

Michael Chekhov

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THE THEATRE OF THE FUTURE
FEELING OF FORM

We must take all the exercises and transform them into our second nature, otherwise we will have no school. There are many things which we have not yet digested - it is very obvious. Therefore, don't live in the illusion that you are going on in the school as quickly as you should: some will go quicker and some slower, this is an individual thing, but I have the feeling that the whole school in general is not going forward as quickly as it should.

Suggestions are not yet taken and transformed into your abilities. The principle of being in the school has not yet been understood properly. It is so oppressing to constantly live under an illusion because you do not take the lessons or the principles for yourselves. If you would only become more aware of your own rehearsals. Your abilities are somehow crippled because you do not develop them with your full powers. You should alter your natures more quickly so that we can have a group of people who will tackle the problem of a new kind of actor's body and soul.

You must take suggestions as you absorb food and happiness and unhappiness in your life. You cannot be unhappy in your life and not take it into your whole being, because that is the nature of things. In the school and on the stage we must believe in our own "I Am" It must be taken just as deeply as any experience in our professional life. It must

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taken in that way, and then we will become specialists.

THE THEATRE OF THE FUTURE:

Consciously or unconsciously we always feel that our profession is of such a kind that we cannot find a crevice through which we can slip and just be there. This is the impression of the theatre in general, but it is not our point of view. You must uproot this feeling of wanting to find the crevice. We must try to find something much more subtle - a kind of acting which is true - nothing sensational, this has been done before - or by means of a new angle such as Piscator or Meyerholdt have found. Our way is a real new step in the future (theatre?) and we are obliged to do it because we are young, and if we do not do it, who will? So we must be pioneers, otherwise we lose our time. If you do not want to become a pioneer, you will become more and more bored here, and you will leave us. But if you have the desire to serve the culture, then you must accept this idea of pioneering, and you must accept the different attitude to our work and our school, which is to change our actor's nature and make it different - more free.

FEELING OF FORM:

Therefore, today I want you to exercise only one thing - the feeling of form. As pioneers, imagine how we would exercise - with what fanaticism we would exercise this

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feeling of form. Why do we call it the feeling of form? Because it is something like a feeling which is in understanding all form. You must feel the form in everything you do. Concentrate on this feeling of form and try to coax it out of your soul. Every human being is born with this feeling of form, but the actor has to develop it in his muscles and his whole being.

Exercise:

Clasp the hands together with a feeling of form. Do it several times, consciously arousing the feeling of form. Do it until you get it. It is the psychology of the artist to be always permeated with the feeling of form.

Exercise:

Sitting on a chair, with the feeling of form, listening to a lecturer. Someone enters the door and for an instant you turn your head and look at the person, then back to the lecturer. Do this very quickly, but with a feeling of form.

Exercise:

Stand behind a chair, walk two or three steps to the chair, put your hands on the back of it and say, "Ladies and gentlemen." Do this several times, exercising only the feeling of form.