

PSYCHOLOGICAL GESTURE
THE CREATIVE PROCESSCriticism of Acting on March 8th:Ballading:

When the director appealed to the actor's imagination it was right, and the wrong part was when the director described things for the intellect of the actor. The director must tell the actor to follow her imagination, and that will prepare something for the future acting, while following with the understanding prepares nothing. Lower appeal to descriptions which are accepted by the intellect.

PSYCHOLOGICAL GESTURE:

We have used gestures so much and we have got a first impression of them, but our directors are giving the gestures in too vague a form. The director, together with the actor, must find what the time, space, activity and quality of the gesture is. We ignore these four points and the gesture becomes more and more vague, instead of being more and more clear and helpful. The gesture expires because of this vagueness, not because of the gesture as a means to awaken something. We must correct this during this period which we may call the pedantic attitude towards the Method. Be pedantic about the gesture in giving it and by doing it. By doing I mean that the actor must not do the gesture at once - we must explore it before doing it.

For instance, the gesture for contraction and expansion - before contracting, the actor must meditate about his body and realize what it means to make a gesture of contraction. The actor must pull together all the parts of his body into his center, and must find a response in his whole body. It is necessary to freely explore this simple gesture for contraction. These gestures are given to us to explore with our body, soul and spirit. Therefore all directors must be very careful in giving gestures, and must use the four qualities of time, space, quality and activity.

THE CREATIVE PROCESS:

We have much evidence in literature that before a great artist starts to create his work, the creative process begins with a very strange thing inside his soul. He begins to feel, but it is not feeling; to touch, but it is not touching; to hear, but it is not hearing - it is something very strange and very attractive and spell-binding for the artist. And out of this strange enchantment which is something - out of this something - the artist gradually begins to get some forms. Gradually he begins to understand what kind of verse he is going to write, for instance.

A real artist will never know what he is going to create until he has had some inspiration in the form of movement, writing, doing, singing, etc. Then the artist who starts with this enchantment, begins to be more active in giving

concrete shape and form to his future creation, which was born in such a strange form that he did not know what it would be. This is the way in which the artist must suffer, when he begins to try to find the form, this is suffering. But it is the right suffering. When the poet tries to find each word he must use, this is suffering. The right word is somewhere but perhaps he cannot find it yet - the enchantment demands three certain words, and until the poet finds them he will suffer.

The same is true with our characters, with our parts, with our whole performance. The director will suffer. A period will come when he sees nothing but chaos and he hates his actors, his profession, his play, everything. What is our psychological gesture? In the theatre today, actors get everything before they begin to create. The actor depends on the playwright, on the director, on the designer, etc. He gets his part and all his directions. Is he a creative person? No. He is the last servant to everyone on whom he depends! The author, the designer are creative persons but the actor is a servant. Therefore actors are such superficial people, because their profession is so empty, so superficial. It is like that because actors are not able to have this first moment of the creative process, this moment of enchantment.

The psychological gesture is the attempt to overcome all these strings which tie the actor to the author, director, etc., and to help him to find the themes and to transform them into the archetypal form. Through the psychological gesture -

which must be elaborated with care - we will get the first feeling of the part as a "song" - a song about Don Quixote, for instance. If the psychological gesture is really elaborated, it is always a song of something about the part, or the whole scene, or the whole performance. Therefore, the psychological gesture, this idea about the gesture, develops more and more not only in your minds, but in my own as well, and you give me - as your teacher and director - so many suggestions which could not be found without you. So we are developing together this idea of the psychological gesture.

If you will remember the psychological gestures in the beginning of The Golden Stair, you will see that they were not so complete because we were only beginning to develop this idea. If we are able to go on working together for years, we will find the way to the real psychological gesture, which will be nothing other than this high point from which the real artist starts. We must help each other, because our idea is to create a new theatre, and to penetrate into the level where all archetypes are living. So be even more careful when working with the psychological gesture, and in exploring it.