INTRODUCTION TO ACTING

TA-20-01 – 5 Units  Summer 2019
Mon/ Wed
1 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Studio B100

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Meetings by appointment
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COURSE OBJECTIVES
This course is an introduction to the craft of acting for the stage. Our work (aka play) aims to develop your skills in imagination, relaxation, observation, and concentration - engaging your voice, mind, and body. This includes solo work, work with a partner or small groups, and work as an ensemble. The class introduces analysis of text, character development, and scene study. Activities include discussions, acting games and warm-ups, improvisations, reading assignments, writing assignments, rehearsals outside of class with a partner, presentations, and in-class performances.

This is an experiential class in which your success depends greatly on your attendance and your active class participation. Show up on time and be prepared! By fully engaging in the class assignments and projects, you will gain access to skills and concepts that can be applied throughout your life and career in any field.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Our class reader is available at the Bay Tree Bookstore.

You will also be required to read one play, which will be assigned. The plays are available at the McHenry Library. (Please note: Scenes from online sources are NOT acceptable material.) From these plays, you will memorize, rehearse, and present one scene.

REQUIRED MATERIALS AND CLOTHING
- JOURNAL. Please bring a journal every day to class. Pick a notebook only to be used for this class. Make sure your name is in the journal. Please write legibly. If you are unable to write legibly, please type up your journals, print, and staple. Journals are due on Day 8.
- PEN, PAPER & FOLDER. Always bring something to write with. Bring a folder for handouts.
- COMFORTABLE CLOTHING TO MOVE IN. Sweats/ comfortable pants that cover the knees are great. Skirts, shorts, and tight jeans may not allow you to move freely. Remove loose jewelry and hats. You may want a hoodie or long sleeved shirt that you can take off. We will work barefoot.
- WATER BOTTLE. Have your own water available and take bottles out with you at the end of class.
- NO CELL PHONES. Phones must be turned off and put away in backpacks at the top of class.
- NO GUM. Spit out gum before class. NO FOOD IN CLASS. Bring snacks to eat during breaks.

PERFORMANCE ASSIGNMENTS
- Personal Narrative
- Personal Daily Activity
- Independent Activity
- A 2-minute, two-person, dramatic scene from a contemporary American play
Rehearsal outside of class is required. For scenes, 8-10 hrs of rehearsal is recommended.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS
- Personal Narrative
- Journal. This includes: in-class observations, out-of-class assignments, notes and responses to the reading.
- Final Paper. This is a Personal Process Reflection paper.
EVALUATION AND EXPECTATIONS

Participation/ Attendance
Theatre is one of the most collaborative of the arts. Actors must be able to rely on each other or there is no performance. Those of you in team sports will be familiar with this. In class, student actors depend on each other’s energy and commitment, as an ensemble and especially for scene work and partner work. Therefore, attendance is mandatory.

Your participation is 20% of your final grade, and this includes attendance. This grade will also be based on active and engaged class participation, active listening and contribution to discussion, punctuality and preparedness, visible commitment to the task at hand and to classmates, and growth in the areas of commitment, self-discipline, risk-taking, vocal and physical awareness, and emotional involvement. If you are late to class, you will lose points for lateness. If you are absent, for any reason, you will lose that day’s participation points.

Please note: NEVER be late or absent on a day that you are scheduled to perform! You and your partners will receive a zero on the assignment if one of you are absent.

So stay healthy! An actor’s body is his/her instrument. Treat your instrument well. Take care of yourself so you can show up ready and alert. If you have a serious injury, joining us in class to observe but sitting out of rigorous physical activities is encouraged. If you are very sick and possibly contagious then you should stay home, but you must notify the teacher within 24 hours of your absence.

Respect
Respect the space and respect each other.

Respect the space. We need a safe, clean, creative space in which to work. When you come in, come in quietly. Your cell phone should be turned off and put away in your backpack for the duration of class. (This is to avoid interrupting activities and performances, and to allow you the space to be fully present.) Take off your shoes. Stretch out, take some good deep breaths, and work on becoming present. Keep conversation to a minimum. Get into your own space and let others do the same.

Respect each other. Make observations with compassion. We are here to help each other learn and grow. One person speaks at a time. Listen fully to your fellow actors. Speak in the first person when you give another actor feedback. Make statements like: “I observed…” “I felt…” “I noticed…” Avoid judgment or assumptions. Respect your acting partner by making yourself available for rehearsals outside of class time and working collaboratively in a considerate and cooperative manner. Unkind/ unsafe language or slurs are never acceptable.

You have the right to feel safe and respected. You are responsible for keeping your acting partner physically safe at all times, in class and in rehearsal. If you are encountering any problems feeling safe and respected, with other students, your scene partner, or for any other reason, please let the instructor know as soon as possible.

Honor System
Plagiarism is strictly prohibited either from a published source or from another student. Any assignment that includes plagiarized material from another source will receive a zero and academic sanctions may result.

Summer Session Students with Disabilities
If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me as soon as possible.
CLASS SCHEDULE:

Day 1 – Mon July 29
HMWK: Outside Journal Entry #1: Eye Contact with 3 people/ Observations of 3 other people. Write in your journal. Bring in two copies of your Personal Narrative (handout) on Wednesday.

Day 2 – Wed July 31
Personal Narratives
HMWK: OJE #2: Read An Actor Prepares by Constantin Stanislavski by Monday. Take notes in journal. OJE #3: Observe and take notes in journal on an Activity you do Daily. Bring the activity to class on Monday (no props.)

Day 3 – Mon Aug 5
Daily Activities
HMWK: OJE #4: Read Objectives essay by William Ball by Wednesday. Take notes in journal.

Day 4 – Wed Aug 7
Daily Activities Continued
HMWK: OJE #5: Read Sanford Meisner chapters by Monday. Take notes in journal. I will email you your scene/ play assignment and partner. Pick up your play from the library. Read the whole play.

Day 5 – Mon Aug 12
Independent Activities
HMWK: OJE #6: Read A Director Prepares by Anne Bogart - Terror Essay - by Wednesday. Notes in journal. Bring in independent activities on Wednesday (bring in any objects you may need) Rehearse scenes

Day 6 – Wed Aug 14
Independent Activities Continued
HMWK: OJE #7: Scene Score – There will be a handout for this assignment. To be included in your journal. Rehearse scenes

Day 7 – Mon Aug 19
Independent Activities Continued
HMWK: OJE #8: Your Rehearsal Process – Describe your process with your partner in your journal. Rehearse scenes

Day 8 – Wed Aug 21
Scenes (Final Project)
Journals DUE
HMWK: Final Papers due next Wednesday; Rehearse scenes

Day 9 – Mon Aug 26
Scenes Continued (Final Project)
HMWK: Final Papers Due on Wednesday; Rehearse scenes

Day 10 – Wed Aug 28
Scenes Continued (Final Project)
FINAL PAPERS DUE
Potluck/ Reflection

GRADING (100 points total)
Class Participation and Engagement (20 points = 2 pts per class) 20%
Personal Narrative (10 pts), Daily Activity (10 pts), Independent Activity (10 pts) 30%
Scene (15 points) 15%
Written Assignments: Journals (20 points) and Final Paper (15 points) 35%

Acting assignment points are based on commitment, effort, and focus; a demonstration that one has rehearsed outside of class time with full engagement; willingness/ openness to trying new approaches; and the gradual application of acting tools learned in class.