



## **LNDN THTR 3316 Integrating Character Through Voice and Movement**

### **CAPA LONDON PROGRAM**

#### **Course Description**

In this performance-based theatre course, students will engage in acting techniques that utilize psycho-physical training, integrating their voice and body as they create characters from modern and contemporary texts. Students will begin by examining and building awareness of their own vocal and physical apparatus through solo and ensemble exercises. Students will learn the anatomy, physiology and physicality of the voice and build healthy and effective methods of vocal projection through a progression of exercises developed by Kristin Linklater and Patsy Rodenburg. Students will be concurrently introduced to various physical theatre training techniques such as Michael Chekhov, Jacques Lecoq, and Vsevolod Meyerhold. For the final project, students will integrate these vocal and physical techniques through creating characters from selected scenes. Throughout the course, the actor-student's journey will be focused on mind-body connection, self-awareness, relaxation, presence, emotional vulnerability, and clarity in verbal and non-verbal communication.

#### **Requirements and Prerequisites**

There are no prerequisites for this course, though some fundamental experience with acting is recommended.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- a. Understand and apply the vocal techniques of the Linklater progression in order to build a personal vocal warm-up for use with rehearsals and performance
- b. Identify and explain the functions of various vocal and anatomical muscle groups and systems.
- c. Understand and apply the physical methods of Chekhov and Meyerhold in order to create an in-depth and embodied character for performance.
- d. Collaborate efficiently and effectively with an ensemble, engaging in physical games, exercises and rehearsals with a free and open voice/body.
- e. Analyze text from a monologue or scene to create behavioral choices that manifest themselves through altered vocal and physical changes.
- F. When appropriate, conduct research on a play, playwright and circumstances of a scene in order to utilize costume, sets, and props of the period(s).

#### **Developmental Outcomes**

Students should demonstrate: responsibility & accountability, independence & interdependence, goal orientation, self-confidence, resilience, appreciation of differences.

#### **Class methodology**

This course will meet for 3 ½ hours, twice a week, for six weeks. This will consist of in-class participation, discussion, weekly writing assignments, monologue and scene work, as well as invited guest lectures and field visits. Final assessment will occur through in-class participation and presentations, as well as through the writing assignments.

#### **FIELD COMPONENT(S)**

CAPA provides the unique opportunity to learn about the city, its culture, theater and history through direct, guided experience. Participation in the extracurricular activities is required. In particular, attending a performance at any theater at The National, The Globe, the Royal Court or elsewhere on the West End.

#### **Assessment/Grading Policy**

- 
- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| • <b><u>Class participation and attendance</u></b> | <b>20%</b> |
| • <b><u>Weekly journal writing</u></b>             | <b>20%</b> |
| • <b><u>Character observation</u></b>              | <b>10%</b> |

- Ensemble project
- Scene

25%  
25%

Overall grade

100%

DESCRIPTOR	ALPHA	NUMERIC	GPA	REQUIREMENT/EXPECTATION
Outstanding (High Distinction)	A	93+	4.0	Maximum grade: In addition to description for grade "A-", the student shows detailed understanding of materials about which he or she can show independent analytical ability. This means the ability to question an issue from different perspectives and evaluate responses in an objective manner.
Excellent (Distinction)	A-	90 - 92	3.7	Student shows understanding of literature beyond the textbook/class hand-outs/class notes, and the work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for evaluation.
Very good (High Credit)	B+	87 - 89	3.3	Shows evidence of a capacity to generalise from the taught content, or the material in literature, or from class lectures in an informed manner. Also, the work demonstrates a capacity to integrate personal reflection into the discussion and an appreciation of a range of different perspectives.
Good (Credit)	B	83 - 86	3.0	The work is well organised and contains coherent or logical argumentation and presentation.
Good (Credit)	B-	80 - 82	2.7	Student shows understanding of literature beyond the textbook and/or notes, and, there is evidence of additional reading.
Average (Good Pass)	C+	77-79	2.3	The work demonstrates a capacity to integrate research into the discussion and a critical appreciation of a range of theoretical perspectives. Also, the work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question and its theoretical implications and demonstrates evidence of additional reading.
Adequate (Pass)	C	73 - 76	2.0	Shows clear understanding and some insight into the material in the textbook and notes, but not beyond. A deficiency in understanding the material may be compensated by evidence of independent thought and effort related to the subject matter.
Below Average (Borderline Pass)	C-	70-72	1.7	Shows some understanding of the material in the textbook and notes. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought related to the subject matter.
Inadequate (Borderline Fail)	D+	67 - 69	1.3	Fails to show a clear understanding or much insight into the material in the textbook and notes
Poor (Fail)	D	60 - 66	0.7 - 1.0	Besides the above for D+, student has not shown interest or engagement in the class work or study.
Poor (Fail)	F	<60	0	Shows little or no understanding of any of the material
Incomplete	I			Please see CAPA policy in the Faculty Handbook.

### **Dress Code**

This is a very active class and you will be expected to move and work on the floor or with others every class. Dress in clothing that is not too tight or revealing that allows you to move freely and that you won't mind rolling around in. It is recommended that you wear solid colors (preferably black), without logos or designs as this can be distracting to other students. Clothing should be designed for movement (sweats, shorts, yoga pants, etc.). Limit jewelry. No facial piercings that will hinder speech or body piercings that might get caught on clothing. No flip flops, high heels, open toes or backless shoes. Barefoot or rubber soled shoes are recommended. The reasons for this dress code relate not only to matters of safety, but also group modesty. No hats should be worn in the classroom and hair should be pulled back from the face. As a courtesy to your classmates, please go easy on the cologne or perfume (you will be working closely with each other).

## Course Materials

*Freeing the Natural Voice: Imagery and Art in the Practice of the Natural Voice*, Kristin Linklater, Theatre Communications Group, New York, NY, 2006, ISBN: 978-0896762503

*To the Actor*, Michael Chekhov, Routledge, New York, NY, ISBN: 978-0-415-25875-3

Handouts and reserve materials at discretion of instructor

Play script for scenes and monologues as assigned in class

### **RECOMMENDED READING (excerpted handouts may be provided):**

*An Acrobat of the Heart*, Stephen Wangh, Vintage Books, New York, NY, ISBN: 0-375-70672-0

*Actor Movement*, Vanessa Ewan and Debbie Green, Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, London, UK, 2015, ISBN: 978-1-4081-3441-2

*Freeing Shakespeare's Voice*, Kristin Linklater, Theatre Communications Group, New York, NY, ISBN: 1-55936-031-3

### **REQUIRED MATERIALS**

Water bottle with lid

Journal or Notebook and folder for handouts

Pen or pencil

Additional costume or props as needed for scenes

## Weekly Course Schedule

<b>CLASS TOPIC</b>	<b>HOMEWORK DUE</b>
<b>Week 1: Connecting to Voice &amp; Body</b> In this section, students will begin working with their voice and body by utilizing exercises developed by Patsy Rodenburg and Kristen Linklater. Emphasis will be on relaxation, body awareness, vocal and physical awareness, and collaborative games to build connection and presence with partners. Students will engage in solo exercises and partner work.	Read Linklater Intro and Chaps 1-6 (pp 1-117) Read Rodenburg Excerpt: Second Circle Writing Prompt: Five Specific Goals for the Class Character Observation Exercise #1
	Read Linklater Chaps. 5-7 (pp. 127-172) Character Observation Exercise #2 Weekly Journal Due
<b>Week 2: Exploring Internal Impulses &amp; External Stimuli</b> In this section, students will engage in exercises that balance the internal life of the actor with the external stimuli they encounter. They will continue to explore and understand the physiology of their voice as well as anatomy and simple movement exercises with partners, including introduction to contact improv and gesture.	Read Linklater Chaps. 8-9 (pp 173-184) Character Observation Presentations
	Read Linklater Chap. 10- 11 (pp 185-212) Read Chekhov Introduction; Chap. 1 & 2 (pp. xxv-34)
<b>Week 3: Exploring Space, Rhythm and Tempo</b> In this section, students will begin playing with techniques of Michael Chekhov and furthering their studies with Linklater and Rodenburg, exploring how changes in spatial dynamics, rhythm and tempo affect character and playing choices. Students will also be introduced to Lecoq's levels of tension and ensemble games.	Read Chekhov Chap. 5 (pp. 63-76) Read Lecoq handout/excerpt
	Read Linklater Chaps 12 & 13 (pp 213-244) Chair Duet Exercise Weekly Journal Due
<b>Week 4: Exploring Ensemble Movement</b> In this section, students will be introduced to various physical theatre techniques to shape character and story (such as Boal, Lecoq and Meyerhold).	Read Linklater Chap 14-16 (pp 245-278) Students assigned the final scene

<b>Week 5: Integration &amp; Synthesis</b> In this section, students will begin to integrate and synthesis the voice/body techniques by applying them to improvisational exercises and working with scenes.	Read Linklater Chap. 17-19 (pp. 279-324) Read Chekhov Chap. 7 & 8 (pp 85-122)
	First read-through of Scene
<b>Week 6: Creating a Character</b> In the final section of class, students will apply the techniques in the context of a scene. Scenes will be chosen that will challenge the student in scope and form, focusing specifically on creating fully-embodied characters in heightened given circumstances.	Weekly Journal Due Scene Work-through
	Scene Final Showing

## **Attendance, Participation & Student Responsibilities**

**Attendance:** CAPA has a mandatory attendance policy. Attendance is taken at the beginning of every class. Unauthorized absence from class will result in a reduction of the final grade and potentially a failure for the course.

**Missing classes for medical reasons:** If you need to miss a class for medical reasons or for a family emergency, you must send an e-mail to let the Director of Academic Affairs know at least one hour in advance of your class or meeting at the following e-mail:\_\_\_\_\_. Note that calling the CAPA Center (\_\_\_\_\_) is acceptable only if you do not temporarily have access to the internet. An e-mail is still required as quickly as you can get access to the internet again. You will need to provide evidence of the reason for your absence. Unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction. In the event of a missed class or field trip, it is your responsibility to contact your instructor and make up any missed assignments.

**Class Participation:** Students are expected to participate actively and critically in class discussions, and the participation portion of the class will be graded accordingly. Students must read assignments BEFORE the class, and come in on time. Participation is a vital part of your grade: students are expected to participate orally in seminars and in online forums and discussions in a critical and evaluative manner; to interact with the faculty and fellow students with respect and tolerance; and to actively engage in discussion. Derogatory or inflammatory comments about the cultures, perspectives or attitudes of others in the class will not be tolerated.

**Academic Integrity:** A high level of responsibility and academic honesty is expected. Because the value of an academic course depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student, it is imperative that a student demonstrates a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work and class behavior. Plagiarism and cheating will result in dismissal from the program. See the Handbook of CAPA Academic Policies for more information and resources on plagiarism.

**Use of electronic equipment in class:** All devices such as laptops, I-pods, I-pads, netbooks, notebooks and tablets, smartphones, cell phones, etc. are **NOT** allowed unless you have express permission from the faculty or you have been instructed to do so. If you require an accommodation to use any type of electronic equipment, inform the Director of Academic Affairs at the beginning of Term.

**Use of Electronic Translators:** In Language courses students are NOT allowed to use electronic translators for writing texts in the target language: those submitting compositions and texts of whatever kind translated in such a fashion will receive a final F grade for the course.

**Late Submission:** Late submission of papers, projects, journal entries, pieces of homework and portfolios is only permitted with prior approval. A request must be made to the relevant Faculty member no later than two days prior to the due date. Late submission without prior approval will result in a full alpha grade penalty. In either case, work cannot be submitted after feedback has been provided to the rest of the class on the relevant assessment or one week after the due date whichever comes first, after which point a grade of F will be given for the assessment.

**Behavior during Examinations:** During examinations, you must do your own work. Unless specifically instructed by the lecturer or instructor, talking during an exam is not permitted, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any failure to abide by examination rules will result in failure of the exam, and may lead to failure of the course and disciplinary action.

## **CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE (SAFETY, TRUST & TOLERANCE)**

This class involves participation in exercises that may make you or others feel vulnerable or uncomfortable and may lead to discussion of various topics. Although a safe environment will be our top priority, know that you may encounter artistic

ground that brings up personal feelings. It is vital that you respect your own feelings and thoughts as well as others. In the nature of our work and scenes, we will be examining various issues and diverse cultures. We each have a unique point of view—part of this class is identifying and strengthening that point of view to enable you to hone it in your craft. This class offers an opportunity to share our different experiences that influence our perspectives of the world—we can enlighten and educate each other. You may share the same thoughts and ideas as others, but you also may disagree or feel uncomfortable with certain ideas, topics and views shared in this class. This classroom should be a lively, interactive, and comfortable place where we are free to take risks, dream, inspire, create and test our ideas about acting (and life). We (myself, the TAs, students) will strive to create an open, respectful, and trusting environment in this course.

At minimum, the following rules will be practiced:

- Everyone in class has a right and obligation to participate in the exercises and discussion.
- All questions, perspectives, and opinions are important and valuable—you are encouraged to share and discuss.
- Demonstrate respect for all ideas, beliefs and people.
- Avoid making assumptions, generalizations and stereotypes.
- If you are offended by something (even if spoken by an instructor or TA), please let us know immediately. You can do this anonymously or in the moment, but we will strive to ensure to maintain a safe environment for everyone at all times.
- When offering criticism or comments on performance work, focus on the positive aspects and offer specific comments keeping in mind a generosity of spirit.
- No cell phones. Please turn them completely off during class. If a cell phone rings during class, this will be counted as part of your participation grade. (How would you feel if a cell phone rang during your monologue or scene?).
- Laptops and other personal computer devices are also not permitted unless by special accommodation through Disability Resources. (\*see note at end of syllabus)
- Please no food.
- Water bottles are preferred, but other drinks may be acceptable if properly contained.
- No photos or video of class allowed.
- Please clean up after class. Leave the space better than you found it. Pick up litter. Put chairs back. If you set up your scene, then put everything away. Others use this space so be respectful.
- Please take care of any physiological needs *before* you come to the classroom—entering and exiting during discussion, exercises or scene-work can be distracting.