

Th&F 213: Movement I - Foundational Tools - *Fall 2009 Syllabus*

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Office Hours: MW 3-4 and by appointment

Course Description

An exploration of the expressive potential of the physical and emotional body in the context of acting as art. Exercises, readings and projects are designed to develop the fundamental physical skills and imaginative awareness required of the actor in effective dramatic performance. The course will emphasize professional work habits, physical conditioning, and development of individual and ensemble creativity. In-depth exploration and examination of the full, expressive range of human movement involves not only physical commitment but the active commitment of the actor's entire being. The actor's sensitivity to inner/external awareness must be finely tuned through extensive training. Understanding one's own experiences and habits is a necessary departure point for developing the ability to embody a character and to tap into the realm of feeling and emotion in a healthy and artistic manner. The course will seek to open the doors to the imagination and the endless loop of inner experience made visible. The work of Michael Chekhov and Rudolf von Laban will form the philosophic and practical basis for exploring these themes. The course will be both physically, mentally and emotionally demanding and will require energy, courage, stamina and the suspension of judgment as we explore the spirit of play within a serious context. The instructor will seek to create a safe and trusting environment in which the student can feel free to explore, take risks and find freedom from physical, psychological and vocal inhibitions.

Course Objectives

- To develop a sense of the self as a creative artist.
- To develop and integrate the physical and imaginative skills that will allow the actor to tap into the source of her creative individuality.
- To free the expressive potential of the body by developing a strong, supple instrument, a sense of ease, form, beauty and entirety.
- To create awareness and freedom in the breath.
- To gain both freedom and command over movement and to establish a vocabulary of movement principles and actions.
- To establish familiarity with the basic body systems.
- To develop a strong sense of ensemble
- To understand and apply basic concepts of Laban Movement Analysis, Michael Chekhov Acting Technique and Neutral Mask.
- To develop observation skills and the language with which to articulate intangible concepts.
- To learn to pay attention, allowing each moment to unfold as it is happening in the service of an image and to develop the courage and confidence to act.
- To take personal responsibility for learning, growth, development and risk-taking.

Course Requirements

Class attendance is mandatory. This class is primarily experiential; missed material cannot be made up.

Dress: In order to promote a feeling of ensemble and professional environment all class members will wear solid black. Please avoid overly revealing or concealing attire. Dress in layers to address internal and external temperature fluctuations. Long hair should be pulled back. Feet are bare or jazz shoes are permitted. NO Street clothes of any kind. NO Jeans of any kind. NO jewelry, watches or hats or socks. No zippers or pant legs hanging on the floor. No gum, food or drinks in the classroom.

Water in a closed container is encouraged. Please do not ask to leave the classroom for a drink.

A journal or notebook and pen/pencil to be brought to each class. A binder for handouts and assignments.

A yoga mat to protect bony parts from the floor, since it is often inconvenient to get down the large mats for just a few minutes. They may not always be needed, but can always be used. You can leave them in a locker or stored in the classroom.

Blackboard: This course will use a Blackboard site. The site will contain all course documents, assignments, announcements, etc. It is NOT a substitute for coming to class. It is the student's responsibility to check Blackboard daily and all emails that will be sent via Blackboard.

Blackboard is accessed via KU's homepage by clicking on "Blackboard" in the upper right hand corner of the homepage.

Content:

Texts - Course Packets to be purchased from TH 317 for \$10 each.

Reflective Writing - Keep excellent notes. Your blog is a place to record what we have done in class as well as your individual experiences, responses and ruminations. You will submit an entry once a week. It will include a brief description of classroom activities, what you observed in yourself during the exercise, connections you are making to the art of acting, thoughts about the readings and how they relate to the exercises and questions you may have. Often, I will pose a question based on the readings, but otherwise you have individual freedom as to subject. Portfolio entries will not be graded individually; I will read them each week, respond with comments, and take note of how you are using this feature. An overall grade will be assessed four times a semester.

See Rubric.

Readings as assigned.

End of Term Self-Evaluations (criteria TBA)

3-4 performance projects to be presented in class throughout the semester, involving outside preparation including midterm and final project; date TBA. If you miss the class in which the projects are shown, you will not be able to make them up!

Attendance at UT productions. Ticket Receipts (your name is printed on them) or a program with your name circled will be required as proof of attendance or casting/crew assignment. If cost is an issue, you can sign up to usher and see the show for free. Do not delay in purchasing your tickets for the Inge shows. Seating is limited and they sell out quickly. In addition, you are required to see Pilobolus Dance Theatre at the Lied Center.

Pilobolus Dance Theatre <http://www.lied.ku.edu/events/pilobolus-dance-theatre.shtml>

February 5, 2010

KU Confidential an original devised piece created by Henry Bial and KU Students, Inge Theatre

February 4, 5, 6 (9:00 p.m.). 7*, 10, 11, 12, 13*, 2010

Arms and the Man by George Bernard Shaw, Crafton-Preyer Theatre

February 26, 27, 28* & March 4, 5, 6, 2010

Undergraduate Student Projects, Inge Theatre

March 25, 26, 27***, 28*, 31 & April 1, 2, 2010
Anything Goes music & lyrics by Cole Porter, book by Guy Bolton,
P.G. Wodehouse, Howard Lindsay & Russell Crouse, Crafton-Preyer Theatre
April 23, 24, 25*, 29, 30 & May 1, 2010
Unless noted, all performances are at 7:30 p.m.
* 2:30 p.m.
***2:30 & 7:30 p.m.

Other assignments and projects due as given in class. *You are responsible* for all announcements and assignments given in class even if you are absent. Talk to a classmate, about the work we did, whether or not there was an assignment and so on. These things may not be posted right away, since it is my intention to discourage you from missing class! Some dates may change at the discretion of the instructor. As assignments are added and new due dates accrue, the instructor will make every effort to give plenty of advance warning and to follow up with announcements posted on Blackboard.

Course Plan/Calendar

“Every talented artist bears within himself the desire for transformation.”
Michael Chekhov

Weeks 1-8 The Path to Transformation: Becoming Conscious –

- Awakening, sensitizing and training the psycho-physical acting instrument
- Actor as Creative Artist engaged in the Creative Process
- Body as the “mediator of experience”
- Freeing and Expanding the Breath, the Body, the Inner Life – “Being Responsible”
- Ensemble
- Moving Energy: the Life Body
- Just Action
- Cultivating strength, flexibility, range of motion, playfulness, imagination
- Developing Technique
- Falls, Tumbles, Handstand, Strength, Balance, Tai Chi, Yoga, Sticks
- Gesture is full body/mind/heart event.
- Theatre in the Art Museum/ensemble projects.

Readings (through August 26th):

August 19: Lorna Marshall, *The Body Speaks* and Olsen, *Body Stories*.

August 24 Casciero and Handout

August 26 Chekhov, *The Creative Process*

Petit, *Translating the Inner Event to the Outer Expression*

Week 9 Conferences

Weeks 10-12 Experiential Anatomy

- Bartenieff Fundamentals, Developmental Movement Sequence, Bones, Sensing, Imagery
- Exam:
- Writing: Identifying Bones, Anatomy of Breath
- Performance: Demonstration of Skills

Weeks 12-16) Harnessing Technique: Absorbing Meaning from Movement/Giving Meaning to Movement

- Archetype/PG
- Environments/Qualities
- Willing Thinking Feeling
- Laban Efforts

Final Exam - Wednesday December 16, 10:30-1.

Important Dates

Spencer Museum	February 22
Spring Break	March 15-19
Last Day of Classes	May 6
Final Exam	May 11, 7:30-10:00 am

Grades

Presence/Presence - It is my aim to create, with you, a safe learning environment in which it is possible to for individuals to take physical and emotional risks. Absence, tardiness or disrespectful behavior adversely affects everyone; the reverse is also true; kindness, generosity, and respect foster growth and success. Your physical and energetic presence is required for you to be successful in this class. Material that is explored cannot be made up. Illness is the ONLY reason to miss class. Under ordinary circumstances, you would be encouraged to attend class, watch and take notes if your illness were mild. However there are now valid concerns about the H1N1 virus and its potential for spreading. Please see the Provost's website

<http://www.pandemic.ku.edu/pdf/tipSheet> and

<http://www.pandemic.ku.edu> regarding University policy. I am working on different ways to accommodate concerns about the spread of illness without sacrificing academic standards for this course. One such innovation is that I am adjusting my grading criteria to reward those whose attendance is outstanding. Standard attendance policy is no more than three absences without adverse consequences to your final grade-one letter for each subsequent absence. Less than three absences will be rewarded with extra credit.... A student will be considered late once class has begun, and will be considered absent if more than 10 minutes late. Three tardies equal one absence. Leaving class early is not permitted. Students will be required to sign in at the beginning of class. If a student is caught signing another student into class, both will receive a letter grade reduction in their final grade. If you are an athlete or have performance conflicts you must provide the instructor with written notice of all absences within the first 2 weeks of class. If you have missed three classes by mid-semester you will be asked to withdraw from the class. A total of 6 absences will automatically result in a failing grade. 3 tardinesses will equal one absence. You may observe class once or twice a semester if you injured or unwell, but you will need to submit a type-written response to your observations.

Earning an A in this class will require the following attributes; excellent and prompt attendance, generosity to colleagues, outstanding ensemble player, strong sense of initiative and responsibility, grasps concepts intellectually and incorporates them physically, active participant

in class discussion of readings and experiences, completes all written and performance assignments on time with superior quality.

Breakdown

50% Daily Classroom Participation

40% Daily Classroom Performance and Participation

Presence (physical and energetic; read, attendance) risk taking, open attitude toward challenges, collaboration, generosity and forbearance to peers, preparation and promptness, initiative and professional discipline, effort, energy, progress, ensemble. Verbal class participation in discussion on readings and other course material, including classroom exercises.

10% Skill

Integrating and incorporating concepts and skills, incorporating coaching, embodying the principles that are explored, application, ensemble, composition, preparation, initiative, creativity, performance.

30% Reflective Writing

20% Performances, Exams, Writing Assignments

- Writing and Exams: Conscientious and thoughtful reading and absorption of course material. Ability to articulate intelligent and considered responses to readings and other course material. All papers must be typed and stapled. Hand-written, unstapled or e-mailed assignments will not be accepted.
- Performances: performance skill, evidence of rehearsal; revision in composition, clarity, creativity, dramatic interest and coherence. Preparation of work will occur either in or out of class (sometimes both); it is the student's responsibility to schedule rehearsals.

Extra Points:

- Perfect attendance or sterling attendance (less than three) after your overall grade is assessed.

Late Work: Students will not be allowed to make up missed performances or quizzes. You must be present on performance dates. (See H1N1 disclaimer.) All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class. Assignments turned in at the end of class will be considered late. Late work will only be accepted until the next class meeting either in class or turned into the instructor's mailbox and at a reduction of half credit.

Above all, think ahead. Make PRIOR arrangements with me. If you are truly ill, then call me (864-2679, 760-1355) so that I am aware of the situation BEFORE I get to class.

Grade Description

A - Outstanding

B - Very Good; Well Done

C - Acceptable

D - Well below accepted standard

F - Failure to meet class standards 6 or more absences

Important Notes

Physical Environment: Due to the nature and content of this course the student must understand that s/he will be required to work in close physical proximity, often requiring contact, with their instructor and their fellow students. It is assumed that each student is comfortable with such contact unless stated otherwise. Excellent personal hygiene is required and care to prevent

the spread of illness should be taken. Please let me know if you have any physical problems, either chronic or acute, which may prevent you from fully participating in class work. If you believe you have a physical disability that may warrant accommodation in this class, I urge you to speak with me as soon as possible so that we can work together to develop methods of addressing those issues. The KU office of Disability Resources coordinates accommodations and services for all students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted DR, please do so as soon as possible. Their office is located in 22 Strong Hall; their phone number is 785-864-2620 (V/TTY). Information about their services can be found at <http://disability.ku.edu> <<http://disability.ku.edu>>. Please also contact me privately in regard to your needs in this course. The use of cell phones, pagers and other electronic communication devices is not permitted in the classroom..

Success: I am here to help you succeed. If you are having difficulty with any aspect of the course it is essential that you take responsibility and contact me BEFORE you run into trouble. I will gladly arrange my schedule to meet with you if my office hours do not coincide with your schedule. Do not wait until the day something is due to tell me your printer broke or that you couldn't reach your scene partner. Please ask questions in class if you do not understand an assignment or an activity. If you need to, ask me questions outside of class as well. Admittedly, there will be times when I will tell you that the assignment itself is about the creative process which CANNOT be proscribed, but I can always be a sounding board. If my office hours don't work for you, I will schedule another time for us to meet!!!! There are several organizations on campus that are here to serve you as well, and I highly recommend taking advantage of them. They include a Writing Center (www.writing.ku.edu) and the Counseling Center (www.caps.ku.edu.)

Blackboard: Please contact me if Blackboard features are difficult or missing, or if anything else seems to be amiss.

Course materials prepared by the instructor, together with the content of all lectures and review sessions presented by the instructor are the property of the instructor. Video and audio recording of lectures and review sessions without the consent of the instructor is prohibited. On request, the instructor will usually grant permission for students to audio tape lectures, on the that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructor, recordings of lectures and review sessions may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

The class plan and procedures are entirely subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Student Consent Form – Sharing Course Work

I will randomly select several students whose work will be copied and included in an archive of student work that I keep for this course. That archive is important to my continued reflection on how well students are learning in my courses. There are also two additional ways that I sometimes use a small portion of the archive of student work. First, I often use prior students' work as a point of comment for later students who are preparing for examinations. I post various questions and answers on a web site and invite students to comment on how well the answers address the questions. Second, I maintain a course portfolio in which I write about the quality of student performance that is generated in the course. These examples are a very important piece of my work that I show to other professors to indicate how much and how deeply students are learning. Once the course portfolio is completed, it will also be made available to a wider audience of professors on a public web site on teaching and learning in higher education (www.ku.edu/~cte/gallery).

This form requests your consent to have your work possibly included in discussions of understanding for future students and in any versions of my writing about teaching in a portfolio. There is only a small chance your work would be randomly included in my private archive for any assignment, but I ask all students for their permission should that be the case. Note that you have the choice to have your work be anonymous or have your name be part of the work.

Please check the following designated purposes (if any) to which you give your consent:

_____ I am willing to have copies of my coursework available so later students can use it for preparation.

_____ I am willing to have copies of my coursework included in my professor's course portfolio.

_____ I am willing to have copies of my coursework included in the public web site.

Please check one of the following:

_____ I wish to have my name remain on any work that is used.

_____ I wish to have my name removed on any work that is used.

Additional restrictions on the use of my texts (please specify):

Print Name _____

Date _____

Phone Number () _____

Email _____

Course Title _____
Professor _____

By signing below you give your permission that work you produce for this course may be used with the restrictions and for the purposes you indicated above. You understand that your grade is *NOT* connected in any way to your participation in this project, and I will not receive the list of students who have given permission to have their work shared until after I have turned in the grades for the course. Your anonymity will be maintained unless you designate otherwise. Finally, you understand that you are *free to withdraw consent at any time*, now or in the future, *without being penalized*.

Signature _____

Please address questions to: Name, Department, phone, email.