

# THEA 20 - An Introductory Course in Acting      Course Syllabus

Theater Arts 20 Summer, 2023

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## Course Description:

In this class, you will learn the basics of acting for both stage and digital media using the Stanislavski method. Through discussion and rehearsal both in class and outside of class, you will rehearse and perform a scene from William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. You will record on video your performance (with your scene partners, if applicable), submit it to Canvas, and then present a live performance of it to the class.

We will then shift our focus from a classical text to more recent texts. You will choose, memorize, rehearse and perform a monologue from a modern play, motion picture or a full length series, selected from a list developed by the class. You will record on video your performance, submit it to Canvas, and then present a live performance of it to the class. Both your *Midsummer Night's Dream* project and your *Modern Monologue* project will be accompanied by a paper on your process creating and performing these characters. Participating in class discussion, both during your own work and the work of the other students, is a key component of this course.

## Course Schedule Weeks 1 - 3

We will be working on scenes from William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. You will be required to find a copy of this text. Working with other actors in the class, you will be responsible for the performance of 15-20 lines of text in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. We will be casting roles and choosing scenes during the first week of class and rehearsing them during the following weeks. For your Midterm Performance, you will record your performance (with your scene partners, if applicable), submit it to Canvas, and present it to the class. You must use an inventive scenic background or other elements that help indicate the time and place of the piece you have chosen or have been assigned. Please add a musical sound track (*with no lyrics*) that will highlight your interpretation of your scene or monologue. Along with your performance, you will be submitting a 5 page paper on your process of creating your performance with your group. You are welcome to reference the books, but the primary focus should be on your interaction and interpretation of the character you played.

## Weeks 4 - 5

You will select a monologue from a modern play, motion picture or a full length series from a list we will develop as a class. You will memorize the monologue, and then work on the monologue in class with the instructors and your fellow actors. The monologues must be set in a different context than the context of the film they are from. You will record your performance of the monologue, which must be set in a different context than the context of the play or film they are from, adding additional layers of design (visual backgrounds, props, costumes, sound or a musical background) that help to clarify your new context or vision for the monologue. The performances will be

presented during the final week of class as your Final Performance. Along with your performance, you will be submitting a 5 page paper on your process of creating your performance on your own. In this paper, we'd like you to also focus on how the skills and techniques you've learned in this class will be useful in your life outside of theatre. We want to know what has stuck with you over the last 5 weeks, and how perhaps you have changed in this class.

**Course Requirements:**

Your attendance and promptness to each class and section meeting.

The quality of your participation in discussions held daily in class about your work and the work of the other students in the class.

Your preparedness for the performances, and the promptness of your submission of both of the two major assignments.

The quality and effort that you invested in all aspects of both assignments.

**Required Materials:**

William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream

An Actor Prepares by Constantin Stanislavski

Building a Character by Constantin Stanislavski

**Office Hours**

By appointment.

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