

This is a proposed syllabus which incorporates Japanese studies into the curriculum.

Physical Life for the Actor

Class purpose: To introduce student actors to methods of incorporating kinesthetic action and response as a means of developing their acting process.

Class goals: Physical life for the actor is designed to:

1. Help young actors discover varying methodologies of physical awareness
2. Develop an understanding of habitual use of self
3. Learn techniques to enhance physical choices in pursuit of acting a character
4. Add a deeper and more profound level of understanding to their acting process

Assignments are based on daily exercises and full participation in the exploration of those exercises.

They include:

1. Basic stretching
2. Basic yoga
3. Calisthenics
4. Basic Alexander relaxation and breathing techniques (habitual use of self)
5. Free form physical improvisation with sound
6. Rudolf Laban's (Efforts) direct, indirect, quick and slow movement; and glide, float, punch, press wring, flick, dab etc.
7. **The Suzuki Method (stamping, squatting, ten ways of walking) The Suzuki method will be preceded by an introduction to traditional Japanese Performing Arts, primarily Noh and Kabuki.**
8. Neutral Mask (explorations of gender; masculine, feminine, neutral and the four elements; fire water, earth and air)
9. Group contact improvisation
10. Unarmed stage violence; punches, slaps (karate chop), hair pulling, falls and kicks
11. Viewpoints; time, space, architecture, topography, shape and story

Grading: Your grade will be determined by the following criteria:

1. Attendance
2. Participation (a willingness to give 100% to the exercise being explored)
3. Your ability to respond to your own experience of the work, and the work of others

4. Your demonstration of an understanding of the concepts explored in the class
5. You show growth in various areas and aptitude for the exercises and the processes
6. Your performance in the final project.

The Final Project: Your final project will be a 5-7 minute group performance that incorporates aspects of all the different methodologies that we explore in the class.

Attendance: Because of the intensive nature of the work you are expected to attend and participate in every class. There are no excused absences. You will be allowed three absences to use at your discretion. There will be one letter grade deduction after four absences and a subsequent grade reduction for every two absences after that. Tardiness will not be tolerated. At the beginning of each class I will lock the door and you will not be allowed to enter, so don't knock!

2

Note about participation. We will work under the assumption that all students have no major physical limitations, if you do have a physical limitation, please advise me. We will focus your daily participation on a situational basis.

You should come dressed to move every class period. We will work in our bare feet (no shoes, no socks)

Every class will begin with fifteen minutes of basic stretching, yoga, and calisthenics.

Week 1. Introduction of basic stretching, yoga and calisthenics

Week 2. Introduction to Alexander relaxation and breathing techniques

Week 3. Free form improvisation games

Week 4. Introduction to Laban efforts

Week 5. Continuation of Laban efforts

Week 6. Introduction to Japanese traditional religion, philosophy and performing arts

Week 7. Introduction to Suzuki method; why Suzuki? Beginning of Suzuki method exercises

Week 8. Continued Suzuki exercises

Spring Break

Week 9. Introduction to neutral mask

Week 10 continued neutral mask

Week 11 Introduction to stage violence

Week 12 continued stage violence

Week 13 introduction to viewpoints

Week 14 continued viewpoints

Week 15 begin working on Final performance

Week 16 Final performances