

Curriculum Vitae

Tovah Close, MFA

tovahclose@gmail.com

Theater teacher and practitioner

EDUCATION

MFA	American Conservatory Theater Master of Fine Arts Program <i>Instructors: Melissa Smith, Deborah Sussel, Dawn-Elin Fraser, Jeffrey Crockett, Dennis Krausnick, Gregory Wallace, Lisa Porter</i>	2008
BFA	University of California, Santa Barbara Department of Theater and Dance <i>Instructors: Irwin Appel, Michael Morgan, Judith Olauson Tourney, Tom Whitaker, James Donlon</i> Honor Thesis: "Ein Jahr/One Year," Advisor: Judith Olauson Tourney	2005
	Breath Embodiment New York Intensive, Jeffrey Crockett	2013
	The Linklater Center, New York City Freeing the Natural Voice, Dianne Schoenborn	2013
	Knight-Thompson Speechwork: Experiencing Speech Step one of certification process expected December 2019	

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Level

Adjunct Guest Artist

Mary Baldwin University Shakespeare and Performance MFA Program 2018-2019

- Designed and taught a 10-week class in the fall semester for the third-year company on the actor's voice. Topics included spontaneous breath, ease and freedom, vocal release, resonance and placement, articulation, character voice, vocal health and warm up practices, and concluded with a Shakespeare monologue lab. The spring semester focused on articulators, Anatomy of a Dialect, and an introduction to Received Pronunciation (RP) British.

Guest Instructor

University of Virginia Department of Drama, MFA Acting Program

February 2018

- Designed and taught a two-week workshop for MFA actors entitled *Phonetics for the Actor*, which included an overview of phonetics, speech anatomy, exploring the consonant chart, gliding and sliding in the vowel chart, transcribing the actor's personal idiolect
- Included six one-on-one sessions in advanced dialect study
- Focus on integrating phonetics into existing speech study framework (Lessac and others), and awareness of personal speech habits in relation to standard speech

Undergraduate Level

Lecturer in Performance (full-time)

University of Virginia Department of Drama

2019-present

Courses Taught:

Acting I

Introduction class to the basics of the Stanislavski system. Students work on ensemble, listening, voice & body, pursuing objectives and playing actions while examining contemporary theatrical texts.

Speaking in Public

A voice and speech class for non-majors. Topics include presence, feeling comfortable in front of a crowd, crafting content that is narrative, persuasive, and personal in nature.

Adjunct Instructor

New York University

Tisch School of the Arts

Undergraduate Drama -- New Studio on Broadway

2011-2017

Courses Taught:

Speech IA:

Fall 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016

A first-year introduction to the basics of speech for the actor which includes creating context, scoring operative words, warming up the voice, consonant sounds and the narrow transcription of their phonetics, exploration of a poem employing and integrating all of the semester's topics.

Speech IB :

Spring 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2017

Continues the speech training of the first year, including visceral exploration of vowels, diphthongs, triphthongs and the narrow transcription of their phonetics, a deepening of the understanding of devising context and discerning operative words. The semester culminated in a group project using Walt Whitman's "Pioneers! O Pioneers!"

Speech IIA:

Fall 2011, 2012, 2014, 2016

The second year of speech training introduced actors to heightened speech sounds (American Theater Standard) while working with text from Shakespeare and exploring tools for effective, authentic acting in verse. Topics included scansion, rhetoric, and

imagery. The course culminated in a presentation of a Shakespearean sonnet or monologue.

Speech IIB: Spring 2012, 2013, 2015, 2017
Introduction to dialects beginning with R.P./Standard British, and culminating in actor's choice of Estuary or Cockney. Actors explored sound changes, melody, rhythm, inflection, and physical and oral posture. Students worked on a monologue to audition standard for each dialect and presented it to the group.

Voice and Speech IIIA: Fall 2012, 2013, 2014
Advanced exploration of voice for the actor including vocal presence and embodiment, adjusting to room tone, breath-body connection, and vocal health. The dialect unit in this course was advanced study of Dublin and/or Nuyorican dialects. Students worked on and presented a monologue to audition standard in each dialect.

Speech IIIB: Spring 2013, 2014, 2015
A dialect scene study course for upper-level students, including review and cold reading of dialects learned previously, and student-led exploration of new dialects of particular interest, including US Southern, French, Italian, Russian, Brazilian, and Scottish.

Senior Tutorials: Fall 2013
Highly individualized ongoing one-on-one sessions with select students in areas of concern or interest, such as vocal health, phonetics review or dialect acquisition.

Adjunct Instructor

New York University
Tisch School of the Arts Summer High School Program

Courses taught:

Spoken Voice: Summer 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014
Introduced advanced high school actors to Middendorf- and Linklater-based breath and voice work, Viewpoints, and an exploration of heightened text leading to a devised voice and movement project rooted in Shakespearean text.

Speech for the Actor: Summer 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014
Introduced speech tools to advanced high school actors, including verbal action, broad transcription IPA, Shakespeare tools such as scansion and rhetoric. Students devised and performed a speech-focused group presentation of a Shakespearean sonnet.

Continuing Education

Instructor

Live Arts

Dialects with Tovah Close Workshop Series

2018-2019

Designed and taught a series of stand-alone dialect workshops for members of the Charlottesville community. Dialects taught included Standard British, Irish, New York, and US Southern.

K-12

Instructor

Live Arts

Spring Break Filmmaking Camp April 2018

A one-week intensive, co-taught with Light House Studio, in which middle school artists devised, wrote, filmed, acted in, and edited a short film, "Case 31."

Mini Camp July, August 2018

One-week camps for kindergarten-aged children, focused on theater games, building ensemble, and creative play. The week culminated in a presentation for invited guests of "Anansi the Spider and the Talking Melons."

Drama Faculty

Governor's School of North Carolina

Summer 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013

- Assisted the head drama instructor in casting, rehearsal, games, and exercises.
- Designed and implemented a voice and speech curriculum for gifted high school seniors including:
 - Vocal Technique: Vocal warm-up for rehearsal and performance, physical readiness and availability, and a connection to the actor's personal use of breath, diction and the space.
 - Dialects: Explored articulation and dexterity of speech organs, basic phonetics, and an overview of the sound changes for R.P., Cockney, Irish and Scottish dialects.
- Served as voice and speech consultant on the following studio productions:
 - Our Country's Good*-- Summer 2010
 - Summertime*-- Summer 2011
 - Twelfth Night*-- Summer 2012
 - Red Noses*-- Summer 2013

Guest Teacher

August 2013

Epic Theater Ensemble "Epic Next" Summer Intensive

- Designed and led voice and speech classes with high school groups, addressing physical awareness, body-breath-voice connection, articulation, and verbal action.
- This program fosters social change by mentoring and training student artists from underfunded public schools in New York City.

Faculty

American Conservatory Theater

Young Conservatory Summer Programs

Courses Taught:

High School Acting Technique: Summer 2006, 2007, 2008
Devised projects, monologues, physical character embodiment, scenes from American Realism rehearsed and performed for an invited audience.

Middle School Acting Technique: Summer 2006, 2007, 2008
Exercises, games, and scene work with emphasis on helping students feel comfortable in their bodies and being seen.

High School Voice and Speech: Summer 2006, 2007, 2008
Development of breath, resonance, articulation, work on Shakespeare sonnets, and introductory dialect work including R.P. and Irish.

Middle School Voice and Speech: Summer 2006, 2007
Breath and resonance development, exploration of Lewis Carroll's *The Jabberwocky* and T.S. Eliot's *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* to promote growth and familiarity with heightened text and to encourage imaginative work.

Junior Acting (Grades 3-5) Theater Games: Summer 2006, 2007
Focus on imagination, theater games, constructive play, and collaboration.

PROFESSIONAL THEATER EXPERIENCE

Production Dialect/Voice & Speech Coach

Heritage Theater Festival, U.Va. <i>A Chorus Line</i>	June 2018
Mile Square Theatre, Hoboken, NJ <i>Betrayal</i>	April 2017
Epic Theater Ensemble, NYC <i>Ad Astra</i>	January 2017
Off-Broadway: 59E59 <i>Bauer</i>	August 2014
Epic Theater Ensemble, NYC <i>32 to Base</i>	August 2013
Summer Theater of New Canaan, CT <i>Carousel</i>	July 2011
Parenthesis Theater Company, NYC <i>The Lady's Not for Burning</i>	April 2011
Occam Repertory Theater, NYC	November 2010

Featuring Loretta

Summer Theater of New Canaan, CT
Camelot

June 2009

ACADEMIC:

University of Virginia Dept. of Drama
The Wolves
Just Like Us (Staged Reading)
We are Pussy Riot or Everything is P.R.

October 2018
March 2018
September 2017

NYU Tisch, New Studio on Broadway
The Apple Tree, March 2015
The Baker's Wife, April 2014
Little Women the Musical, February 2013
James Joyce's The Dead, October 2012

2012-2015

DMR Adventures
Guys and Dolls

June 2018

American Conservatory Theater MFA Program
The Reluctant Doctor

February 2007

Honors Thesis, U.C. Santa Barbara
Ein Jahr/One Year

Sept. 2004- April 2005

Undergraduate honors thesis in which I wrote, directed, designed, and performed in a two-person play adapted from the letters my grandparents exchanged while engaged and separated during the earliest years of the Holocaust. The creative process relied heavily on language and the connection between my personal voice and the voices of my grandparents. The piece explored the permeability of time and space and the power of the written word.

VOLUNTEER:

Live Arts
The Wolves
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time
Ragtime
Big Love
Top Girls

March 2019
February 2019
October 2018
March 2018
February 2018

Private Dialect Coaching & Accent Reduction

Coaching actors for auditions and performances, and non-native speakers of English looking to reduce saturation of accent. The process includes researching the dialect, teaching and adjusting sound changes, coordinating location and scheduling, and checking in for follow-up questions.

Dialects Coached:

British: Cockney, Estuary, Period RP, Scottish, Standard British, Yorkshire

European: Czech, Dublin Irish, French, German, Italian, Polish, Russian, West Irish, Ukrainian

North American: African-American Vernacular, Boston, Dominican, General American, Maine, Mid-Atlantic/Theater Standard, New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rican, Texas, Tidewater Southern, Wisconsin

African/Caribbean: Ghanaian, Trinidadian, Zulu South African

Asian: Arabic, Indian

Selected Acting Credits

<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Mary	American Conservatory Theater
<i>Or,</i>	Nell	The Process Group, NYC
<i>Orestes 2.0</i>	Helen of Troy	BoCoCa Theatre Festival, NYC
<i>The Contrast</i>	Letitia	Metropolitan Playhouse, NYC
<i>Lobby Hero</i>	Dawn	Vortex Theater, Albuquerque, NM
<i>Orlando</i>	Sasha	A.C.T. MFA Program
<i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i>	Gwendolen	A.C.T. MFA Program
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Titania	A.C.T. MFA Program
<i>David Copperfield</i>	Mrs. Micawber	A.C.T. MFA Program
<i>Intimate Apparel</i>	Mrs. Van Buren	A.C.T. MFA Program
<i>The Beard of Avon</i>	Anne Hathaway	The Garvin, Santa Barbara, CA
<i>Lobby Hero</i>	Dawn	Vortex, Albuquerque, NM
<i>Pentecost</i>	Amira	Theater UCSB
<i>The Trestle at Pope Lick Creek</i>	Pace	Theater UCSB

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS/SERVICE

- Actors Equity Association member since 2008
- Voice and Speech Trainers Association member since 2011
- Volunteer voice over artist (radio ads) for Indivisible Charlottesville and Charlottesville Waldorf School
- 2019 Judge for the Moomaw Oratorical Contest hosted by the Jefferson Society, University of Virginia
- Guest Judge for Renaissance School's annual Shakespeare monologue competition
- Alumni Board of Directors, American Conservatory Theater 2010--2014
-Secretary, 2012-2013

ACADEMIC HONORS/AWARDS

- UCSB Department of Theater & Dance "Outstanding Senior" award, 2005
- UCSB Senior Honors Project Research Grant (\$1000), 2005
- Graduated UCSB with High Honors (top 8.5% GPA of graduating class)

OTHER RELEVANT TRAINING

Scene Study for Professional Actors: Scott Freeman

Acting for the Camera: Rosalyn Coleman

Alexander Technique: Frank Ottiwell, Emily Whyte, Rahimah Wright, Jennifer Tweel Kelly

Armed and Unarmed Stage Combat: Gregory Hoffman

Ballroom Dance (2 years): various

Yoga and Pilates (10+ years): various

Clown: Leslie Felbain

Neutral Mask and Commedia Mask: Matthew Graham Smith

Private Singing Lessons: Richard Ruff (1 year)

UCSB Gospel Choir (1 year): Victor Bell

References Upon Request