

SONYA COOKE

Phone: (949) 307-1404 Email: cooke1@lsu.edu

Websites: www.sonyacooke.com / www.sevenpillarsacting.com

ACTING INSTRUCTION

Assistant Professor of Acting, Head of Undergraduate Performance Concentration, College of Music and Dramatic Arts, Louisiana State University, Fall 2019 - Present

At the undergraduate level, I teach Acting II, Acting for the Camera II, Audition Technique, to name a few. I am the primary acting professor to the MFA actors. I have implemented the technique I originated, Seven Pillars Acting, as the foundational training at LSU. I administrate the undergraduate performance concentration and oversee around one hundred students each semester.

Owner, Director, and Head Teacher, Seven Pillars Acting Studio, Los Angeles, CA, May 2017 – May 2019

I opened a new acting studio in Los Angeles that focuses on teaching the unique pedagogy of Seven Pillars Acting. I ran the school, oversaw an administrator, taught classes, and mentored the students and community.

Owner, Director, and Head Teacher, Actor's Studio of Orange County, Santa Ana, CA, January 2014 – Present

I own, run, and teach at an acting school for professional actors in Southern California. Leading a staff of ten teachers, four employees, and a regular school body of 200 students, I seek to provide a source of quality, professional acting training for the Los Angeles and Orange County markets.

Founder and Head Instructor, Certification Program, Seven Pillars Acting Studio, 2020 – Present

Every summer, I train and certify qualified teachers in the Seven Pillars Acting technique. I oversee and supervise the instruction and implementation of the pedagogy at institutions, such as UC-Irvine, which has implemented the technique into their core undergraduate training.

Faculty Member, The Studio School, Fall 2014-June 2016 and Summer 2013

I taught Acting Technique for Directors, Script Analysis, and Theatre History for their BFA students. Previously I taught acting technique and styles to the teen division in the summer.

Teaching Assistant for Introductory Acting, UC-Irvine, Fall & Winter 2012

With an emphasis on Stanislavski and the other great teachers of modern American acting, I wrote the syllabus and instructed foundational acting technique using contemporary American plays.

Private Coach to Actors and Singers, 2008 – Present

I maintain a regular roster of professional actors in my private studio. My students are all over the country and are booking quality work on a regular basis.

Teaching Assistant for Musical Theatre Course, UC-Irvine, Fall 2011

I taught an introductory musical theatre class focused on connecting the voice to the body and acting the song.

CURRICULUM WRITING

Curriculum Writer, Seven Pillars Acting, 2013-Present

I wrote the comprehensive technique for Seven Pillars Acting. The curriculum is broken down into Pillars Training and advanced courses and takes 2-3 years to complete.

Curriculum Writer, The Studio School, Los Angeles, CA, Summer 2015-Summer 2016

I was tasked to write a 4-year curriculum for the acting conservatory for teens at the Studio School in Downtown Los Angeles. The curriculum included acting technique, voice and speech, movement, theatre history, and business courses.

Curriculum Writer, Guthrie Theatre, Minneapolis, MN, Summer-Fall 2012

Under the guidance of Sheila Livingston, I collaborated on and wrote a six-month long curriculum for "Shakespeare Saturdays," a new program intended for bringing families and the community to the theatre, which included text analysis, voice, and Elizabethan dances.

PUBLICATIONS

Seven Pillars Acting. Los Angeles: Rare Bird Books, December 2017.

Vocal Traditions: Training in the Performing Arts, Seven Pillars Acting Technique Chapter, Author and Collaborator, Routledge Press, January 2023.

“Vocal Traditions: Seven Pillars Acting Technique”, *Voice and Speech Review*, Routledge, April 2022.

“Rhythm in Acting and Performance: Embodied Approaches and Understandings by Eilon Morris,” *Voice and Speech Review*, Routledge, September 2022.

“The Seven Pillars of Acting: Circumstances,” *The International Journal of Arts Education*, XV (Fall 2014): pg. 29-37.

The Last Lifeboat by Luke Yankee, Movement Consultant. New York: Dramatists Play Service, Inc, 2015.

Vocal Traditions: Seven Pillars Acting Technique chapter, Routledge Press, Forthcoming Early 2023

Acting Technique Blogger, www.sonyacooke.com, Winter 2008 - Present

TRADEMARK

Federally registered trademark for *Seven Pillars Acting*; Reg. No. 6,216,771

Federally registered design-mark for Seven Pillars Acting 7-pointed star; Reg. No. 6,836,321

CONFERENCES

Chair and Panelist, “Re-Imagining the Acting Classroom with Anti-Racism Principles”, Virtual Association for Theatre in Higher Education Conference, August 7th, 2021

Panelist, “Techniques for Tackling Heightened Text Challenges: How to teach the tough stuff – Rediscover or Reimagine?” Virtual Association for Theatre in Higher Education Conference, August 7th, 2021

Panelist, “Covid-Era Devising: Contributing to a New Canon,” Association for Theatre in Higher Education, July 28th, 2022

Panelist, "Leading Group Exercises In Zoom," AP MidSummer Covid Response Forum Online, Baton Rouge, LA, United States, June 26, 2020.

“The Seven Pillars Acting Technique: Circumstance,” Ninth International Conference on the Arts in Society, Sapienza University, Rome, Summer 2014.

ACTING (abridged list)

<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Julius Caesar	Andrew Borba	New Swan Shakespeare Festival*
<i>Gloria</i>	Gloria/Nan	Femi Euba	Swine Palace, Baton Rouge
<i>Louie</i> , Season 1, “ <i>Dogpound</i> ”	Office Assistant	Louie C.K.	FX Networks
<i>Lily Grace: a Witch Story</i>	Lily Grace	Wes Miller	Where We Are Productions
<i>Illicit Documentary</i>	Lawyer	Owen Palmquist	National Geographic, PBS
<i>Godzilla: Fathom</i>	Voice of Senator	Michael Dougherty	Warner Brothers
<i>Time Sensitive</i>	Multiple Characters	Marcela Lorca	Guthrie Theatre
<i>Think Tank</i>	Savannah	Joe Valenti	Valenti Vision Films
<i>Azunne Arts</i> , Episode 3	Host	Joseph Villapaz	Manhattan Neighborhood Network
<i>Pyretown</i>	Louise Josephson	Maggie Low	Times Square Arts Center, NYC

The Mousetrap
Cloudlands

Mollie Ralston
Caroline

Jim Bumgardner
Amanda Dehnert

Cortland Repertory Theatre
South Coast Rep, Reading

*Upcoming Summer 2023

DIRECTING (abridged list)

Bloom Girl, a devised environmental theatre piece, LSU, Fall 2021
The Fireturtles: an Indie Rockumentary by Brett Duggan, Independent Comedic Pilot, 2015
Bachelorette by Leslie Headland, Grotowski's Barn, UC-Irvine, Spring 2013
Antigone by Sophocles, Aldrich Park, UC-Irvine, Fall 2011
The Woolgatherer by William Mastrosimone, Grotowski's Barn, UC-Irvine, Spring 2011
Laying Off & Once Removed, _gaia Studios, Jersey City, NJ, Fall 2009
Five Years to the Day by Nathaniel Kressen, Prophecy Productions, NYC, Winter 2008
Hedda Gabler by Henrik Ibsen, UC-Irvine, Fall 2012 and Spring 2013
Discovering Voice by Sonya Cooke, UC-Irvine, Spring 2012
Famous Quotes by Kevin M Reese, Actor's Studio of Orange County, Summer 2017
Advanced Showcases, Actor's Studio of Orange County, June 2016 and June 2018

EDUCATION

Master of Fine Arts, Acting, Claire Trevor School of the Arts, University of California at Irvine, September 2010 – June 2013

Faculty: Richard Brestoff, Robert Cohen, Eli Simon, Phil Thompson, Cynthia Bassham, Annie Loui, and Gary Busby

Bachelor of Fine Arts, Drama, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University, August 2003 – May 2007

Classical Studio: Louis Scheeder, Donna Germaine, Greg Seel, Robert Richmond

ETW: Rosemary Quinn, Raina von Waldenburg, Steven Wangh, Jonathan Hart

The Meisner Extension: Vicki Hart, Nate Flower, Per Brabe, Fitz Ertl

RESEARCH

Medici Scholar, UC-Irvine, Summer 2012

This grant made it possible for me to participate in a program at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, MN, called "A Guthrie Experience for Actors in Training."

Research Grant Recipient, UC-Irvine, 2011-12

Titled "Hedda Gabler: Inside and Out," I sought to compare acting technique approaches by leading a reading of the play and visiting NYC's Performing Arts Library to view archival performances, culminating in a short performance in attempt to test out my research.

STUDENT MENTORSHIP

Head of Undergraduate Performance Concentration, LSU, Fall 2019 - present

Faculty Mentor, The Studio School, Fall 2015 – Spring 2016

Career Mentorship Program, Actor's Studio of OC & Seven Pillars Acting Studio, Fall 2014 - 2019

VOLUNTEER WORK

NYU Mentor, Career Development, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University, Fall 2014-June 2016

Research Assistant for Academic Reader, Claire Trevor School of the Arts, UC-Irvine, Fall 2012

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

SAG-AFTRA Union Member, June 2013 – Present
Actor's Equity, EMC Candidate, Fall 2019 – Present
Association of Theatre in Higher Education, Member, Fall 2019 – Present
American Theatre and Drama Society, Member, Winter 2020 – Present
National Alliance of Acting Teachers, Summer 2020 - Present

REFERENCES

Kristin Sosnowsky
Chair, School of Theatre
Interim Dean, College of Music and Dramatic Arts
Louisiana State University
225-578-9274
ksosno1@lsu.edu

Cynthia Bassham
Professor of Teaching, Acting
University of California at Irvine
949-824-4903
cbassham@uci.edu

Nick Erickson
Head of MFA Acting
Louisiana State University, School of Theatre
225-578-4331
nickwe@lsu.edu