

Michael Chekhov

June 8, 1938

SUGGESTIONS FOR AN ARTICLE ABOUT MICHAEL CHEKHOV:

Stanislavsky - Rudolf Steiner

M.C. About the personality of the person [Michael Chekhov] I would simply state that he was the pupil of Stanislavsky, and later was a leader of the Moscow Art Second. I would confine this so that it is not a description of the person but rather a description of the Method. The Method must be described absolutely. I would cut down on all the things about the person but about the Method I quite agree with what has been written. It is better to have the things said about the person in an objective, dry way.

There are two points I would clarify: 1. The meaning of the sound - in connection with the speech method - this is taken entirely from Dr. Steiner. The question is should we mention his name or not refer to it? For my part I would like to mention him, because I believe his speech method is really something for the future world. 2. About the reference to "the whole body". Perhaps this is too special; perhaps the ^{audience} readers would have a funny feeling about this phrase.

G. Shdanoff: I agree with Mr. Chekhov. He is quite right. I would say much more in the introduction, but in a different style - in a biographical style. As it is it is a little too personal. That is the result which the readers must feel. The reference to "the gifted child" is too little; I would describe much more, but in a biographical way. (Here there was a reference to P.A. Markov and his

M. Chekhov

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"The First Studio - Sullerzhitsky-Vachktangov-Chekhov".)

M. Chekhov: If you describe my path to the theatre, it is impossible to miss the point where I met Dr. Rudolf Steiner. Stanislavsky was the beginning, then I passed on to Dr. Steiner's ideas, and the mixture of Dr. Steiner and Stanislavsky has given me certain grounds for my Method. If I do not mention Dr. Steiner it is as if I want to avoid the most important thing. I cannot deny it. Dr. Steiner is organically there. You might say that after Michael Chekhov left Russia, he had experiences in different countries, trying to get some ideas about the European theatre, and he was drawn more and more to the idea of Dr. Steiner. This threefold experience of Russia, the European theatre, and Dr. Steiner, which influenced his whole life, led him to the results which he now calls his Method. Stanislavsky, the European theatre, and Dr. Steiner who has influenced his whole world outlook.

G. Shdanoff: For five years Michael Chekhov directed the Second Moscow Art Theatre; he created many of his most important parts in the Moscow Art Theatre and was not only trained there. He became the director of the Second Moscow Art Theatre in 1923 and was with it until 1928, when he went to Berlin and to Max Reinhardt.

Mrs. Elmhorst: How much about Dr. Steiner do you wish to mention?

M. Chekhov

June 8, 1938

M. Chekhov: Perhaps we could say that Dr. Steiner influenced the whole of Michael Chekhov's being, so that in the light of Dr. Steiner's teaching he has created his Method, without giving details as to how or by what means. It must be touched in a big broad way, without mentioning any special points. The article must not be intimate or too much in the style of a diary.