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#### Michael Chekhov

#### November 27, 1937

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# IMAGINATION INCORPORATION

<u>Hamlet</u> <u>The Deluge</u> <u>King Lear</u>

IMAGINATION: Old Students:

Work for incorporation of images, and combine with this work on speech. Try to overcome this quality of reserve. With the feeling of form - take it quite psychologically - move the structures. Imagine the scene with Claudius and make it more and more complete. Recreate the image you had before, and add this vision which is at the same time acting, and try to act the scene in your imagination from the point of view of Claudius's inner experience - this is the main point - not the

outer appearance. Try to hear the words you are going to say. You must very carefully give your scene to your audience and then very humbly disappear. If you break it, you cut the heart of your audience. You must sustain your scene. Stop and start your imagination between each scene, because it gives very good exercise for the psychological muscle. In our sense, to repeat means to make better. Each time the image must be more and more clear.

The scene from <u>The Deluge</u>. Exercise your speech on the basis of the exercise which is atmosphere. We must cross the threshold of false modesty and make many mistakes. This is necessary and from it we learn very much.

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Take the scene from <u>King Lear</u>, adding the words, "Blow, winds, and crack your chocks! rage! blow! Your cataracts and hurricanes, spout till you have drench'd the steeples, drown'd the cocks!" Take the image - imagination means invisible action. Don't think it is a psychological process only it is acting not on the stage, but in our imagination. Don't forget to sustain the end - don't break too soon. Touching the inner life of the image has sense only if we are going to incorporate it in more or less definite form. You must see the movements in your imagination. Sometimes your movements are so poor and helpless. Therefore, you must attempt to see, to a certain extent, in this exercise, the outer life of the character, although the inner life of the character is more impor-

tant. You must have one eye half open for the outer form which the character takes. Get the inner life of the image.

Imagine Lear with old, old hands, a white beard, and torn clothes. Paula'a character really had a biography, but how important it is to have a relaxed body. The whole thing is to get the instinct that the body will be tense only to the extent that is necessary. In Paula's case we saw a body which could not incorporate her character. It is not forbidden to have certain contractions in the body, but they must be to a certain extent free. It is not possible to say be absolutely relaxed, because this may spoil the idea of the character, but it means to pay attention to such an extent that the body will

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not disturb the creative idea. We must get this ability to have a relaxed body. Never feel that our exercises for relaxation are superfluous. Think about our exercises as if we have not yet started them. It is so important to start the exercise each time with the feeling that you are going to try to do the exercises. Our natures are so contracted and retrogressive that we must overcome this.

