

Course: Physical Theatre I
PEIMS Code: N1170180
Abbreviation: PHYTHE1
Grade Level(s): 9-12
Number of Credits: 1.0

Course description:

Physical Theatre I, is the first level in a series courses designed to build physical communication for the theatre. Students will study body alignment, abstract movement, corporal mime, and specific Illusionary mime skills. Students will also study neutral and three dimensional mask work, and perform tertiary roles in a full-length silent theatre production. Students will explore each of these areas to develop the skills necessary to create and perform in-depth and nuanced non-verbal characters. These skills are vital in creating dynamic theatrical pieces giving students the tools to communicate three dimensional characters in complete stories. This course engages students in the development of physical character, physicalization of specific characteristics, and in-depth performances. Students are expected to transfer knowledge from one course to the next, while continuing to add complexity to their artistic work. Students will delve into the analysis of the script and the archetypical characters, implementing physicality necessary to communicate information to the audience.

Essential knowledge and skills:

- (1) Foundations: inquiry and understanding. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment, using the conventions of physical theatre. The student is expected to:
 - (A) practice the proper physical alignment of the body;
 - (B) identify the major muscle groups of the body;
 - (C) create and perform abstract character studies using the Eight Effort;
 - (D) create and perform the Eight Efforts in combinations to physically describe characters, ideas, and emotion;
 - (E) incorporate the skill of fixed point in mime performances;
 - (F) create and perform clear subtext within mime performances;
 - (G) analyze and perform archetypal characters in mime scenes;
 - (H) collaborate with other students in creation of mime scenes;
 - (I) develop proper present-reveal rituals in mask performance; and

- (J) create and perform an organic character from a mask in performance.
- (2) Creative Expression: Performance. The student interprets character, using the body expressively, and creates mimes and physical theatre productions compounded with the psychological aspects of the characters. The student is expected to:
- (A) create characters from archetypes and physically communicate character information in performances;
 - (B) perform original movement studies, mimes, and masked pieces;
 - (C) perform abstract movement studies based on specific scripted characters;
 - (D) perform Lecoq's masked staging rituals;
 - (E) build a set of physical skills and illusionary mime techniques for performance that lead to advanced physical characters;
 - (F) collaboratively create mime stories, scripts, short mimes that follow storyline structure on paper as well as in performance;
 - (G) collaborate in an ensemble;
 - (H) design and create a three-dimensional mask design; and
 - (I) create a minor character for a full-length silent theatre production using the elements of character developing including physicalization and sub-text.
- (3) Historical and Cultural Relevance. The student relates physical theatre to history, society, and culture. The student is expected to:
- (A) research the movement styles of cultures, as appropriate to script or source material;
 - (B) examine the customs and rituals of a time period or culture as they pertain to movement style and physical communication; and
 - (C) apply research findings to the archetypal character and masked character.
- (4) Critical Evaluation and Response. The student responds to and evaluates physical theatre and theatrical performances. The student is expected to:
- (A) employ the various styles and skills of physical communication in stage performances;
 - (B) employ appropriate vocabulary related to physical theatre;
 - (C) analyze characters and storylines leading to stage performances;
 - (D) evaluate performances that incorporate physical communication skills; and
 - (E) support and defend choices made and used in character development.

Description of specific student needs this course is designed to meet:

- Opportunity for students to learn a wide range of physical skills and techniques to give depth to characters and advanced communication to the audience
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- Provides students the ability to enrich their characterizations and give depth to theatrical performances.
- Opportunity for students to develop advanced competitive auditioning skills.
- Opportunity for students to develop confidence and control of physical movement in auditioning skills.
- Opportunity to collaborate with other performers.
- Opportunity to choreograph movement into a meaningful whole.
- Opportunity for students to develop individual creative expression, as well as develop specific scripted information.
- Opportunity to work in an ensemble.
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- Opportunity to collaborate with other performers
- Opportunity to choreograph movement into a meaningful whole
- Opportunity for students to develop individual creative expression, as well as develop specific scripted information
- Opportunity to work in an ensemble.

Major resources and materials:

Bishop, George. *The World of Clowns*. Brooke House Publishers, Los Angeles, 1976.

Dewey, John. *Human Nature and Conduct*. Courier Dover Productions, 2012.

D'Orcy, Jean. *The Mime*. 1974.

Duchartre, Pierre Louis. Translation by Randolph Weaver. *The Italian Comedy*. Dover Publications, Inc, New York, 1966.

Frost, Robert. *Applied Kinesiology: A Training Manual and Reference Book*. North Atlantic Books, 2002.

Grantham, Barry. *Commedia Plays, Scenarios, Scripts, and Lazzi*. Nick Hern Books, London, 2006.

Kenny, Colum. *The Silent Communication in Daily Life*. Karnac Books, 2001

Kipnis, Claude. *The Mime Book*. Applause Books, 1988.

LaBan, Rudolf. *The Mastery of Movement*. McDonald & Evans, 1988.

Neumann, Donald A. *Kinesiology of the Musculoskeletal System*. Mosley, 2002.

Olsen, Mark. *The Actor With a Thousand Faces*. Applause Books.

Rolfe, Bari. *Mimes on Miming*. Panjamdrum Books.

Shepard, Richmond. *Mime: The Techniques of Silence*. Drama Book Specialists, 1977.

Access to library sources such as books and periodicals.

Access to electronic research tools.

Access to willing professionals in the Physical Theatre.

Access to guest speakers, mimes, movement specialists.

Access to mime and physical theatre workshops.

Suggested course activities:

- Experiment with body placement, and creation of abstract character studies using the eight efforts.
- Create and perform the “efforts” in combination, to physically describe characters, ideas, and emotion complimented with illusionary mime techniques.
- View and evaluate in discussion, silent performances, which utilize physical communication.
- Evaluate specific movements and character choices.
- Analyze characters and storylines leading to staged performances. Learn ensemble work habits and artistic collaboration.
- Create mimes using various prompts and themes
- Performance in full-length mime show in minor and secondary roles
- Creation of a three-dimensional mask, using more advanced painting techniques.
- Physical character development using character masks.
- Use advanced illusionary techniques.
- Dramatize expression of sub text

Suggested methods for evaluating student outcomes:

- Evaluate daily physical warm- ups.
- Appraise students’ selection and use of vocabulary.
- Appraise weekly journal entries.
- Evaluate student participation.
- Evaluate choreographed mime studies.
- Evaluate student mask work, design and 3D execution of mask design.



Approved Innovative Course

- Evaluation of masked character studies.
- Scheduled semester exams

Teacher qualifications:

- Any secondary theatre certification (e.g. Theatre: EC-12) as defined by SBEC rules, [TAC §231.241](#)
- Recommended: Experience in professional/community theatre
- Recommended: BFA or MFA in Acting and/or Physical Theatre

Additional information: