

THTR 140B – Voice I

Section: 62661R

Units: 2

Spring 2021 – M/W 08:00-09:50am

DRC 120

Instructor: Lauren Murphy Yeoman

Office hours: Friday 1-3pm

Other times by appointment

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Reply timeline: Within 48 hours

Course Description

We will complete the Linklater voice progression begun in the first semester, acquiring a complete vocal system as a daily actor practice. From the principles of freeing and opening, we move into strengthening and developing, to become both loose AND strong, always through seeking maximum effect for minimum effort. From the foundation you have established of (i) releasing habit tensions and (ii) releasing breath and sound, we will examine 3-4 octave range expansion, enlarging breath capacity, dynamic articulation, and bigger sounds. We are conditioning your voice for greater demands of expression and language - heightened energy, longer thoughts, complex meaning and feeling. This will lead to long-form text work on contemporary monologues and scenes, and using vocal dynamics of pitch, rhythm, volume and tone to shape speaking with intention. The overall goal is to allow your voice to serve your imagination and interpretation of character and text.

Everyone will also be required to lead a warm-up through the full progression of voice exercises. This is for each member of the ensemble to glean independent understanding of the voice exercises. To learn something deeply, you must teach it.

Course Objectives

- * Individual: To build and sharpen your tools and abilities for authentic dynamism of voice.
- * Ensemble: To further become both the one and the all in your BFA cohort: the individual dedication of each ensemble member contributing to the progress of the whole group.
- * Overall: To bridge the voice work directly into acting work, moving from personal into character and from expression into action. The raw materials of self will now be used to create transformational art. It is important to ascend to new levels of commitment,

work ethic, hunger and inquiry.

Learner Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Develop a self-guided vocal practice using the Linklater Voice progression
2. Identify personal habits that reveal vs. conceal the voice
3. Perform dramatic text with vocal presence and support
4. Communicate layered meaning and feeling, use vocal dynamics and operative word stress to serve the acting objective

Prerequisite Course: THTR 140 A

Concurrent Enrollment: Students must be registered for lecture and lab

Voice and Speech Class Philosophy:

As voice teachers at USC's School of Dramatic Arts we strive to align ourselves with principles of inclusivity and equity in the classroom. We seek to educate not as privileged experts, but as facilitators whose hearts and minds are concerned with our students health and well-being both as individuals and collectively. We encourage and celebrate students who speak out as advocates for themselves and others. We recognize systemic racism as part of our culture and so we seek to uplift our students to be the voice(s) of change and the bearers of the torch for a new generation; a generation that does not seek to deny its past, nor to downplay the serious challenges of the present, but to face those challenges with resilience and bravery.

Required Materials

- *Freeing the Natural Voice*, 2006 edition, by Kristin Linklater, available in digital and hard copy versions through online sellers
- I will provide other required materials via Blackboard. These will include articles, videos, and websites germane to the voice work.
- Please bring a dedicated notebook to every class for hand-writing and drawing.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Participation in in-class warmups and group exercises:

Group warmups and explorations will be devised according to the individual and collective needs of this group, and depend on the generous, respectful, supportive contribution of each member of the ensemble for the continuous additive layering of learning through the semester. **Points will be deducted from your Participation grade for lateness and for absence: 2 points for lateness, 5 points for absence.**

Journal Reflections:

You will write a journal entry for each of the assigned chapters of *Freeing the Natural Voice*, correlating with in-class work, about your personal experience of the work on voice, body, and speech sounds. (10 journal reflections total.)

Monologue Exploration:

Partway in to the semester, you will apply the physical and vocal awarenesses developed in previous classes to a dedicated solo exploration of a selected monologue. You will work with me in front of the group and try adjustments based on the principles of release and imagery we have been practicing and absorbing.

Team Warmups:

In small teams, you will plan a 20-minute warm-up to take the group through, covering the full progression of Linklater exercises. You will sharpen your understanding of the how and why for each section of the progression by leading the group through them.

Final – Scene Exploration:

For your final, you will rehearse and develop a selected scene with a scene partner, incorporating your connection to voice and self into playing off of each other, active listening, intention and point of view.

Grading Breakdown

Grades will be recorded in the Blackboard gradebook and updated weekly.

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Participation in warmups and exercises	50	25
Journal Reflections (10 total)	40	20
Midterm – Monologue and supporting materials	50	25
Team Warmup	20	10
Final – Scene and supporting materials	40	20
Total	200 points	100%

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following 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

Course-specific Policies (Assignment Submission, Grading Timeline, Late work, and Technology)

Assignment Submission:

Guidelines and expectations for all of the above components of your grade will be discussed thoroughly in class, establishing specific parameters to follow. Journal Reflections will be submitted via Blackboard. Monologue and scene rehearsals will be both during class and as homework, and corresponding written work with those assignments will be submitted via Blackboard. Please ask me for clarification if you need it at any time in the semester.

Grading Timeline:

Grading for performance and presentation work will be uploaded to Blackboard two days after the completed presentation and performance. Grades from written work will be uploaded two days after the deadline.

Late Work:

No late assignments, exercises, or delivery of performances shall be accepted unless advance extensions have been arranged with me or unless exceptional circumstances occur.

Attendance

Lateness and absences will be evaluated on an individual basis. Unexcused absences are unacceptable. Communication with me is part of evaluation. No credit for missed classes and no makeups for missed rehearsals or performances unless extenuating circumstances occur. Under these circumstances, please notify me immediately.

Attendance is weighted at no more than 15% as per University Guidelines.

Dress

This class will be very physical. Movement clothing is mandatory. Please also remove any jewelry that could interfere.

Class Agreements

- Share responsibility for including all voices in the conversation.
- Listen respectfully.
- Be open to changing your perspectives based on what you learn from others.

- **Understand that your words have effects on others.**
- Notice your own defensive reactions and attempt to use these reactions as entry points for gaining deeper self-knowledge, rather than as a rationale for closing off.
- Recognize how your own social positionality (e.g., race, class, gender, sexuality, ability) informs your perspectives and reactions to your instructor and those whose work you study in the course.
- Differentiate between safety and comfort. Accept discomfort as necessary for social justice growth.
- Identify where your learning edge is and push it. For example, whenever you think, I already know this, ask yourself, How can I take this deeper? Or, How am I applying in practice what I already know?

Course evaluation

Student feedback is essential to making this course the best it can be. Students will have an opportunity to submit comments on the mid-semester evaluation and the standard USC course evaluation survey at the end of the semester.

Synchronous session recording notice

Synchronous class sessions will be recorded and provided to all students asynchronously in Blackboard.

Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment

Please be aware that USC has a policy that prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment:

SCampus Section 11.12(B)

Distribution or use of notes or recordings based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is a violation of the USC Student Conduct Code. This includes, but is not limited to, providing materials for distribution by services publishing class notes. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the Internet or via any other media. (See Section C.1 Class Notes Policy).

COVID-19 Resources

Continuously updated requirements can be found on the [USC COVID-19 resource center website](#).

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Subject to change based on the group's needs:

Week 1:

Check in with state of post-break body and breath as we plunge back into basic voice. Where are you in your life and with your work?

Homework: * Follow the Reading Schedule to read chapters covered in class work
* Write journal reflection on class work from the week

Week 2:

Review the voice progression and delve into the next sections - resonating cavities of multi-octave range; power breathing to support upper resonators.

Homework: * Follow the Reading Schedule to read chapters covered in class work
* Write journal reflection on class work from the week

Weeks 3-4:

Prepare for student-led warmups. Testing review of progression in body. **Homework:** * Follow the Reading Schedule to read chapters covered in class work
* Write journal reflection on class work from the week

Week 5:

Student-led warmups AND first rounds of Contemporary Scenes begin.
Homework: TBA

Weeks 6-9:

Continue student-led warmups and scene work. You will be learning ways of working, rehabilitating language and absorbing text on visceral and practical levels. Text exercises will involve many different ways to explore and will depend on what is observed to be needed. We cannot predict at this point, but we will be working intensely. As you know, supporting others by listening and learning is going to be the most efficient thing you can do for yourself.

Homework: TBA

Week 10:

Final Scenes will be assigned and fluid explorations continue. Keeping a sense of the build-up of the work, invoking the learnings of technique as the stakes are raised.

Weeks 11-14:

Work on Final Scenes, in the same vein as contemporary scenes to deepen and further the goals you have been identifying through the early phase of work.

Week 15:

Bring Final Scenes to fruition, potential sharing of rehearsal process with BFA faculty.

SDA PRODUCTIONS

SDA productions are courses and therefore do not supersede any other courses in which you are enrolled. When in an SDA production, students must not register for evening classes that conflict with regularly scheduled rehearsals. In short, being involved in an SDA production is a curricular assignment and must be treated as any other curricular assignment.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR COMMITMENTS AND ISPS

Should you choose to participate in any extra-curricular project, such as an Independent Student Production, the SDA administration and faculty will not make allowances or exceptions for absences in class, missed or delayed assignments, home work that is required as preparation for class, or lack of participation in class resulting from your extra-curricular involvement.

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 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 GFS 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for DSP 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.

Support Systems:

Campus Support & Intervention (CSI) – (213) 740-0411

Campus Support & Intervention is an office within Campus Wellbeing and Crisis Intervention. We are a team of professionals here to assist students, faculty, and staff in navigating complex issues. Whether you are here seeking support for yourself or someone else, we are available to help you problem solve, understand options, and connect with resources. <https://uscsa.usc.edu>

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

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

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <https://titleix.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://titleix.usc.edu/>

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.
Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu