics

Reporting

- DFPA's communication guide
- On syllabus
- Review in class
- Can go to anyone

Independent Rehearsals

- Holds accountable
- Another avenue for reporting
- Boundary practice in class

Fear of retaliation cannot exist in a consent based space.

- Setting boundaries
- Not doing scenes because of their content
- Not performing intimacy

Should not impact grade or casting

Auditions and Casting

- Audition notice
- Audition disclosure form
- Indicate if an ID will be on the team
- No intimacy at callbacks



Audition Disclosure Form

Name: _____

THEATRICAL INTIMACY

Are you open to the following:

	Yes	No	More Information Needed
Performing or witnessing realistic theatrical intimacy?			
...kissing?			
Performing or witnessing stylized theatrical intimacy?			
Performing or witnessing simulated sexual assault?			
Performing or witnessing stylized sexual assault?			
Performing or witnessing non-sexual physical contact with others?			
Performing text discussing or alluding to sexual intimacy?			

VIOLENCE

Are you open to the following:

	Yes	No	More Information Needed
Performing or witnessing simulated acts of violence?			
Performing or witnessing situation involving theatrical firearms?			
Performing or witnessing simulated self harm?			

CONTINUE ON BACK OF PAGE

NUDITY

Are you open to the following:

	Yes	No	More Information Needed
Performing or witnessing on stage nudity?			
Performing or witnessing partial nudity (including revealing costumes)?			
Performing or witnessing on stage costume changes?			

OTHER CONTENT

Are you open to the following:

	Yes	No	More Information Needed
Performing or witnessing substance abuse?			
Performing or witnessing profanity?			
Performing or witnessing derogatory language?			
Performing or witnessing subject matter involving sexual assault?			
Performing or discussing actions related to disordered eating?			

Directing Class Audition Disclosure

It is important that actors know what could be asked of them in the directing scenes and what their personal/artistic boundaries are. For this reason, we have included an intimacy disclosure section to this audition form. Remember: consent is revocable, so what you put on this form is not set in stone. It simply gives us a baseline for collaboration and discussion.

Note: not all scenes contain intimacy.

If you would like more information about what each play contains in terms of intimacy+sensitive content, feel free to look through this document:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/15S_mBnQpBZnmRFIzUn8nVp93VzuTaZ7pr3k9iLDNYA/edit?usp=sharing

Are you open to... *

	Yes	No	Need more information
performing non-sexual physical contact?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
performing realistic theatrical intimacy?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... kissing?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...partial nudity (removing and putting on shirt)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Performing text discussing or alluding to sexual intimacy?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Referencing graphic sexual acts with animals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Performing a romantic connection between a human and an animal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Performing the hunting of/ death of an animal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Rehearsals

Hire an ID!

If you can't, that's okay too!

- Focus on boundaries and consent
- Let context justify touch
- If the why behind an intimate action cannot be explained with a good reason, it shouldn't happen
- Eliminate “just kiss” mentality
- Check in with your performers

“

*Ever tried. Ever failed.
No matter. Try again.
Fail again. Fail better.*

-Samuel Beckett

This is not easy.

There will not be overnight change. It's a process. Change begins with awareness and education. Thank you for giving me the space and time to open doors to change.



Q+A

