

SYLLABUS EXTRACT

Theatre 150 – *Development and Control of the Actor's Voice*

Spring 2012

Tue/Thur, 10-11:55 am, Dance Studio

Instructor: George Kendall

Office: 7-108

Office Hours: Tue/Thur 8:30-9:50 am, Fri 2-3:30 pm, and by appointment

Course Description

The voice is the actor's primary tool. The intent of this course is to increase your physical awareness of the voice and the ability to vary vocal output with more control. The methodology used is a mix of Berry, Rodenburg, and Linklater vocal theory, techniques, and exercises. We will discuss and learn how these factors affect your voice through: 1) external, environmental influences; 2) how you hear and perceive sound, 3) emotional influences of your personality; 4) physical control and agility of your sound creation system from breathing through diction. Just as an athlete or musician trains their muscles to be more efficient and agile, so can the actor train the muscles involved in voice creation to develop and increase the effectiveness of their breath, resonators, range, articulation, and overall vocal power.

Voice is not separate from the context of living.

Vocal technique is a myth, for there is no such thing as a correct voice. There is no right way – there are only a million wrong ways. Vocal work is not how to do, but how to permit and set the voice free.

Cicely Berry, *Voice and the Actor*

Student Learning Outcomes

- Understand the basics of voice/breath, speech/diction, and language/text.
- Develop a greater awareness of how control of the physical aspects of speaking is fundamental for convincing stage acting.
- Understand how the body's anatomy, postural coordination, physical conditioning, breathing, and emotional state influence the voice.
- Realize how thought and emotion affects the way in which words are spoken.
- Freeing the potential of your vocal output by reducing physical limitations.
- Ability to collaboratively work with others via a disciplined, professional, and respectful manner throughout the training, rehearsal, and performance processes.
- Creation of a personal vocal aesthetic and physical warm-up plan, reflecting on it both in oral and written form.

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Required Course Materials

Readings posted to BLACKBOARD and the following required texts:

- *Voice and the Actor*, by Cicely Berry, Wiley, 1991, ISBN: 978-0020415558
- *The Right to Speak: Working with the Voice*, by Patsy Rodenburg, Methuen, 1993, ISBN: 978-0878300556

The following texts will be referenced, are not required, but are recommended for further study:

- *The Actor Speaks*, by Patsy Rodenburg, St. Martin's Griffin, 2002, ISBN: 978-0312295141
- *Freeing the Natural Voice*, By Kristin Linklater, Drama Publishers, 2006, ISBN: 978-0896762503

You are also required to purchase one ticket to a live stage production for critique – student discounts are available.

Major Assignments

HOMEWORK – Homework after each class is to practice the techniques learned that day for at least **30 to 60** minutes daily until the next class and to journal at least two (2) of these vocal practices and detail how they affect your acting.

JOURNAL BOOK – This is a handwritten notebook of at least three (3) weekly entries of reflections on your vocal work and how it affects your acting. The journal will be collected occasionally and lastly on the day of your final performance. NO late books will be accepted.

MONLOGUES – You will perform multiple monologues throughout the course. All monologue work must be memorized, no exceptions! You will also provide the instructor with a paper copy of the monologue prior to any reading.

PERFORMANCE VOCAL CRITIQUE – This will be a 4-6 page, typed, double-spaced, MLA formatted analysis of a local performance this semester. A play not performed on campus will take prior approval from the instructor. Using concepts learned in class, evaluate their acting from a vocal perspective. How does the actor use their voice in performance? How did the actor alter their vocal choice(s) to alter their character throughout the play? A good grade on this essay will take time for thoughtful research and analysis. Please, no filling of space in the essay rehashing the play's plot!

GRADE CRITERIA

Classroom attendance/work ethic	20%
Preparation and in-class text work	25%
Performance presentations	20%
Journal book and homework	20%
Performance Critique Essay	15%

EXTRA CREDIT – Is not available for this course.

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CLASS SCHEDULE

Due to the nature teaching performance and the dynamics of individual personalities, the following rough schedule is subject to change. Changes will be announced in class and on Blackboard.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Lecture Content</u>	<u>Reading for NEXT Class</u>
Week 1	Course introduction and vocal basics	Chapter 1, Berry Chapters 1-2, Rodenburg
Week 2	Physical components of voice, part 1 Self-analysis and observation	Chapter 3, Berry Chapters 3-5, Rodenburg
Week 3	Physical components of voice, part 2 Body work and habits First monologue (15-30 seconds)	Chapter 2, Berry Chapter 6, Rodenburg
Week 4	Physical components of voice, part 3 Breath work and habits Second monologue (30-45 seconds)	Chapter 4, Berry Chapter 7, Rodenburg
Week 5	Physical components of voice, part 4 Volume work and habits Third monologue (45-60 seconds)	Blackboard Collection #1 Chapter 6, Barry
Week 6	Breath capacity, control, and listening Vocal range and articulation	Blackboard Collection #2 Chapter 9, Rodenburg
Week 7	Speech and Diction; Phonetics part 1 Mouth (teeth, tongue, and soft palate)	Blackboard Collection #3
Week 8	Speech and Diction; Phonetics part 2 Head (nasal and skull resonators)	Blackboard Collection #4
Week 9	Speech and Diction; Phonetics part 3 Chest resonation	Blackboard Collection #5
Week 10	Fourth monologue (1-2 minutes)	Chapter 7, Berry Chapter 10, Rodenburg
Week 11	Language and Text, part 1 Fifth monologue (2-3 minutes)	Blackboard Collection #6
Week 12	Language and Text, part 2 Analysis and scoring text	Blackboard Collection #7 Chapter 5, Berry
Week 13	Language and Text, part 3 Complex text work	
Week 14	Your Personal Vocal Presentations	
Weeks 15-16	Final Performances and Course Wrap-Up	