

Educating and training the theatre artists and artisans who will become the collaborators, innovators, and leaders of our profession, committed to the enrichment of diverse communities.

Course Syllabus: Fall 2023
Mask Making 54-536 | 860

CLASS MEETINGS: Tuesdays 9:00-11:50am

ROOM: PCA 308, Costume Studio

INSTRUCTOR: Brian Russman; he, him, his **E-MAIL:** brianr@andrew.cmu.edu

OFFICE: PCA 325

PHONE: 917.225.1110

OFFICE HOURS: Fridays 1:00-4:00 pm *or* by appointment

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS

PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY STANDARDS:

As a condition of enrollment in the College of Fine Arts, we expect you to positively contribute to the community in order to fully engage in the intellectual life at CFA. Classrooms, studios, rehearsal and performance spaces, exhibition venues, and off-campus curricular destinations are safe spaces for expression and self-identification. Students are expected to treat *everyone* with respect, regardless of race, country of origin, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, age, religion, political affiliation, or marital status. Lack of respect and harassment includes offensive comments related to any protected personal characteristic, deliberate intimidation, sustained disruption or speech, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention. Violations of this agreement are subject to a response to be determined by the Heads of School and Associate Deans.

It is *my own intent* that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course will be structured as a lecture/demonstration and lab that will allow students to explore and synthesize terminology, products and processes related to mask making for the performing arts. While impossible to cover all processes in one course, it is the hope that in-class work time will allow students to learn from one another as each explores and conquers the different opportunities they encounter on the journey to final product.

There will be some discussion about the mask from the performer's viewpoint and projects will be "activated" as part of the project presentation.

REQUIRED SUPPLIES (Include, but not limited to):

Many class supplies have been pre-purchased but there is great likelihood that students may need to purchase specialty items on a per-project basis. Items you will need:

Xacto knife	Set of wooden sculpting tools
Paints and Brushes as needed	Recyclable materials

ATTENDANCE:

- Due to the laboratory nature of this course attendance is mandatory. One unexcused absence will reduce the course grade by one (1) letter grade. Being tardy (late by more than 10 minutes) will also not be accepted. Three tardy arrivals will constitute one class absence.
- *Students are responsible for content missed due to class absence.*

PROJECTS:

This course will consist of four (4) practical, sculpting and mask making projects. Each project will consist of multiple parts as further described in the individual handouts to be provided when projects are assigned.

PROJECT #1: Latex Mask	30 Points
PROJECT #2: Paper Maché Mask	30 Points
PROJECT #3: Thermo-Formable Mask	30 Points
PROJECT #3: Maquette Exploration	30 Points

GRADING:

Each class project will be evaluated on three criteria: Mastery of Concepts, Application of Skills, and Quality of Work. The student is expected to show development in all areas as the class progresses.

NO LATE WORK ACCEPTED WITHOUT DISCUSSION PRIOR TO DUE DATE!

- An extension must be requested at least 24 hours in advance.
- When an extension is granted, said extension is assumed to mean one calendar week unless other arrangements have been made.

Projects will be evaluated on a 30-point system for a semester total of 120 points. The 30 project points are broken down as follows:

Mastery of Concepts:	10 Points
Application of Skills:	10 Points
Quality of Work:	10 Points

- **Mastery of Concepts** measures a student's comprehension of and ability to explain course content
- **Application of Skills** is representative of a student's ability to apply course concepts
- **Quality of Work** measures the student's work against professional standards

Evaluation Matrix

Score	Mastery of Concepts	Application of Skills	Quality of Work
10	Exceeds class presentation and materials. Explains and contextualizes concepts for peers.	Consistently properly selects and applies skills and debugs skills for others.	Workmanship is at a level on par with the work produced by professionals in this industry
9	Easily synthesizes and explains concepts in relation to topics and applications.	Consistently applies proper skills without mistakes and recognizes errors in work when encountered.	Workmanship is consistently of a high enough standard to be considered professional.
8	Correctly explains course concepts with minimal mistakes.	Usually applies proper skills with minimal errors in work. Skills need finesse.	Workmanship overall can be considered neat and presentable.
7	Usually explains course concepts with occasional errors.	Usually selects and applies the proper skills and makes only occasional mistakes. Skills need work.	Shows potential for professional level workmanship through specific examples.

Although not listed, scores of less than 7 may be assigned when appropriate in the view of the instructor. Reasons for these scores may be based on (but are not limited to) poor attitude, tardiness, absence, disregard to safety and shop procedures, undisciplined or unprofessional behavior, game play or sabotage of work, or frequent required reinforcement of concepts or procedures.

A verbal evaluation of the semester may be done at semester reviews. Any student who feels they are not receiving adequate feedback and wanting a private evaluation may make an appointment to receive one at any time during the semester.

POINTS:

108 – 120
96 – 107
84 – 95
72 – 83
71 and below

LETTER GRADE:

A
B
C
D
R

- A Exceptional work that consistently exceeds the standard expected. Student shows diligence, mastery of techniques, puts forth excellent effort and has a strong growth trajectory.
- B Good work that meets the standard expected of students. Work shows the application of techniques with good effort and growth.
- C Satisfactory work that minimally meets the standard expected but does little to go beyond. The work shows average application of techniques, minimal effort, and little growth.
- D Passing. Work markedly below the standard. Student shows minimum effort or below, lack of focus and inability to apply techniques. There is no growth.
- R Failing Grade – Student shows sub-par mastery of technique, presents a negative attitude and required course work is missing.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you to achieve your goals and cope with stress.

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.

If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings such as anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support.

CMU CaPS: 412-268-2922

UPMC Re:solve Crisis Network: 888-796-8226

If the situation is life threatening, call the police:

On campus: CMU Police: 412-268-2323 Off Campus: 911

CLASS MEETINGS

August 29, 2023:

MASK FACTS: Masks in Antiquity

Introduction | Mask Styles | The Performer's Viewpoint

HOMEWORK: Watch mask performance videos on Canvas

September 5, 2023:

MASK FACTS: Jacques LeCoq

Sculpting Tools | Sculpting | Rubber and Latex Techniques | Hair Punching |

Attachment Techniques | Paint Techniques | Linings

ASSIGN: Project #1

September 12, 2023:

MASK FACTS: W.B. Benda

WORK DAY: Project #1

September 19, 2023:

MASK FACTS: Bread and Puppet Theatre

Paper Maché Techniques

ASSIGN: Project #2

September 26, 2023:

MASK FACTS: Commedia dell'arte

DUE: Project #1

WORK DAY: Project #2

October 3, 2023:

MASK FACTS: Carnival of Venice

Open Structures | Assemblages

PLAY DAY: Recyclables

October 10, 2023:

MASK FACTS: Anna Coleman Ladd
Thermo-Formables | Skinning | Vision Portals
DUE: Project #2
ASSIGN: Project #3

October 17, 2023:

NO CLASSES: Fall Break

October 24, 2023:

MASK FACTS: Mummenschanz
WORK DAY: Project #3

October 31, 2023:

MASK FACTS: Halloween
Polygon Masks | Maquettes | Foam Constructions

November 7, 2023:

NO CLASSES---Democracy Day

November 14, 2023:

MASK FACTS: Paddy Hartley
WORK DAY: Projects #3 & #4

November 21, 2023:

MASK FACTS: Basil Twist
WORK DAY: Projects #3 & #4

November 28, 2023:

MASK FACT: Michael Curry
Leather Techniques
DUE: Projects #3 and #4 (at beginning of class)

December 5, 2023:

NO CLASSES---PLAYGROUND