

CRITICISM OF LESSONS GIVEN BY STUDENTS  
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CRITICISM OF LESSONS GIVEN BY STUDENTS:

Paul's lesson:

We must not say that our feelings, our emotions are the most important thing because this is still very close to the physical. The emotions must be transformed before they can be used in art in general, and in our art more especially. It is so easy to fall back to the old kind of actor who used only his sentiments, feelings, and pathos. Real pathos is something great and stately and grand, but the pathos which we now know is something not real. Our path is a very simple one. Our Method must become more and more simple. We must find this in our life together.

The wrestling exercise was not good because it was too quick, and it lost its charm and became too animal. It is not real wrestling - that is only the form we have taken. Our object is to find an aesthetic form without using our muscles. But it must be done slowly because that is the nature of the exercise. It is like a slow motion picture. It can be charming or repulsive, depending on how we do it. When we are moving naturalistically, there are many moments of ugliness because in ordinary life we have no feeling for the beauty of the thing we are doing. As artists, we must feel

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this beauty of movement at every moment and in every movement.

Beatrice's lesson:

Very warm and persuasive and clear. The exercise was done well. A great progress.

Deirdre's lesson:

Too introspective. Not warm enough, and not energetic enough. Too much inward rather than going out.

Nestor's lesson:

It is better to use the eyes and ears for the purpose of concentration because that is enough. For real concentration we only need to use our senses to begin with. The real concentration does not need the use of the senses. In speaking of the actor's march, speak about the beauty even more seriously. Give more of yourself in order to help your audience and you students.

I now have an impression of the whole time we have been together. Each school, each group of pupils, in time speaks to the teacher - without really speaking. The teacher begins to understand what is the right approach for each group. Before we began to work together, I could not say which was the right way for us. Now I am able to draw some conclusions about our life and our work together. The result is that I have to change some things in our work. I would like to work more with exercises because I feel that something is going

down, and I don't wish to continue the independent work. We must postpone this independent work for some time and concentrate our work on The Golden Steed and the exercises. After Christmas we will do two other kinds of work. Therefore, we must have more time, and the independent work must be postponed.

#### SPACE - DIMENSION:

##### Leader exercise:

The idea of this exercise is to learn to serve. The leader must give, not command, this is again very important psychologically. We must develop our feeling for space and for direction. We must be aware of the right and left, of the diagonal and horizontal, etc. The actor must be responsible for the space and for his position on the stage. It is a crime the way actors of today are using the space. They have not only spoiled the feeling of space, but they have spoiled the audience. So that for us, as a new group, <sup>we</sup> don't only have to create these feelings for ourselves, but we must fight with naturalistic actors for the audience. Our group exercises are one of the most important implements against this dead kind of being on the stage.

#### THE IDEAL ACTOR:

Now we must understand what is the deep meaning of doing exercises with a leader. Each actor must feel when he is on the stage that he came to serve the idea of the whole



evening, of the whole performance, not because he is a star and desires to show himself. He must feel that he comes to serve the idea, which is higher than his own interests, and the leader exercise is the first feeling we must develop for serving an artistic idea. In this simple exercise, in which one person leads and serves, this is the most simple form for developing these ideas.

#### THE IDEAL GROUP:

Let us take a group of actors who come together for a performance. There are several kinds of groups. First there is the commercial theatre in which people come together casually. Another type is a group theatre, like the Group Theatre<sup>1</sup> in New York. They are bound together with work and life. If you come into one of these theatres and you see the same play and the same good or bad qualities, you will feel something more than this performance by these two different kinds of groups - the casual group, or the repertory group. The repertory theatre is always radiating some power because the group is constantly together. This is a very important power, which we must have for each performance, and this leader exercise is appealing to these feelings. To be a group, to serve each other by serving the main idea.

Then there is a third kind of group, which is very seldom seen. Young people who come together and without understanding anything about the theatre, they love it and wish to

serve it. This is the most charming group, and this love, this idealism, is the most persuasive power. If we can have such a feeling and create such a group, this will be really the best theatre, only because we will be radiating this young idealistic power with love and without criticism, without stars, without good or bad actors. Everybody is good, everybody wishes to serve the theatre. This is our idea which we must reach. Our group exercise includes this idea. Therefore, try to start the exercises, and they will tell you more than before.

#### THE LEADER PSYCHOLOGY:

##### Exercise:

To a phrase or sentence of music, which Mr. Harvey will play on the piano, to which you must all listen, the leader will give the direction, and the others will follow. It is very important for the leaders to know the direction because the responsibility of the whole exercise really rests on their feeling of direction, just as a leading actor must feel the responsibility for the whole play because he must give the direction. Begin over and over again, improving it each time.

After you have done the exercise, your duty is to remember it when you are at home. If you will remember the exercises you have done today, they will be twice as powerful.

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To see, to create, to understand, to grasp, and wish to be better next time. You must confine your feelings to the feeling of your body - the pleasure of moving. It is not necessary to act; in fact, it is bad to act or to do something pictorial.

Nobody can give you the power to act. You can be directed and can be taught and helped, but the power to act you must have yourself. We are only able to find the direction and the words together, but to do you must find for yourself alone. Do not think that when you have left the rehearsal room, you have already done your work. You must continue to do it at home.

We have rehearsed three steps in The Golden Steed. If you had worked on these three steps, they would be clearer than they were before. But you are doing all your work dead! If you had imagined and rehearsed in your imagination, you would never be as dead as you are now. You are doing everything very mechanically - there is a difference between mechanical and technical. You have forgotten what you have done before. Your work today is what we call in the theatre, "Nothing." If we continue to fall back each day, we will always sit in the same place. Tremendous work must be done all the time. We have not touched the characters yet. Imagine what we have to do.

You must be crazy about the play. Who will be crazy about it if not you? In the ensemble, the tragedy is that if somebody is lazy, all will suffer. That is a great responsibility.



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Those who are really working must force the others to work, too. This is the tragedy of the theatre: that one person can kill the work of many others. The theatre is a profession in which we must work together.

Let us work on the three big moments of the play:

1. The moment when the Copper Rider appears, in a heavy, earthy, tragic atmosphere. 2. The Silver Rider appears in a weightless, airless atmosphere of light and spiritual joy. 3. The Golden Rider appears in a heroic, joyous atmosphere.

#### THE ACTOR AND THE AUTHOR'S TEXT:

We must feel that each sentence we speak is the most important one in the play. Each sentence is describing the idea from another side. There are no sentences which can be spoken in an empty way, as if they are unimportant. One of the most important things in the new theatre will be that each sentence will be written by the author with the feeling that this sentence will be unique. Authors are now writing long soliloquies about one idea - this is nothing for the theatre. In two sentences he must be able to give the idea, and actors must be able to speak the two sentences in a thrilling way. For this theatre one can give one's life, but not for the theatre in which one sentence is good and the other twenty are not important. Any author working with our theatre must feel that it will be an event for his words to be spoken by our group.

The theatre must be born as a new being, full of life. Everything must be re-created, and everything of the ordinary theatre must be thrown away. It is so important. The theatre in which each sentence is an event has the right to live. The ordinary theatre today is cheap and flat because it is done with a feeling of "what for?" or "why?".

Having the three points of the Riders, we can better understand the complicated line of the Wise Old Man and Antin. Antin must show the same theme of passion, but on the earth. Everything around Antin is passion and evil. He must go down into it as into a hell. He must know the passion of the earth, as well as the high passion of the Silver Steed.



Antin's line - the Three Steeds

The first moment is Antin's entrance, and his attempt to rush by the mountain with all the passion with which he has just ridden the Copper Steed. Then he is defeated by the laughing crowd.

The second moment is during the entrance of the two brothers. During this moment he is afraid of himself, whom he sees merged in his brothers. This is the moment of his fear - the only fear he knows in the play.



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All our movements and actions must be truthful. You will find the right movements through the truth of the image. Every one of us must rehearse and rehearse everything that has been done, and everything that has happened in the play. In that way we will be acting every part, and the play will be a whole thing which we love.