Acting and Character Creation

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Course Description:
This course is an introduction to acting to experience how performance, movement, body, voice, etc. can be used to generate character performance ideas. The course will be used to help students create and build well-rounded characters for original stories they will produce in class.

Characterization, delivery, timing, expression, motivation, body language, and posture will be studied through improvisation exercises, storytelling activities, observation studies, and by examining the work of master actors.

Course Objective:
To understand acting and how it relates to storytelling, and how these skills can be used to bring characters to life; to experience FEELINGS and learn to TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS and INTUITION; to experience acting, movement, body language, tone, pace, rhythm, and apply in ways that generate performance ideas.

To create an original story and use acting exercises to discover performance ideas that bring your fictional characters to life.

Course Length: 6 weeks (1.5 hours sessions)

Course Competencies:
• Demonstrate the principles of acting, including timing, conflict, staging, and direction
• Create a unique, living, breathing character from the inside out
• Think more creatively, spontaneously.
• Transform acting principles into original characters you create for your stories.
• Feel more self-confident in public performance.

Note:
This is a performance class. Students should wear clothing that is comfortable for movement.

Materials & Supplies:
• Pen or pencil
• Paper
• spiral bound notebook
• folder for loose papers
• observation journal
**Weekly Outline:**

Session 1 – Intro to class, class objectives; What is effective acting? Bringing characters to life, the power of observation, improvisation games – getting to know you, word-by-word, word association; MINDCAMP storytelling exercise to generate an original story students will work with throughout the 6-weeks.

Session 2 – Creating a character, acting exercises; Conducted Story exercise; the parts of a narrative; CHARACTER RE-INVENTION game. Writing session – turn your observations into a new character and story - interpreting your observation. Make notes on what performance ideas were discovered today.

Session 3 – intro: context/motivation/subtext/objective – conditioning curiosity; scene reads/improvisation scenes; CONTEXT EXERCISE. Character fun (use drawing, writing exercises to create new characters, applying what’s been learned so far; Writing session – turn your observations into a new character and story - interpreting your observation. Make notes on what performance ideas were discovered today.

Session 4 – reading scenes for SUBTEXT; plus CONTEXT, MOTIVATION, SUBTEXT exercises, scene reads/improvisation scenes. Make notes on what performance ideas were discovered today.

Session 5 – continue CONTEXT, MOTIVATION, SUBTEXT exercises; Writing session – turn your observations into a new character and story. Lecture: Bringing Characters to Life. Make notes on what performance ideas were discovered today.

Session 6 – STUDENTS PERFORM ORIGINAL MONOLOGUE DEMONSTRATING ALL THAT’S BEEN LEARNED IN CLASS. Group work: scene reads demonstrating what has been learned and discovered in class.