



aces ECA

Educational Center for the Arts

THEATRE DEPARTMENT

Course Descriptions

Acting Techniques I

This course will focus on understanding and performing a variety of theatre exercises and techniques that are based on Constantine Stanislavsky's System of Acting. To demonstrate this learning the class will study and perform Uta Hagen's exercises. Each exercise will include a performance and written assignment. Students will be asked to reach deep inside themselves to explore what is perhaps the most difficult question an actor can ask himself on stage, "Who am I?" Students will learn how to make strong and believable choices, and to recognize the difference between when one indicates and when one is truly living on stage. Students will be guided to develop a safe learning environment to take risks and explore. Emphasis will be placed on moment-to-moment work, and the ability to concentrate on both their own work and the work of their peers. Five creativity exercises will be explored to increase students' focus, concentration and imagination. During the second quarter, students will learn to apply their newly acquired technique to scripted material.

Acting Techniques II

Acting Techniques II, also known as Contemporary Scene Study, is a course for beginning and intermediate acting students who are ready for rigorous, practical acting training. Through class exercises, discussions, and readings from texts by great modern acting masters, students develop a basic understanding of the Stanislavski system and its terminology, and become proficient in the techniques of other 20th century acting masters. By cultivating a trustworthy and supportive ensemble, students establish a safe place for artistic risk-taking so that each student is free to explore his/her own artistic impulses in the search for a distinctive artistic voice. The main focus of the course is study and experimentation with characterization in scenes from contemporary theatre. Scene work and performances focus on listening and reacting, timing, physicality, awareness of space, vocal expression, character building, and the importance of authentic emotional identification with characters and making 'in the moment' connections between scene partners.



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Acting Techniques III

Otherwise known as Modern Scene Study, this class builds on the lessons learned in Contemporary Scene Study. The focus is on various American playwrights and plays of the mid to late 20th century. Initially students will explore a variety of acting exercises to help them develop their range and acting technique. They will explore conflict-resolution improvisations, neutral monologues, and scenes. Each student will keep an acting journal. The class will read a classic play by a 20th century American playwright. In addition, each student will read a different play and present a written and oral report on the play, the playwright, and the time period it was written as well as the characters and the given circumstances of the play. The students will work on a variety of scenes throughout the semester and will present their final scenes as part of the Theatre Department Winterfest.

Acting Techniques IV

This course focuses on understanding how to break down a scene into specific beats with clear objectives, obstacles and actions, appreciating the importance of speaking, listening and connecting to a scene partner, and applying established acting techniques to performance (Stanislavski, Michael Chekhov, Uta Hagan, Sanford Meisner). Students will be challenged to make strong and active choices as they discover their character's objectives in the scene and super objective of the play. Scene study is like "exercise" for the actor, and prepares the actor for work in a larger production. This class will focus on exploring, interpreting and performing scenes from Classical or Experimental plays. Approaches to heightened or experimental text and vocal techniques will be explored through the exercises and principles of Kristen Linklater, Patsy Rodenburg, and Cicely Berry. Students will research and complete written assignments and oral presentations on the history and performance of the plays studied. Students will write a detailed character analysis once they are assigned scenes and characters. Students may be challenged to work on characters that may be against their type or types of roles they usually play, in order to expand their range while developing their technique.



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(Acting Techniques IV continued)

Students will be challenged to take risks and reach beyond their perceived limitations while spending concentrated time working on their assigned scenes, exploring the construction of classical language or experimental text, memorizing lines, and creating effective movement and blocking. Period music, movement and choreography will be included in the course. The course requires full physical, vocal, emotional and psychological commitment from its participants. The class will culminate in a public performance.

Audition Prep

The Audition Techniques Class is focused on helping each student develop and prepare a minimum of two speeches (one Shakespearean and one modern) that can be used for college and conservatory auditions. The class discusses the “dos” and “don’ts” of a successful audition and how to conduct oneself in the interview process. The students explore and ultimately decide on strong objectives, physical actions and a variety of tactics that will work for their character and the monologues they have chosen. They work with each other and the instructors in order to achieve the best possible results from their audition experience. The goal of the class is to prepare the student to succeed and hopefully be accepted to the college or conservatory of their choice.

Artists Collaborative

Artists Collaborative will guide 4th year students in creating a personal artist statement and in turn collaborate with their classmates to develop a group statement. Through exercises, discussions, experimentation, improvisation, writing prompts and creative processes, students will utilize their group artist statement to create in the last quarter of their final year at ECA, a brief, mini-project that will be shared with the Theatre department and potentially for the community at large.

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Autobiography/Devised Theatre

In Autobiography, students focus on using true stories from their own lives as dramatic material. Students acquire and apply a variety of playwriting, theatre making, and acting techniques as they dramatize their own stories. Once students have chosen the most effective theatrical forms and techniques to dramatically realize their stories, they stage and rehearse their stories in preparation for a public sharing at the end of the semester. Students continue a concentrated regimen of actor training throughout the semester. Techniques that are learned in class will be applied directly to the personal stories developed for performance. Some of the acting techniques studied throughout the semester include working with atmospheres, body centers, characterization, voice and speech for the stage, effective actor warm ups, character motivation, pursuing objectives, choosing and playing tactics, playing within a style, effective use of stage space, working effectively and generously in an acting ensemble, improvisation, theatre games, and taking artistic risks.

Chamber Theatre

Chamber Theatre is a technique for adapting and staging non-dramatic texts which may include short stories, novels, poems, and other types of literary and non literary texts. This course will examine the techniques of chamber theatre which strive to maintain and highlight as much of the structure, tone, and character of the original text as possible. In essence, chamber theatre is a way of turning a one-dimensional text which exists on the page, and in the mind of the reader into a “three dimensional text” which exists in time and space on the stage.



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Choreography for Production

In this course, students work with a movement specialist to implement any and all of the following interventions, as appropriate for the specific play or production being mounted: embody their characters more fully; create and execute inventive staging and blocking; incorporate movement and gestural sequences into the performance; and, learn and refine dance choreography. In the production of a Shakespeare play such as *As You Like It*, students study and physicalize the difference between carrying their bodies as a character from an aristocratic class as opposed to one from a peasant class. As well, they learn an English Country Dance, a period dance form that many Shakespearean characters would have performed in their daily activities. For a devised production, students invent gestures and movement material that can serve as an aesthetic, choral accompaniment to narrative action and support storytelling and meaning-making by appealing to the audience's kinesthetic and abstract sensibilities.

Directing

This beginning directing course will focus on the elements of directing including analysis, concept, imagery, blocking and the rehearsal process. Students will direct each other in both a short one act and in short scenes utilizing the skills they will learn in class. We will look at the role of Director as Detective, Visionary, Analyst, Dissector, Composer, Architect and Leader.

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Feminist Theatre

In Feminist Theatre students learn about leading figures in feminist movements from U.S. social and political history through the lens of theatre. They research the lives and contributions of feminist activists, leaders, teachers and artists who led on the national stage and in their (and our) own communities. In this study of feminism, we take an intersectional approach: we investigate the cultural stereotypes and systemic biases based on the performance of genders and sexualities in everyday life, as well as the way in which these intersect with constructs of race, class, nationality, religious and political identity. Students become familiar with foundational theories of the political, economic and social (in)equality of the sexes from second wave feminism, as well as more recent discourses about how intersectional identities compound each person's experience and impact collective movements towards greater equality and social justice. They read and/or view models of performance work that tell the stories of feminist figures throughout history, including: *Machinal* by Sophie Treadwell; *Ohio State Murders* by Adrienne Kennedy; *The Heidi Chronicles* by Wendy Wasserstein; *Stop Kiss* by Diana Son; *What the Constitution Means to Me* by Heidi Schrek; *45 Plays of American's First Ladies* by the Neo-Futurists; *for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf* by Ntozake Shange; and *Gloria-A Life* by Emily Mann. Through a series of creative writing exercises and embodied performance workshops, students are guided to devise their own work inspired by the styles and themes of the above plays as well as to examine their own ideas and feelings about their places in our world and what it means to be a feminist today.



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Forum Theatre

Forum Theatre is a process-centered theatre class that allows students/participants to “explore, show, analyze and transform the reality in which they are living.” Based on Augusto Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed it follows in the footsteps of the Living Newspaper, Bertolt Brecht’s Epic Theatre and Theatre for Social Change. This class will explore an issue that causes problems and a sense of oppression, and then they will develop scenes that approach the subject through various perspectives. It breaks down the wall between actors and audience by introducing a facilitator called “The Joker” who leads the post -performance discussion and helps to turn the audience into “spect-actors”. He invites the audience to come to the stage and to change a character’s choice and to act out the subsequent scene. Ultimately the goal of the performance is to create a dialogue between opposing sides of the issue and to help them to discover the areas of commonality.

This class will research, write, edit, improvise, rehearse, create, and eventually perform a theatrical performance based on a social issue that is relevant to their lives and to that of the greater community using the techniques of Theatre of the Oppressed.

Initially, the class will discuss various issues that caused them and their families and/or community in which they live to feel “oppressed.” They will decide on a topic and discuss how best to develop a series of scenes that shed some light on the problem from as many perspectives as possible. They will research the history and definition of the issue from both sides of the conversation and discussion. They will write, edit, improvise, and develop scenes and monologues that will present some of the issues and problems from various perspectives, raise questions and possible solutions, conduct interviews, stimulate conversations and dialogue between folks on both sides of the discussion, in order to discover commonality on the problem or issue.

The class will be divided into small groups to improvise, write, create, and develop effective monologues and scenes, and then work together as an ensemble to fine tune, edit, and rehearse the devised script, which will be a quilt of moments that focus on the issue. Ultimately the ensemble will create through spoken, movement, and gesture, a performance ready for sharing with the rest of the department.

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Improvisation I

This course focuses on introducing students to the successful principles of Improv (“Accept and Build” “Say yes and...”) and the importance of using CROW (Character, Relationship, Objective, Where) at the beginning of each Improv. By playing games and investigating Conflict/Resolution Scenarios each student will develop their improvisation skills - spontaneity, focus and concentration. Ultimately these explorations will help the student to develop confidence in their “moment to moment” work as they explore successful approaches to improvisation and working with their scene partner(s) to achieve the objective of the scenario or game.

Improvisation II

Improvisation II focuses on building upon the lessons learned in Improvisation I. The students will use the successful principles of Improv (“Accept and Build” “Say yes and...”) and the acronym CROW (Character, Relationship, Objective, Where). Each student will develop their improvisation skills - spontaneity, focus and concentration as well as confidence in their “moment to moment” work as they explore successful approaches to improvisation and working with their scene partner(s) to achieve the objective of the scenario or game. The class will culminate in a Night at the Improv performance.

Mask Improvisation

In Mask Improvisation, the actor learns to perform effectively with a mask and in turn learns to be a better performer without a mask. Through the exploration of exercises in both neutral and character masks, actors learn about themselves physically, emotionally and psychologically.



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In the Footsteps of the Elders

The students in this class will interview two senior citizens. They will transcribe a story from each of those interviews of that senior's life experience. Then they will rehearse, create, and eventually perform *In the Footsteps of the Elders*, a theatrical performance using the words of their elders and based on that person and their personality and physicality.

Initially, the class will discuss the work and approach to interviewing and recapturing the person as created in the work of Anna Deavere Smith. They will develop a questionnaire, conduct interviews, and research the history of the time period of their story.

The class will then work together as an ensemble to create, edit, fine tune, and rehearse the devised script, which will be a quilt of moments from their family stories. Ultimately the ensemble will create through spoken word, movement, and gesture, an oral history performance.

Movement for Actors I

The focus of *Movement I* is the body's potential as an instrument for experiencing and conveying meaning. Students investigate moving with more efficiency, more sensory awareness and more possibility. Every day they move as an ensemble, as individuals and in small cooperative groups to explore their personal body stories. Classwork progresses through three methods: structured exercises (warm-ups) that repeat and evolve over time; improvisations or explorations that investigate specific movement concepts; scenes that put the concepts into practice.

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Movement for Actors II

Movement II builds on the foundational work of Movement I and introduces students to more refined skills for understanding the body's potential for meaning making. Students connect their personal physicality to that of their characters and experiment with specific tools to develop more sophisticated and nuanced choices for embodying ideas. The classwork concentrates on four areas of expertise: 1) exercises that promote efficient and expressive body usage; 2) explorations that increase movement range and expressivity using space, shape, and dynamics; 3) compositions that apply movement principles to narrative and abstract scene development; and, 4) assignments that apply movement principles to character development. Curricular material draws on elements from Laban Movement Analysis (LMA), concepts from Contact Improvisation--a technique that explores weight sharing between two or more bodies--and improvisational explorations derived from Action Theater and Viewpoints.

Yoga

In Yoga, students explore the connections between movement and sound produced by the body in order to release their expressive impulses, encourage authenticity, and develop a flexible, integrated acting instrument. Attention is also given to promoting self-care, advancing empathy, and managing stress, all of which deeply influence the body and voice. Yoga brings together the body and mind, aligning breath with postures that open and strengthen the body. Through physical and breathing activities, students are guided to recognize, notice and identify what is happening in the moment and to appreciate and work from where/who they are now. As the course material progresses, tools and strategies are introduced so they can begin to make decisions about how to direct their inner resources towards specific objectives, whether personal or in service of a theatrical scene.



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Musical Theatre

In this course, students are cast in specific roles following formal acting, singing and dance auditions, and spend their class time rehearsing for a fully staged musical production or a collection of scenes from musical theatre. Class sessions give students the opportunity to master rehearsal practices and performance techniques such as blocking, singing in solo and ensemble rehearsals, exploring movement and learning choreography. Students collaborate with multiple directors and their peers to create stage business, form character relationships, and build solid characters through intense external and internal character work. Students participate in music rehearsals and acquire a working knowledge of musical terminology, technique and rehearsal etiquette. Students analyze and interpret both the thematic concepts and the practical elements of the script, articulating their thoughts in detailed written assignments. Students are chosen to serve as stage managers, who assist the directors and supervise actors, organize rehearsals, and create the production's promptbook. They also serve as communication liaisons for directors, actors and technical production staff.

Students participate in all aspects of mounting the production and have opportunities to help build sets, and learn about marketing through selling program ads. Students will incorporate costumes and makeup into their acting. Through technical rehearsals, students will make adjustments into a performance space, how to collaborate with live musicians or recorded tracks, how to work with set pieces, and how to integrate their acting with lighting and sound cues. Students also gain techniques in working with microphones. The course culminates in productions for the public. All actors participate in a strike following the final performance.

Origins of Western Theatre

Origins of Western Theatre explores the beginning of the history of Western theatre dating back to the ancient Greek playwrights Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes. Aristotle's definitions of theatre, tragedy and comedy are center pieces of the course. Origins of Theatre also analyzes ancient Greek myths, symbols and rituals in both a lecture and process-oriented, experiential course.

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Acting on Camera & Film Production

In this course, intermediate and advanced acting students are ready for rigorous, practical on-camera acting training, blended with learning the basic elements of film production. Through class exercises, discussions, and fully producing polished short films, students will develop a clear understanding of how to create and develop characters and character relationships on film, and how best to use production design techniques and editing techniques to most compellingly capture the story of those characters and character relationships.

Throughout the course, we will cultivate a trustworthy and supportive ensemble to establish a safe place for artistic risk-taking so that each student is free to explore their own artistic impulses in the search for a distinctive artistic voice in their film-making. Students will be guided by the teacher in class throughout their character and film preparation.

Technique work will focus on listening and reacting, timing, physicality for film, awareness of frame space, vocal expression, character building, and the importance of authentic emotional identification with characters and making 'in the moment' connections between scene partners. Production technique will focus on script analysis and adaptation to storytelling on film, camera shots, angles and movement, frame composition, lighting, creating mood and atmosphere, editing with specific software such as Final Cut Pro, and sound design and effects.

Playwriting

Playwriting is a dramatic writing course in which students learn to use the basic tools the playwright employs in order to bring stories to life on stage. Subjects include: dramatic and comic play and scene structure, finding the unique voices of characters, exploring social issues through character dialogue, situational comic and dramatic writing, believable monologue writing, storytelling through stage action, adapting literature for the stage. All subjects focus on both dramatic and comic writing.

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Oral Interpretation

Oral Interpretation is a performance class based on the idea that literature is an expression of profound human experience, and that the best way to share personally meaningful literature is to act or read it aloud to another person. The study of literature through oral performance includes the development of skills in the analysis and interpretation of prose, poetry and dramatic literature, with an emphasis on vocal and physical techniques. Students learn to "hear" the author speaking through the written word and apply skills which enable the student to read the material aloud to an audience, creating a shared experience among author, reader, and listeners. Thus the student learns to communicate thought orally with clarity and expressiveness. The teacher and student assess the individual student's acting skills at the outset of the course, and then set realistic goals for the quarter. The teacher and student review the student's progress following each assignment or exercise. Students receive feedback and evaluation in these areas: empathy, class collaboration and cooperation, storytelling, readings, performances and subsequent constructive criticism from his or her peers.

Quick Play Festival

The Staci Swedeen Quick 10 Minute Play Festival - in honor of our dear colleague Staci, a wonderful playwright and teacher who passed away in December 2019. Students write and perform 10 minute plays in a highly concentrated two-week conception to writing to rehearsal to performance process. Performances of each short play are either submitted in video form, performed live or recorded during online classes. Students collaborate with their peers in all facets of the production process.

Script Analysis for Actors

In Script Analysis for the Actor, students are introduced to concepts, techniques and skills used by professional actors to most effectively interpret dramatic texts written in a variety of styles. By working directly with the plays of the world's most influential playwrights, students come to see how to broaden their interpretive skills in order to allow them the freedom and confidence to take full ownership of the characters they create in any play.



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Physical Theatre

In Physical Theatre, students explore and experiment with the different ways that these two disciplines intersect, overlap and find expression on the stage. We look at the range from the minimalist physicality of Samuel Beckett's work to the highly risk-infused physicality of Britain's Frantic Assembly and DV8, from the deeply personal and vulnerable presence of German choreographer Pina Bausch's dance-theatre work to the outwardly entertaining appeal of musical theatre. The course is divided into roughly three areas of study: physical theatre, dance theatre (expressionist dance), and musical theatre. Physical theatre will address open-ended techniques for developing movement and story, from minimalist to maximalist. Using the techniques of Contact Improvisation, Frantic Assembly and American choreographers such as Liz Lerman and Bill T. Jones, students explore creating movement and blending words and movement. Dance theatre looks specifically at the work of German choreographer Pina Bausch and employs her methods towards exploring personal stories. And musical theatre looks briefly at creating dance with music. In each unit, poems, songs, and theatre scenes are used as the basis for creating text and movement studies. Students are encouraged to bring their passions and personal experience into shaping the progress of this class. We investigate the work of artists interweaving dance and theatre, employ their methods to tell our stories, and find humor, joy and fun in the process.

Rasa Boxes

Rasaboxes, devised by Richard Schechner, trains performers to physically express eight key emotions which were first identified in the Natayasastra, an ancient Indian Sanskrit text dealing with theatre, dance and music. Rasaboxes integrates this ancient theory with contemporary emotion research about "the brain in the belly", studies in facial expression of emotion, neuroscience, and performance theories-including Antonin Artaud's assertion that the actor is "an athlete of the emotions." Schechner developed Rasaboxes to offer performers a concrete physical tool to access, express and manage their feelings/emotions within the context of performance.

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Senior Seminar

Senior Seminar is a quarter-long course designed to support seniors as they prepare and complete the processes of college applications and audition prep. A timeline of due dates and assignments designed to support the students meeting their deadlines will be adhered to. A fostering of a strong personal essay will be a major point of focus for all students. Additionally, students will select, memorize and work on a contemporary monologue. Students who are looking to audition for musical theatre programs will additionally do the same with a song. A special focus during this course will be on students learning how to create an effective and professional looking self-tape, as many college entrance auditions are done by video submission. Additionally, students will learn about the audition process and be taken through various experiential simulations to experience what a college conservatory or professional audition may look like. Students will also develop their artist's resume and will work on cold reading techniques, presentations, and feedback.

Singing for Actors

Singing for Actors will introduce students to healthy vocal technique (breath, articulation, resonance, projection) in voice and speech, and further into singing technique with a focus on contemporary placements in the voice, the Joan Lader technique (endurance training for singers), the speech level, head and mix registers and vocal colors.

Stage Combat

Stage Combat is a special topics theatre course in which students learn the basics of stage combat hand-to-hand techniques and swordplay as they are safely used in the professional entertainment world to create the illusion of violence. Students are responsible for learning, practicing and demonstrating the new techniques taught in each class by incorporating them into originally choreographed stage combat routines. In the first quarter, students focus primarily on hand-to-hand techniques. In the second quarter, students focus on broadsword and rapier technique. Midterm and final projects include choreographing creative routines that utilize all learned techniques. All combat routines are choreographed collaboratively by students in class.

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Technical Theatre

Technical Theatre provides students with an introduction to major elements of technical theatre by immersing them in authentic applications of technical theatre techniques and skills. Emphasis is placed on students learning to use professional carpentry tools and skills, scenic design elements, and lighting and sound technology safely and appropriately. Students utilize learned skills by practically applying them to support ECA's departmental spring productions and performances. New skills are taught and practically applied in every class. Assessments include regular safety and skills examinations that are authentic to the elements and tools of technical theatre with which the students work. Students have the opportunity to support the technical needs of performances and sharings in all ECA's departments as well as events and performance booked into ECA spaces by outside professional companies.

Viewpoints

Viewpoints is a systematized technique for movement improvisation and in-the-moment composition. It was first created by dancer and choreographer Mary Overlie and further delineated and adapted for the theatre creative and production processes by Ann Bogart and Tina Landau. This course introduces students to the Viewpoints technique and training practice. The curriculum goes through the nine Viewpoints, breaking down each one so the student understands the extensive possibilities within one Viewpoint. As they accumulate understanding of each individual Viewpoint, they open their explorations and work with interrelating Viewpoints. As the coursework develops, specific themes are introduced and students experiment with the Viewpoints as they apply to theatrical content (narrative, given circumstances, and site specific).



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Theatre for Social Justice

The Theatre for Social Change class focuses on developing an original performance piece that explores a particular social issue. “The Living Newspaper,” developed by the Federal Theatre Project in the 1930’s, serves as a model. Students have input into the issues explored, conduct research – both through existing written material and interviews, investigate artistic expression, and develop and write a script. In the past students have collaborated with members of the community such as Yale School of Drama directors and playwrights, Yale-New Haven Hospital personnel and patients, social workers, therapists, filmmakers, 12-step program members, and social activists. Students study the basics of dramatic structure and theatrical writing, while investigating, defining, and celebrating the individual student voice. Students are encouraged to practice many forms of writing including poetry, monologue, dialogue, prose, stage scenes and musical compositions, all the while being challenged to avoid negative societal stereotyping. Students keep journals and engage in a variety of writing and acting exercises on the given topic. After the script is in place, students begin the process of rehearsing and developing a performance piece, which is shared for the public. As they rehearse, students are challenged to find acting, physical, and vocal techniques that most successfully convey their message, furthering a practical understanding of student actors’ bodies, voices, and imaginations. On occasion, existing text or scripts which explore a social issue are used in place of developing an original script.

Past titles and topics of Theatre for Social Change have included, As I Sat on the Green - (Homelessness in New Haven); Bang, Bang Your Dead – (Violence in Schools); The Bullying Project - Hear Your Laughter, Hear Me Cry; The Federal Theatre Project- (political, social and cultural problems of the Great Depression); Feminist Theatre; The Hospital Project- (people living with terminal and chronic diseases); I’ve Got You Under My Skin – (the HIV/AIDS epidemic); The Laramie Project – (Violence against Homosexuals); Solo Text – (personal narratives, emerging from oral cultural stories and traditions); Voices from the Street: In Search of the American Dream (Homelessness in America); That Time of Year Thou May’st in Me Behold - (Aging and the Elderly); The Visitor’s Guide to America - The Immigration Project; Political Theatre; The Weird Sisters – (based on the true life stories of three young women in New Haven, who struggled with, and triumphed over abandonment, abuse, and addiction).

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Theatrical Production

Students in this course begin by choosing, memorizing, and auditioning with specific monologues from the play. They are then cast in specific roles, and spend their class time rehearsing for a staged production. Students begin the rehearsal process with a thorough reading of the play, and analysis of the units of action (beats) within the play, with a focus on understanding how events and characters move the play forward. Students use the script to build characters, develop character relationships, study, memorize and perform the play. Students are encouraged to make strong choices in acting, voice and movement, and to stay open to directorial concepts in blocking. It is not uncommon for music to be included in a production, which gives students the opportunity to dance, sing or play instruments. As students explore the world of the play and their characters, they organize their thoughts and ideas in multiple written assignments, including detailed character analysis and script analysis assignments. Students may also do in-depth research on the themes and time period of the play; the life, work and dramatic theories of the playwright; and the play's production history. In addition to concentrating on the needs of telling the story of a particular play, students gain an understanding of the demands involved in the rehearsal process of any play and in working as a member of an ensemble.

During the rehearsal process, students work with a director, a movement coach, and a voice coach. Student actors may also contribute to the production's technical needs through building and painting the set, running an ad campaign for the program, building and collecting stage props and costumes, and designing a poster and program. One or two students are chosen to perform the role of Stage Manager for rehearsals and the running of performances. The Stage Manager assists the directors and supervises actors, organizes rehearsals, and creates the production's promptbook. They also serve as communication liaisons for directors, actors and technical production staff. Students integrate all skills and research into final performances for the public.

The logo for the Educational Center for the Arts Theatre Department. It features the text 'aces ECA' in a large, white, sans-serif font at the top. Below it, 'Educational Center for the Arts' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom, 'THEATRE DEPARTMENT' is written in a large, white, sans-serif font. The background is a dark teal color with a faint, repeating pattern of a group of people, possibly a theatre cast, in a lighter teal color.

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Voice and Speech I

Voice and Speech I is a process centered course that meets once weekly for 1 Quarter. Students are introduced to the basic concepts and skills necessary for effective voice and speech for the stage. Students will consider how their physical bodies make sound and speech, how physical grounding and alignment can affect the voice, and the importance of proper breath support, projection, and diction. Through a series of activities and exercises, students are encouraged to expand their range, explore unknown territories of their voices, and consider how sounds within words can convey aesthetic qualities. In sum, students will learn how to prepare their bodies and voices to perform optimally and artistically.

Voice and Speech II

Voice and Speech II is a review of the foundational skills explored in Voice and Speech I with further emphasis placed on the rhythm, sounds, and qualities of speech. Students explore voice and speech through a focus on Anne Bogart's Vocal Viewpoints and Arthur Lessac's Body Energies and Consonant Orchestra, and begin to mine the expressive possibilities of speech sounds and their application within text. Students also begin to focus on the architecture of text and how it may be conveyed in performance.

Voice and Speech III

Voice and Speech is a process centered course in which students explore the capacity and functionality of their unique vocal instruments and apply various techniques to the performance of text. The goal of the course is for students to become acutely aware of the abundance of choices they have for speech on the stage. Students are introduced to the symbols and sounds of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), specifically the sounds used in producing Standard American English. Using various methods, students learn the placement of all vowels and consonants and focus on speaking the phonemes of the American English fully and clearly. After gaining a working knowledge of the IPA, students will apply their knowledge to transcription of speech into IPA and reading IPA. A point of focus is to distinguish between how language is heard as opposed to how language is written and the implications for the actor on the stage.



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Voice and Speech IV

Students in this process-centered course will focus on the skills needed to choose and effectively perform a Shakespearean monologue and contrasting sonnet that will be appropriate for audition or competition use. After choosing appropriate monologues and sonnets, students will break down each text with a focus on 1) images 2) unfamiliar words, 3) landscape of the text 4) relationships between ideas, and 4) character or speaker objectives. Following the focus on understanding and mining the text for meaning, students will work to find effective vocal and physical choices that most clearly convey meaning in performance. As a part of the work, students will fully score their monologues and sonnets, analyzing objectives, obstacles and actions. Students will perform for each other and provide feedback. All students will leave the class with at least one monologue and sonnet that is memorized and performance ready. If time allows, students may work on more than one sonnet or monologue.