

THED 561-700 Voice and Movement
Voice and Speech Section
University of Northern Colorado
Summer 2015

Thursday, Friday, Saturday - July 23 - 25, 2015

9:00 am to 12:00 pm & 1:00 pm to 5:30 pm

(we will take a lunch break from 12:00 - 1:00)

Instructor: Shelly Gaza, MFA

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Course Description

This course is designed to instruct the actor in voice (vocal sound production) and speech (verbal communication) for the Stage. Students will engage in physical exercises and explorations (much of which will be rooted in the work of Kristen Linklater) that will aid in the re-discovery of natural breathing, and in time, a use of their instruments (the organs of voice and speech specifically, and the overall body in general) that is free of physical tension and other unhealthy habits that inhibit an actor's ability to not only be heard and understood, but to be fully available and engaged – physically, psychologically, and emotionally.

In addition to physical work, students will also learn about the anatomy related to voice and speech, as well as the proper ways to care for and maintain a healthy voice. Students will also be introduced to the fundamentals of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) which will be used to understand the main characteristics of American Standard speech.

And finally, throughout this three-day intensive, special attention and time will be dedicated to ways in which participants can incorporate voice and speech work into their own classrooms. Specifically, we will explore theatre games and exercises that aim to increase a young actor's confidence in, and proficiency with voice work.

Course Objectives

- To increase awareness, freedom, and depth of breath
- To increase rib swing and abdominal movement, and eliminate “shoulder breathing”
- To increase vocal projection and endurance
- To replace habitual tension in the body with “relaxed readiness”
- To increase articulatory energy and vigor
- To use the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) as a means of understanding and discussing the sounds of American Standard speech.
- To explore ways of incorporating voice and speech work in the theatre classroom

Texts Books

There are no required text books for this course. Supplemental materials will be provided by the instructor. The following books, while not required, are highly recommended additions to a theatre educator's library, and will be helpful resources for this course:

Freeing the Natural Voice, by Kristin Linklater

Freeing Shakespeare's Voice, by Kristin Linklater

Speaking Shakespeare, by Patsy Rodenburg

The Actor Speaks: Voice and the Performer, by Patsy Rodenburg

Voice and the Actor, by Cecily Berry

Grading

1. Attendance, Promptness, and Participation (300 points / 60%)

Attendance and promptness are required for all classes. Please plan on entering the space ten minutes prior to the beginning of class. This will allow time for removing shoes for the warm-up, turning off cell phones, filling water bottles, etc. Due to the intensity of this brief session, attendance, promptness, and participation in classroom activities are absolutely required for all three days of the course.

2. Sonnet Performance (100 points / 20%)

Students will need to memorize one of Shakespeare's sonnets prior to the start of class. This sonnet will serve as practice text for exercises and warm-ups, and will also be presented, in solo performance for a grade, on day three of the course. Students are free to choose any one of Shakespeare's sonnets that appeals to them. (Please do not choose a speech from one of Shakespeare's plays.) A complete list of sonnets can be found on the following web sites:

<http://absoluteshakespeare.com/index.htm>

<http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/>

3. Journal (100 points / 20%)

Students will keep a journal throughout the three days. Journal entries will consist of the following:

1. A description and personal analysis of each day's activities.
2. Your notes on class, specifically those related to anatomy and vocal health.
3. Specific questions to answer and topics to explore, to be specified by the instructor. These writing assignments will be made at the end of each day and are to be completed in the evening, prior to the next day's class.

Journals are to be typewritten in either Pages or Word and emailed to the instructor by 8:00 am on Sunday, July 26 (the morning following the final day of class.) Please do not convert your journal to a PDF, as I will be typing my feedback directly into your document. All journals will be returned, with feedback/questions answered by Monday, July 27, 2015.

Movement Clothing

We will be engaging in vocal warm-ups and exercises that will involve a great deal of physical movement and stretching. Therefore, students are expected to wear clothing to all classes that can comfortably accommodate this type of movement. (Please do not wear tight jeans or short skirts, for example.)

Cell Phones/Computers/Tablets

All cell phones must be turned off and put away prior to the start of each class period. Also, it is my preference that you take notes with pen/pencil and paper, and not electronically. However, if you need to use your laptop or tablet to take class notes, please discuss this with me prior to doing so. At no time, however, should students text, check email, or surf the web during class time.

Disability Statement

Students with disabilities who feel that they may need accommodations for this class are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services as soon as possible at 970-351-2289 to ensure that appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

In Closing

I am very excited about meeting and working with you for these three intense and exciting days! If you have any questions prior to the first day of class, please don't hesitate to email me. And now, here are some of my favorite quotes that I thought you might enjoy. See you in July!

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“Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with deeper meaning.”

Maya Angelou

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A defective voice will always preclude an artist from achieving the complete development of his art, however intelligent he may be.... The voice is an instrument which the artist must learn to use with suppleness and sureness, as if it were a limb.

Sarah Bernhardt, *The Art of the Theatre*

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"Know your voice—it's strong, it's sensitive, it's resilient, and it's you,"

Kristin Linklater

“The human voice is the organ of the soul.”

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
