

Michael Chekhov

September 6, 1939

ATMOSPHERE

The Possessed: Second run-through of the play:

Scene I - Last part of Verkovenski's speech is unintelligible. Still very weak at the beginning - Verkovenski does not believe all his ideas. Scene II - Too weak still - atmosphere not yet established - Verkovenski does not have sufficient changes. Scene III - Good, but not yet powerful enough. Blair (Shatov) shows good improvement in this scene. Scene IV - Well acted. Scene V - Well done - Mary Lou (Martha) much better, but she can still mount much more. Scene VI - Well done - Peter (Drosdov) very good. Scene VII - John (Stavrogin) very weak in radiation. Scene XI - Beatrice (Lisa) very weak - floundering - does not feel it. Scene XII - Much better. Hurd (Kirilov) speech - words still indistinct. Scene XIII - Very well done. Scene XV - Weak.

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Criticism:

The atmospheres were much better, although we can still get much more. The tasks were fulfilled more or less. For Stavrogin, the less he is on the earth the better, and the man-god-ideal must be seen somehow in him. When he is not too concrete, we begin to understand that a phantom is walking over the whole earth. Hurd (Kirilov), what you did today is just right, but "I can't" is lost again. Tom (Lame

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Schoolteacher) was very good in the small soliloquy - many variations and changes. Lonnie (Droscoy) was good, but one thing must be changed - the character - in one place the form must be broken otherwise it is too monotonous. Mary Lou (Martha). It was good, but at the moment of awakening there must be a little shock. Secondly, you start too concretely - the dimensions of fairy tale must be illusion, and you start too concretely. It must have more air and fantasy in the fairy tale scene.

Continue to imagine and recall these atmospheres and try to create them wherever you are during the day. Exercise them constantly because without them it is impossible. With them all the words and movements of the characters are speaking immediately.

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