

Michael Chekhov

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Improvisation exercises given by Michael Chekhov at an Audition:

It is very, very early dawn - the first rays of the sun. The room is very quiet and very sad - no light inside or out. There are two figures in the room - one is a man and the other a very young girl. When the sun rises something must be decided definitely between these two figures, but the decision cannot be made. Imagine the difficult state of this person when everything disappears, and he hears only the ticking of the clock for two minutes, after which crisis the person will decide something. Perform these two minutes.

Five hours later on the same morning, many people are going through the door, all of them inharmonious in their connection to the two persons. Absolutely from another world with their interests, and they bring dreadful disharmony into the room. The problem between the two persons is not yet decided. When the other people enter the room, the man tries to be absolutely friendly and polite as a screen or a mask, but inwardly he tries to continue the night line which was not accomplished - two lives, one for them and one for himself.

Clown Trick: The performance of a stupid trick which is always successful, but this time no one laughs. The clown is shocked and crushed by his failure and he falls into an abyss, but then he does the trick for the second time absolutely unsuccessfully, and then he does it for the third time because he can't help it. Then he feels inwardly dead - killed.