

Michael Chekhov

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OBJECTIVES,
CHARACTERIZATION
INVISIBLE BODY

OBJECTIVES: New Students:

Your objective is to comfort the other person. Take the objective with your whole being; pour all your creative activity into your hand and arm, until you feel that your right hand is full of this kind of activity to comfort; then get up and stroke the hair of your partner, pouring out the whole activity of comforting through your hand. Realize that your hand and arm are able to be full of activity of a certain kind. This is what it means to be an actor. When you have finished your exercise, you must stop it with the same activity as when you started it. Finish it absolutely.

The nature of the objective is activity. Now instead of the hand, fill your breath with this objective and the words, "I don't know, my dear," must have the same activity of comfort, full of life as if your words were your hands. If you will consider how beautiful and strange it is to be able to speak, you will get more interest for your words.

CHARACTERIZATION:

Old Students:

Improvise on the basis of characters. A scene of a political gathering - a speaker and a crowd. The speaker's center is in his right fist; his head is much larger than normal; his body is thin and dry; the center, which is in the fist,

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tends to go up and down. The crowd has its center in its brain and nearer to the forehead. A very small center, very hard, and it sparks always in one direction. The bodies are like question marks.

THE INVISIBLE BODY:

Criticism:

You have made one mistake. The body I gave you was an invisible body, which will affect your visible body, but the mistake you made was that you confused the two bodies. The invisible body must lead, entice and coax your visible body - not the opposite. Our visible body often wishes to serve us too quickly, and this is wrong. When the visible body takes the lead everything becomes wrong, because it has taken its task from the intellect. The invisible body must be the leader, and you must follow it with great care. If you follow its suggestions just a little it will be enough. If you want you can fit your invisible body into your physical body, but is much better to follow the suggestions. The mistake is to do something like what your invisible body would do. Then it is wrong, because you try to do everything with your physical body, and you do not need the invisible body. Our physical body needs time to adjust to the invisible one, so don't force it. Your invisible body will coax the visible one if you will give it time.

With characters it is the same as with the whole play - you have a certain time in which to prepare a character. You are trying to follow the suggestions of your invisible body until

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the moment when it will affect something in you. You will awaken one morning and you will feel, "I am the person". But until that moment comes you have to be very careful and work. Again, never confuse the thing - whether you have got your character or not; how long must I wait; etc. One thing will follow after another and then you will have the happy moment when it happens. Then you can move and speak and live the whole character in your private life as well, and you will know everything this character does. But it must come and must not be forced. It can be prepared by continuous work, but it will not come when it is forced.

It is the same approach as to the three different kinds of movement which we did yesterday. The whole approach to our theatre is the same. Some day I will show you the scheme I have.

Explore the three kinds of movement, molding, floating, radiating, as if you have never heard of them before.