



USC School
of Dramatic Arts

Course: Advanced Movement
Course #: 515d
Units: 2
Session: Spring 2023
Instructor: Stephanie Shroyer
Email: shroyer@usc.edu
Office Phone: My cell phone (provided during class)
Office Hours: Right after class Tues./Thurs. and available by appointment. Students are encouraged to use this as an opportunity to speak privately with the instructor about individual in-class progress.
Class Meets: Time: 12 until 1:50 p.m.
(MFA grid 12:15-2:05)
Days: Tuesdays and Thursdays
Location: MCC 107
Final Exam: TBD According to the MFA Culmination Schedule

Course Description:

In 515d we turn our attention to an investigation of the use of internal and external musculature (internal being the musculature of thought, external being that of the body) and an understanding of physical space to fulfill character and the worlds they inhabit. Beginning with investigations of the grammar of movement, power of body language, kinesthetic response and moving to the application of principles to character and text, the student will build a movement vocabulary to encompass the physics of acting. Course emphasis lies heavily in the territory of composition and picturization as tools, able to intensify storytelling by the visual and spatial subtext communicated by the actor's movement and manipulation of space and objects.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the 515d movement studies:

1. Through the employment of the free form warm-up, the student will have acquired a movement vocabulary suitable for the construction of an embodied physical characterization.
2. The student will have undertaken a physically transformative characterization effort where they are able to differentiate and build structural and behavioral traits of character from their own.
3. The student will have researched, acquired objects and/or constructed the physical components of the environment for a text that is the source of their characterization and performed excerpts in this environment.
4. The student will have constructed and performed with their peers, the ensemble connective tissue that becomes the storytelling container for excerpts from a text to be determined.

Learning Aspirations

1. To cultivate a pervasive "questioning" state of mind predicated on a commitment to taking responsibility for oneself.

2. To develop a process through which one can break inhibiting habitual movement patterns to allow unencumbered choice, conscious control, and spontaneity in movement according to the needs of a given character and text.
3. To recognize the importance of and exhibit competency in determining the necessary behavioral, environmental, and spatial choices as they relate to:
 - a. The “reality of doing” principle for the needs of the source material.
 - b. Making of “meaning” through movement (story and relationship connotations).
 - c. The active pursuit of character objective within a text.
 - d. Integration of the mechanics of movement into performance.

Course Notes, Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Course Notes:

- The syllabus, weekly agenda and assignments are posted on Blackboard. Necessary day to day updates and communications will be done via USC email.
- Instructor may supply handouts and excerpts from suitable texts as needed.

These are my source texts: (available online if interested in more info)

- Space in Performance, by Gay McCauley
- Laban For All, by Jean Newlove and John Dalby
- The Expressive Body, by David Alberts
- The Empty Space, by Peter Brook
- The Shifting Point, by Peter Brook

Supplementary Materials:

- Instructor may supply handouts and excerpts from suitable texts as needed.
- Notebook/Journal suitable for sketches, daily notations of curiosities, progress, and thoughts. The documenting of process, progression and iconic studies across the semester may be of interest to retain for future contemplation.

Description of Assignments

- **CLASSWORK** Regular warmups utilizing prompts rooted in movement vocabulary principles that illuminate the physics of acting and comprise the actors grammar of movement. Various out-of-class observation assignments will be given throughout the semester as necessary for class work.
- **JOURNAL** It’s suggested to keep a movement journal. In addition to 515d class notes and other acquired pertinent information to your movement study the journal may include associations, similarities and/or contradictions between your areas of study. Put it all in! Consider this journal a document you are writing/compiling from the you of today to the you of tomorrow. One day it may be the documentation of your personal trajectory to craft!
- **PROJECT ONE: MIRROR PROCESS STUDY** Choose a physically challenging monologue. Then find an iconic image that provides inspiration.

(Bring a picture of a full figure, not just the face or torso. The setting should be indicative of the world of play).

- *Bring to class two hard copies of the text (one is for me to keep) and your iconic image. (Keep in mind you must be able to bring this picture with you to class every day for the duration of this study). Due: Tues. Feb. 7th.*
- *Goody bag assembled and brought to class Due: Tues., Feb 14th.*
- *Do Re Mi spatial orientation work Due: Tues., Feb 21st.*
- *Icon inspired/Mirror Process monologues taken into scenes. (Mirror process character working with a “silent partner”) Due: Tues., Feb. 28th*
- *Mirror Process Final Shares Due: Tues., March 7th and 9th.*

Phase One will center on “iconic” character study, building and utilizing “the character goody bag”. Emphasis is letting a “pre-existing” external form inspire a “developing” internal landscape.

Phase Two will center on the “Do Re Mi”. The characters environment as source for physical action. Conceive and build “The Energized Space”.

Phase Three is to deepen physical aspects of characterization and to develop the physical world of storytelling. “Movement patterning” and “modification of impulse” in support of “world of play” circumstances and the influence of “reality of doing” is of paramount importance. Think “What do I need around me to tell this story?”

- **PROJECT TWO: MOVEMENT PATTERNED SCENES WITH ENSEMBLE DEVELOPED CONNECTIVE TISSUE** Utilizing the 515d movement vocabulary and processes/progressions developed to date- develop character, movement patterned scenes and transitions providing the “container” for storytelling, the ensemble will culminate the semester with an event comprised of excerpts from a TBD text. *Due: TBD according to the MFA Spring Semester Culmination Schedule*

Phase One: Research presentations and applications of historical, sociological, and cultural influences necessary for the chosen text.

Phase Two: Mirror Process and Movement Patterning

Phase Three: Ensemble creation of connective tissue.

Grading Criteria and Assessment

100 possible points. All points are awarded based on prompt and effective completion of the stated requirements.

Class work is adjudicated according to the standards and expectations set forth by the MFA in Acting core faculty. Participation, preparation and willingness to explore concepts with openness individually and as part of the ensemble.

Projects are adjudicated based on completeness of physical choices and ability of student to develop lasting recognizable physicality as observed by the instructor on a continuum basis.

Levels of achievement are defined as follows:

Excellent: evidence of clear understanding of class concepts coupled with original and creative insight and confident preparation

Good: an understanding of class concepts is evidenced with competence

Satisfactory: a general understanding of class concepts but definable gaps are in evidence

Poor: definable gaps in class concepts and lack of preparation are in evidence.

Unsatisfactory: absence of preparation, work not completed on time and no communication with professor and student partners.

<u>ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>PCT</u>
Classwork	40	40%
Project One	30	30%
Project Two	30	30%
TOTAL	100	100%

Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment

USC policy 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).

Course evaluation

Course evaluation occurs at the end of the semester university wide. It is an important review of students' experience in the class. You should expect to receive an email update once the system has launched to provide your feedback on this course. In addition, you are always welcome to connect with me as the instructor to offer any feedback on the course.

Additional Policies

Attendance and Time Requirements

- Students are expected to be in class, dressed, and ready to work by 12:15 p.m.
- Attendance is mandatory.
- Two episodes of tardiness equals 1 absence.
- Late work will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor and then will be reflected in the grade by docking no less than 2 points per day.

- 515d course work will require rehearsal outside of scheduled class time. Please schedule space according to the guidelines put forward by SDA's Academic Services Office.
- The syllabus is posted on Blackboard. Check your USC email regularly. Scheduling changes and other timely information will be sent via email.

Health and Participation in Class

- There is no online attendance, observation, participation option for this class. All classes are held in person, on ground in MCC 107. Classes will not be recorded for future viewing and there is no zoom option for 515d.
- While being mindful of the importance of being in class, our hope is that if you are feeling ill, you will use your best judgement as to whether you need to be absent.
- We will ensure that you have opportunity to access lecture notes (should there be any) or schedule office hours so that you can remain current in content covered during your absence but know that there is no way to reconstruct missed sessions in totality.
- 515d is a highly participatory, experiential, activity-based class. It requires extensive group exercises, large and small group discussion, outside rehearsal and peer observation/feedback of in-class presentations. If your health presents a consistent interruption in your engagement with the above we will meet to decide best way forward under the circumstances.
- The University, as of this writing, states masks are highly recommended in the classroom but not required. We will follow University health protocols as adjusted throughout the semester.

Classroom Rules

- Students must dress in attire that is flexible and allows them to move freely. To maximize safety and learning potential, it is utmost importance to be able to observe physical technique and form during movement and voice. Sweats, yoga pants, gym shorts etc. are appropriate. No Jeans. No belts. Bare feet preferred for movement vocabulary. A towel is recommended.
- No food, coffee, tea, soda allowed in the studio. Bottled water is welcome and recommended.
- Character studies and scenes require attire and props to support movement choices and to define the physical world as specified by the text (see "Goody Bag" addendum to syllabus). There will be no miming of the physical elements of the work. The *reality of doing principle* is paramount in 214B Movement Module.
- Cell phones are to be turned off and put away for the duration of class. Even during breaks.
- Electronic capture of any portion of class is strictly prohibited without prior approval of the instructor.

Process and Progression

Week one: Introduction and baseline performance shares.

Week two: Year Two ensemble in NYC.

Weeks three thru five: Movement Vocabulary centering the physics of acting clarified by the grammar of movement. What are the composite physical constants that affect understanding of story? Focus on meaning made thru gesture, the body in space and in relation to others.

Weeks six thru nine: Continues the physics of acting/grammar of movement thru free form warm-up explorations and work on Project One: The Mirror Process.

Week ten: Introduction to Project Two. Center on the actor's "movement patterning". What are "world of play" circumstances that influence the actor's "reality of doing" dedicated to storytelling as specified by a text? What do I need around me to tell this story and how do I use such to optimal effect?

Weeks eleven thru fifteen will center on the "dynamic sequencing" of impulse dedicated to story. A practical application of the influences of light, sound, shape, environment, objects, architecture, topography, kinesthetic response, and spatial relationship as catalytic tools to effectively illuminate text. All towards the end of building connective tissue that transitions the trajectory of story.

Weekly Breakdown

Week 1	1/10 1/12	Introduction and Course Outline. Baseline Performance Share.
Week 2	1/17 1/19	MFA Year Two Ensemble in NYC MFA Year Two Ensemble in NYC
Week 3	1/24 1/26	Movement Vocabulary. Prompted Free Form Work Movement Vocabulary. Prompted Free Form Work <i>Assignment: Iconic Study- "Borrowing" Due next class.</i>
Week 4	1/31 2/2	Movement Vocabulary. Prompted Free Form Work Movement Vocabulary. Prompted Free Form Work <i>Assignment: Choose a physically challenging monologue. Then find an iconic image that provides inspiration. (Bring a picture of a full figure, not just the face or torso. The setting should be indicative of the world of play). Due next class.</i>
Week 5	2/7 2/9	Movement Vocabulary. Prompted Free Form Work. Iconography. Read monologue/look at iconic images. Movement Vocabulary. Prompted Free Form Work Iconography. Read monologue/look at iconic images.

*Assignment: Assemble Goody Bag for Character Transformation
Due next class.*

Week 6 2/14 Movement Vocabulary. Introduce Mirror Process. Transformation.
Structurals and Behaviorals.
2/16 The Do Re Mi. Environment/Place
*Assignment: Draw the Do Re Mi for your characters
environment/place. Due next class*

Week 7 2/21 Movement Vocabulary. Do Re Mi Spatial Orientation work
2/23 Movement Vocabulary. Do Re Mi Spatial Orientation work
*Assignment: Monologue as a scene. Work with a “silent partner”
to make a monologue a scene. Due next class.*

Week 8 2/28 Mirror Process Character Scene work.
3/2 Mirror Process Character Scene work.
Assignment: Rehearse for Final Share. Due next class.

Week 9 3/7 Mirror Process Final Shares
3/9 Project Two Guidelines Distributed/Casting of project

Spring Break March 12th thru March 19th

Week 10 3/21 Project Two Text Concept Briefing. What do I need to know to
build the physical container for the text?
3/23 Movement Vocabulary specific to Project Two
Assignment: Research presentations. Due next class

Week 11 3/28 Research/Mirror Process Share
3/30 Research/Mirror Process Share

Week 12 4/4 Scene Movement Patterning
4/6 Scene Movement Patterning

Week 13 4/11 Scene Movement Patterning
4/13 Scene Movement Patterning

Week 14 4/18 Building the Container. Connective Tissue
4/20 Building the Container. Connective Tissue

Week 15 4/25 Putting it all together. The Emergence of Event.
4/27 Putting it all together. The Emergence of Event.
Assignment: TBD rehearsal for 515d culmination.

*****Culmination of Project Two: Movement Patterned Scenes TBD*****

***Course schedule subject to change according
to the needs and progress of the group***

Grading Policy

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

Your grade is assessed according to:

Classwork	40%
Project One	30%
Project Two	30%

Attendance and Time Requirements

1. Attendance is *mandatory*.
2. Two episodes of tardiness equal 1 absence.
3. Absences in excess of 2 incidences will affect your grade negatively.
4. Check your email regularly for scheduling changes and other timely information.

Textbook and Materials

- Supplemental Reading:
 - 1) Space in Performance, by Gay McCauley (recommended)
 - 2) Laban For All, by Jean Newlove and John Dalby(recommended)
 - 3) Anne Bogart Viewpoints, edited by Michael B. Dixon and Joel A. Smith (recommended)
 - 4) The Expressive Body, by David Alberts (recommended)
 - 5) The Empty Space, by Peter Brook (recommended)
 - 6) The Shifting Point, by Peter Brook (recommended)
- Instructor may supply handouts and excerpts from suitable texts as needed.
- Notebook suitable for sketches, daily notations of curiosities, progress, and thoughts.

Class Code

- Unless otherwise directed, students should dress in movement attire.
- Athletic Footwear or barefoot only.
- Certain exercises/explorations may require specific attire, environments, and props.
- No food or beverages permitted in the studio except for bottled water.
- A towel and personal yoga mat are suggested.

Note From The Instructor

The principles explored this semester in 515b are processes that take time to absorb and understand. Do not become impatient. Remain positive and curious about the work. Remember the results are not instantaneous. Your commitment to openness in exploring these concepts is of much greater importance than a definitive result. Resist judgment and

expectation of any particular outcome. Explore. Play. Be fearlessly inventive within the parameters given. Each student works and learns in a unique manner.

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.

****The following statements and disclosures portion of this document are subject to SDA updates. Addendums will be posted on the Blackboard posting of this syllabus/contract****

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.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion + Intimacy in Theater Consent Culture Statement:

Through our pluralistic approach of diverse pedagogies, methodologies, ideologies, and modalities of artistic expression, we invite(engage) and challenge students to expand their breadth and depth of knowledge, complexity, and range of the human experience. Even though we nurture, guide, and challenge our students to embrace the unknown or unfamiliar and step outside of their comfort zones through storytelling/art, we aim to practice effective strategies and offer tools to students mindful of their physical, psychological, social, and emotional wellbeing. In alignment with professional and industry standards, we will integrate core principles and techniques of Intimacy in Theater and Building Cultures of Affirmative Consent. This will provide agency, offer resources and support to the teachers, students, directors, and staff to establish healthy boundaries of consent when working on material that is physically, intimately, or emotionally charged content in both the classroom and production.

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.

This syllabus serves as your contract for course #515, Fall Semester 2023.