

Course Description

We will be investigating the basic progression of exercises defined as Linklater Voice work, freeing the natural voice. This is a practical approach to dealing with the actor's instrument. Through a series of classical voice exercises we will be exploring the dimension of the actor that is the voice. This work also involves personal exploration, physical exercises, and imaginative work through assigned texts as well as text chosen by the student. Natsuko Ohama will be working with all students. This is the first year of MFA ACTING training and it is an imperative that the groundwork is laid for the use of the voice to come: connection, flexibility, and strength. Voice work is going to be the one of the bedrock experiences of the training year.

The class will learn the basic vocal progression of exercises, which lead to a warm-up. By the end of the term we will know the principles of warming up. In this semester a great deal of focus will be on the breath freedom, flexibility and strength of the vocal instrument. Our goal is to release and connect the elements of the voice, body, emotions and clarity of thought. This work forms the building blocks that allow your voice to be heard, understood, and felt in a personal, powerful, sensitive way. This work will be applied to the acting texts, scenes and monologues and shared with the MFA cohort in culmination performance.

This work is derived from the work of Iris Warren who taught at the London Academy of Arts in the 1940's. It has been refined and expanded upon by Kristin Linklater in the last half century. We will be covering all the elements involved with the basic speaking voice, this is not a singing class. Freeing the Natural Voice is about hearing the person, not the voice.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the class students will be able to:

1. Conduct a vocal warm-up through the basic Linklater Voice progression of exercises
2. Identify personal habits that reveal vs. conceal the voice
3. Locate physical sensations of vibration and resonance
4. Embody imagery in language
5. Apply a personal process to learning text in the body
6. Perform a poem and a monologue applying principles of voice work

Grading Breakdown

Class work- 60%

Midterm-15%
Final exam- 25%

Grading Scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

A-excellent quality
B-good quality
C-fair quality
D-poor quality
F-fail

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 instructors is essential in case of emergency or illness. Violation of these requirements will result in disciplinary measures. The expectations are that you will be one line ready to work on time, you will be able to be admitted five minutes before class time. Please dress appropriately in clothes you can do physical work in, tights, sweat pants, we will be stretching and moving around.

Required Materials

Masks. A hand mirror, tissue, hand sanitizer, massage oil, hand towel, note book, pen, hair ties, or hair bands if hair is very long, not hats.

Optional Materials

Yoga block, mat, bottled water.

Class Meetings

Tuesday and Thursday 3:00-5:50

Location: PED 202 /Zoom Platform

Final Exam

As scheduled by MFA cohort- TBA

EDI @SDA: Professional Development/Mandatory EDI Training Wednesday, September 15, 2021

As part of our EDI initiatives and call to action, some workshops will be offered to faculty and staff and to students. Competencies that will be included: Anti-Racism (Faculty/Staff) and Equity Mindedness (Faculty/Staff), and then Theater Intimacy & Building Cultures of Consent (Students, Faculty/Staff). More details will follow. NOTE: All SDA classes will be cancelled to support involvement in this effort.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Week 1: Introduction to each other and discussion of individual voice issues. Practical self-observations, and exploration of the group experience are what we will do in the early stages. We will be looking at breath freedom and vibration in particular. Physical Awareness work. Initial sound vibration, and breath. (Please have a piece of text memorized to be able to use in class work, your choice) If you can bring an object and a hand written letter addressing yourself, and your hopes for the semester.

Week 2: Personalization work begins. Monologues of your choice. Breath connection is one of the more difficult practices and this will continue on through the semester as we gain more knowledge. It is an individual experience and therefore students should not feel they are behind, or at a disadvantage if they do not conquer breath freedom in the first weeks. This is an ongoing process. Humming introduced.

Week 3: Andy Robinson will be coming in to take the class with you on Tuesday, the seventh. This will be an opportunity to work with the founder of the program, and he will be charting his own exploration in this class. The Thursday class that week, Natsuko will continue, sensitivity to sound awareness. Dropping down the spine and coming up. Physical work spine exploration, pelvis work, arm swings, working on the floor, on all fours, squatting. Incorporating sound of humming, blowing through the lips. Continued work on monologues.

Week 4: Clarification of the vocal progression as it applies to individuals. We will be looking to build consistency of connection and freeing vibration of the voice. Personalization work continues. Sound in the body, head rolls. Freeing Sound. Swings. Facial Isolations Mirror required. Monologues.

Week 5: Exploration of jaw work, tongue stretches and relaxation. As stated before there will be a continuation of the breath exploration, as issues related to breath freedom will become clearer. Text work and personalization will continue as we incorporate who we are and how this affects the voice. Bring in a poem of your own choosing, a new one, and have it learned by heart.

Week 6: Individual check-in working one on one with me. soft palate, and the channel will be introduced First three resonators, Chest, mouth and teeth. Refining and practicing these particular areas of the voice. Isolating them and combining into larger sounds HAYS.

Week 7: Individual check-in working one on one with me continues. Of course there is a fluidity of time line here, as students will be in different stages of connection, understanding and experiences. However there will be a connection and ensemble building aspect that is helpful at this point. Larger sounds and review of the parts of the voice work leading up to this point. Scenes will be assigned by me.

Week 8: Power breathing, ribs, vacuuming lunges, anticipatory breath and large sighs. At this point we start to deal with the power, strength elements of speaking and deepening it in the body. There will be continuing individual check-in as well as supporting the individual to be present in themselves. Work on scenes.

Week 9: Sinus resonators and nasal resonators, front of the face and middle of the voice. Review all the elements leading up to this point. Practice, drilling and review.

Week 10: Range and Articulation and begin to enter the picture. More skills added and energy as well will be required which will be incorporated into text work.

Week 11: Writing out the exercises and clarifying knowledge of the progression. Refining details. This is your direct chance to become specific with questions and practice. Note book is required. Students will share and exchange the notes together. They will be illustrated.

Week 12: Group exploration as it applies to a vocal warm-up. Looking at text projects, review the voice work up to this point. Individually lead warmups will be assigned. We will be putting the final touches on our exploration as we move into the more specialized work of sound and movement and text in the next semester.

Week 13: Warm-up lead by students. Commentary on Warmup and notes from me. Text work explorations and work for culmination.

Week 14: Warm-up lead by students. Commentary on warmup and notes from me. Text work explorations and group work, rehearsal for culmination.

Week 15: Warm-up lead by students. Commentary on warmup and notes from me. Text work explorations and group work, rehearsal for culminations.

SDA PRODUCTIONS, ISPS, AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

SDA productions, ISPs and Extracurricular Activities* will not excuse you from any class work. There will be no exceptions made for absences in class, missed or delayed assignments, homework or lack of class participation resulting from your involvement in any of the above. Your grade will reflect your work in this class, independent from work in any other class or activity.

*Activities that have been officially sanctioned by the larger university (such as marching band, song girls, or varsity sports) are exempt. You must submit official documentation to your professor regarding your participation in an event prior to your absence.

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. 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>.

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from OSAS. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. OSAS is located in GFS 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for OSAS and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 814-4618 (Video Phone), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

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. See the university’s site on Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

Health and Participation in Class

You are expected to complete your Trojan Check screener daily and, as your instructor, I may ask you to show your daily screening in class. Your health and safety, and the health and safety of your peers, are my top priorities. If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, or if you discover that you have been in close contact with others who have symptoms or who have tested positive, you must follow the instructions on Trojan Check. My hope is that if you are feeling ill or if you have been exposed to someone with the virus, you will stay home to protect others. I will ensure that you can continue to participate in class remotely so that your education is not disrupted.

To reduce the spread of COVID-19, USC requires that face coverings (masks) be worn indoors including in classrooms. Face coverings must cover your nose and mouth and be worn throughout the class session. A mask with a valve is not considered an adequate face covering and should not be used, as it can expel exhaled air, increasing the risk to others. Eating or drinking during class is prohibited because of the risk posed by removing your mask for these activities. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in your being asked to leave the classroom immediately. Requests for accommodations related to the face covering and eating/drinking policies should be directed to the Office for Student Accessibility Services (<https://osas.usc.edu/>).

SDA Student Support & Reporting Form:

To facilitate a supportive environment of accountability, SDA has created an internal system of reporting for students to address issues/concerns and to offer feedback or suggestions for improvement. This mechanism provides a pathway for reporting and offering feedback without fear of retaliation or judgment. Any submission filed through this form will be reviewed and processed accordingly through SDA Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

To file a report, please visit: <https://bit.ly/SDAstudentreporting>

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298
usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776
<https://osas.usc.edu>

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710
campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.