

ACTING FOR THE CAMERA: Spring 2014

University of Alaska Fairbanks, Theatre & Film Department

Course: THR/FLM F310 F01

CRN: 33993 (THR), 33874 (FLM)/ 3 credits

Required Prerequisites: THR 121 (Fundamentals of Acting)

Location: Green Room/ KUAC TV Studio

Dates: January 16 - May 9, 2014

Days/Time: Fridays 9:15 AM-2:00 PM

CARRIE BAKER, Associate Professor, Theatre & Film Department Chair

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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:30AM – 1PM

I. Course Objectives:

The goal of this course is to apply skills introduced in Fundamentals of Acting to acting for the camera. Through exercises and scene study, we will expand each performer's range of emotional, intellectual, physical, and vocal expressiveness for the camera. Students will act in on-camera exercises, television scenes, and film scenes.

II. Course Goals and Student Learning Outcomes:

- To familiarize students with on-camera acting techniques.
- To demonstrate the differences between stage and film acting.
- To expose students to single-camera acting techniques for acting in film and television.
- To develop actors' skills for a long shot, medium shot, and close-up shot.
- To develop actors' skills with on-camera blocking, business, subtext, and reactions.
- To develop students' creative tools and expressiveness for the camera.
- To prepare students for on-camera auditioning.

III. Instructional Methods:

This class is a scene study course. Students will learn camera acting techniques by being in front of the camera as much as possible. Students will “crew” scenes their classmates are acting in. Shooting on-camera work is time consuming. The class will include extensive scene memorization, class discussions, performance critique writing, and journal self-assessment writing.

IV. Required Reading:

You will have weekly reading from the following books. Each Friday you are to come in with a list of 10 “tips” about camera acting that you learned from the reading that week. The books will also help you tremendously when you are in front of the camera, so keep up with the reading. Your midterm and final self-assessments will include analysis of

acting techniques discussed in these books. Both texts are available via the online bookstore. Both texts and the film DVD are on 2-hour/ overnight reserve in the library.

- Film and Television Acting: From Stage to Screen, Ian Bernard, 2nd edition, Focal Press, ISBN: 0240803019
- Secrets of Screen Acting, Patrick Tucker, 2nd edition, Routledge, ISBN: 0878301771
- Film Viewing: *Mystic River*, directed by Clint Eastwood. Library DVD-604.

V. Recommended Reading:

- Audition, Michael Shurtleff, Walker & Co. ISBN: 9780802772404
- Acting in Film, Michael Caine, Applause Theatre Book Publishers ISBN: 9781557832771
- Acting Professionally: Raw Facts About Careers in Acting, Robert Cohen, 7th Edition, McGraw-Hill Publishing Company ISBN: 9780230217249
- Acting for the Camera, Tony Barr, Harper & Row Publishers, ISBN:0-06-055009-0
- New York Agent Book, K. Callan, Sweden Press, ISBN: 1-878355-13-9

VI. Safety Meeting:

All *Acting for the Camera* students are encouraged to attend the Departmental Safety Meeting (required of all Theatre & Film majors) Saturday January 25, 2014 in the Salisbury Theatre 1-4pm. Find more information about this and the Theatre/Film season at www.uaf.edu/theatre/.

VII. Attendance & Lateness Policy:

Attendance to all classes is mandatory. Exercises, discussions, and scene work cannot be made up for the simple reason that they happen in class. If you miss classes, you are missing the course.

Students are permitted one unexcused absence. Excused absences must be supported with written documentation (such as a doctor's note) presented when you return to the following class. Each unexcused absence will reduce your final grade. Missing a class in which you are scheduled to perform is unacceptable and will further reduce your grade. When possible, notify me via email or phone before class if you will be absent. All handouts and assignments will be given in class; if you miss a class, you are responsible for getting all handouts and assignments. All course paperwork (syllabus, assignments) will also be posted on Blackboard.

Please arrive to class on time. Being late will reduce your grade. Three lates will equal one unexcused absence and reduce your grade accordingly. Come to class everyday and be on time. I expect the highest level of professionalism and responsibility from each of you.

VIII. Grading Policy:

Please note: Grading will be based on a +/- system this semester. A minimum grade of C- is required for all prerequisites and major courses.

Class Participation/ 10 Weekly Tips: 10 points

Memorization, Preparation & Performance of Material: 60 points

On-Camera Monologue: 5 points

Blocking Exercise: 5 points

Flirtation Scene: 10 points

TV Scene: 20 points

Film Scene: 20 points

Film Critique: 10 points

Midterm Paper: 10 points

Final Paper: 10 points

TOTAL POINTS: 100

A. Class Participation: 10 points

Your level of participation, enthusiasm, energy, and willingness to work in this class is of the utmost importance. Extensive memorization and preparation outside of class is expected. Watching others shoot a scene can be tremendously beneficial to your own acting. Also, you will participate as technical crew support when you are not shooting. I expect a positive and supportive attitude from each of you, especially when your classmates are shooting. I expect each of you to actively engage in class discussions about the reading and scene work and to turn in your list of “tips” due each Friday. You are graded each class for participation and attitude.

B. Memorization, Preparation & Performance of Material: 60 points

Exercise and Scene Work:

Each time you shoot an exercise, monologue, or scene in class, you need to come in with the material FULLY OFF-BOOK. Thorough memorization and preparation of this material is imperative. Your in-class rehearsal is essentially a blocking rehearsal on the day of the shoot. This is a typical film/TV process...VERY different from a stage-acting process. All your memorization, character choices, and business choices must be done before class.

Some Notes:

- Warm-ups: It is your responsibility to physically and vocally warm-up before each class. We will not be doing group warm-ups. You will find relaxation is very important for camera acting, so I encourage you to do thorough warm-ups prior to class (stretch, range & resonance, articulation & tongue twisters).
- Shut off cell phones.
- Please do not eat in class or near any of the video equipment. Water is the only drink allowed in the studio but please keep it away from equipment and don't spill it.

C. Midterm Paper: 10 points

You will write a three page double-spaced self-assessment of your on-camera acting work based on the first 6 weeks of camera technique and performance of exercises. In this self-assessment you should: articulate your on-camera strengths and weaknesses; reflect on your process when approaching on-camera scene work; track your acting development and the differences between stage acting and camera acting; respond to your readings in Bernard and Tucker; and set goals for the remainder of the semester. Due: Friday February 21, 2014.

D. Film Critique: 10 points

Three double spaced typed pages. You will write one film acting critique this semester on the film *Mystic River*, which is available on reserve in the library. Your observations and writing will be based on your readings in Bernard and Tucker and the on-camera acting techniques that we will learn in the first half of the semester. Even if you have already seen the film, see it again. I will hand out Critique Guidelines later in the semester. Due: Friday March 14, 2014.

E. Final Paper: 10 points

The final three page double-spaced self-assessment will be based on the second half of the semester and your work in the film and television scenes. In this self-assessment you should also: articulate your on-camera strengths and weaknesses; reflect on your process when approaching on-camera scene work; track your acting development and the differences between stage acting and camera acting; respond to your readings in Bernard and Tucker; and track your own progress throughout the semester. Due: Wednesday May 17, 2014 at final exam.

IX. Important selections from the UAF Student Code of Conduct:

“UAF requires students to conduct themselves honestly and responsibly, and to respect the rights of others. Conduct that unreasonably interferes with the learning environment or that violates the rights of others is prohibited.... Honesty is a primary responsibility of you and every other UAF student. The following are common guidelines regarding academic integrity:

- Students will not collaborate on any quizzes, in-class exams, or take-home exams that will contribute to their grade in a course, unless permission is granted by the instructor of the course. Only those materials permitted by the instructor may be used to assist in quizzes and examinations.
- Students will not represent the work of others as their own. A student will attribute the source of information not original with himself or herself (direct quotes or paraphrases) in compositions, theses and other reports.
- No work submitted for one course may be submitted for credit in another course without the explicit approval of both instructors.”

If you cheat or plagiarize in this class, you will FAIL the assignment and possibly the entire class.

X. Disabilities Services:

The Office of Disability Services implements the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and insures that UAF students have equal access to the campus and course materials. I will work with the Office of Disabilities Services (208 Whitaker, phone: 474-5655) to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities.

<http://www.uaf.edu/disability/>

XI. Support Services:

- UAF Student Support Services <http://www.uaf.edu/sss>
- UAF Writing Center <http://www.uaf.edu/english/writing-center/>

XII. Tentative Semester Overview (always subject to change!):

Reading should be done by class each week...it will help your performance! Your list of “tips” is due every Friday at the beginning of class.

Week 1:

1/17 Enrollment, Syllabus, Intro to on-camera acting/ Studio Tour, Meet the Directors/ Subtext Exercise with directors/ Assign: Monologue and *Blocking* scene.

Week 2:

Reading:

- Tucker: Introduction – Ch 2
- Bernard: Foreword - Ch 2

Assignments Due:

- 10 TIPS
- Prepare contemporary on-camera monologue: 30 seconds
- Memorize/ prepare *Blocking* Bernard p. 17

1/24 On-Camera Acting skill development/ Shoot: monologues, reactions shots, blocking exercise/ Assign: *Flirtation* Scene (business)

Week 3:

Reading:

- Tucker: Ch 3 & 4
- Bernard: Ch 3 & 4

Assignments Due:

- 10 TIPS
- Memorize/ Prepare *Flirtation* Bernard p.139

1/31 Shoot *Flirtation*

Week 4:

Reading:

- Tucker: Ch 5 & 6
- Bernard: Ch 5 & 6

Assignments Due:

- 10 TIPS
- Memorize/prepare *Flirtation* Bernard p.139

2/7 Shoot *Flirtation*/ Assign TV Scene audition Material

Week 5:Reading:

- Tucker: Ch 7 & 8
- Bernard: Ch 7 & 8

Assignments Due:

- 10 TIPS
- Prepare TV Scene Audition Material

2/14 Watch *Flirtation* Playbacks (Discussion: Continuity, Choices, Chemistry)/ Casting Session for TV Scenes/ Casting with Directors (MS) & Review Audition Footage with Actors (CB)

Week 6:Reading:

- Tucker: Ch 9-11
- Bernard: Ch 9-11

Assignments Due:

- 10 TIPS
- Memorize/prepare TV scenes
- Midterm Self-Assessment Paper due 2/21 (Monologue, Reactions, Blocking, Flirtation, TV audition & reading assignments)

2/21 Rehearse & Shoot TV Scenes

Week 7:Reading:

- Bernard: Ch 12-End
- Tucker: Ch 12-End

Assignments Due:

- 10 TIPS
- Memorize/ Prepare TV scene

2/28 Rehearse & Shoot TV Scenes/ Assign: Film Scenes

(3/1 *Trail Home* Staged Reading)

Week 8:Assignments Due:

- Film Critique due 3/14
- Memorize/ Prepare Film scenes

3/7 Watch TV Scenes Playbacks/ Film Scene Rehearsals with Directors (with scripts)

Week 9:Assignments Due:

- Film Critique due 3/14
- Memorize/ Prepare Film scenes

3/14 Film Scenes Load in/ Blocking Rehearsals on location (actors off book)

SPRING BREAK

Week 10:

Reading:

- *The Eyes Have It* Article

Assignments Due:

- Memorize/ prepare film scene
- 3/28 Shoot Film Scenes on location

Week 11:

Assignments Due:

- Memorize/ prepare film scene
- 4/4 Shoot Film Scenes on location

Week 12:

Assignments Due:

- Memorize/ prepare film scene
- 4/11 Shoot Film Scenes on location

Week 13:

Assignments Due:

- Memorize/ prepare film scene
- 4/18 Shoot Film Scenes on location

Week 14:

4/25 SPRING FEST/ TBD extra filming day

Week 15:

5/2 TBD (commercial/ voiceover workshop, ADR, green-screen, extra shoot day)

<u>Final Exam in the Salisbury Theatre: Wednesday May 7 10:15AM-12:15PM</u>
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Watch Film Scene Playbacks/ Final Discussion
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Final Self-Assessment Paper due
