

APPRAISAL OR EVALUATION  
OF PERFORMANCEThe First Studio (Moscow Art  
Theatre Second)Review of Performance of March 8th:

If we try to annihilate all the feelings of criticism which surround us, then we will realize that what we have done is both very precious and instructive. The real results will come later on and we will know their true value. If we count the few hours which our directors have had for each sketch, we will see that what has been reached is almost a miracle, a wonder.

I have seen many theatre schools, but what you have done in such a short time I have only seen once before, in Russia during the famine. At that time we had our first pupils in the First Studio.<sup>1</sup> Being absolutely killed from outside, from the life around them, they found this fire from inside. From quite another starting point than yours, they have done the same wonder. It is interesting to know that these young people who were working in Russia and who found this fire, are now working as very powerful directors and actors. Through their contorted suffering psychology they have learned so much.

The idea is to incorporate as much as we are able to understand. Try to find in your souls the right approach to what you have done. Realize that if you take it seriously, you will get much more than from performances which you will do perfectly in the future.

M. Chekhov

March 9, 1937

I have learned much from your work, and in spite of the many mistakes you have made, I have learned many things because of the seriousness which you have brought to the work. This is a very good sign. What I cannot understand, I can feel, and from this point of view I know that I have learned very much. You have prepared everything, sketches, graphs, books, designs, costumes, etc. with love and care. Now, forget the sketches for a while.