

Michael Chekhov

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CHARACTERIZATION
THE WILL - PURPOSE
THE CENTER

CHARACTERIZATION:

The Golden Steed:

We will continue the work on the crowd scenes. As characters in the crowd, walk about, speaking a little, trying to find the qualities of the character. Find your body, your psychology, and from that we will try to find the line of each character. Find the will of your character. For example, Antin's will is to send forth his fiery center. The will of the White Old Man has already left him and is in reality with the mountain.

THE WILL - PURPOSE:

What is meant by finding the will in each character? This is the attempt to find the artistic language between actor and director. When we try to ask ourselves as actors in the old theatre, "What is this character?", we speak much about the character and what it wants. Many words. What is true is that each character must have a purpose for being on the stage, must have a direction for his will, an aim as a character. This must be discovered by each character. You must be able to show where your center is and what your will is. We are aiming to find this language without words, and if you are able to show me your center as here or there, and that your will is to fall down, let us say, that already shows what you wish to do on the

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stage. If you can do this, it will be very clear what the character is aiming at. For example, Antin's center is in his breast, it is fire; and he sends it out.

Instead of describing all these things we must feel our purpose. This new kind of conversation, which must be developed between actors, playwrights, costume designers, directors, etc., will be much more artistic. It is much better not to talk about the character, but to find the line and the gesture of the character. By these gestures the feeling is much more easily awakened than by describing it. Try to do the gestures you have found for your characters in the first part of the lesson.

THE CENTER:

Try to find the aim of this exercise. This is the same as when we tried to find the psychological gestures in your speech, but this time it is for the will. The center is not only for moving, but for following the image. That is the idea of the exercise. Try to find out clearer and clearer for yourself what the character of the center is, whether it moves or not, where it moves, what is the direction of the will; but always be artistically and never in intellectual conceptions.