

Michael Chekhov

(afternoon) February 7, 1938

STYLE - COMEDIA DELL' ARTE
IMPROVISATION \
OBJECTIVE

STYLE - COMEDIA DELL' ARTE:

Our rehearsal this time is on Henry's play [Spanish Evening]. Now the rehearsal mood - you know what it is. Music. Will you please take the music and transform it into hands, arms, legs. Will you add to all the qualities we have, the quality "I want to leave the earth," - continuously - a little over-the-earth psychology.

Now imagine we have three houses, two-storied. You are all young people, and you are sitting in these houses and looking out. It is early morning. Open the windows and say "Good morning."

Now with the condition that you are afraid of the old people hearing you. Now the same scene but everybody is old. You greet each other, but inside the same music. This is only the mask - transform it into inner gesture.

Alternate old and young people in this scene. Now young people. The old people are asleep in their beds. The condition is not only to say "Good morning," but go out of the house and greet each other. Now the old people are calling you back in the houses. Try to do it much quicker, but without hurry. Try to get up - I want to lift my center up.

On this basis, take the mask of the old people and

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discuss the question of the wedding. It is not real old but it is comedy old. Take the condition again of the fear of the old people.

Now take it again but this time with hurried carelessness. Distinguish between hurry and carelessness.

1. Dominated by old people.
2. Unhappy - quarreling with old people
3. Victory - freedom from old people

Our beings are extended to the fullest extent.

Now repeat the same with the old people.

1. We are the power in this town.
2. We are angry and astonished about this protest - we are trying to restore the full activity of old people.
3. Defeat. We are defeated but we try to smile and show that everything is all right.

Try to find the inner psychological gesture. The gestures must be archetypal.

IMPROVISATION:

Anna and Peter - improvise: It is very early in the morning, so early the moon is still in the sky. The girl must come to the window and is serenaded by the young man with the guitar. His mood to her is very gentle - he must not even kiss her, just say, "I love you" - it is enough.

Criticism:

The tempo is not right for this play - it is for a serious play. Try to do it with the condition that this is the event of your whole life.

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Now another officer (Terry) with quite different activity - fighting - although there is nothing actually to fight. The same action, and you say, "I love you," but in the mood of storming a fort. The same quality of being innocent, only in another color.

Peter hides and sees Terry - they both love the same girl - there is a great moment of fear on Anna's part - what to do? Both officers ask one another at the same time, "Do you love her?" They parry with their swords in duel. The two sisters cannot leave the house, so they must try to stop the duel by words from the window (they must not make too much noise or the mother will hear). Try to get the quality of "fighting to lose."

Next, the bridegroom appears in the window. The officers are so frightened they don't want to fight him. They take flight. The whole company comes from the tavern happy and full of wine.

Now I want you to develop psychologically what you have done physically, subconsciously, instinctively, in pairs: "I love you." Simple movements.

Now, please without dancing, bring the costumes. Make a circle around the stage and Blair will give you costumes and you will dress in a certain style and say, "I love you" in the style of your costume. Try to express a certain character.

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OBJECTIVE:

Next, the sacristan and the young wife who has once rejected him. Early morning. Objective: Let him know that nothing is lost - she still has a very deep feeling for him. Do not exaggerate and do not do the whole scene. It is much more useful for the future rehearsal of the play to have this type of not exaggerated performance.

Next, the young maid and her lover who is like a lion. Her objective is to flirt, then run away.
