

TART I20: VOICE AND PERFORMANCE  
INSTRUCTOR: KEVIN CRAWFORD  
CONTACT HOURS: 60  
CREDIT HOURS: 3

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is designed for the student who is engaged in the specific demands of physical theatre and masked performance. The student actor will be led through a carefully guided but very thorough vocal and physical warm-up, right up to performance. A series of rigorous exercises and improvisations will stimulate the students' integration of voice, body and imagination and will extend the boundaries of vocal potential to explore the monstrous, the grotesque and the ridiculous. Students will develop greater range, flexibility, sustaining power and emotional presence through concentrating on the sung sound and systematically challenging their boundaries in terms of pitch and quality.

This approach to the vocal and verbal training of the actor is derived from the work of Alfred Wolfsohn and Roy Hart in England, and works to broaden the parameters of what is possible for the human voice, thus offering a protean raw material for the investigation of character and voice in physical theatre and mask work.

This vocabulary of vocal and verbal skills will serve us for the challenge of vocal presence in Commedia dell'arte. Not only must the actor mold his physical expression to the mask, but also they need to find the vocal quality that fits with the character of the mask. This course provides the foundation for creating a specific vocal design for mask work.

A choice of textual support, including monologues, short scenes and some Greek choruses and extracts from Shakespeare will provide the material for small-scale studies and presentations both in class and to a wider public within the school.

### **JOURNALS + ASSIGNMENTS**

We consider keeping an up-to-date, accurate journal of the training—and artistic and cultural reflections that it inspires—to be an essential element of each student's journey through the semester.

These journals are not intended for public dissemination, but the Program Director will at his discretion ask to have access to them at specific points in the semester to help evaluate students' progress.

The journal may take several forms, including the literary, the visual and the photographic. The ultimate objective of this task is to produce a coherent record for each individual student that serves as a point of crystallization for his or her artistic and intellectual growth.

In addition, the Program Director will set short written assignments at key moments in the semester so that students can articulate clearly their progress and demonstrate comprehension of fundamental principles in the training. The Program Director will provide students with a full calendar of assignments.

### **OBJECTIVES**

This course develops an approach to voice work that leads students through rigorous warm-up procedures to a full performance presence. Students will develop their own vocal potential within a personalized approach that seeks to promote a synergy of vocal, physical and imaginative energies. The course facilitates connections between the sound, the word and the elaboration of character, particularly within the context of mask work and Commedia dell'arte.

### OUTCOMES

Students will be able to explore vocal extremes within a defined and controlled context of good practice. They will acquire the fundamentals of a technique for vocal and textual training that prepares them directly for performance, as well as the skills to approach vocal characterization within mask work and Commedia dell'arte.

Students will encounter a range of texts that promote emotional and imaginative engagement with their voices within the challenge of presentation and will have the tools to develop the vocal design for extreme characters and heightened emotional moments.

### SUGGESTED TEXT

*The Radiant Performer*, H. Wesley Balk, University of Minnesota Press  
*Freeing Shakespeare's Voice*, Kristin Linklater, Theatre Communications Group  
*The Actor and the Text*, Cicely Berry, Virgin Books  
*Text in Action*, Cicely Berry, Virgin Books  
*Dark Voices*, Noah Pikes, Spring Journal Connecticut  
*An Actor Adrift*, Yoshi Oida, Methuen

**Please note:** Students are not required to obtain the suggested text.

### MEANS OF EVALUATION

Attendance and class preparation	60%
In-class presentations	25%
Journal	15%