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Long Form Improvisation will broaden our approach to improvisation by exploring character and relationship, giving us the tools to tell an expanded narrative. Applying rules and concepts learned in previous improv classes, we will learn to tell completely improvised plays in various styles and genres. We will deepen our improvised stories with characters and objectives (or wants) and discover character's through dialogue. This work allows us to engage in the moment with awareness to *focus*, *tone*, *beats*, *theme*, *character arc* and *re-incorporation*. We will explore the difference between plot and story (Defining plot as the events that happen in the narrative; while story is the emotional journey of the characters.) We will explore narrative improvisation by organically discovering what is happening and then deep diving into those character wants. We will de-emphasize plot, allowing our scenes to simply happen as a by-product of good storytelling.

All of this will start with the journey of ensemble. Ensemble is the foundation to group minds and build off one idea. We will explore narrative through plays, TV and film.

Our goal for this class will be to change and be changed. Can we allow our story telling to be cared for moment to moment, be a dramaturg to ourselves and the story all while allowing ourselves to be AFFECTED by what the other person is saying or doing. In other words 'to be changed' Change is so scary for most people let alone those choosing to explore this art form. So, we will be driven by the caretaking of the story, of the characters wants and if they know all that and still be changed by what they hear, see and feel in front of them.

In a story more often our characters meet up with others who have a want that opposes their want. How do our actors know when to lose? Can our characters be changed or let go or lose when they have a goal.

Serve the story, the objective or the want that is present. We will all be online experiencing that story at the same time allowing us all to have input on the experience. That will be the biggest outcome, to see the matrix of the story and serve it over our fear.

GRADING

Grades are based on the quality of **participation** (i.e. frequency of attendance (5%), supportiveness of fellow students (20%), commitment to the exercises (50%), enthusiasm for learning and improvement (25%), at each student's own capability.) Students are NOT judged on their mastery of each exercise, but on their willingness to **COMMIT ENTHUSIASTICALLY** to

each exercise or scene. I strongly encourage you to use this class as an opportunity to trust yourselves, have fun, go for it and take risks!

ONE as in 1, absence is permitted per semester, excused or unexcused, other than documented medical explanations. Each absence after the first will result in a 1/2 point grade drop (e.g. from an A to an A-). Lateness is not allowed and *two lates are recorded as an absence.*

CLASS RULES:

Be fiercely supportive and respectful of each other. During other students' scenes, please **_DO NOT TALK. DO NOT TEXT. DO NOT CHECK CELL PHONES._** There will be a brief break at the halfway mark, so you will have an opportunity then to take personal time. **DO NOT DO OTHER CLASS HOMEWORK.** These actions will cause your grades to drop immediately. Pay attention to your classmates' work onstage. You will learn as much from their participation as your own.

Show up every week. Come to play. Commit to the warm up. *Muster your energy and play hard.* Be supportive and respectful of each other. Be vulnerable! Be prepared to be on your feet for the entire class. Exhibit a concrete desire to improve your skills. Do all this: You get an A.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an in-depth study of improvised ensemble storytelling through scene work. We will also explore different forms, like Lotus, Montage and Long Form. (Please note we will NOT be learning "The Harold." If your goal is to learn "The Harold" this class will not spend much if any time on it.)

We will explore the primary tools for creating a completely improvised story and by developing full characters. You will need to make strong emotional choices. This course emphasizes character development through scene work, while introducing advanced improvised narrative with theory and technique. We will discover our ensemble mind, work in a calm relaxed state, learn to let go of ideas and accept what is happening on stage. We will let go of control and be in the moment and allow ourselves to be taken in by flow with the rest of the cast.

EMPHASIS ON STORY THROUGH CHARACTER

A character is a person you create who is, in at least one very specific way, unlike yourself. This can be a behavioral aspect, a different value system, point of view, demeanor, IQ, cultural context, etc. How does your character view the world and the people around you? This course gives you a great opportunity to use your imagination and try out behaviors and attitudes that might be very different from your own.

A character is not merely an accent, a posture, a repeated catch phrase or an overly broad stereotype void of original features. For the character to be effective it must be grounded in

reality. I encourage you to observe people around you and keep a notebook of your observations. What character traits make you laugh? Make you crazy? Pay attention to specifics/details. You will be asked to create at least 2 original fully-formed characters in this course.

FOCUS ON CHANGE TO DISCOVER STORY

A story has a beginning, middle and end. However, it's what happens to our characters during those events that causes them to change. That change is what makes a story so satisfying. Who is our character and how do they handle the situation in front of them? Do they evolve emotionally based on what has happened to them? Character is a story, and if story means change than characters changing is what makes a great story.

OBJECTIVE

To understand and learn the basic tenets of improvisation and how it can be applied to storytelling, the workplace, acting and being human.

Statement 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://adminopsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety. This is important for the safety of the 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 http://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 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.

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat." - Theodore Roosevelt