

# THE WORKING ACTOR

THEA 385-01

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Professor Maria-Christina Oliveras  
Winter 2020  
via ZOOM

*Office Hours: By appointment.*  
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## Course Description:

This course is designed to demystify and facilitate the transition from academia into the professional acting world. Emphasis will be placed on training beyond Wesleyan, auditioning, finding opportunities in NYC, LA, and regional markets, cultivating a network, self-tapes, clarifying a mission statement, and logistics of the business (headshots, agents, casting directors, unions). The course will also include modules that address the industry shift on-line, such as ZOOM specific plays, voice-over, and auditioning via ZOOM/self-tapes. In addition, the course will include talks with industry professionals and a number of supplementary viewings/conversations, which will be scheduled around students enrolled.

\*\*Please note, although the course will explore acting tools and material for auditions, this is not an acting technique class. This is a boot-camp intensive, specifically to offer insight into the business side of the industry.

## Pre-Assignments include (Specific Instructions to Be Sent to Enrolled Students):

- Writing a Draft of Your Resume
- A Self-Tape of a Monologue of Your Choice (1-2 minutes, including a slate, and specific instructions will be sent to enrolled students)
- Research into a Specific Market of Your Choice
- Initial Work on Determining your "Type" within the Industry
- Pre-Work on your Mission Statement/Vision Board (A Questionnaire)

## Course Policies/Requirements:

- Attendance and preparation for all classes is mandatory. Absences are only permitted with a Medical Note or Dean's Excuse. No Exceptions.
- All Pre-Assignments must be completed before each class.
- Class attire will be customized to assignments. On days where you are "auditioning," interviewing, self-taping, etc, please dress accordingly.

Required Texts (Please see supplementary list below of other Texts which will be referenced throughout the session):

- *Auditioning* by Joanna Merlin
- Each module will have a number of handouts and readings and extensive resources/recommended book lists. All books will be available at the library on reserve or pdfs will be provided.
- Course Packet (pdf)

#### Required Viewings:

- *Casting By* documentary (on Amazon Prime)
- Live Streamed Play TBD
- Various Excerpts from Television Shows including *Schitt's Creek*, *Game of Thrones* and *The Office* (subject to change)
- Streamed Tutorials to be assigned for each module
- *Acting for the Camera*//Michael Caine Documentary  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZPLVDwEr7Y>
- *The Power of Body Language*-Ted Talk-Ann Cuddy  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/amy\\_cuddy\\_your\\_body\\_language\\_may\\_shape\\_who\\_you\\_are?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_may_shape_who_you_are?language=en)

#### Grading:

- Students will be graded on their attendance, preparation (including memorization, outside rehearsal, and course readings), commitment to choices, and active participation in all classroom exercises and presentations. Short responses to exercises and readings will be assigned throughout the semester. [40% of grade]
- Monologues [5%]
- Final Action Spreadsheet [5%]
- INSIDE THE LIFE OF Presentation [5%]
- On-Camera Scenes [5%]
- Agent Interview [5%]
- Mailing/Marketing Materials [5%]
- Researched List of Directors/Actors/Playwrights/Theaters/Television Shows [5%]
- Self-Tape [5%]
- Audition Listings/Actions [5%]
- Typing [5%]
- Web-site [5%]
- ZOOM Audition [5%]

#### Recommended Books/Resources

(Excerpts will be Distributed/Referenced Throughout from Selected Titles):

#### **Acting**

- *On the Technique of Acting* – Michael Chekhov
- *Letters to a Professional Actor* – Michael Chekhov

- Respect for Acting - Uta Hagen
- An Actor Prepares - Stanislavski
- The Art of Acting - Stella Adler
- Grit – by Angela Duckworth
- Auditioning by Joanna Merlin
- The Intent to Live by Larry Moss

## Creativity

- Letters To a Young Poet - Rainer Maria Rilke
- The Power of Now - Eckhart Tolle
- The Artist's Way – Julia Cameron
- Letters to a Young Artist by Anna Deveare Smith
- Discovering the Clown by Christopher Bayes

## Other

- American Theatre Wing - Working in Theater Series (available to watch online)
- <http://americantheatrewing.org>
- Ted Talks : <http://www.ted.com/talks> (Ann Cuddy, Brene Brown, among others)
- Super Soul Podcasts with Oprah
- NPR and PBS offer up great arts programming.
- A Number of Theaters Offer Up Wonderful Free On-Line Programming specifically The Public Theater, NYTW, Atlantic Theater, Freeman Studio, Barrow Group, and Primary Stages
- New York Times, Playbill ([www.playbill.com](http://www.playbill.com)) and Time Out NY provide listings of live streamings.
- Documentary: *The Last Dance*
- *The Forty Year Old Version* by Radha Blank on Netflix
- WES LIBRARY ONE SOURCE DATABASES:
  1. Digital Theatre
  2. Routledge Performance Archive
  3. On the Boards TV
  4. Kanopy