

Michael Chekhov

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## FEELING OF TRUTH

The Cricket on the Hearth Rehearsal:

The feeling of truth is not something which can be applied to certain things and not to others. In the performance today, certain passages were absolutely truthful, while others were not truthful. We will assume then that every moment needs the feeling of truth. Take it for the whole play as a living voice inside of us which will lead us through the whole performance, fully conscious so that you are really aware of the ground on which you are going to exercise. In the next rehearsal we will take another ground. For today, concentrate only on the feeling of truth.

For example, when the candle was forgotten - this means that not everything was complete at this moment. The candle was not senseless business - the light here or there makes everything different - it makes the heart of the scene, for instance, if it is taken really seriously in the sense of what it means from the most inner meaning of the picture.

From the feeling of truth you would have had the necessity to take the candle - the feeling of truth lies in the completeness of the scene. If you have forgotten the candle, it means that your feeling of truth was not complete. If you consider this candle business as simple business, and if you do not connect it with the whole thing, it means that your true picture of the scene is not complete.

This is an example where the real feeling of truth

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can command us in instances where the thing itself seems to have little, if any, connection with the feeling of truth. It can be considered from the angle that you simply forgot. But that cannot be because if the business has some sense, then it belongs to the realm of the feeling of truth.

As another example: Some of you forgot to shut the door. Instead of embracing the whole world around the play, the cold outside and everything - if you had the real feeling of truth, you would, of necessity, feel that the door must be shut because your feeling of truth would command you to embrace the whole world in which Cricket takes place. So it is not a matter of accidentally forgetting the business of shutting the door. It is much more than that - it means the forgetting of a great deal of your own psychology in the play.

Another example: Your speech when you are speaking to one another. You speak "in general." That means that the idea, the sense, the meaning was there, but the impression given was that these sentences could have been spoken in the same manner to any member of the cast. This is wrong from the standpoint of the feeling of truth. Each sentence must be spoken so that everyone will be convinced that you have found the intonation which can be applied only to one person, and the same sentence spoken to another person must sound different. You must speak from a different inner state.

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Otherwise it means that your feeling of truth is not awakened sufficiently to entice you to speak to everyone on the stage in a different tone - a tone which can be applied only when speaking to this particular person and to no one else. This is again the feeling of truth. If you will feel truthfully with whom you are speaking and pay attention to this feeling of truth, you will know when you are too quiet, too official, too refined, too intimate, etc. It will tell you immediately whether you are right or wrong.

The feeling of truth must be taken as something which shows us more that which is right than something which punishes because things are wrong. This same feeling of truth commands the time and the tempo and all other things. There is nothing on the stage which cannot be permeated with the feeling of truth, just as a sponge can be filled with water in every part. If, for instance, an actor brings a new depth of feeling onto the stage, you must be overwhelmed by the new suggestions which will come to you as a result. This freedom can only be based on real inner life. Everything will give us pleasure if we are stimulated, and one of the ways to become stimulated is this highly developed feeling of truth. Your feeling of truth must recognize a new note, and you must have a new response to it. Without this feeling of truth you will simply miss all the suggestions that are coming from everywhere.

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In this scene, if you would take into your consciousness the night, the dimensions of the room, and so forth - we cannot enumerate the many things, but through the feeling of truth you can awaken feelings in this scene. All the feelings are waiting to be freed, but because of the lack of the feeling of truth, the feelings remain passive. Real human feelings cannot come out if it is a lie, therefore, we have two marvelous things in our life: 1. To love someone, whomever it may be. 2. To be where there is nothing of love, nothing of feeling. And as we cannot always be honest in our life today, we have found a screen which is good behaviour.

To be well behaved on the stage is impossible. On the stage we must only show our feelings - that is what we must be pioneers in. We must be brave enough to show our feelings and not to be polite and well behaved rather than to show one's real human feelings. On the stage we cannot allow this. How to awaken our feelings? We must awaken our feeling of truth, not as a judge, but as a guide. If we awaken the feeling of truth, all other things will come.

Suggestions for today's rehearsal of Cricket:

Blair (Caleb): Sometimes your speech becomes too young. You slip out of the character sometimes, and when you move, the same thing is true.

Sam (Tackleton): Try to keep as many colors as possible.

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Variety in the psychology, but everything as a dark spirit - an isolated, lonely figure.

Ronnie (Edward): When you enter, you can still be a bit older. At the beginning the audience must be really deceived - after that you can do what you like - after the audience has discovered that you are young.

John (Peerybingle): There are just a few small places where you are not true psychologically.

Scene II: Caleb and Bertha: When Tackelton appears when you are singing, it is an unusual thing. He never comes at that time. So it is much more of a shock. We must have this for the plot about the strange marriage from which everyone recoils. In the second part of the scene, after Tackelton has gone, it must be psychologically a different tempo. It is not similar to the beginning at all. The beginning is a usual, everyday thing, but this is a very exceptional case - after Tackelton's entrance everything is exceptional. Bertha must lead here. There must also be accents from all of you at the end, after having climbed more quickly to the end.

Sam: Increase the objective which is to explain the origin of Greek philosophy to an idiot. So you must have it in the back of your mind terribly strongly.

Scene III: May and Caleb must be more worried and disturbed by Mrs. Fielding. Scandal must be there in the atmosphere. Dot must lead this more actively. This must be underlined by

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everyone so that from this unpleasant thing everything develops.

Scene IV: Caleb must make the whole last scene a bit more urgent. Cover it with this urgency. From Tackelton we need some variations which are qualities or colors. May - more inward shining - take more part in everything because you are the center. Presence.