

Michael Chekhov

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DESIGNERS - PROPERTIES, COSTUMES, WIGS, ETC.  
TEMPO OF REHEARSALS  
FEELING OF TRUTH VS. NATIONALISM  
JUSTIFICATION  
TEMPO  
DIRECTORS REHEARSAL PLAN  
WIGS EN SCENE

Stanislavsky  
The Anatomist (Moscow Art Theatre)

DESIGNERS:

In Peer Gynt the designer must remember that although Peer is coming from a strange outer world, you are only showing this one scene, and therefore the influence of the other world must not be too strongly felt. His costume must be warmer in his relationship to the mother. Not too much cool green. Try to take into consideration what light you will have on the stage. Find more open sleeves and collar. Also find wigs.

Each director must already give to Mr. Peters all the properties and things he requires. It is already time to find out how to get them. Our future approach to the costumes and settings will be much more complicated than it is now. This is just the first right approach, which we must assume, and then we will try to make our costumes and wigs and settings to be more speaking. At the present time we are using the three dimensional space, and for the moment it is enough.

TEMPO:

Some directors have already reached the stage where they must start with the tempo. This is absolutely necessary

In The Kishina Scene.

You must not only apply the Method, but you must choose the right things for the right moment. For instance, such beautiful things as atmosphere and imagination may give nothing if you have no wise an scene, but this depends upon the tact of the director. Therefore, when preparing his rehearsal the director must decide what will lead him forward. It depends on what state the scene is in, and what difficulties he meets with. Perhaps the director does not know what is lacking. He must pay more attention to what is needed to bring the sketch forward, and not just have an illusion about it.

FEELING OF TRUTH:

By appealing to our feeling of truth we can do the most abstract and profound things, and they will be tangible and concrete for our audience, because of the feeling of truth. By means of this we will be able to serve our future audience with the most profound ideas and ideals we have to give them, and not just to entertain them because that is not the purpose of our theatre. Our theatre is to serve society and we can do this by giving them our most profound and abstract ideas which, through the feeling of truth, will be concrete for our audience.

We must not confuse this feeling of truth with the natural one. There are many, many truths and each one is a new one and depends upon the things around it. This confusion

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I have seen many times in Moscow - Stanislavsky was the originator of this feeling of truth - where we have confused the feeling of truth with naturalism. We have confused many things. In The Anatomist we made a great mistake because the feeling of truth we applied to it was naturalistic. But everything is creating a new feeling of truth. When John asked his actors to do something with a feeling of truth, without any truth, he was right because in his Fairy Tale it cannot be naturalistic truth. There are many truths.

#### JUSTIFICATION AND FEELING OF TRUTH:

It seems sometimes that these are one and the same thing. If I am truthful I have justified what I did, and vice versa. Not at all. Imagine that you have a beautiful justification for closing the window, but you can do this without any feeling of truth, and just so you can close the window very truthfully but without any justification. What is the difference? You will find it in your souls, but theatrically it is very clear. The feeling of truth is how you are doing a thing, and justification is why you are doing it. These two small words can help you the moment you begin to confuse the two.

When looking for the means to help yourself, ask whether you are doing why or how. For example, let us take The Fishing Scene. Imagine that the boat is thrown back into the sea by a big wave, and you are moving after the wave.



Will you please do it with a feeling of truth, and then with justification. Try to find the difference between the two.

The objective feeling of truth and justification are brothers. They are very close and when you are acting you will be using them both unconsciously, but you must be able to divide them consciously. They are helps for you, just as every other door in the method is a help, to be used consciously or unconsciously. Justification can be described and given by the director, or it can be unconscious and can be done freely by the actor. In either case justification is surrounded by an 'aura' which is in the actor's own being, and which no one can give him. The aura is something which comes from his actor's soul. You must be able to analyze and justify consciously, but your conscious justification can lead to a very dry performance without the 'aura.'

#### The Golden Steed:

This rehearsal was very good because the director knew exactly what he wanted to do, and how he was going to do it. It was very clear, without any hesitation or vagueness, and the results were good. The cast did not act more than the director asked, and that was very good.

The question of respect in the theatre is something which will grow with time, as a feeling in the group. It cannot be imposed.

The Fishing Scene: Criticism of Rehearsal:

The cast must gradually get accustomed to doing everything quickly. When the director tells you to start with a technical rehearsal, you must be obedient, to save the time. These small things are taking from us months and months of time. It is a very dangerous thing. Therefore, we are trying to do different exercises in order to be with the director and start the rehearsal at once. We must start with the last word of the director's sentence. Don't prepare. It is quite understandable, of course, because actors need some beginnings. This is very important and you will save much time, and the rehearsal will be much more interesting.

The director must also know before coming to the rehearsal absolutely what he is going to do today - nothing vague. We must prepare the rehearsal, but he has the right always to do something other than what he intended, when he meets his actors. But this can even take place during the rehearsal which he had planned. If the director will not change his plans, he must be able to work for five hours, knowing what he is going to do. This is absolutely necessary for our future theatre.

DIRECTOR'S REHEARSAL PLAN:

Each director will feel himself completely free if he will keep before him such questions as: what do I want to reach with this rehearsal? Not in general, because the

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director's approach must be very concrete. Then the second question must be: by which means must I reach this today? Don't allow yourself to have a vague idea. If I want to reach the style of movement, for instance, the actors must know what my idea is, and with which means I am going to reach it. The actor must know what the director wants and must do it without loss of time. These two things are most necessary.

#### MISE EN SCÈNE:

All directors should now begin to set moments of mise en scène throughout the whole play, and on the grounds of this established mise en scène you can work with imagination, with tempo, etc.