

Michael Chekhov

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RADIATION
BRIDGES AND TRANSITIONSCriticism of Performances by Beginners:The Stronger - performed by Pas and Penny:

It was a very good performance in every sense. The main difficulty, which is quite natural, was that everything which was good was only half-way there. Your actor's nature is not yet elaborated enough to carry what you wish to send to your audience. This is not a mistake; it is the difficulty of the present stage you are in when you are not yet ready, from my point of view.

Both of you have made one mistake - you were not sufficiently possessed by the group feeling - you were too separated. You must use the group feeling even when you are alone on the stage - you are in a circle in which you include invisible partners. It will always be better than to become psychologically alone on the stage, which kills your ability to radiate and express yourself. It is important to act with someone, while being alone on the stage. If you do not understand what your partner suggests, how can you go on? You cannot because you do not know to whom you address yourself, or to whom you ask the question. This kind of solitude is absolutely killing. You can be a genius, but you will kill it if you act alone.

RADIATION:

Another mistake, and this comes from your first mistake: you did not radiate enough. It was also because

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you were alone - you discarded your partner, and, therefore, your radiation was personal and, as such, egotistical. Pas was better in this respect.

BRIDGES AND TRANSITIONS:

The third mistake was not so obvious. As young actors, you hurry inwardly - you are afraid to be silent. You hurry your text and do not give yourselves time for bridges and transitions. You speak the word before you are ready sometimes.

During rehearsals, try to develop these bridges and transitions from the very beginning. Do not jump from one sentence to another, only following the intellectual meaning, without transitions. The meaning is always clear and that is not the actor's task to convey the logical meaning which the author has given. But how to convey the meaning, that is our business. How to speak the author's words so that they will become yours and ours. For this aim you must find all the transitions between words and sounds without pause. There must be bridges and transitions. But they will not come to you if you are afraid of certain silent presence on the stage. Bridges and transitions, in our sense, do not depend upon words at all. It is the emotional and soul life, and imagination and everything together, which is like a stream going on without words. If you will develop these bridges and transitions, you can, for instance, act without any logical words

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or plot, simple bridges and transitions without any text. You can do it if you have trained yourself from the point of view of bridges and transitions because this is the source from which we can take our actor's values and not rely upon the author's words.

For instance, some sentences were filled with these bridges and transitions, and then we felt that they were right. From the point of view of a living being, which is the actor, they were right. If your presence is filled with bridges and transitions, it will be a performance. That is the only right we have to be on the stage - to radiate these things. Our theatrical business begins and ends with the actor. First of all, the actor must be good, and then comes the author and the settings, etc., etc. Otherwise we will never find the theatre. We will find good or bad directors or authors, but never theatre. Theatre is the actor. Your task is to work upon: 1. Bridges and Transitions. 2. Contact and group feeling. 3. Imagine your part all the time.