THR 330 Acting Topics
ACTING FOR THE CAMERA

Instructor: Steven Koehler
koehler4@uwm.edu
Office Hours: After class (best)
Or by appointment

Faculty Advisor: Robin A Mello
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Class Logistics:

TUESDAYS
1/22/19—5/14/19
2:00-2:45 PM (Editing/Viewing/Rehearsing)
2:45-4:45 PM (Class time--Room T-7)

Expected average student time investment:

Class meetings: 45 hours
Assigned outside work: 30 hours
Weekly average: 5 hours per week

Content: THR 330 ACTING FOR THE CAMERA is an on-camera, exercise-intensive, workshop-style class which will immerse students in the experience of performing in front of the camera. Primary emphasis is placed on truthful, authentic human behavior under imaginary circumstances. Topics covered include: Meisner Technique, Commercial Copy, Ear Prompter & Teleprompter, Text Analysis, Slating, Continuity, Auditioning, Virtual Auditioning, Callbacks and Creation of a “Reel”.

Guidelines/Expectations:

• Come to every class prepared.
• Actively participate in all class activities.
• Dare to be DUMB! There is a proverb which roughly says: “You can ask that question and maybe look dumb for a minute, or you can chicken-out and just stay dumb forever.”
• Speak for no one, listen to everyone! The only ability of ours that ultimately matters is our availability.
• Turn your phone off! (Unless specifically needed for an activity)
• You are being recorded! Other than the first part of our first class, cameras will be rolling pretty much ALL of the time we are together. The raw footage will be made available on a web-based platform from which you will be compiling and editing a “Reel” which demonstrates your growth and shows off your best work. (Your “Reel” will also be your practical final exam, and will be shared with a sharing on our last day which will be open to the public.) Our T.A.-Extraordinaire Maya Norman will be available to assist and instruct you in the editing process from 2:00 to 2:45 on Tuesdays.
• You are being TRUSTED! Publish video footage of NO ONE without their full knowledge and consent! To develop on camera acting skills, you need to be on camera. To be reflective and learn from what you are doing, you need access to the footage of your work. Because of the nature of this class, access to YOUR work is impossible without entrusting you with the work of your fellow classmates. Violation of this expectation may be grounds for dismissal from the class (and subsequent failure of course).

University Policies: If you haven’t yet, please make yourself familiar with the following UWM policies: https://uwm.edu/secu/wp-content/uploads/sites/122/2016/12/Syllabus-Links.pdf

Attendance: Attendance will be taken at each class. To pass this class, you must attend 13 of our 15 classes.
Grades: You will be graded on Meisner scenes, Commercial Copy, Ear Prompter, Teleprompter, Scripted Partner Scene, Continuity Scene, Audition, and your Performance Reel. There will be some required Readings and viewing assignments (with quizzes!) and at least two written mid-term papers.

Sample Performance Rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEISNER SCENE</th>
<th>ADVANCED (22.5-25)</th>
<th>PROFICIENT (20-22)</th>
<th>BASIC (17.5-19.5)</th>
<th>MINIMAL (15-17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Body Listening and Availability: True Acting finds its source in our relationship with our scene partner and everything in our environment.</td>
<td>Actor FULLY engaged with and available to scene partner and environment.</td>
<td>Actor MOSTLY engaged with and available to scene partner and environment.</td>
<td>Actor SOMETIMES engaged with and available to scene partner and environment.</td>
<td>Actor RARELY engaged with and available to scene partner and environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being in the Present: It is the actor's job to breathe life into the words of a playwright, and life only exists in this moment--right now!</td>
<td>Actor FULLY lived off of the real stimuli that were present in the scene.</td>
<td>Actor MOSTLY lived off of the real stimuli that were present in the scene.</td>
<td>Actor SOMETIMES lived off of the real stimuli that were present in the scene.</td>
<td>Actor RARELY lived off of the real stimuli that were present in the scene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REALLY doing what you are doing: The basis of all true acting is the reality of doing. We do not pretend or &quot;make it look like&quot; we are doing a thing. We actually do it!</td>
<td>Actor was FULLY committed to and concentrating on their task during the scene.</td>
<td>Actor was MOSTLY committed to and concentrating on their task during the scene.</td>
<td>Actor was SOMETIMES committed to and concentrating on their task during the scene.</td>
<td>Actor was RARELY committed to and concentrating on their task during the scene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instinctively and Spontaneously Responsive: As infants, we expressed ourselves fully, freely, and without fearing what people thought about us. True Acting demands that we relearn and reclaim our ability to be exactly who we are and rediscover our true voice.</td>
<td>Actor was FULLY, authentically and fearlessly honest and responsive from moment to moment in their scene.</td>
<td>Actor was MOSTLY honest and responsive from moment to moment in their scene.</td>
<td>Actor was SOMewhat honest and responsive from moment to moment in their scene.</td>
<td>Actor was RARELY honest and responsive from moment to moment in their scene.</td>
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</table>
Grading Scale:
A = Learning tasks completed in an exemplary fashion. Full availability.
B = Learning tasks completed proficiently. Above average availability.
C = Learning tasks completed basically. Partial availability.
D = Learning tasks unsatisfactorily completed. Low availability.
F = Learning tasks were incomplete. Mostly or completely unavailable.

**CALENDAR (Subject to class progress.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>KEY EXERCISES AND DISCUSSIONS</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADED TASKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>“Most of acting is reacting, and you only reacting if you’re listening. I think if you have a talent for acting, it is the talent for listening.” M. Freeman.</td>
<td>Introduction to Meisner Technique. The Passion of Joan of Arc!</td>
<td>Assign: Diction Test #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>“Falsehood is easy, truth so difficult.” T.S. Eliot</td>
<td>The Job of the OC Actor. Michael Cain Delivering Commercial Copy Meisner: Repetition game-hanging on to what you know is true.</td>
<td>Grade: Diction Test #1 Assign: Commercial Copy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>“The basis of all true acting is the reality of doing.” S. Meisner</td>
<td>Coached Repetition Using an Ear Prompter Meisner Repetition continued Meisner Master Class DVD</td>
<td>Grade: Diction test #1 Grade: Commercial Copy Assign: Ear Prompting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>“Who looks outside, dreams. Who looks inside, awakens.” Carl Jung</td>
<td>Meisner: The 3 Moments Game and Crossing the Bridge.</td>
<td>Grade: Ear Prompting Assign: Meisner Scene 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>“Only through unceasing hard work can you arrive at the place of true effortlessness!” L. Silverberg</td>
<td>Meisner: The nature and purpose of The Independent Activity</td>
<td>Grade: Meisner Scene 1 Assign: Independent Activity</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| 6 | Dwell not upon thy weariness, thy strength shall be according to the measure of thy desire.  
    proverb | Meisner Master Class DVD Part 2 | Grade: Meisner Scene 1 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | “One must desire something to be alive.”  
    Margaret Deland | Intro to Text Analysis  
    Playable Action  
    Cold Read Auditioning | Assign: Cold Read Auditioning  
    Assign: Diction Test #2 |
| 8 | “Treasure your relationships, not your possessions.”  
    Anthony J. D’Angelo | The “Business” of OC Acting Agents Managers Unions and Casting Directors. | Grade: Cold Read Audition  
    Grade: Diction Test #2  
    Assign: Teleprompter |
| 9 | “The difficulty of executing a playable action lies in dealing with that which is actually happening in the other person.”  
    D. Mamet | The Knock on the Door.  
    Meisner Improv Partner Scene | Grade: Teleprompter  
    Assign: Meisner Scene 2 |
| 10 | Ideally, every moment of a play/screenplay is based on what has happened in the moment preceding it.”  
    D Mamet | Preparing for and memorizing a Scripted Scene  
    The Squeaky Door.  
    The Emotion Trap | Grade: Meisner Scene 2  
    Assign: Scripted Partner Scene/Analysis |
| 11 | “A word does not start as a word—it is an end product which begins as an impulse, stimulated by attitude and behavior which dictate the need for expression.”  
    P. Brook | Practice for scripted partner scene  
    Work on Script Analysis. | Grade: Meisner Scene 2  
    Assign: Scripted Partner Scene/Analysis  
    Analysis Due when Partner Scene is Performed |
| 12 | “The words are the job of the playwright. The actor’s job is to bring these words to life through the vehicle of authentic human behavior.”  
    L. Silverberg | Practice for scripted partner scene  
    Work on Script Analysis  
    Finalize Reel | Grade: Scripted Partner Scene |
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<th>“Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart. Try to love the questions themselves. Do not now see the answers which cannot be given because you would not be able to live them. R.M. Rilke”</th>
<th>Preview Final Reel</th>
<th>Grade: Scripted Partner Scene</th>
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<td>13</td>
<td>“I think my biggest achievement is that after going through a rather difficult time, I consider myself comparatively sane. I’m proud of that.”</td>
<td>OC Acting as a career?! Ways to make a living while you try and make a difference!</td>
<td>Grade Missing Tasks Assign: Get people to come watch our showcase!!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>“To be nobody but yourself, … means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight, and never stop fighting…Does this sound dismal? It isn’t. It’s the most wonderful Life on earth. e.e. Cummings”</td>
<td></td>
<td>Showcase of Final Reels/Scenes!</td>
</tr>
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