

## Semiotic Experiments Assignment

Directing 472 – Spring 2005

100pts

**Purpose:** To experiment with abstract and concrete ways to build layers of meaning into an encapsulated stage moment.

**Assignment:** Select 5 images from your original image dump. These 5 images should encompass your view of the world of the play. Then, with your actors, stage each image in a separate “stage moment.” These are non-linear, non-plot, and non-character building moments. Refer to the Kowzan table of semiotics on page 105 in the Aston & Savona text. This will help define the varying sign systems that are available to use, but do not be limited by this list. Think also about audience placement, the 5 senses, etc. Kowzan leaves many systems out of his list.

Your goal is to squeeze every ounce of meaning and connotation surrounding an image (**as it pertains to your scene**) into each “stage moment.” You may add props, sounds, colors, textures, or whatever else you would like, but you must use your actors in each moment. The actor(s) must be at the heart of each moment.

It is completely up to you how you handle the transitions between “stage moments,” but give it some thought. Let the world of the play guide your transitions. The transitions are significant to the overall impression expressed by your 5 moments.

Each moment can be as long or as short as is necessary, but the combined time for the 5 moments and transitions cannot exceed 10 minutes. Go with your gut, but **do not wait to start working and playing with these**. Spend time experimenting with various ways of expressing a given image. Free experimentation is what this assignment is about. How often do directors actually have the time to play and experiment?

**Written Work:** On the day of your in class performance, please submit a detailed written account of each “stage moment” using the analytical format provided on page 107 in figure 6.2 of Aston & Savona. Be sure to account for each sign displayed on stage within each moment. The written work should only be as long as is necessary.

\*\*Disclaimer for the cynical: Yes, the written portion makes it especially analytical. Yes, it then might resemble an act of science, but then, the point is to force you out of the artist’s delirium. I want to you be able to objectively create meaning and to build the world of the play before jumping into rehearsals as usual with all the necessary delirium intact. ☺