

# COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

(as of September 2018)

## ACTING

### Acting Foundations

**AFO.101**

Acting Foundations offers introductory practical instruction into the actor's craft. The course utilizes techniques and practices from a range of contemporary theatrical pedagogies to provide the student with a variety of practical touchstones and entry points into the actor's craft. The in-studio work will consist of a range of exercises, practices and projects focused on training the actor's presence, reactivity, impulse, imagination, mind-body connection and their complicity as an ensemble. The in-studio work will be augmented by weekly readings on the evolution of 20th Century actor training. The students will write papers critically appraising the weekly readings and reflecting on them in relation to their in-class training.

### Scene Study

Scene Study is a core course and students must obtain 65% or more in order to move forward.

#### Scene Study I

**SCS.101**

A studio course designed to introduce basic acting techniques. Character and text analysis are introduced and students learn how to apply this analysis in their written work and in performance. Students will be asked to prepare and explore one monologue and one two-person process scene. They will be asked to assess their explorations using Shurtleff's *Audition* guideposts.

#### Scene Study 2

**SCS.102**

A studio course focused on deepening an understanding of the fundamentals of the acting process introduced in Scene Study I. Students must prepare written workbooks in order to further refine application of character and text work in rehearsal and performance.

#### Scene Study 3

**SCS.203**

A studio course focused on furthering the skills developed in the previous two terms concentrating on "intention and action" and integrating text analysis skills, relationship, character development and personal process in rehearsal and performance. The students will prepare and perform a contemporary monologue and will all work on the same three-person contemporary scene from a Canadian play.

#### Scene Study 4

**SCS.204**

A studio course focused on ensuring that students have achieved full comprehension of basic techniques of character and text work, emotional grounding and connection, and arc of play. Students work on one polished monologue and one three- or four-person scene. Monologues and scenes are presented in a final juried performance to assess feasibility, professionalism, talent, commitment and technique. Students learn to apply technique to an entire play through arc work.

#### Scene Study 5

**SCS.305**

A studio course focused on Audition Technique through workshops, exercises and the continued building of audition material. Students will perform three new monologues throughout the term and several auditions, including cold reads and improvisations.

## **Scene Study 6**

### **SCS.306**

A studio course designed to prepare students for professional industry panels. Each student will prepare three monologues and participate in rehearsal process-developing exercises. They will also receive an individual coaching session working with their chosen piece. At the culmination of the course, immediately following their presentations, students will receive feedback from their instructor and the professional panel which usually includes casting directors, agents, artistic directors, and professional performers.

## **Improvisation**

### **Improvisation I: Clown**

#### **IMP.101**

An introduction to the form and skills of Gaulier Clown, the study of showing up, being open, sensitive, vulnerable, human and ridiculous.

### **Improvisation 2: Scenic Improv**

#### **IMP.102**

Improvisation fundamentals including the power of observation, risk-taking, giving and receiving offers while creating character, environment and narrative from a place of impulse.

## **Film and Television**

### **Film and Television 3**

#### **FTV.203**

An introduction to acting for the camera. Students learn how to create believable characters for a camera-sized performance and are introduced to the technical terminology of the film and television industry.

### **Film and Television 4**

#### **FTV.204**

An intermediate level of acting for the camera. Students explore scene study work using master, medium and close-up shots. Students are also introduced to the more technical aspects of the filmmaking process.

### **Film and Television 5: Voiceover**

#### **FTV.305**

Voiceover will introduce students to the skills necessary to excel in the world of voiceover. It will focus on microphone technique, breaking down a script, and audition etiquette. The goal will be to give students an opportunity to familiarize themselves and experiment with approaches to commercial and web voiceover, animation, narration and audio books.

### **Film and Television 6**

#### **FTV.306**

Building upon principles acquired in Film 3 and 5, this class facilitates the actor's transition to auditioning for work in the Film and TV industry. The focus is on recreating a real audition scenario in which students are given "breakdowns and sides" in preparation for a mock in-class audition. Auditions for commercials, TV series, film, webisodes, Movies of the Week, and dance auditions for film/TV are included.

## **Voice and Text**

The voice must be flexible and responsive in order to realize the rigorous demands of acting. In Voice and Text, students will explore techniques that amalgamate vocal, physical and emotional expression with text. Students will expand their range of emotional expression using both physical technique and vocal development.

Numerous voice, text, and movement techniques are examined including the work of Moshe Feldenkrais, Jacques Lecoq, Etienne Decroux, Rudolf Laban, Moshe Johnstone, Viola Spolin, Anne Dennis, Linda Putnam, Jerzy Grotowski, Erika Batdorf, Jill Courtney, Paula Thompson, David

Smukler, Patsy Rodenburg, Cicely Berry, Kristin Linklater, Alexander Technique, Arthur Lessac, Edith Skinner, Evangeline Machlin, and the Roy Hart Theatre.

### **Voice and Text I**

### **TXT.101**

An introduction to physical anatomy, focus, breath and voice for stage. Students will apply physical technique in connection to articulation and an increased ability to communicate emotions through text.

### **Voice and Text 2**

### **TXT.102**

An introduction to vocal anatomy. Students will continue to refine diction, breath and vocal technique with a concentration on stamina and focus as it relates to performance. There will also be self-assessment and a more detailed examination of emotional expression.

### **Voice and Text 3**

### **TXT.203**

An advanced exploration of vocal techniques. Students will develop a process by which they approach and develop spoken material (i.e. poetry) for performance in accordance with their current physical and vocal experience level. Students are required to submit a paper that demonstrates awareness of body and breath as it relates to the acting work and will have written tests and homework appropriate to term material.

### **Voice, Text and Movement 4**

### **TXT.204**

Physical and vocal techniques are applied directly to text and script analysis in this course. Students apply technique in preparation for term-end jury monologues and scenes. Continued development of alignment, breath release and support, diction, and resonance should increase ability to “activate” the textual clues. Students also develop their own vocal and physical warm-up appropriate to their juries.

### **Voice and Text 5**

### **TXT.305**

A coaching course that explores the use of voice and text in the context of a rehearsal process and formal performances. The voice component is tailored to the vocal requirements of the show, including, but not exclusive to, warm-up, projection, vocal support of character choices, exploration of registers, pace, accent, intonation, articulation and clarity. Students will delve into textual clues to discover meaning, clarity of thought, punctuation, and idea development.

### **Voice, Text and Movement 6**

### **TXT.306**

Students will continue to pursue healthy use of body and voice for character analysis, concluding with the panel audition experience. In preparation for a professional career, students will write a paper summarizing their current warm up, including knowledge of their own approaches and skills in application to their overall performances.

## **Movement**

### **Movement I**

### **MOV.101**

Students will deepen their kinesthetic sense and overall expression through somatic, conditioning and improvisational practices emphasizing the interrelatedness of the mind, body, and identity. Various components will be combined for the students to learn and explore self-expression, body awareness, and dynamic range of movement. The movement training will include theories and practices in the Alexander Technique, BMC (Body-Mind-Centering), Pilates, Contact Improvisation, Action Theatre, Viewpoints and structured improvisation. Students will research how to re-direct their movements and thoughts to access their underlying support and free patterns of tension to prevent injuries. Improvised and impulse created movement exercises will draw on the

spontaneous physical interaction while dancing in solos, duets and ensembles. Movement exercises will engage the students' imagination to access more presence and aliveness while performing.

### **Movement 2: Stage Combat**

### **MOV.102**

An introduction to unarmed physical stage combat for the actor. Students will develop the physical understanding of how to keep themselves and their partner safe during a stage fight. Students will explore the movement concepts and theatrical tools required to create the illusion of force, impact and abandon. Students will work toward connecting their performance of safe technique with the vocal and physical aggression needed for a believable fight scene.

### **Movement 3: Laban**

### **MOV.203**

Students will explore their inner impulses to move, deepening their kinesthetic sense and emotional expressions through improvised individual and ensemble work. Rudolf Laban's concepts, the Chekhov technique, Grotowski work, contact improv and others will be used as a framework. Students will learn and experience a vocabulary of movement that will enable them to learn more about their personal preferences in movement and how they move in relationship to the world around them. Students will apply and align their new skills with aspects of Shakespeare 3 to deepen their connection to character. Through exercises and assignments, students will be encouraged to use their new observational skills to ignite their imaginations.

## **VOCAL**

RCPA vocal instructors teach a healthy singing technique that is based on the same principles of breath, support, placement and vocal health that is taught widely in opera schools where the repertoire is exclusively classical. We then add the elements of style particular to musical theatre and pop repertoire, such as healthy mixing (AKA belting).

Students are encouraged to work on repertoire that suits their natural vocal talent and style. We always begin with more traditional musical theatre repertoire that is closely aligned with the classical vocal music of the same decade. Note: All music must be brought to each class.

### **Singing Lessons 1–6**

### **SGL.101, 102, 203, 204, 305, 306**

Singing lessons focus on the basic functioning of the human voice. Students are taught, through vocal exercises, how to identify and train the muscle systems that control the vocal folds in order to develop a healthy instrument. Previous vocal misuse will be identified and correction initiated. Breathing, posture, vowel production and diction will be addressed. As the voice develops, the student will work at transferring the healthy sounds he/she makes in vocalizing to repertoire.

Each student in Terms 1–4 receives eleven half-hour weekly lessons; in Term 5, eight half-hour weekly lessons and in Term 6, six half-hour weekly lessons. Students also receive coaching sessions with pianists who assist with learning repertoire.

### **Musical Theatre Presentation (MTP)**

Music Theatre Presentation (MTP) is a core course and students must obtain 65% or more in order to move forward. In MTP, both acting and vocal presentational skills are combined. Students are required to have selected songs prior to the commencement of each of MTP 2, 3, 4, 5. They must then show their choices to both their tutorial and MTP instructors who must reach consensus

before a song is further developed. Students may carry forward or change songs not worked on in MTP to the next term.

### **MTP 1**

### **MTP.101**

An introduction to solo singing, this graded course begins with a discussion and demonstration of the basics of vocal technique. All students will sing the same portion of one song. Topics will include how to breathe, warm-up, practice and form vowels and consonants. Later in the term, each student will perform one complete song, chosen from traditional repertoire, from memory. Each student will sing twice.

### **MTP 2**

### **MTP.102**

A continuation of MTP 1, this course concentrates on concepts of basic storytelling, relationship, moment before, clear connection to a scene partner, and keys to success, i.e., backstage/performance/rehearsal terms and etiquette. The goal for students is to begin incorporating the concepts of Scene Study into their songs. Students will be encouraged to make clear and bold choices. Repertoire should concentrate on traditional repertoire. At least one presentation of a traditional musical theatre song is required before more contemporary musical theatre is presented. Pop songs will not be presented in MTP until Term 4. Students are required to sing MTP repertoire in singing lessons prior to presenting it in MTP classes.

### **MTP 3**

### **MTP.203**

A continuation of MTP 2, the first half of this course continues the creation of an audition book. Students will start to incorporate more complex repertoire. In the second half of the term, students study a Musical and perform songs in their vocal range from this Musical. The following elements will be addressed: beat-by-beat tactical analysis/playable intentions, and emotional journey of character. Students are required to sing their MTP repertoire in singing lessons prior to presenting it in MTP classes.

### **MTP 4**

### **MTP.204**

A continuation of MTP 3, this course expands the audition book to develop a well-rounded repertoire of four to six audition pieces. Cut versions of songs, also known as "16-bar cuts" will be introduced. This course prepares the student for the Fourth Term jury, which involves a presentation to Faculty at the end of the term. Students will learn how to establish a clear intention, conflict, moment before, why now, and emotional and tactical journey for each song. Pop songs may be presented. Each student must have two contrasting songs prepared for the jury; songs must be approved by their tutorial instructor. The second song must include a 16-bar version. Concept of CARD summary will be introduced. Students are required to sing their MTP repertoire in singing lessons prior to presenting it in MTP classes.

### **MTP 5**

### **MTP.305**

A continuation of MTP 4, this course will focus on Audition Technique. The slate, interacting with the casting panel, appropriate material choice, and the audition "book" are all discussed as they relate to the professional audition experience. All students will have explored a complex piece (Stephen Sondheim, Jason Robert Brown, etc.) and a pop song by the end of this term. The appropriate repertoire for the auditions for the Sixth Term musical will be addressed. CARD work from MTP 4 will be continued. A complete audition book with at least five contrasting songs is required by end of term.

### **MTP 6**

### **MTP.306**

This course serves as a final preparation for the students' emergence into the arena of professional auditions. Each student will perform at least twice for the class. Each student will finalize repertoire for their audition book to include only material which is appropriate for professional auditions. Songs from previous terms may be reworked in light of the student's increased skills. The class culminates in a Panel audition.

## **Choir**

**CHO.101, 102, 203, 204, 305, 306**

Choral singing provides singers the opportunity to develop their skills in an ensemble experience. Musicianship, part singing and group blend of the ensemble is emphasized, in addition to healthy vocal production.

All Fourth Term students must also complete a scale and interval exercise (major scale, harmonic minor scale a selection of intervals) prior to their Jury. This will take place separately from regular class time and be administered by the Division Head or other examiner.

Choirs explore the fundamentals of choral singing, with an emphasis on the practical application of music theory in sight and ear training. Students work on advancing their music reading skills. Students will learn how to break down and count rhythms in simple and compound time and mark music accordingly, as well as apply all tempo, dynamic, and articulation markings as indicated on printed music. Ongoing attention will be paid to the blend and balance of the ensemble, as well as to language and diction. Each term, choirs will work on two or three selections, and prepare a song for presentation during the term

## **DANCE**

RCPA offers several levels of dance in ballet, tap, and jazz. A student's skill level is assessed during orientation on the first day of their first term. Students are then placed in a skill level that matches their experience. Developing skills in the discipline of dance is not only essential to a career in the performing arts but also enhances skills in other disciplines.

### **Ballet 1–6**

**BAL.101, 102, 203, 204, 305, 306**

Ballet develops muscular control, performance presentation and discipline. Discipline is one of the most important factors of dance, and aids in the ability to focus, comprehend and digest the complete movement of the body. Students will learn ballet steps and terminology and adapt them to their body to produce not only a natural flow, but also grace of movement. Cecchetti methodology will be taught.

### **Tap**

**TAP. 203, 204, 305, 306**

Tap dance is a form of physical artistic expression that can be applied in a variety of ways. Through choreography and improvisation, students will apply tap technique to music from classical, jazz, pop and musical theatre genres.

### **Jazz**

**JAZ. 101, 102, 203, 204, 305, 306**

Modern jazz technique strives to achieve competence in movement, communicative possibilities, and correctness of posture. Technical requirements focus on strength, endurance and flexibility and are associated with a developed sense of movement designed to produce a variety of emotions. All variety of jazz dance is covered, and depending on the course level, include an examination of Broadway/Musical Theatre, contemporary, lyrical, latin/salsa, hip-hop, and urban dance.

## **THEORY**

### **Musical Theatre History Lecture 1**

**MTH.101**

This course explores the evolution of musicals from the early twentieth century to current leading composers and writers. (i.e., from Gershwin to Menken). Students will listen to excerpts and discuss structure, historical context, and musical styles and idioms. The course provides a comprehensive overview of musical theatre repertoire.

### **Theatre History Lecture 2**

**THH.102**

An exploration of Western theatre from ancient Greece to the twentieth century. Employing important dramatic texts, students will examine the evolution of Western theatre based on a variety of historic movements. Topics to be examined will include performance style, staging practices, philosophical and theoretical underpinnings, historical context, relevance to contemporary acting, etc. This course operates in conjunction with Theatre History Rehearsal I.

### **Dance History Lecture 2**

**DCH.102**

This course will provide students with an historical overview of theatrical dance from the Court of Louis the XIV to the present. The content focuses mostly on twentieth-century developments in dance, tracing the lineage of ballet, jazz, tap, modern dance and dance in musical theatre. In addition, discussions will include the contributions of significant choreographers, specific works and renowned companies to the development of dance. Through lectures, readings and videos, students will learn to understand, critically examine and appreciate the theatrical dance forms they see and practice today. The end-of-term project for this course will consist of choreographing excerpts, with fellow students, from the many dance forms studied. Partnering will also be explored.

### **Music Theory**

The Music Theory program is divided into three levels. Theory courses are designed to explore the elements of music theory as they apply to musical theatre performance. Knowledge of music theory enables students to more efficiently learn music for repertoire-building, coachings, tutorials, rehearsals, and presentations. Required reading (provided): Alfred's "Essentials of Music Theory".

There will be a mid-term exam, final exam and keyboard exam in each level as well as regular homework assignments. Students must receive a passing mark of 70% in order to advance to the next level.

#### **Theory I**

**THE.101**

In Theory I, all basic aspects of musical notation—staff, clefs, notes, pitches, note values, time signatures, etc.—are covered, as well as the notes on a keyboard. Students will be expected to identify notes in treble and bass clefs in written music, as well as play them on a keyboard.

#### **Theory 2**

**THE.102**

Theory 2 helps prepare students to develop proficiency in the musical preparation of ensemble and solo repertoire. Building upon concepts learned in Theory I, students will expand their basic understanding of music notation, theory and sight-singing.

#### **Theory 3**

**THE.203**

Theory 3 builds upon the material covered in Theory I and 2, and focuses on dynamic, tempo and articulation markings as well as chords, triads (major, minor, augmented, diminished), dominant 7<sup>th</sup>

chords, chord inversions, chord progressions, scale degree names, introduction to figured bass, and minor scales. The course culminates with a transposition assignment.

It is mandatory that RCPA students graduate with a Theory 3 level of understanding. If a student has had theory training prior to attending RCPA, they may circumvent theory courses if they pass a written test taken at orientation. If qualified, students are not required to attend lectures. Alternatively, they are invited to repeat Theory 3. No reimbursement is available.

## **WORKSHOPS**

### **Professional Development 5**

**PRO.305**

A series of professional development workshops aimed at preparing the students for the business side of a career in the performing arts. Sample workshops include an introduction to Casting Workbook, Accounting For Actors, Mic Technique, How to do Professional Dance Calls, etc.

### **Guest Panel 6**

**PAN.306**

The final course requirement in the sixth term is Guest Panel. This is an opportunity to introduce graduating students to industry professionals and for our students to experience and receive feedback based on professional standards. Panelists (3–6 professional actors, directors, agents, and producers from the world of film, television and theatre) assess the work of sixth-term students who perform monologues and songs in an audition-like setting for both the faculty and the guest audition panel. The panel and faculty then meet one-on-one with the students in order to give each student relevant feedback on their performance for the panel. Prior to meeting the panel, the students are coached one-on-one by RCPA faculty.

## **PERFORMANCE PROJECTS**

### **Musical Theatre History Rehearsal 2**

**REH.102**

This course covers ensemble fundamentals—learning to work together, retain spacing, acquiring an awareness of body line, and vocal harmonies—all while performing sung, choreographed and staged pieces that give an overview of twentieth-century musical theatre styles. The emphasis is on ensemble work. This rehearsal practicum is a core course and students must obtain 65% or more in order to move forward. In Terms 1 to 4, it is the process that counts rather than the final product. This project presentation will be shown at the end of term to the faculty and student body only.

### **Shakespeare 3**

**SHK.203**

An introduction to performing Shakespeare. Students will learn about playwright William Shakespeare's world and his work. They will participate in exercises exploring text analysis and performance skills using sonnets, monologues, and scene study all written by Shakespeare. The final presentation will demonstrate the skills that they have acquired throughout the course. This rehearsal practicum is a core course and students must obtain 65% or more in order to move forward. In Terms 1 to 4, it is the process that counts rather than the final product. This project presentation will be shown at the end of term to the faculty and student body only.

### **Musical Theatre Lab 4**

**MTL.204**

This course will focus on the integration of all training thus far through the development of various original musical theatre pieces created with the guidance of a professional director and composer to be showcased at the end of term. Students are expected to participate in the creative process by sharing ideas, writing dialogue, writing song lyrics in collaboration with their assigned partners and their instructors with the goal of creating the beginnings of a presentable piece of musical theatre.

Emphasis will be placed on initiative, maturity, professionalism, integration and process. Music Theatre Lab is considered a core course. Students must obtain a minimum of 65% in this course to move forward to the next term.

### **Play Production 5**

**PLA.305**

**Productions are core courses and students must obtain 65% or more in order to move forward.**

In Play Production 5, the student participates in the mounting of a full-length stage play. Casting directors, agents and other relevant professionals will be invited to attend by the students. Students will exercise their understanding of the actor's process. They will exhibit their skills of professionalism, their ability to take and apply director's notes, apply character development to a specific role(s), and to demonstrate that they are able to learn blocking.

The production is selected in accordance with the specific needs of each term. Casting will be determined by the director in much the same way as in the profession, usually through an audition. Emphasis is on showcasing the strengths of the students. There is no guarantee that everyone will have a lead role.

Class members will also be involved in the production process and will be required to document the entire experience in a series of assignments and journal entries. Some additional duties assigned include: Assistant Stage Management, Production Management, Sound Design, Asst. Musical Direction, Dance Captain, Costumes, Props, Publicity, Makeup, and Social Media.

### **Musical Production 6**

**MUS.306**

**Productions are core courses and students must obtain 65% or more in order to move forward.**

Musical Production 6 is a five-week, full-time rehearsal process leading to a fully-staged production of a musical that is presented publicly in the sixth week. Casting directors, agents and other relevant professionals will be invited to attend by the students. The process will allow advanced students to experience all aspects of casting, rehearsing, and mounting a production which will prepare them for the professional world of musical theatre. Aspects of ensemble, personal acting work, technical production and professional conduct will be covered as the cast is guided from day one of the rehearsal process to the final presentation. The production is selected in accordance with the specific needs of each term. Casting will be determined by the director in much the same way as in the profession, usually through an audition. Emphasis is on showcasing the strengths of the students. In other words, there is no guarantee that everyone will have a lead role.