

The MPI Actors Studio is a series of four professional development workshops offering three varying levels of experience from basic, intermediate to advanced.

The workshops are designed to assist area actors with differing degrees of skill and experience to learn and practice the art of film acting while gaining experience in a cinematic environment. These workshops offer secondary objectives that are not within the school's scope of accredited programs.

ACTING FOR FILM & DIGITAL MEDIA

This beginner workshop introduces universally accepted acting methods for film and digital media. Beginning with basic acting principles, participants explore established techniques and how to apply their own life experience in order to deliver a truthful and naturalistic performance in front of the camera. Since the camera magnifies the actor's action, delivery must be organic and real.

Lessons incorporate voice and movement concepts to control vocal inflections, facial expressions and using body language to express emotions subtly without words and include concepts such as relationships, personalizing the circumstances, listening and reacting instinctively to overcome the amateur's inclination to deliver an exaggerated or overly theatrical performance.

Conducted on a live film set and in front of a camera, participants will engage in role playing exercises and performing basic scenes that can translate their acting talents to a believable on-screen performance.

Skills developed:

- Knowing the actor's job
- Using personal memories
- Listening and reacting
- Trusting your instincts in the moment
- Communicating through action
- Identifying the elements of character
- When to use movement vs. stillness
- Body and voice availability and blocking in the film space

Workshop Length: 8 weeks | 2 days per week | 3 hours per session = 48 hours

THE ACTORS' FILM CREW

This intermediate workshop is for actors' who have had some form of acting experience or previous training. Actors interact with dozens of people but often knows little about their roles on the shoot and how they affect the actor's performance. This workshop unveils the mystery of all those people who watch the actor during a filmed scene and why they are there.

A film professional is brought in from each major department to demonstrate their job on a production and how their duties and responsibilities relate to the actor. Such positions as the 1st Assistant Director, 1st Camera Assistant, Gaffer, Location Sound Mixer, Script Supervisor and Make-up Artist detail and demonstrate how they work with a trained actor on a production. Through simulations on set, each crew person runs participants through the filming process from their vantage point with the actor being the main focus.

Additional emphasis and time are given to the camera department and its influence to an actor's delivery. Through additional exercises, participants learn techniques for and experience blocking, hitting focus marks, keeping continuity, establishing eye lines, pacing and taking screen direction during takes. Scenes are filmed and played back for evaluation and further coaching.

Skill developed:

- Building confidence in front of professionals
- Understanding the production workflow
- Learning set etiquette
- Learning the function and responsibilities of key production personnel on a film set
- How to communicate with key crew personnel to improve performance
- Adapting your acting techniques to the camera to look your best
- Discovering how to block a film scene
- How to listen and interpret direction to deliver the performance

Workshop Length: 6 weeks | 2 days per week | 4 hours per session = 24 hours

FAME (Film Actors Movie Experience)

A filmed performance requires a refined set of acting skills. This can only be acquired through experience on a live film set under circumstances like that of an actual professional shoot.

This workshop brings the actor into that movie studio environment where they can obtain these experiential skills on a production. Participants audition and are cast in featured roles of selected scenes. They conduct table reads, study scenes, rehearsal sequences, and block shots. Their acting techniques are put to the test when a real film crew arrives and the shoot goes into production.

Each performer works with the director and crew along the way to gain the acting competencies only found on a production, acting in a scene and seeing their completed work edited together.

Upon wrapping their scene, the actor works with the director and editor to do ADR in a sound booth as necessary. Finished work is screened for family and friends on the MPI soundstage. Participants get copies of their filmed scenes to use for their personal reels.

Skill development:

- How to breakdown a character
- Film acting
- Listening and reacting to spontaneous commands
- Interplay techniques with cast members
- Staying in the moment while nailing continuity through multiple takes and coverage
- How to prepare for each day of a film shoot
- Learn how to act under pressure
- How to maintain composure in stressful environment
- How to develop trust with the director

Workshop Length: 10 weeks | Weeks 1-5 = 2 days per week | 2.5 hours per session
Weeks 6-10 = 1 day per week 8 hours per session

THE ACTOR'S BRAND

How you perceive yourself can be the biggest difference between landing the part or not. What is the actor's brand why is it not the same as type casting? This workshop guides you through a process of self-discovery that defines the life cycle of an actor. The beginning is very different than the autumn of your film career and understanding this helps you decide the types of roles you should be going after.

Knowledge is power and understanding how casting choices are made, what to do in an audition to deliver a knock performance and the dos and don'ts when dealing with casting directors are essential to making it as an actor. It is as much as business as it is an art form and being able to sustain it requires knowing how all things work.

Participants learn the art of self-promotion, build trust in their abilities and the belief that they can succeed in an incredible competitive arena of acting. Actors walk away armed with knowledge, a strategy of where to go in the wider world of film acting and opens doors you never thought to enter.

Essential knowledge and skills:

- Getting the right kind of headshot
- Building your brand
- Landing an agent and representation
- Seeking out cast calls
- Preparing and delivering a confident audition
- Seeking out the right roles
- Self-taping for parts across the country
- What to expect after an audition
- What happens in a callback
- The first things you should do when you get the role
- Relocating to major film centers like LA or NY | when and why
- Knowing your rights as an actor
- Spotting sketchy projects
- Understanding contracts and work rules and how to join SAG to land the bigger union jobs

Workshop Length: 4 weeks | 1 session per week | 2.5 hours per session = 10 hours