

The training students experience in this class is

- Based on the concept of actor as artist/creator.
- Is about exploring one's own artistic impulses and abilities

The course is devoted to creative work, exploring the main areas in drama: melodrama, tragedy, and the art of comedy. The work rests on inquiry, which includes not only aesthetics, but also developing a personal work ethic and skills in relating to a community. Providing opportunity to use the whole self; body, imagination, intellect, and spirit and allowing the unknown to have equal value with the known.

In other words, working from a question rather than an answer.

Theatre artists are MIMICs in the truest sense of the word. Our task is to mimic the world around us, recreating and commenting upon the dramatic, tragic and comic aspects of the human condition.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Elements of Theatre: Physical Techniques is an intermediate level theatre course that explores the dynamics of movement, involving the body as the primary element of recognition of living beings, through the re-enactment of everything which moves, in life and on stage. Universal laws of movement are applied to creative dramatic interpretation and to the art of acting, exploring different areas of drama recognized in the history of the theatre, and then reinterpreting them in the context of present ideas and values.

With a primary system of working with the body, not to become athletic or virtuosic, but as a channel for imagination, emotion, the voice, and metaphor, building growth of confidence and trust to confront any type of situation.

With learning focused on:

- How to create a common language and intuitive communication
- How to build artistic relationships on a long-term basis.

The work in this class may be different than what you are used to - there is a devotion to process, laboratory type conditions with a commitment to research versus a form; a journey of self-exploration that at the same time establishes the essence of the future artistic work. Sensitizing the actor to creativity, the world of the imagination, and collaboration, is preferred over the mastery of a form.

Providing student actors with:

- The tools and the knowledge to develop work in any context, without being tied to a specific form (traditional, conventional, mainstream theatre etc.), or to a recipe of how to produce work.
- The ability to avoid falling prisoner to only one model of success

STRUCTURED IMPROV, TECHNIQUE AND CO-OPS

This class is offered and (ideally) spread over two years, during which students move along two parallel paths:

- the study of improvisation and its rules
- movement technique and its analysis

These dual journeys are supplemented by CO-OPS (pieces created collaboratively in groups) through which the students' own theatre work takes shape. Every five weeks, working themes are given to the students in such a way as to stimulate their imagination and benefit collective creation. How to work on this and what to do with it are not dictated by the teacher, but become open for student exploration. The results of these works are presented in front of the class. At first, the CO-OP presentations are more like responses to the themes, eventually developing into short pieces of theatre in the styles under investigation. The CO-OPS are not tests; they do not measure student progress or skill, but exist to provoke both students and the teacher!

The process of the course moves from silent psychological exercises to a point where the student builds a character, going through stages of identifying with nature, animals, colors, sounds and words; and discovering the art of acting with masks. All classes are inter-related and follow the same gradual progress in the work. Together they form a coherent whole, based mainly on the analysis of movements and improvisation.

First year students

- Are encouraged to be devoted to observation, of the world and of the movements in it.

Second year students

- Are challenged to move beyond their previous experience and knowledge, going beyond styles or genres, seeking to discover the driving forces involved, so that they in turn provide creative inspiration.

Program of Studies

- Physical and vocal preparation
- Movement analysis and Mime of action
- Elemental acrobatics, juggling, stage fighting...
- Play and re-play of daily life
- The neutral mask (calm, silence, balance)
- Dynamic study of nature as an approach to acting characters through :
 - elements and materials
 - plants and animals
 - theatricality of objects
- Masks
 - Expressive, larval, utilitarian masks

Each year, additional units selected from in the following categories may be interjected to supplement the student's experience, depending on their readiness

- Human comedy (Commedia dell' arte and half masks)
- Gestural languages
- The study of tragic texts, Crowds and Orators, the chorus and the hero
- The world of the fantastic
- Circus and theatre clowns

Investigations:

At the end of the first semester, the students carry out observations and research into various places and social "milieux" and present them in a public performance. (End of semester Theatre Informance)

The Personal Commission/ Command

At the end of the year the students are given a personal theme, starting point for a creation, to conclude the study and affirm their personal style.

Class Procedures & Policies

- **Theatre is a performing art. Consistent attendance, full participation, active listening and engagement in ALL work is mandatory**
- **Students are required to dress down in appropriate clothing for all classes unless otherwise instructed**
- **Students should apply themselves without prompting, completing work in a timely manner**
- **Food (including gum) and drink are NOT allowed in the Black Box. Water, however, is strongly encouraged.**
- **Jewelry or accessories should be removed, they restrict movement and pose a distraction and/or are a safety hazard**

Assessment: When moving through the curriculum, assessment informs instruction. Learning goals and learning objectives are set and based on student's demonstration of understanding and mastery of skills and techniques. Assessments are created within a variety of formats (formal, informal, summative and performance based assessment)

Grading is based on the demonstration of student ability to gain mastery of the Theatre ARTS CORE Standards (what each student knows and is able to do and understand) **and calculated on a four point scale.** Work habits are reported separately in the comment section of Progress Reports in order to give the most accurate report of student progress

A	4 – 3.5	EXEMPLARY (Exceeds Expectations)
B	3.25 – 2.75	PROFICIENT (Meets Expectations)
C	2.5 – 2	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (Developing Toward Expectations)
D	1.5 – 1	UNSATISFACTORY (Needs to Increase Effort)
F	0.9 - 0	FAILING

Individual /Group Process - 35%

- CO-OPS (collaborative original scene work in themed units) **NOTE: the final product is not graded!**
- Research/History Investigation (Dramaturgy)
- Theatre Informance
- Investigations

Skills Development – 35%

- Daily Engagement in physical and vocal preparation
- Ensemble Skills, Awareness, and Application
- Observation/Analysis
- Class Work
 - Investigative Improvisation and Practice
 - Movement Analysis
 - Mime Articulation

Written Work – 20%

- Theatre Notebook/Journal (Documentation of Process)

Technical - 10 %

- Tech Hours (First Year Students – 5 hours /Semester, Second Year Students 10 hours/Semester)
- Production Contribution for Theatre Informance