

**MFA 2 ADVANCED MOVEMENT/MASK**  
***MASK /CHARACTER TRANSFORAMTION***

**#515c**

**Spring 2020**

*"Every true artist has deep within them the desire for Transformation"*

~Michael Chekhov

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**Office Hours**

Available by appointment. Call, text or email as listed above.

**Course Goals/Learning Objectives**

The work will engage the actors in Mask work that has its origins in the pedagogy of Jacques Copeau, Jacques LeCoq, and Libby Appel and also incorporate components of Michael Chekov technique.

- Introduce and actively work with the fundamental principles of various forms and styles of Mask and experience their effect and value on the imagination and physical expression in developing the "poetic body" of the actor.
- Train through a series of exercises to strengthen spontaneity and imagination.
- Exploration of energy, connectivity and communion between the actors in relation to each other.
- Discover the unity of the actor's instrument: body, mind, psyche – thus, exploring and developing its optimal potential.
- Explore the potential for character transformation through mask work, and the various external and internal degrees of that work.
- Cultivate an awareness and control of the actor's vocal and physical apparatus.
- Apply the work to scenes both masked and unmasked, exploring different levels of theatricality.

**Course Overview**

Working in stages with Metaphysical Mask, Neutral Mask, Larval Mask, Human Comedy, Libby Appel "Primal Masks" and Character Mask, the actors will explore how the Mask, body and imagination speak to the primal, organic and poetic forms of physical expression as actor. How the "story" lives in the body, and the methods by which one can explore character transformation from an initial base of neutrality.

Mask work offers the opportunity to engage the actor into an examination and awareness of both the subtle and bold forms of expression in the body. Mask work offers the opportunity to discover an awareness of habitual patterns in body expression and energy particular to each actor, arriving at a blank canvas on which to then build specific choices of body shape, body center, and specific emotional and psychological point of view to then artfully transform body, breath, voice and energy into a fully developed character that is specific , dynamic and a leap beyond the actors “everyday self” and comfort zones.

A rigorous commitment is expected and required towards the goal of shedding habitual form and developing the tools and ability to shift these elements of being with specificity and imagination, leading to transformation of self

### **Final Exam**

TBD

### **Class Meetings**

T/Th – 10:00-11:50  
PED 206

### **Grading Policy**

- A work of excellent quality
- B work of good quality
- C work of average quality
- D work of below average quality

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

Class Work – 50%  
Midterm – 25%  
Final – 25%

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

<b>WEEK</b>	<b>FIRST CLASS</b>	<b>SECOND CLASS</b>
1	<b>Physical Warm Up</b>	<b>Metaphysical Mask</b>
2	<b>Metaphysical Mask</b>	<b>Neutral Mask</b>
3	<b>Neutral Mask</b>	<b>Neutral Mask</b>

4	<b>Neutral mask</b>	<b>Neutral mask</b>
5	<b>Neutral mask</b>	<b>Exercises as bridge to:</b>
6	<b>Larval Mask</b>	<b>Larval Mask</b>
7	<b>Larval Mask</b>	<b>Larval Mask</b>
8	<b>Exercises as bridge to:</b>	<b>Expressive Half Mask</b>
9	<b>Expressive Half Mask</b>	<b>Expressive Half Mask</b>
10	<b>Expressive Half Mask</b>	<b>Expressive Half Mask</b>
11	<b>Expressive Half Mask</b>	<b>Expressive Half Mask</b>
12	<b>Appel Full Primal Mask</b>	<b>Appel Full Primal Mask</b>
13	<b>Appel Full Primal Mask</b>	<b>Appel Full Primal Mask</b>
14	<b>Appel Full Primal Mask</b>	<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>
15	<b>Appel Full Primal Mask</b>	<b>Appel Full Primal Mask</b>

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

We expect the highest level of commitment from MFA actors. Lateness is not tolerated without prior notice. Unexcused absences are not permitted. Communication with the instructor is essential in case of emergency or illness. Violation of these requirements will result in disciplinary measures.

### **School of Dramatic Arts Private Teaching Policy**

A faculty member holding a full-time appointment may not accept for private instruction where a fee is charged any student who is currently enrolled in any USC School of Theatre course. This policy is established for your own protection as well as for that of the student, since the appearance of a conflict of interest is immediately established if the student studies privately with you for a fee at the same time that you will be called upon to give that student a grade in a course taught within the School or cast that student in a School production. It is in the best interests of all concerned to not even suggest the possibility of a conflict of interest. This policy is in keeping with the University's Code of Ethics, established March 2004, which states that we "recognize that the fundamental relationships upon which our university is based are those between individual students and individual, professors; thus, such relationships are especially

sacred and deserve special care that they not be... exploited for... personal gain.”

### **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.

### **Statements on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

#### **Academic Conduct**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>. Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage [sarc@usc.edu](mailto:sarc@usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

#### **Support Systems**

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* [http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

#### **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.

