

ATMOSPHERE  
Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme

ATMOSPHERE:

Exercises for Atmosphere:

1. Imagine an atmosphere.
2. Move in it.
3. Find some sound, some words, to express your feelings.
4. Then your action will come.

In working on The Green Cockatoo, or on any play, we must begin with our exercises for atmosphere. In these exercises we must define the work very carefully before we begin. We must never confuse these exercises and the performance of the play. In order to reach our aim in these exercises we must do everything very definitely.

The director, or conductor, who is appointed each day by the group, must direct very carefully and clearly every step and every action. From these steps and actions we can find an atmosphere by doing the action again and again. Don't try to act before you are absolutely familiar with the various atmospheres. This is real training, like a violinist.

Rehearse the same sound, the same movement, over and over again until in your soul will be awakened the atmosphere we wish to create. Do not be content with having reached a certain stage in an exercise. Meditate upon it and try to improve each time.

The Green Cockatoo is more of an action play, while The Golden Steed is more full of feeling, and Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme is more full of characters. Our approach to the

M. Chekhov

November 2, 1936

play is to find each atmosphere. That is our work.

When working on exercises, do not be slavish to the play. You are free to create fresh atmospheres each time. If you find an exercise is too difficult, then divide it into its various parts and rehearse each part until it is familiar; then make them into one movement. A very simple rule to be observed is that each movement and each moment of the exercise should be finished. You must find something which will finish and resolve your movement, and in that way, you will do the exercise better. You will be more in the exercise.

The first step for an artist is to be able to send out his soul, his emotions to the audience. The actual movements will come after.