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PHILOSOPHY OF
TEACHING ACTING

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“What we usually call ‘developing one’s talent’ is often nothing more than freeing it from the influences that hamper, occlude, and frequently destroy it entirely.”

Michael Chekhov

Everyone who aspires to be an actor needs training in order to develop their desire. The birth-right of talent is not enough to become an artist. As an educator, my job is to provide the skills and tools necessary for an actor to create, imagine, trust, and respect their craft. By creating a safe environment to take risks and setting high standards to achieve goals, I combine the study of acting, voice, and movement as a means to hone talent into skillful expression.

Safety without risk is boring. In my studio, I want to inspire my students’ creative energies through questions and not answers. The acting studio is a place of challenges, of honesty, and predominantly of process. An actor’s process is an important stage in their growth as an artist, and the classroom is the place to fully invest oneself in the process of learning acting. But most importantly, I do not expect products in my studio. The art of acting is a lifetime of discoveries and I exemplify that through my artist’s journey.

In an attempt to give actors an applicable technique, I teach the Stanislavski system. By approaching the craft through action and objective, students are able to grasp ethereal elements as a concrete application that anyone can learn. My technique as an actor and teacher is in constant evolution, and I value the components of other acting methodologies as well. By using the works of Richard Boleslavsky, Stella Adler, and Viola Spolin, my teaching further promotes the idea that there is no right way to act, but rather it is the student’s job to choose what works for them. Through warm-ups, games, improvisations, and exercises I hope to give my students a variety of techniques that they can use to develop their own process of creating a role.

In order to create a role, an actor must have a natural, strong, and free voice that supports any endeavors they attempt on stage. Through various voice innovators, I teach the idea of connecting with your core in order to release tension and avoid damage that can inhibit an actor’s vocal process. Through the works of Kristin Linklater, Patsy Rodenburg, and Frankie Armstrong, I teach how to utilize the vocal instrument in order to enhance character work.

I strongly advocate physical awareness when teaching actors. I believe that a solid understanding of movement is incredibly valuable in character work. Everything we do as actors stems from our ability to live within our bodies. The foundation of my technique lies in exploring the hidden emotions and meanings within the body and muscles. An actor must be physically aware and limber in order to withstand the rigors of the artist’s process. I incorporate the ideas of Rudolph Laban, Jerzy Grotowski, and Tadashi Suzuki in my training. Their theories regarding the connection between psychology and movement support the need for flexible, aware, and aligned actors. Furthermore, yoga and Pilates are also useful in connecting to the actor’s center. I strive to give my students freedom in their acting by developing and strengthening their physical core.

Educating actors feeds my artist’s spirit. My learning process is never over and each time I teach, I attempt to bring something fresh to my students. I endeavor to bring an enthusiastic, encouraging, and energetic atmosphere to the studio. The desire and commitment to acting, voice, and movement challenges each student to become a skilled craftsman. And I believe these skills are crucial to unlocking the artist that lies deep within the human spirit.