Draft Course Syllabus

Title: The Art of Performance: Acting & Improvisation
Credits: 3
Instructor: Susan Palmer & Melissa Lourie
Meeting Dates and Times: July 14th-July 25th Mon-Thurs. 9-3:30
Location: Royal Tyler Theatre

Course Description
The goals and processes of improvisation and acting with text are intricately related. Develop and discover your authentic and creative response through improvisation and acting exercises in a safe, open environment. Using relaxation techniques, a variety of situation and character-based improvisation games, and basic principles of acting, students will gain a better understanding of how we communicate. We will strengthen presentation skills and explore spontaneous response to the world while having a truly delightful time. This class is suitable for those with experience in performance as well as those who have never performed at all.
In the morning sessions, students will focus on the art of improvisation and in the afternoons, students will focus on working with scripted material. Students will develop and perform a short monologue, and a scene assigned by the Instructor. The course will culminate in a performance that includes improvisation as well as scenes and selected monologues.

Course Goals:
- Introduce fundamental principles of improvisation
- Increase physical and vocal awareness and ability
- Explore relaxation techniques
- Gain **c**onfidence in front of group
- Develop an authentic and spontaneous response
- Strengthen concentration
- Have an opportunity to play
- Learn how to make specific choices in dealing with dramatic texts

Intended Learning Outcomes
- Understand the basic structure of a scene
- Learn about staging
- Implement the principles of improvisation including agreement, listening, sharing focus, building on information presented, concentration and staying in the present
- Develop new tools for creating character and establishing place
- Understand techniques that allow for authentic emotional response
- Understand and interpret dramatic text through performance

Course Policies
- Arrive on time
- Wear comfortable clothing in which you can easily move

- Have an open mind and be ready to focus and participate in all activities
- Improvisation can often make students feel exposed and vulnerable. I ask that anything that comes up in class stay in class.
- No negative comments. Help to create a safe and supportive environment

Attendance Policy
Missing 1 or more classes without approval will be an immediate failure.
Emergencies, illness and unforeseen inclement weather will be taken into consideration.

Contributions in class
The nature of this class is practical. Your participation is expected in all activities, discussions and assignments. We expect you to fully engage with the material even when it becomes challenging and difficult for you. We do hope that these challenges will only ignite your curiosity and cause you to delve even deeper into yourself.

Required Reading
Free Play: Improvisation in Life and Art by Stephen Nachmanovitch

Recommended Reading
The Second City Almanac of Improvisation by Anne Libera
Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre by Keith Johnstone
Improvisation for the Theatre by Viola Spolin

Grading
50% participation
10% assignments
40% Presentations (10% monologues, 15% improvisation, 15% scene work)