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Chekhov Theatre Studio
Ridgefield, Conn.
January 16, 1939

THE OPENING OF THE CHEKHOV THEATRE STUDIO IN
RIDGEFIELD, CONNECTICUT

January 16, 1939

THE STYLE OF THE CHEKHOV THEATRE STUDIO
CHANGE IN APPROACH TO OUR METHOD
CONSCIOUS WORK
CHANGE IN ATTITUDE TOWARD WORK
IMAGINATION
CONCENTRATION
THE FOUR BROTHERS
CHARACTERIZATION
NEW APPROACH LEADING TO RHYTHM

Mr. and Mrs. Elmhirst
Beatrice Straight
King Lear
Iris Tree

To Old Students:

As all of you know, it was a great step for us to move here, for everybody, for Mrs. Elmhirst, for Mr. Elmhirst and for Biddy, for each of you, and for myself. It was a difficult time, and during all this time Mrs. Elmhirst, although it was part of her heart and because Dartington is her heart, and our Studio was part of her - during this very difficult process of tearing the heart to pieces which I have observed from the beginning - was able to let us go. In our thoughts we have to send our gratitude for her great patience, for her great heart. It was really a great experience for me to see Mrs. Elmhirst in these days.

Beatrice was quite a different thing - she suffered but she has been so active in preparing for our new life, and we know that without Beatrice we would not be able to move -

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what Beatrice has done I do not think anybody else could do, and nobody else would do. Only Beatrice's strange spirit has done it. Beatrice has prepared everything for our future, which we must appreciate. We must concentrate on this thing for one single moment. We must make this point and thank Mrs. Elmhirst, Mr. Elmhirst, and Beatrice for all they have done for us. Beatrice's spirit is responsible for our being together. I want to thank Beatrice for all the things she has done.

THE STYLE OF THE CHEKHOV THEATRE STUDIO:

As we move to this other country, I want to move the style of our School - the style of our life. We have a certain style, and I want you to maintain and keep it and not lose yourselves in insignificant things. Always remember that we belong to this Studio, and there is something behind us which must somehow radiate through us into society, when we come in touch with other worlds. It must be developed. For the new students - how we behave in our profession, it is very important - not to make jokes about the serious work in the class. Each of you will lead the new students, and when we invite guests, it is important to show our style.

These are the four leading points:

Mrs. Elmhirst, Mr. Elmhirst, and Biddy. The style of our School.

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CHANGES IN APPROACH TO OUR METHOD:

During these two and one half years perhaps the old students have learned something from me - I have learned much more from you, and for which I am very thankful to you, and one of the results of my lessons which I got from you is that I have changed somewhat my approach to you, and I have created a different plan for the work. I will tell you today what it is.

1. The main point in this new plan is that you have to fulfill definite tasks which I will give you. Of course, I have given you tasks in the past, but this time it will be our main and guiding principle to prepare very quickly the tasks which I will give you.

CONSCIOUS WORK:

2. You know that in our School we have very often had students with talent, gifts, inspiration, and so on. Of course, this is important, that is why we have our auditions to try and find out whether our new friend has enough talent to join us. But we must remember that talent is something which is not in our power. Actually, we may say that it does not concern us at all whether we have talent. If we have no talent, then our destiny will say to us, "Stop, and leave this school." If we have talent, destiny will say, "Stay, go on."

What is interesting for us in our School is whether

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our future actors are able to work or not - this is the only point which interests me, and which should interest you. Because, through conscious work, through knowing how to do and what to do, and what to reach, we can do much more than talent can do if it is simply there hidden somewhere. Talent and genius very often makes people uncertain and conceited. (We know from the biographies of great people how much they have suffered with their genius and talent when they were not developed,) But in our School, as a principle, work is first, talent is last. I have the right to appeal to your ability to work. Knowing how to do it, and what to aim at I have the right to ask you to work, and to bring me the results of your independent work.

CHANGE IN ATTITUDE TOWARD WORK:

The usual psychology that you are working in the school and are quite free when the class is finished - this usual psychology is wrong for our School. If one is an artist-actor and thinks that he can go on ^{being free} when he stops his work, he is wrong. This is all right in the business world - from eleven to one and five to seven - here, it is impossible. If you have the idea to develop yourselves as actors you must work - on your tasks, your part, your development. You must pay attention not to lose your time during your free time, and I must insist on it because I have told you that I have changed

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something in my Method, and that is more and more conscious work. You cannot fulfill this work if you feel that when you have left this room you are free - one is never free when one is an artist, and not a businessman. Work, work, and work!

To Old and New Students:

Now we shall start and I shall distribute first the tasks which I will give you to prepare.

I would like to start our first lesson by saying that what I am going to give you through a long period you have to take. This is the most important thing. If I give you something, and it is not taken, it will be between us and never in you - my only aim is to give you things which you will absorb and make them your own things and ideas. If not, you will always know something and will not be able to do anything. To be able to do, that means: To take something which is given and to make it your own.

For this aim, as I have told you already and will repeat many times, you have to work hard, concentratedly, decisively - you have to decide, "I must get these things, and after I get them I can modify them and apply them in an individual way." But before you get them you cannot apply them in the individual way.

If you will remember your first lesson today in Eurhythmy, you will see that there are a lot of things that you thought you knew (I mean the Old Students), but if you

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were right and quiet and peaceful, you would see that there are many new things in these old and simple things which were given you. There is always something there to be accepted, to be understood, to be taken and adjusted to yourself, and yourself to be adjusted to it. So never enter this room or go to Miss Crowther's lessons with the idea, "This is an old story." Come every day fresh with the idea, "What can I get today from the same thing?" Then you will grow and develop your own talent.

The first rule, and the most important, I give you today: To be able to work upon old things as if they were new. It will help you and me and our work.

In addition to the hard work which I expect from you, you have to be patient and wait for things I am going to give you, and do not expect to get all these things in one week, in one month. I will give to you slowly and see if you are able to get it and then I will go on. If I see you are not yet able to get it, I must wait until you do get it. In our work in England, I applied the different principles which I have always used in Russia and other countries before I entered England and America, and it was right for these countries but apparently wrong for England - I gave too much at once - many rules and they overwhelmed us. You have taught me to change my principles - one thing slowly, but it must be taken.

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IMAGINATION:

Now the first thing I am going to give you, and you have to take, is the idea that the creative ability in us as artists is based on one thing (one for the time being) which we call the ability for imagination. Everybody has the ability of imagination - without this ability, for instance, no one would have his meals. Imagination is the thing without which a person is spiritually and mentally ill.

The artist must not be satisfied with the amount of imagination he has from Nature - he has to develop it, through the School, through exercises, through many efforts we have to develop our imagination. There is no limit to developing the imagination. If we think we are able to imagine everything we want - if our imagination is very vivid - that means go on. This ability can be developed to such a state that the imagination will be the artist. It must be so powerful, and so beautiful and inspiring that you become the eternal student of your own imagination. This is the ideal. One of us may have more imagination than another, but what is more important is how much I can develop my imagination. It is very comforting to know that imagination can be developed to an unlimited degree. With this idea I want you to work on imagination.

1. Imagination is connected with many things which, before we start to explore the problem, seem to have no con-

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nection with us. But the more we work this way, the more we see that many things are in close connection with this marvelous ability to imagine. For instance, when we imagine we think that this is a purely psychological process, which is true, but if you will explore the question you will see one interesting thing, and that is the human being, or actor, or artist imagines very much in accordance with his body. If I am slim, all my imagination is inclined to be slim. If I am fat, all my imagination becomes fat and clumsy. If I think, for instance, that I have the right to tell everybody the full truth, and am always speaking the truth without paying attention whether anybody needs it, the imagination thus becomes very limited and very narrow-minded. If you have an illness which you have not had before, and you compare your imagination before and after this illness which does not allow you to move as quickly as before, you will see your imagination is different because of this thing. If you have certain family connections, happy or unhappy, you will see that this family life influences you.

Imagination is connected with so many things, and if we say to ourselves: I imagine as I, that means that I kill my own ability to be an artist. If I am going to train my imagination, that means that I am going to defeat my illness, my family problems, my bodily difficulties and all these things. My imagination has to be powerful enough to

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dictate to my heart, to my body, to my narrow ideas. To develop our imagination means to lift it up over all the things which are usual in and around us - to lift it so high that it is inspiring me as a free thing.

I want you to try to remember this talk - try to elaborate it. This is what I require of you as it concerns the theoretical part. It is very good for the old students to go over these things as if they are new for them, because it will give you very much.

First Exercise in Imagination:

Will you imagine things which I will tell you:

Imagine a very small white flower - Imagine a very big red flower. If you imagine two things which are not psychological things, simply physical things - one small white flower and one big red flower, you can see that they are not only different from each other, they are for you as an artist psychologically different - the small white flower awakens in you a different psychology from that of the big red flower. So you have to add your psychology to your imagination. If you will develop your imagination, your psychology will follow your imagination, and your imagination will awaken your psychology.

Exercise:

Imagine again these two flowers, and try to pay

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attention to the small white flower and the big red flower. By trying to do so (and this is the exercise which I give you as a task) you will see, or foresee, or anticipate that when you have a part and are free enough to work on this part (not only for four weeks, which is impossible from the point of view of art) your imagination will lead you into the outer and inner life of the character. How can the actor create a part in four weeks any more than an author can write a new Faust or a new Macbeth? If you have time to develop the part, you have to imagine your character and to see his outer appearance, just as in the case of these two flowers, you have to penetrate into the inner life of the character you are going to portray as well.

For instance, imagine King Lear, and see the whole costume, etc. What is King Lear's psychology? You must make the effort to see his psychology, his soul, how he feels, how he thinks, how he wishes and desires - his mood, is he loving, is he angry? The real actor is able to see the psychology. It requires tremendous power of the imagination to plunge into this character and know it. Through the power of my imagination I have to be King Lear immediately. The ability to imagine into the character.

When we start imagining as beginners, then we see that our imagination is very weak. If we imagine, for instance, two pieces of wood in the most simple way, in the form of a

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cross, you will see how helpless these things are when they move. This cross cannot be a real cross until you fix it, otherwise it will make you dizzy. Try to imagine the cross as it really is. You see how weak your imagination is because you cannot stop it - you cannot fix the object - and this requires long and patient work to develop the will power which will not only give you the pictures, but will be able to fix the picture in you.

If you will imagine not such a simple thing as a cross, but a character, you will see that for this aim you require great will power which can come through the exercises. If these exercises are really taken, you will see that they are the life itself, the power itself, the idea itself.

CONCENTRATION:

To be able to start this long way of developing the imagination we have to pay attention to the fact that the great weakness in our imagination lies in our inability to be able to concentrate. We are so distracted in our life that we cannot really keep our attention on one point as long as we need. We concentrate on something as long as it is interesting or a necessity, but the ability to be able to concentrate on things which we, as artists, choose is not there. Very often artists and actors try to escape the necessity to meet this problem of concentration by saying

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consciously or unconsciously, "The artist must be free," and, therefore, under the guise or disguise of freedom they actually do nothing. The artist can only be free when he has his own power psychologically and physically. One must be able to control and master his own being. But to be able to have one's own psychology and body and everything in one's own power, one has to develop the ability to concentrate without which all efforts will be almost in vain.

This is the beginning, and I want to give you certain ideas about imagination, as we understand it in our school. The problem must be taken absolutely seriously, otherwise your time is lost, and my time is lost, and Beatrice's confidence in us is lost.

THE FOUR BROTHERS:

Exercise: Feeling of the Whole:

One thing which the artist must have continuously in his artist's nature is the feeling of the whole. The artist, whatever he does, must do it with the feeling of completeness or wholeness. If he enters the stage, he must feel the complete thing. If he speaks, it must be a complete thing - no floundering or vagueness - everything must be done as a whole thing, physically and psychologically. This marvelous feeling of the whole must be awakened in each of us through exercises. Then you will feel how beautiful is this feeling of the whole. It is like the ground on which you can

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be firm, and the audience will absorb and take everything because you give it to them in such a beautiful form. Try to take it as if it were a new thing. Try to awaken this feeling of the whole by a simple movement.

Exercise:

Lift your hands up, and then down, and consider the whole process as one whole thing - a small piece of art. Try to take pleasure in doing these things completely.

Start kneeling down on one knee, then lifting the hands and then getting up. This to be considered as one unbroken thing which you are able to produce as artists. Recall and realize this pleasure which comes from the human nature - completeness of everything we do.

Now the same movement absolutely complete, with the feeling of the whole, but in a very quick tempo. Overcome the protests of the body with this feeling of the whole. I need this thing, therefore, I force my body to be obedient. The feeling of the whole - make it complete - recall the beauty of this feeling of the whole.

If you will do such exercises, you will gradually and naturally get a certain distaste for vague and unelaborated things on the stage, which is very important. We have to love our art, but we have to hate some things in our art so that we will never confuse this feeling of vaguely being on the stage. It must be eliminated. If I am going to "perform" a

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vague person, it must be done - I have to imagine the person like this - I have to imagine a whole for this un-whole person.

Exercise:

Sentence: "To sea, to sea, the calm is o'er."

Will you speak altogether this sentence, so that each of you has the same feeling of the whole when you are speaking the sentence.

Combine two things: Invent a certain movement which can have some connection with this sentence. Produce this sentence and the movement which you will find yourselves. Imagine for a moment what kind of movement you want to do. Speak and move at the same time. Have enough patience to sustain this inner power. Do not confuse the two things: One is to cut into pieces, another is to be able to do staccato with pauses which do not break the form - staccato - legato with pauses.

The feeling of the whole is able to embrace everything whether it is staccato or legato. When you do your exercises on the feeling of the whole, the feeling of the whole not only embraces the exercise but the whole life. It is a great gift when scientists or artists are able to embrace their whole profession as one big whole thing.

Here is the thing you are going to do: anticipation - feeling of the whole - sustain. You have awakened in your soul

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things which will always be there. You must do it consciously. The teacher must know what shall be awakened in the student and what shall be dropped. This ability to anticipate - to do one whole thing - to sustain - feeling of the whole.

Now I shall give you tasks.

New Students:

For the young students the task must be based only and exclusively on the imagination, so that the things I will ask you to prepare and will work on with you, and on which you have to work alone, try to base only on the imagination. Imagine things and characters and through your imagination try to develop the character. All things which will disturb your imagination try to discard.

Old Students:

The task must be based on three things:

Imagination
Grounds
Qualities

When you show me your work, you must be able to tell what qualities you were trying to get - what grounds you took.

As we are going to prepare two plays, I will ask you also to work on your parts. We must wait for Mr. Shdanoff for rehearsals, and prepare for him our parts separately and individually. We are not able to do the whole work because he has re-written the play, and secondly, I need his help physically.

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TASKS:

DON QUIXOTE - John to be Author

Don Quixote	Sam
Host	Warner
1st Harlot	Doirdre
2nd Harlot	Erika
1st Shepherd	Alonzo
2nd Shepherd	Hurd
Sancho Panza	Woody

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FISHING SCENE - Iris to be Author [Iris Tree]

Woman who loses her husband	Erika
Fisherman who is saved	Alonzo
Old Fisherman	Warner

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CHARACTERIZATION:

Shdanoff Play: [The Possessed]:The Character of "Slim Mike" [or "Fedka"]:

Will you imagine quite freely while I tell you the things about the character. Will you all imagine the same thing.

Character: Escaped convict (try to imagine the escaped convict, and try to change the image in accordance with new things. This is the technique to be able to see everything changed and elaborated until you will get the desire to express, and this is the right way - to be so rich in our imagination that we get the desire finally to act. Start with imagination and finish with acting).

A shameless person, without any conscience, young, handsome, able to kill people as easily as moving his hand. His nature is very crude and rude - he tries to hide his nature under the guise of politeness in all his movements, in speech, in everything - he tries to wear his costume, even though it is old, in the most gentle manner. He has always a knife with him - when he takes his knife we see that this knife and his hand are one thing - he manages this knife as a painter would his brush or a playwright his pen - it is a thing which belongs to him and he loves his knife and he works with it skilfully and beautifully.

Through his outer image please look into his soul and mind. Let him move before your mind's eye and follow his movements, and try to picture his soul. If he were able to analyze his own psychological attitude toward the whole world, and the people around him, he would say perhaps, "My desire is to make everybody around me sleepy - my desire is that everybody sleeps and I am walking alone through the world, and I am managing everyone, killing and stealing." This main psychology has created in him a certain kind of walk. He

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walks beautifully so that each step shows, "I want you to be sleepy and I want to be alone in my world." All his movements are in a certain way beautiful.

Imagine this character along the lines I give you, and try to elaborate his speech on the basis of the imagination I give you. His speech, his manner of walking, how he keeps his shoulders, neck and arms. When I ask you next time to please show me how he walks, runs, speaks, listens, how he is thinking, how he is looking, everything must be absolutely clear to you because of this effort to imagine him.

Henry Young's Play: [Spanish Evening]

The Character of 'The Barber':

Small village or town in Italy or Spain. There is a barber shop and the character is the Barber. He thinks himself as beautiful as a lion - powerful, strong, handsome; that there are no girls in the whole world who will meet him and not fall at his feet. Actually he has a very naive and stupid face, at the same time, a very childish and very charming person. He thinks he is very gracious and each movement he does he thinks it is beautiful, but actually each movement he does is very stupid, primitive and naive and not beautiful at all. He is satisfied with himself absolutely. When he meets a girl he becomes immediately very aggressive, and he cannot think of any other connections with girls. He feels that it is almost his duty to be aggressive with the girls. He has invented a very strange coiffure which is at the same time an advertisement and the means to attract girls. He loves and desires his own body and thinks he is so strong - he crushes everything he touches - when he embraces the girls they suffer. The whole world for him is divided into two parts: girls and wives, and husbands. The husbands' world frightens him tremendously, and he becomes powerless and his muscles are weak. He

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becomes very strong in the company of the girls.
He has a very quick and tempestuous nature.

The Character: "The Mother" in Shdanoff's Play - The Possessed :

The Mother is an old lady, an old-fashioned lady. Everything in her is expressing the mother's attitude toward the world and especially toward her son. Her whole life and meaning could be expressed in the following way:

- To take care
- To protect
- To defend
- To encourage people who are weak

Not at all sentimental - nothing of usual softness, quite the opposite - she is a very strong person with a very clear brain - she penetrates into the psychology of the person with whom she has to speak or help and says and does everything with absolute sureness. She is the widow of a General, of very good family, and in the town where she lives she is as important as the Governor himself - her influence is unlimited. She is absolutely responsible for each word she says, for each movement she makes, for each thing she does because she knows how important it is. She does not allow herself to speak too much, or to speak things which she cannot justify, etc. She has a very strange son whom nobody can understand; that even she is not able to understand, him and this is her tragedy - this is a really tragic person. She feels and knows that her son is unhappy; that he experiences deep tragedy, but what tragedy she cannot guess because he has so many masks and guises that even her mother's heart cannot get there to help. Two different and contrasting situations - she is weak and lost when with her son - only her heart dictates to help him but she cannot. She wears only black clothes.

Try to imagine her not so much thinking about things she has to deal with as meditating everything, even when saying, "How do you do."

Character: Daniel [The Stranger] in Shdanoff's Play - The Possessed :

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We have tried to find this character in a very serious way. We have spoken about the person who, through his great spiritual experience, his consciousness, has the ability to understand and feel the whole cosmic life. For instance, we know there are people who are much interested in small things, such as a stamp collection, with no other interest for things. There are people who have interest in many things at once, and there are people who have interest in things which are not material or visible and tangible, but they feel they exist and they get interest from these things. A plant grows (the stamp collector will be satisfied that the tree grows) but such a character as "Daniel" has interest for the process of growth. He has interest for all the plants of the earth, trees, roots, leaves, and so on. Then it can be something which interests a person in the stars - dimensions which are too huge to realize - when they try to realize these distances and this world of plants, and the process of the thunder storm, they sometimes get a shock which opens their consciousness so that there is eternity. Once he gets this feeling for eternity and is not frightened, then it is something which we call cosmic consciousness, and then the person is always living the life everywhere. That is what we try to get. This person cries because he is happy - he is serious because he lives in everyone. So when Nicholas enters the room, it is as if he knew before that Nicholas would come because this person who lives everywhere knows beforehand things which are going to occur. Before it happens he knows what is going to happen.

Now add to this character which we will try to elaborate, that he tries to laugh. His consciousness is cosmic, but he can laugh. Cosmic consciousness at the end of his days.

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FOUR QUALITIES - FOUR BROTHERS:

The four qualities which I want to awaken - the four qualities which we must have in our nature are:

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1. Feeling of the whole
2. Feeling of form
3. Feeling of beauty
4. Feeling of ease

Whatever we do on the stage must have definite form - nothing vague or floundering in form. The feeling of form in speech you will get from Miss Crowther. The feeling of form in our movements, partly from Burhythmy and partly here. Soliloquies you will get from Miss Crowther which will give you the possibility to find form. From our point of view we have always to try to speak with the feeling of form.

Pay attention to your body which has been given you by Nature. Remember that the body is a beautiful form. The head is a form, the neck is a form, the chest, everything is form which is given to you - you have only to appreciate these things as an artist and especially as an actor - we have to show our art through our bodies, therefore, we must know the body and appreciate it. For instance, if I love or hate on the stage, I express it by using my form, my body. If my body is something about which I know nothing, how can I express my hate or love on the stage? Now try to see how interestingly this form (the body) can be moved. I go forward - I can go backward - I lift my hands - this is my profession and my body is beautiful. Everything from the point of view of form. Realize that the body is a beautiful form and that it can be used freely. Even the fingers are

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very interesting - they are able to create different forms and make different interesting moods.

Now do the following: Having this feeling of form because of your body, you have ^a general ground for this thing we are trying to do. Each movement must be experienced by the actor as a form. For instance, will you take something and put it back where you took it from, and experience this simple and naturalistic movement from the point of view of form. This is a form which I create each time - do it with the feeling of form. Be sure that you are able to keep it.

Keeping this feeling of form, please say the sentence: "The snow is falling." Try to speak it without exaggerating your speech - the feeling of form in general. Now try to do it individually.

Try to combine the sentence with the movement. For instance: I am sitting down - movement and sentence.

Exercise:

Walk from one side to another and when you cross the middle of the room, drop something and pick it up and then walk to the wall - one whole thing - beginning, anticipation - end, sustaining. Now do it again with the feeling of form. Now please add this sentence: "I have dropped my handkerchief," and the sentence must be included as a whole.

If something disturbs and stops you from fulfilling your aim, it must be painful. If you get accustomed to

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unfinished things and it does not torture you, that means you have spoiled your artistic nature. The artistic actor is always suffering if something is not started right and not accomplished - be aware of a certain unpleasant feeling and encourage it. Artists must enjoy what is good and must suffer from what is bad. Without this suffering we are somehow blind - I will look at it and find how painful and dreadful it is. The beauty of art and the ugliness of art. If you do not know the ugly you will never know when you do ugly things. When things are done on the stage which are not accomplished, without any form, you must stop and see how dreadful it is.

Now the same thing with the sentence for the feeling of form. Now combine the feeling of form and the feeling of the whole.

Please remember that the idea of all these exercises is not the exercise itself, but to awaken in our nature the constant ability to be always able to build forms on the stage; to re-create our nature. You must take these exercises with the desire to take them, and to awaken your nature by means of the exercise. Do not take them being somehow apart - try to be one with the exercises, then you will awaken something in your nature.

Feeling of ease:

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That means that everything we have to do on the stage must be done easily. The audience cannot bear too much effort - more effort than is necessary always makes the impression that the audience does not like it. Spend just a little less energy than is necessary. The feeling of ease can be developed in everything you do (almost losing your weight). When after the performance the actor feels much more free and alive, this is how it should be done. You must go through the whole performance as though you had done nothing.

Feeling of form:

My body is light and easy. It is possible to experience the body without using it, just as well as we can experience it as a heavy thing. Light, easy body - feeling of ease - move, walk, run, walk, stop. It is by psychologically having the desire to be light and easy that you will get it.

Exercise:

Lie down and get up - light and easy - psychology and movement lighter and lighter. Try to be so light that there is no noise at all - so light that you will not hear yourselves.

Now, quicker tempo without weight and without noise. Now, try to speak the sentences.

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Feeling of beauty:

The danger is to seem to be beautiful - the feeling of beauty is inside of us - we do such unbeautiful things on the stage. We have to develop this feeling of beauty so that the voice in us will stop us from doing unbeautiful things. How to do it? It does not mean that I want you to go about always as angels - the most ugly thing must be done with this feeling of beauty, then it becomes art. It does not mean to show the beauty, but inwardly I must not be ugly. Do not show beauty - be beautiful. The only danger is to "show off."

Exercise:

Cross the room and drop the handkerchief with the feeling of beauty, without showing beauty.

Try to combine the feeling of the whole, feeling of form, feeling of ease, feeling of beauty - all Four Brothers which we must have continuously.

IMAGINATION:

New Students:

Imagination is the basis for all the following work and preparation: 1. Imagine everything you are told and given. 2. Through your imagination try to develop the character. 3. Try to discourage everything that will disturb your imagination.

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Old Students:

Work is to be based on the following three things: 1. Imagination. 2. Grounds. 3. Qualities. You must be able to define what qualities you are trying to get, what grounds you have taken, and the results of the work in imagination.

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Work upon the parts in the two plays. We will prepare the parts individually for Shdanoff's play, The Possessed.

The following are the parts you must work on:

Beatrice	Lisa Spanish Evening
Deirdre	Spanish Evening
Jean	Spanish Evening Lisa
Hurd	Kirilov
Warner	Slim Mike Barber Captain
John Flynn	Stavrogin Officer [Drozdov]
Peter	Stavrogin Officer [Drozdov] Priest
Terrence	Officer [Drozdov]
Frances (Paquie)	Martha
Mary Lou	Martha
Alonzo	Drozdov

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Alan	Spanish Evening
Erica	Mother (Mrs. Stavrogin) Spanish Evening
Woodie	Daniel
Sam	Carpenter

MEETING OF ASSISTANTS:

NEW APPROACH TO OUR METHOD:

In the new plan we must not be concentrated only on special tasks. Everybody must do everything - lessons on imagination, rehearsing, etc., etc. Everyone must be in the picture all the time, and must keep each other informed of the work that is being done. One work for all assistants. It will require certain attention to each other's work, which was not necessary before.

I have chosen only the following things in the Method to be used:

1. Imagination
2. Objective
3. Atmosphere
4. Psychological Gesture (very late)
5. Significance (presence, radiation)

We will try to confine ourselves to these five points, but will try to push into them everything which will help. For instance, in the work on imagination we must try to introduce concentration and incorporation - it will be under one heading, whereas before we made separate things of each one.

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RHYTHM:

A series of extra exercises will lead to the feeling of rhythm:

1. The four brothers - feeling of form, whole, ease, beauty.
2. Dynamic - diminuendo & crescendo, legato & staccato, rhythmical waves.
3. Climaxes.
4. Psychology of the pause.
5. Variety of repetitions (as a rhythmical element).
6. Three parts - beginning, middle, and end.

For the moment this is all. We will be able to make our Method much more compact, and be able to concentrate on each point much more. We will not jump from one thing to another, but will work on the imagination for weeks if necessary, until we get it. The rhythmical exercises will be interspersed.

IMAGINATION:

It is a very good sign when our imagination sometimes shows us two contradictory things - it means there is a third thing somewhere which we must try to find. Originality is a combination of things which cannot be combined by a person who is unable to combine contradictory things. Only a great artist can do original things, because his creative spirit allows him to combine things which another artist will not be able to do.

Exercises for Imagination:

1. Concentration
2. Imagine the thing you have to concentrate on.

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3. Imagine something that does not exist.
4. Change the image and let it affect you.
5. Incorporation.
6. Imagination then becomes inspiration. The image then leads you.

To develop the imagination you combine impossible things, and this is the way to become original.