

Michael Chekhov

January 25, 1938

STYLE - COMEDIA DELL' ARTE
OBJECTIVES

STYLE - COMEDIA DELL' ARTE:

I want to remind you of the two levels we worked on yesterday. One level is the music inside - the other level the mask to be sorry, to be gay, to be angry. Now, will you please (without Mr. Harvey's help) create within yourselves capricious music. We are not going to speak about the archetype now, but one of these images could be a butterfly or flying feathers. With this quality, without masks, I want you to get up and sit down. Add easiness to this quality. Now add to this the quality that you are absorbing everything around you, not only absorbing but trying always to find new objects. Don't stay very long with one object. The same butterfly feeling, but a psychological one. Really try to absorb it quickly and to the fullest extent and for one second only.

Now, having this psychological butterfly quality, you are going to get up and sit down. Inside and outside feeling is really the same. Butterfly inside and butterfly outside. Don't lose the quality, keep it - only outwardly. Inwardly you must be absolutely truthful. Run forward and run back. Look at things so that you can remember them in this quick tempo. Will you please move your hands - try to find this quality in each of your arms. Add to this your

M. Chekhov

January 25, 1938

legs without dancing. Define this quality of the butterfly in your legs.

Will you try to combine this ability to absorb, with a definite movement. Do it inwardly. Do it in psychological gesture. Do it only psychologically please. Do not hurry too much. Combine these by doing tricks with objects - juggler's psychology. Do it psychologically by absorbing. Now imagine an invisible body as we do in characterization. Be taller than you are, very slim and very flexible. With the help of this body will you please do the same trick, being tall and slim and flexible. Keep this quality. Develop it. Please find the contact but this time only with Blair. You have to be with him and in him, as if to lose the boundary between you both. I want you to remember the qualities of the butterfly: light, fluttering. You are slurring too much. Remember: slim, slender, invisible, butterfly body.

OBJECTIVES: take the mask of being sorry, almost crying. We will begin the following scene: Catherine is Paula's daughter. It is Paula's objective to keep the boy away from the daughter. The boy's objective is to kiss the girl. Woody is the bridegroom and he is an old man. Anna and Alan are good friends of the boy. The bridegroom is so old that he is fainting with excitement, while the mother is preparing his outfit for the marriage. She is very absorbed in the details of dressing the bridegroom, and at the same time trying to prevent the boy and

4101
M. Chekhov

January 25, 1938

his friends from getting to the daughter. A tramp then appears - he is going nowhere. He sees an opportunity to impersonate a doctor and make some money, by attending to the bridegroom who has fallen to the floor. He hypnotizes the old man and revives him, smokes a cigarette and the old man falls down again. The tramp has a black moustache. This is his power.