

## **Course Syllabus**

### **Interactive Performance with Media for Actors, Physical Theater Performers and Movers**

\* Some prior experience with performance, physical movement, and stage directions is helpful but not required.

\*The ideal number of students in the class is between 6 and 15.

\*Students will work solo or in groups of two.

Media walls and mapped projections are now essential to successful theater productions. From Broadway shows like Beetlejuice and Frozen to The Beatles LOVE by Cirque Du Soleil, and independent performances like Jeremy McQueen's "Wild" from the Black Iris Project, moving images enhance storytelling, transforming sets and creating magical moments. These elements captivate audiences accustomed to the fast-paced world of film and television. However, to fully optimize media-enhanced live performances, it is essential to create transformative interactions between media and performers, resulting in dynamic cause-and-effect experiences that make both the performer and media content invaluable to the story.

"Interactive Performance with Media for Actors, Physical Theater Performers, and Movers" is a course designed to guide performers in building effective interactive relationships with digital media and moving images on stage. Students will explore various methods of creating original performances using projections of digital media, animation, and film. The goal is for performance-focused students to craft clear narratives through physical movement, establishing an interactive relationship between themselves as live performers and the media they share the stage with.

Students must consider aspects of human movement, such as time, weight, and duration, to effectively express emotions nonverbally. Additionally, they will explore how choreography, musicality, and establishing cueing systems for theatrical technicians during live performances can support them in creating the illusion of living in sync with a staged media world.

Students will learn to create the illusion of an interactive, causal experience between themselves and digitized media. The course will cover principles of animation, mime, mask performance, and dance, enabling students to develop a new vocabulary for communicating with theatrical technicians and artists across different mediums.

Students will begin the course by watching and analyzing works that feature live performances with digital media and animation, evaluating the effectiveness of media as a storytelling tool. Workshops will explore how principles used in mime, mask performance, dance, animation, and film convey emotion and narrative storytelling. Students will use these principles to build a common terminology for conveying physical emotion in storytelling. A third workshop will focus on methods for devising original content from a starting point of physical movement explorations.

Following the initial workshops, students will work on four distinct projects in groups and/or solo for the remainder of the semester. For the final project of the semester, students will combine the skills and techniques studied to produce an original shadow performance with a provided rear-projected section of media content.

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#### The Four Course Projects

**The Snow Globe:** Exploring Physical Storytelling

**Cause-and-Effect Performance with Rear Projection:** Exploring Musicality, Choreography, and Rhythm

**Creating Illusions of Action and Reaction:** Using Mapped Projections and Objects

**Final Project - Rear Projection Shadow Storytelling:** Combining Physical Storytelling with Musicality and Choreography to Convey a Clear Narrative with a Beginning, Middle, and End

#### Learning Objectives

##### Overall Learning Objectives for the Course:

- Develop methods for devising original, emotive, and non-verbal content.
- Master techniques for clear and engaging physical storytelling.
- Study, compare, and relate principles used for effective emoting and storytelling in physical movement, animation, and media.
- Explore various methods to produce cause-and-effect interactions between performers and media/animation. Practice effective critique, feedback, and self-evaluation.
- Learn collaborative methods.

##### Workshop: Establishing Emotion and Storytelling through Physical Movement

- Study movement vocabularies for expressing emotion in mime, dance, and mask work.
- Develop methods for devising original, emotive, and non-verbal content.
- Master techniques for clear and engaging physical storytelling.
- Study, compare, and relate principles used for effective emoting and storytelling in physical movement, animation, and media.

##### Workshop: Principles of Animation and Techniques for Storytelling with Film

- Study, compare, and relate principles for effective storytelling in animation, film, and media.

##### Workshop: Devised Theater, Creating Original Work

- Practice on-your-feet story-devising methods to gain confidence in creating something out of nothing.

##### Project: The Snow Globe

- Learn to tell different stories using various movement qualities with a single clip of projected media content.
- Practice movement vocabularies for expressing emotion in mime, dance, and mask work.

##### Project: Rear Projection Cause-and-Effect Performance In Front of the Screen

- Use musicality and choreography to perform with moving images playing at a constant speed.

##### Project: Creating Illusions of Action and Reaction

- Learn how to cue technicians while performing live on stage.
- Practice the “magic trick of transformation.”

##### Final Project - Rear Projection Shadow Storytelling

- Students will practice combining various methods learned in the course to produce an original performance

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**Software, Tools, and Performance Space:** (I am open to innovative problem-solving and exploring alternatives)

1. Software:
  - QLab or similar, for projection mapping
  - Access to media content such as Shutter Stock
2. Collaborative Platforms (such as):
  - Google Drive for file sharing and storage
  - Slack for communication
3. Hardware:
  - High-performance computers capable of running the above software
  - Digital Cameras and Camcorders for filming performances (smartphones can work)
  - Tripods and Simple Lighting Kits for proper filming setup
4. Classroom, Studio, or Performance Space:
  - Space for Movement Exercises (such as a studio or large room)
  - Access to classes and out-of-class time
  - A minimum 9 ft tall x 12 ft wide projection screen (can be made from white butcher paper)
  - A projector that can front and rear project and fill the screen
  - Minimum of 4 feet of play space in front of and behind the screen
  - Minimal Lighting to be used to light the performers without washing out the projections

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#### Sample Schedule for a 10-Week Semester (Classes Meet Twice a Week for 90 Minutes Each)

*Note: Timeline can be adjusted based on the number and duration of classes in a given semester.*

Wk 1 Class 1	Lecture and Discussion: Introduction to Interactive Media Performance Topic: What is Interactive Media Performance and Why is it Important?
Wk 1 Class 2	Lecture and Workshop: Establishing Emotion and Storytelling through Physical Movement
Wk 2 Class 3	Lecture and Workshop: Principles of Animation and Techniques for Storytelling with Film
Wk 02 Class 4	Workshop, Discussion, and Reflection: Devising Original Content and Effective Storytelling
Wk 03 Class 5	Introduction to Project One: The Snow Globe - Exploring Physical Storytelling
Wk 03 Class 6	The Snow Globe - Exploring Physical Storytelling: Opposite Emotional Expression
Wk 04 Class 7	<b>The Snow Globe Performances:</b> Discussion and Feedback
Wk 04 Class 8	Introduction to Project Two: Cause-and-Effect Performance with Rear Projection
Wk 05 Class 9	Cause-and-Effect Performance with Rear Projection: Draft Presentations and Feedback
Wk 05 Class 10	Cause-and-Effect Performance with Rear Projection: Draft Presentations and Feedback
Wk 06 Class 11	<b>Cause-and-Effect Performance with Rear Projection Performances:</b> Discussion and Feedback
Wk. 06 Class 12	Introduction to Project Three: Creating Illusions of Action and Reaction
Wk 07 Class 13	Creating Illusions of Action and Reaction: Draft Presentations and Feedback
Wk 07 Class 14	Creating Illusions of Action and Reaction: Draft Presentations and Feedback
Wk. 08 Class 15	<b>Cause-and-Effect Performance with Rear Projection Performances:</b> Discussion and Feedback
Wk 08 Class 16	Introduction to Final Project: Rear Projection Shadow Storytelling
Wk 09 Class 17	Rear Projection Shadow Storytelling: Draft Presentations and Feedback
Wk 09 Class 18	Rear Projection Shadow Storytelling: Draft Presentations and Feedback
Wk 10 Class 19	<b>Final Performances - Shadow Storytelling:</b> Critique, Discussion, and Feedback
Wk 10 Class 20	<b>Final Performances - Shadow Storytelling:</b> Critique, Discussion, and Feedback

**Course Syllabus****Interactive Performance with Media for Actors, Physical Theater Performers and Movers****Grading Structure**

<b>6%</b>	Wk 1 Class 2	Critical reflections of 3 assigned viewings
<b>4%</b>	Wk 2 Class 3	500-word self-reflection on Workshop
<b>4%</b>	Wk 2 Class 4	500-word self-reflection on workshop
<b>4%</b>	Wk 3 Class 5	500-word self-reflection on workshop
<b>13%</b>	Wk 3 Class 6	<b>The Snow Globe Performances</b>
<b>5%</b>	Wk 4 Class 7	300 words considering three approaches for devising visual imaging
<b>13%</b>	Wk 5 Class 10	<b>Cause-and-Effect Performance with Rear Projection Performances</b>
<b>5%</b>	Wk 6 Class 11	500 words addressing the success and next steps
<b>13%</b>	Wk 7 Class 14	<b>Cause-and-Effect Performance with Rear Projection Performances</b>
<b>5%</b>	Wk 8 Class 15	500 words addressing the success and next steps
<b>20%</b>	Wk 9 Class 18	<b>Rear Projection Shadow Storytelling</b>
<b>8%</b>	Wk 10 Class 20	250-word evaluation of each peer. 500-word self-reflection.