

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Live Sound Action: Learning at the Crossroads of Theatrical Training and Spiritual Practice

This course is designed to give the student an experiential introduction to communal practices of sound and movement that exist in both theatrical training and spiritual traditions. A physically-based studio class comprising an intellectual engagement as well as a more personal heart-based investigation, students will ultimately become meaning makers and create an original theatrical/spiritual practice rooted in embodied research. Emphasis will be placed on creative, collaborative, and reflective skills as well as an exploration of the potential health and spirit benefits of such communal creative practices.

The course will begin with a module on religious theory and the function of theater, during which students will discern their personal connection to essential ideas. Next we will identify and practice expressions of sound and movement in various spiritual traditions, and elucidate how these elements of sacred ritual and liturgy influence contemporary performance practices. Finally we will become meaning makers, applying what we have learned and creating our own contemporary and spiritual performance practice.

Throughout the semester the group will practice and develop physical, collaborative, and reflective skills designed to provide a container for the presence of truth and the truth of presence. There will be ongoing reflection on the questions of:

What is sacred?

How does creative expression relate to a sense of belonging and the release of anxiety?

What makes something a “spiritual practice”? Can we discern common elements across example traditions/practices?

What is the benefit of group experience/embodied ensemble engagement, including both participation and witness, and how does it influence individual sense of well being?

Each week will consist of discussion of readings and topics, exploration of experiential practice, and articulation and reflection on individual experience. Students will work individually, in partners, in small groups, and as an entire ensemble. The class is a studio class, meaning that there is an ongoing physical and embodied element to the engagement with the material. The class will culminate in an open sharing of an original creative ensemble practice.