

TECHNIQUE FOR CREATING ATMOSPHERE
ATMOSPHEREOur Phantoms [The Possessed]:

I consider your ability to work at home of such importance that I will torture you with the same scene all day long; it must be done, otherwise there is no sense for me to be in the school if you will not take the Method so that you are able to use it. You will become amateurs and I will become a dishonest man. I am not able to work like that. We have quite consciously to decide that we must get the Method, and, therefore, we must go through this difficult and monotonous stage, after which we shall go on with our plays. So, be concentrated for the whole day; be active. First we have worked for the style, then for justification, and for the feeling of truth.

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It is a very strong atmosphere of suspicion in the beginning - suspicion and tension as if before a crucial moment. After the words, "My lawful wedded wife," the disaster happens - the tension breaks and the disaster is there. Of course you will find the color of this particular disaster. The atmosphere must be radiated.

First imagine that the atmosphere is around us in the air - suspicion is very easy to imagine being everywhere. Then radiate it back into the space, and it is there. The aim is to become inspired by the atmosphere. If I am in

the atmosphere of suspense I will speak in quite a different manner. In this way we escape intellectual understanding of the words, which is so killing for us. Under the inspiration of the atmosphere it begins to be something. The atmosphere of suspicion will lead to one kind of inspiration, while the atmosphere of fear will lead to quite another.

It is very important not to have illusions about whether we have the atmosphere or not. We must be brave enough to know when we have it, and when it is not there. Don't delude yourselves. If you really get the atmosphere you will find what interesting things will develop from it. If you take atmosphere in a vague way it is quite wrong; you must make a really conscious effort to imagine the atmosphere in the room, then you will get it in yourself, and then you will radiate it. You have the technical means, take them and apply them and you will see that I have a reason to give you this means and not others.

Sometimes atmosphere distributes itself and clings to various places, but the ideal is that the whole stage must be full of atmosphere, like a jelly. You don't use the atmosphere sufficiently; you must use it and increase it by moving and speaking in it. You must all fight and struggle to get the atmosphere. If you lose it during the work, struggle to recapture it. You must see that you are not yet able to do this. We must realize this and be brave enough to go on and suffer together until we get it.

You must find the desire and the ability to be open to the thing you want to be open to. Right now you don't want to be open to the atmosphere. The mistake you make is that when you begin to speak the atmosphere is shattered. We make the mistake of thinking that the atmosphere cannot be shown through words; it can and must be shown through our words and movements. The atmosphere must permeate our whole life on the stage.

There are many possibilities in this atmosphere of suspicion, but it is only through exercise that you will get this ability to develop the atmosphere. I want to give you an example of something which you should know by now. This is a scheme to understand what I mean by atmosphere, and how to imagine it.

Imagine that this is a door here and this is one room and there is another. Imagine that you do not know anything about atmosphere; you simply want to enter the other room. At the moment when you reach the threshold a member of your family greets you and says, "The child is ill." What has happened at this moment? I guess the atmosphere of this room, I imagine it although I am still standing on the threshold. There is the atmosphere which I imagine so much that even not being an artist, only a simple person, I say, "What has happened?" and I enter the room quietly. Why? Because of the influence of the atmosphere which I have imagined before I stepped into the room. Then I no longer

imagine it, I live in the atmosphere.

The next step is that I come to the child's bed, and what will I have in me? I will radiate the same atmosphere back. When someone else comes in to the room and I will radiate the atmosphere to them. Now compare the two states, when I approached the room and was told that the child was ill, I was anticipating the atmosphere in the room which I had not yet entered. I imagined the room full of atmosphere-- this is a fact. The room must be filled with atmosphere. The second step was when I had imagined it and then crossed the threshold, then my whole being was affected by the atmosphere. The third step is when I myself radiate the atmosphere. This is the whole simple technique of atmosphere.

What is wrong, and we do it very often, is that instead of guessing the atmosphere there, I begin to radiate nothing. Then when I am exhausted by this wrong activity I get the atmosphere of human unhappiness and I am depressed by this personal mistake, and then I begin to question the truth about the atmosphere. In this way we lock the door and then try to open it.

That is why I insist on the right approach, and not through vague floundering. It is so difficult to understand when the teacher insists on certain points which seem unimportant to the student. He grasps the idea of the atmosphere and then he wants to be left alone. In this way he overlooks the necessity of the points which the teacher tries to insist

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one. After so many mistakes the student begins to understand that the teacher was right because he finds that his approach was wrong.

The same thing is true if, for instance, I want to meditate. There are certain rules about this but almost all people start with the idea of meditation without paying attention to the rules. The result is that they are stiff and tired. The person may suffer with these tensions for years before coming back to the first words of his teacher, perhaps one simple rule which he had not paid attention to, but after two or three years he realizes that the teacher was right. I take this example of meditation because it is the most subtle thing, but the principle is the same in more primitive things.