

GEORGIA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS
ON-CAMERA 1-CURRICULUM/SYLLABUS

Instructor: Sekou Laidlow

Course: On-Camera 1

Meets: List

Location: TBD

Goals and Objectives: The uniqueness of this class is the conservatory style actor training that supports fundamental on-camera technique. The student will be empowered with tools to work effectively on camera. Actors will embark on taking ownership of their craft and personal process.

Tardy Policy: It is important to be on time for class. Early arrivals are always welcome to get an early warm-up and prep for the day's work. If you do arrive late please come in quietly to avoid interrupting the class in session.

Class Dress: For classes 1-3 please come to class in comfortable nondescript clothing prepared to move freely and be on the floor. We encourage no makeup or jewelry if possible.

Curriculum Development: This content was developed by Sekou Laidlow for Studio 27 Talent Development.

ON-CAMERA 1-BREAKDOWN

CLASS 1: 'DISCOVER'-We will engage our primitive impulses as if it were the first time. The class will do exercises that engage the five senses. The key is to begin unlearning some of the patterns that block our first impulses and re-discover the childlike impulses that allow for engaging the work without inhibition. This is a

foundational acting exercise that encourages utilizing all of the senses in on-camera work.

CLASS 2: 'INSTINCT'- The goal here is to enliven our animal instincts so they are more accessible on-camera when needed. Each student will focus on exploring an animal that best relates to their personality. This work taps into the personalized primal instincts and sensibilities we each already possess.

CLASS 3: 'PLAY'- The goal here is for students to begin developing a sense of play as they approach all material. Students will become aware of their limitations before an audience. The instructor will guide students through taking risks that stretch students beyond those limitations.

CLASS 4: 'ACTION!'- The goal here is the practice of simply connecting with a scene partner using text. We will utilize breathing and listening exercises to allow students to begin establishing rapport with the camera and fellow actors.

CLASS 5: 'THE WORK'- Here we will focus on Scene Study & Character Analysis. This session will lay the groundwork for approaching scene work and incorporate all the training up to this point.

CLASS 6: 'THE WORK' Continued...- Here we will get a deeper exploration of character and scene study. The focus will be to explore the scene for more specificity and see how that work shows up on camera.

CLASS 7: 'CONTINUITY'- Through repetition we will focus on developing a technically consistent performance. Here we will introduce 'Continuity' to begin preparing students for what they are likely to encounter on set. Integrating this element builds confidence in the actors technical proficiency.

REMAINING CLASSES: The remaining classes will be On-Camera Scene Work. The actor will be presented in real time with various aspects of on-camera work. We will introduce new direction that challenges the students adaptability to changing circumstances they may encounter on set.

ON-CAMERA 1 CURRICULUM **WEEK 1**

CLASS 1: 'DISCOVER'

T: 10min-Introductions: Instructor will also talk about the level one class and what students should expect.

T:10-Full extended warm-up body/voice: We can do this warm-up for the first two or three classes. Then class will be asked to complete warm-up prior to class. Warm-ups include hitting all of the vowel sounds and most if not all of the consonants.

BREAK: 5min

T:30min:Discovery Work

T:5min-Debrief/Feedback -Offer homework for next class. Class will be encouraged to go home and do the discovery exercise in dim lighting for at least 1 1/2hrs in the next week. Homework for the next week: '**Instinct**'. Come to class in nondescript clothing. Ask the question: When you think about yourself what animal best describes you?

CLASS 2: 'INSTINCT'

T:10min-Full extended warm-up body/voice

T:10min-Instinct Work-Individual work (Approximately 5min per person)[See Below for details]

BREAK-5min

T:30min-Instinct Work-Complete Individual work then go into group work.[See Below for details]

T:5min-Debrief/Feedback- Offer homework for next class: Come in with nondescript clothing prepared to be open and play.

CLASS 3:'PLAY'

T:10 min: Short warm-up

T:15 min: Play work(Individual)

T:5min: BREAK

T:25min: Play work (As a group)

T:5min: Homework for next class. Breathing & Listening work. Come to class warmed up w/sides. Instructor will provide sides for students at the beginning of the next class. A simple scene with very little stage directions is preferable. Instructors can use scenes that fit the profile.

CLASS 4: 'ACTION!'

T:5min: Student lead warm-ups- Sides will be given to class after warm-up.

T:25min: Breathing & Listening Exercise (No Camera)

BREAK: 5min

T:25: Breathing & Listening Exercise (Camera)

T:5 Debrief/Feedback Offer homework for next week: Have them come in with sides they were just given memorized and ready to go on-camera at beginning of class. They

will come in and watch themselves on-camera. They can take personal notes on what works and what could be better. They should come in warmed up.

CLASS 5: 'THE WORK'

T:5min: Student lead warm-ups

T:15min: Watch scenes: Class will take personal notes on their performances (All scenes will be given to actors and archived).

BREAK: 5min

T: 30min: Second round of scenes shot on-camera: Here we will shoot scenes looking for more specificity. Here the instructor will stop and go to offer notes.

T:5min: Homework: Actors will come in prepared to do same scene one last time including all of the new notes. (Come in warmed up)

WEEK 2

CLASS 6: 'THE WORK' Continued...

T: 25min: Shoot scenes

BREAK: 5min

T:15min: On-Camera Technique (Angles, Shots, Frame, etc)

T:10min: New Scenes: Instructors will present new scenes here. Students will do one round of Breathing & Listening exercise.

T: 5min: Homework: Come in with new scenes prepared to go on camera using everything we learned so far. Students will bring a prop relevant to their scene. We will shoot scenes twice in next class. Continuity will be discussed and integrated into scenes slowly.

CLASS 7: 'CONTINUITY'

T: 25min:Shoot scenes & integrate continuity: We will stop and start. Actors will be challenged to stay grounded while integrating props and continuity. The focus of this class will still be the acting. The integration of continuity will be secondary.

BREAK: 5min

T:25min: Shoot scenes & go deeper. (There should be a bit more ease shooting scenes with all of the elements included.

T:5min: Debrief & Homework: Give class new sides to be memorized with all new information included. They have the option of coming to the next class in costume. At the very least they should wear shoes that best help them feel in character.

CLASS 8: 'REPETITION'

T:5min: Student lead warm-ups

T:20min: Shoot scenes w/notes

BREAK:5min

T:25min: Shoot scenes w/notes (Go deeper) Here instructors are free to offer improv exercises that infuse new life into the scene.

T:5min: Debrief & Homework: Come in w/ same scene and be prepared for some twists. Students will be challenged to explore and find nuances that were missed and come in prepared to shoot scene again.

CLASS 9: 'REPETITION W/A TWIST'

T:25 min: Run scenes w/a Twist: The Twist Here Instructor will have class either make choices that play against the logic of the scene, or improv, preferably right before each individual scene starts). The goal is to have the scene infused with play and freedom that illuminates the scene. Instructor has the freedom to offer creatively whatever they feel ignites, deepens, and integrates freedom. Important here not to let them know ahead of time what you are going to do.

BREAK: 5min

T:25 min: Run scenes w/a Twist - Option: Students can paraphrase the scene once or twice and then go into literal reading of the scene.

T:5min: Debrief & Homework: Class will be given another scene and come in fully prepared to record at the beginning of next class. Class will come in with a handle on the scene that demonstrates their growth. By now they should have a more detailed first take.

CLASS 10: 'LAYERS'

T:25min: Shoot scenes w/notes: The goal is to keep layering in detail

BREAK: 5min

T:25min: Shoot scenes w/notes

T:5min: Debrief & Homework(Teacher will offer other "twists" to layer in the work. We will also be addressing continuity and elements to strengthen performance).

ON-CAMERA 1 CURRICULUM

CONTENT BREAKDOWN

WEEK 1

CLASS 1: 'DISCOVER'

T: 10min-Introductions: Instructor will also talk about the level one class and what students should expect.

T:10-Full extended warm-up body/voice: We can do this warm-up for the first two or three classes. Then class will be asked to complete warm-up prior to class. Warm-ups include hitting all of the vowel sounds and most if not all of the consonants.

BREAK: 5min

T:30min:Discovery Work

T:5min-Debrief/Feedback -Offer homework for next class. Class will be encouraged to go home and do the discovery exercise in dim lighting for at least 1 1/2hrs in the next week. Homework for the next week: '**Instinct**'. Come to class in nondescript clothing. Ask the question: When you think about yourself what animal best describes you?

- **WHAT HAPPENS IN DISCOVER: Primal:**This session is done in dim lighting if possible. Everyone starts on the floor, on their back. Eyes closed. The idea is forget (breath out) all that you know and understand about the civilized world as much as possible. Follow breath, in through nose out through mouth. After 7 to 10 minutes of being still you can begin. Each actor will begin very slow movement around the room. They are imagining coming out of the water onto land for the very first time. They have never experienced elements or life at all. They are the first of their kind. They don't have or understand language or even sound. They don't understand the concept of human or animal. This is a first for everything. They begin noticing and discovering "things" for the first time. During the first 15 minutes of just discovering and seeing "things" they will not engage or see any other moving thing (the other actors). After 15 minutes they will begin noticing each other. They can use all of their senses with the other actors but they can't touch. During this time actors will begin exploring sound and possibly the beginnings of language. Everyone is relating to the other as a first time experience. The challenge will be to impose already known ideas and to engage from a place of knowing. We will encourage actors to be as innocent as possible and to let go of inhibitions.

CLASS 2: 'INSTINCT'

T:10min-Full extended warm-up body/voice

T:10min-Instinct Work-Individual work (Approximately 5min per person)[See Below for details]

BREAK-5min

T:30min-Instinct Work-Complete Individual work then go into group work.[See Below for details]

T:5min-Debrief/Feedback- Offer homework for next class: Come in with nondescript clothing prepared to be open and play.

- **WHAT HAPPENS IN INSTINCT:** Everyone come to class with an animal that best speaks to their personality. Each person will have an opportunity to explore their animal in class individually and as a group. In the first half of class actors will start on the floor as they did in 'Discover'. 5 to 7 minutes on the floor in neutral is sufficient. Next, using their imagination, they will find their own space in the room to establish a habitat to exist in. During this time actors cannot interact with other actors. They will explore the movement, habits, environment, and instincts of their designated animal. For the second half of class actors will interact with the other actors/animals for the first time. Here actors will experience what it's like to co-exist with other animals which includes being territorial, protective, fearful, etc. In this class we want to enliven any instincts that remain dormant. The goal is to become heightened in our awareness of these instincts so they become more readily accessible on-camera.

CLASS 3:'PLAY'

T:10 min: Warm-up

T:15 min: Play work(Individual)

T:5min: BREAK

T:25min: Play work (As a group)

T:5 min: Homework for next class. Breathing & Listening work. Come to class warmed up. Instructor will provide sides for students at the beginning of class. A simple scene with very little stage directions is preferable. Instructors can use scenes that fit the profile.

- **WHAT HAPPENS IN PLAY:** Actors will have an opportunity to do various exercises that inspire a sense of play. The goal is for students to become aware of their limitations before an audience. The instructor will guide students through taking risks that stretch them beyond those limitations. The various exercises will involve actors being creative and emotionally open before the class. This will be done individually and as a group depending on class size. Instructors are welcome to use improv exercises that fit this profile.

CLASS 4: 'ACTION!'

T:5min: Student lead warm-ups- Sides will be given to class after warm-up.

T:25min: Breathing & Listening Exercise (No Camera)

BREAK: 5min

T:25: Breathing & Listening Exercise (Camera)

T:5 Debrief/Feedback Offer homework for next week: Have them come in with sides they were just given memorized and ready to go on-camera at beginning of class. They will come in and watch themselves on-camera. They can take personal notes on what works and what could be better. They should come in warmed up.

NOTE: First round of scenes shot on-camera: There will be minimum to no feedback for this round. Scenes will be recorded for the first time with the focus on breathing, listening, and allowing for moment to moment discovery. Their will be basic instruction of simply going after what you want and allowing new information to land. What we want to see in these takes a clear connection to the scene partner and a basic understanding of the scene.

- **WHAT HAPPENS IN ACTION: Breathing & Listening:** This will be our first opportunity to use text. Sides will be chosen by the instructor. Two actors will face one another in close proximity, about two feet away from each other. This will be done in neutral mask (No facial expressions or lifting of eyebrows). Actor 1 will say their line. Actor 2 will repeat the end of their scene partners line as a question and then begin saying their line. When an actor's scene partner is speaking they must keep their attention on their scene partner without looking down at their lines. The listening actor must breathe deeply and take in everything their partner is saying. Then the listening actor will begin reading their lines. This will continue until scene is over. Focus is to be fully connected with your scene partner by listening and connecting with the rhythm of the others breath. There should be minimum or no inflection in the voice. Instructor will give notes on strengths and things to work on in this area. (For example: movement of hands, fingers, legs. Eyebrow movement and inflections in voice). Instructor can put scotch tape above the students eyebrows so actors stay in neutral mask. This challenges the actor to stay connected to their center and not to escape the moment by lifting eyebrows or using other physical gestures. Each pair will do this exercise twice, going deeper in their connection. The second round of readings will be recorded on camera.

CLASS 5: 'THE WORK'

T:5min: Student lead warm-ups

T:15min: Watch scenes: Class will take personal notes on their performances (All scenes will be given to actors and archived).

BREAK: 5min

T: 30min: Second round of scenes shot on-camera: Here we will shoot scenes looking for more specificity. Here the instructor will stop and go to offer notes.

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WEEK 2

CLASS 6: 'THE WORK' Continued...

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T:15min: On-Camera Technique (Angles, Shots, Frame, etc)

T:10min: New Scenes: Instructors will present new scenes here. Students will do one round of Breathing & Listening exercise.

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CITATIONS

Moss, Larry. *The Intent to Live: Achieving Your True Potential as an Actor*. Vancouver, B.C.: Langara College, 2019.

Skinner, Edith. *Speak with Distinction*. United States: Applause Theatre & Cinema Books, 2000.

Yakim, Moni, and Muriel Broadman. *Creating a Character: a Physical Approach to Acting*. New York: Applause, 1993.

Adler, Stella, and Howard Kissel. *Stella Adler: the Art of Acting*. New York: Applause, 2001.