

USC School of Dramatic Arts

SDA #115A Movement I

Fall 2024 – Mondays and Wednesdays – 8am until 9:50am

Location: MCC 107

Instructor: Stephanie Shroyer

Office: MCC 204

Office Hours: Mon. 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. in MCC (meet outside room 107) and/or by appointment please. Students are encouraged to use this as an opportunity to speak privately with the instructor about individual in-class progress

Contact Info: shroyer@usc.edu

Course Description:

Movement I initiates the actor's physical training of the body as a principal instrument for expression and communication. Awareness and control of the physical instrument is explored through mind-body techniques and improvisation. The work focuses on defining and developing a core physical discipline that provides the philosophical and aesthetic spine of the physical training program in the subsequent 3 ½ years. Concentration emphasizes the notion of play; infusing movement with breath; breath with imagery; and imagery leading to impulse for physical action.

Learning Objectives

- a. At the conclusion of this course the student will have constructed an individualized physical warm-up for the actor.
- b. At the conclusion of this course the student will have demonstrated shared vernacular that precedes the construction of a group physical warm-up.
- c. To observe, analyze and hypothesize the physical trajectory for addressing inhibitive learned/habitual physical patterns of oneself.
- d. To observe, analyze and hypothesize the physical trajectory for addressing inhibitive learned/habitual physical patterns of another.
- e. To devise, rehearse and present an original two-person scene according to the physical principles presented in Movement I.

Learning Aspirations

- a. To cultivate a pervasive “questioning” state of mind predicated on a commitment to taking responsibility for oneself.
- b. To hone a flexible and communicative physical instrument capable of sending and receiving impulse.
- c. To develop mindfulness concerning individual tension and resistance patterns.
- d. To develop the ability to observe, identify and subsequently explore within and embody form.
- e. The ability to commit to imagery and exhibit sustained intent throughout all effort.

Prerequisite(s): Admittance to the BFA in Acting for Stage, Screen and New Media

Co-Requisite (s): THTR 120A and THTR 125

Concurrent Enrollment: THTR 120A and THTR 125

Recommended Preparation: N/A

Course Notes, Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

- Required Text: Course reader- Movement for the Actor by Lucille S. Rubin.
- Instructor may supply handouts and excerpts from suitable texts as needed.
- Notebook/Journal suitable for daily notations of curiosities and progress and collecting class notes/handouts.
- The Syllabus is posted on Bright Space. Necessary day to day updates and communications will be done via USC email.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

- **CLASSWORK** Various out of class observation assignments throughout semester as necessary for class work. (Assessment: Summative)
- **MONOLOGUE** Present at our second class meeting a contemporary American, Naturalistic monologue to assess baseline patterns of tension. (Assessment: Formative) **Due Wed. Aug. 28th.**
- **JOURNAL** Keep a movement observation journal. Content includes but is not limited to, class notes and other acquired pertinent information as well as your thoughts and responses to experience during your process journey. This journal will be useful in Papers #1 and #2. (Assessment: Summative) **Due Wed. Dec. 11th.**
- **MOVEMENT VOCABULARY** Instructor to provide Movement Vocabulary thru warm-ups and exercises, the use of which will be practiced and assessed throughout the semester. Evidence of command of this vocabulary is to be exemplified throughout journal entries, peer feedback, and papers. (Assessment: Summative) **Due Mon. Dec. 2nd.**
- **PAPER #1** Observation, Analysis, Hypothesis for Remedy of Held Tension Patterns/Self.
To hypothesize a physical trajectory for addressing your inhibitive learned/habitual physical patterns of your physical instrument, write a Personal Observation & Assessment of your movement discoveries, difficulties and questions. Please consider and incorporate associations made between movement, voice, text and acting classes. (Assessment: Summative) **Due Mon. Oct. 14th.**
- **MIDTERM** Expanded Nonsense/Open Scenes. **Due Mon. Oct. 21st and Wed. 23rd.** (Assessment: Formative)
- **PAPER #2 Observation**, Analysis, Hypothesis for Remedy of Held Tension Patterns/Classmate.
Case Study of your choice. Select one individual from performance class. Observe, analyze, and assess his/her/their movement and physical

presence on an ongoing basis throughout the semester. Are there differences in “pedestrian” and “performance” tension/expression patterns? Using your growing understanding of concepts explored this semester in 115; hypothesize the strengths and territories in need of attention as exhibited by your case study. Finally, conceptualize a path of attention in the physical work that would address your hypotheses. (Assessment: Summative) **Due Mon. Nov. 25th.**

***Note about Paper #2: A necessary but often overlooked area of physical training is the ability to see on others what we might not be readily able to observe in ourselves. There is great potential for personal growth by first looking out to see in.**

- **FINAL** Presentation of your dynamically sequenced text accompanied by written documentation of the movement vocabulary explored and utilized in the process. This is the devised, rehearsed original two-person scene begun for midterm and expanded according to the physical principles presented in Movement I. (Assessment: Summative) **Due: Wed. Dec.11th, 8-10a.m.**

Grading Criteria and Assessment of Assignments

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

40 pts	Classwork. Evaluation is based on the student’s regular participation, completeness of preparation and concentration during exercises.
20	Journals 10 Paper #1: Observations of Held Tension Patterns/self
10	Paper #2: Observation of Held Tension Patterns/classmate
5	Command/Use of Movement Vocabulary (Evidenced thru The Warm-up, peer discussion, and submitted written work)
15	Final

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>% of Grade</u>
Classwork	40	40%
Journals	20	20%
Paper #1	10	10%
Paper #2	10	10%
Vocabulary	5	5%
Final	15	15%
TOTAL	100	100%

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.

Assignment Submission Policy and Grading Timeline

- Assignments due as described above.
- Both paper submissions must be turned in to me electronically through Bright Space.
- Journals can be submitted in their hard copy form or scanned and uploaded to Bright Space.
- Once submitted, please look for email confirmation from me that I can access your submissions. If there is a problem with the digital submission, I will contact you and we will trouble-shoot to complete successful transfer of your materials.
- Instructor and peer feedback for in class exercises and scene work is regular practice in our class sessions.
- Students can receive written feedback for all performance assignments immediately if the student wishes to capture electronically my handwritten notes.
- Formalized grading of performance and written work can be expected within 3 class sessions from the due date.

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. (*Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook*, page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. 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. (*Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook*, page 13).

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

Notes from the Instructor

- The principles introduced in Movement I are processes that take time to absorb and understand
- Remain patient with self and others
- Remain positive and curious about the work
- Remember the results are not instantaneous
- Your commitment to a physically oriented process is of much greater importance than definitive result
- Resist judgment and expectation of any specific outcome
- Explore
- Play
- Be fearlessly inventive within the parameters given
- Each student works and learns in a unique manner

Attendance and Time Requirements

- Students are expected to be in class: dressed, and ready to work by 8:00 a.m. sharp
- Attendance is mandatory
- Three episodes of tardiness equal 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
- Check your USC email regularly for scheduling changes and other timely information

Health and Participation in Class

Classes are held in person, on the ground in the designated room. Online attendance, observation, or participation is not offered for this class. The sessions are not to be recorded for future viewing.

While being mindful of the importance of being in class, students who develop a health issue should follow the protocol set forth by USC policy in the USC Student Handbook.

<https://sites.google.com/usc.edu/ay23covid/?pli=1&authuser=2>

In the event of student absences, there is opportunity to access any lecture notes and to schedule office hours so that the student can remain current in content covered during an absence. However, it will not be possible to reconstruct missed sessions in totality.

The course is a highly participatory, experiential, and activity-based class. It requires extensive group exercises, large and small group discussion, outside rehearsal and peer observation/feedback of in-class presentations. If the student's health presents a frequent interruption in your engagement with the above, then the student should meet with the instructor to determine the best way forward.

Classroom Rules

- Unless otherwise directed, students should dress in movement attire. It is of the utmost of importance to be able to observe physique and form. Sweats, sports

shorts, fitted yoga pants, leggings, etc. are appropriate. No Jeans!! No belts. No shoes. Certain exercises/explorations will require specific clothing, shoes and props.

- Bring your journal to class every day. We will have lots of notes to jot down!
- Bottled water is welcome and recommended in the studio. However, food and other beverages should remain outside of the facility.
- A towel is recommended.
- The space where you work should ideally be open and yield many possibilities. We'll work together to develop the workspace our environs can provide.
- Cell phones are to be turned off and put away for the duration of class.
- Electronic capture of any portion of class is strictly prohibited without prior written approval of the instructor.
- As 115 is an in-person class there is not an online/zoom participation option available.

Course Schedule and Weekly Breakdown

Weeks one through nine will center on preparing the actor's physical instrument for the work at hand and on defining the parameters for spontaneous free "play" evolving from impulse.

Week 1	8/26	Introduction. Totem Exercise.
	8/28	Baseline Patterns/Monologues.
Week 2	9/2	Labor Day. University Holiday.
	9/4	Building the warm-up. Foundations: "Breath, Image, Action. (Have read pp.1-27 in the course reader)
Week 3	9/9	Building the warm-up. Foundations: "Breath, Image, Action.
	9/11	Building the warm-up. The Encounter (a creative exercise). Foundations: "Trust".
Week 4	9/16	The Warm-up. Foundations: "Seeing" & "Play"
	9/18	The Warm-up. Foundations: "Seeing" & "Play"
Week 5	9/23	The Warm-up. Foundations: "Unification". Ensemble. Introduction of Shared Imagery. Read pp. 101-121 in the reader by 9/26.
	9/25	The Warm-up. "Unification". Ensemble. Introduction of Shared Imagery cont.
Week 6	9/30	The Warm-up. Foundations: "Space/Reality of Doing": Individual Imagery. <i>Objects.</i>
	10/2	The Warm-up. Foundations: "Space/Reality of Doing": Individual Imagery. <i>Spatial.</i>
Week 7	10/7	The Warm-up. Foundations "Space/Reality of Doing": Shared Imagery. Relationship/Place/Situational givens.

		Assign Open Scenes.
	10/9	The Warm-up.
Week 8	10/14	“Space/Reality of Doing”: Open scenes. The Warm-up. Foundations: “Space/Reality of Doing”: Private Moment Exercises. Paper #1 Due.
	10/16	The Warm-up. “Space/Reality of Doing”: Private Moment Exercises.
Week 9	10/21	Midterm Share: Expanded Open Scenes from Week 7.
	10/23	Midterm re-work. Projects assigned for weeks 10-15.

Weeks ten through fifteen will center on catalysts for the actors’ imagery and the dynamic sequencing of impulse into relationship and story.

Week 10	10/28	The Warm-up. Dynamic Sequencing: The catalyst of sound...
	10/30	The Warm-up. Dynamic Sequencing: The catalyst of shape...
Week 11	11/4	The Warm-up. Dynamic Sequencing: The catalyst of environment and objects...
	11/6	The Warm-up. Dynamic Sequencing: The catalyst of words and image phrases...
Week 12	11/11	Veterans Day. No Class.
	11/13	The Warm-up. Dynamic Sequencing: Application to projects.
Week 13	11/18	The Warm-up. Dynamic Sequencing of developed texts: First Showing
	11/20	First Showings cont.
Week 14	11/25	Dynamically Sequenced texts re-worked. Paper #2 Due
	11/27	Thanksgiving Break
Week 15	12/2	Command/Use of “The Warm-up”. Vocabulary Assessment. Semester Wrap-up. “The necessity of conflict in the dramatic universe and the commitment to “theatrical danger” in imagery leading to an actor’s action.” Always part of the physical actor’s work!!
	12/4	Hunter/Hunted.

Final Exam: Final presentation of Dynamically Sequenced Texts. Journals due. Wed. Dec. 11th, 8-10a.m. in PED 204.

Course Schedule subject to change according to the needs and progress of the group

Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university’s mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or “recycle” work

prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

Academic dishonesty has a far-reaching impact and is considered a serious offense against the university. Violations will result in a grade penalty, such as a failing grade on the assignment or in the course, and disciplinary action from the university itself, such as suspension or even expulsion.

For more information about academic integrity see the [student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

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 Bright Space

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion + Intimacy in Theatre 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>

Statement on University Academic and Support Systems

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Student Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress:

To be eligible for certain kinds of financial aid, students are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward their degree objectives. Visit the Financial Aid Office webpage for undergraduate- and graduate-level SAP eligibility requirements and the appeals process.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

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

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline consists of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086

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) 740-2500

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

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 740-0411

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

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - (213) 740-2101

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

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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

*****This syllabus serves as your contract for course #115, Fall Semester 2024*****