

**ADVANCED MOVEMENT**  
***MASK & CHARACTER***

**#515C**  
**Section 63177**  
**Fall 2014**

**DAVID BRIDEL**

2nd Floor DRC

323.791.6495

[bridel@usc.edu](mailto:bridel@usc.edu)

**Office Hours**

Available by appointment. Call or email as above. Mentorship is an essential element of the instructional technique in the MFA program; make it a point to make an appointment.

**Course Goals**

"Transformation is what every actor consciously or unconsciously longs for."

*Michael Chekhov*

The goal of the course is to give the actor the tools - practical, emotional, psychological, physical, and imaginative - to create characters that are distinct, dynamic, and detailed.

**Course Overview**

An initial 6-week "intensive" introduces the actor to *Mask* work, breaking down barriers and beginning to establish both the spontaneous and the technical ingredients of building character through transformation. Various exercises, most of them improvisatory in nature, establish the "territories" of character work in broad brush strokes. In addition, character studies build upon the grammar of movement and animal study established in the 1st year of the class, and begin the process of building a "library" of characters for each individual actor.

A central portion of the class, also grounded in improvisation, develops the actor's abilities to embody character through an exploration of half-mask - i.e. mask work with text - and the masked comedy of the commedia dell'arte. Here, the demands of the mask provide necessary parameters within which the actor must learn to create freely while serving story and genre.

In the final weeks of the class, the students are tested in their ability to create multiple

characterizations through a series of exercises that demand authentic and specific character creation at a rapid speed.

### **Supporting Materials**

A booklet detailing the source of the various techniques explored (including both historical and contemporary precedent), the structure of the course, and a number of references, literary and visual, is available on Blackboard. This booklet has been created to assist you in your pursuit of this area of your study.

### **Class Meetings**

MW 10 – 11.50AM

Location MCC 112

### **Final Exam**

TBD

### **Grading Policy**

- A work of excellent quality
- B work of fair quality
- C work of substandard quality
- D work of dire quality

### **Your grade is assessed according to**

Class Work – 50%

Midterm – 25%

Final – 25%

### **Attendance, Tardiness, Absences**

No unexcused absences are permitted

No lateness

### **Course Assignments & Class Schedule**

- Text in **bold** indicates **assignment requiring preparation**.
- “Open class” means session set aside for catch-up, discussion, and other explorations

**WEEK**

**FIRST CLASS**

**SECOND CLASS**

1	Mask - The Plunge	Mime primer
2	Labor Day	Mask - w/Costume
3	<b>Imitation Project</b>	Mask - Two Masks
4	Mask - Inner Monologue	Mask - Countermask
5	<b>Unrecognizable</b>	Mask - the Reveal
6	Mask - Analysis	Six territories of character
7	<b>Good Future Me</b>	<b>Bad Future Me</b>
8	Half-mask: improv	<b>Historical Character</b>
9	Half-mask: improv	<b>Social Character</b>
10	Half-mask: improv	<b>Genre Character</b>
11	Commedia dell'arte	Commedia dell'arte
12	Commedia dell'arte	Commedia dell'arte
13	Multiple characters: improv	Multiple characters: improv
14	Multiple characters: study	Thanksgiving
15	<b>Multiple chs (half class)</b>	<b>Multiple chs (half class)</b>

#### Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP: [http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html), (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) [ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu).

#### Statement on Academic Integrity

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from

misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, ([www.usc.edu/scampus](http://www.usc.edu/scampus) or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

**Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis**

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.