

In our workshop today, I will be leading the class through warm-ups that are guiding principles, as well as tools, to further guide your work as an actor. We will also explore a few exercises that introduce how to incorporate the Michael Chekhov Technique into your acting.

“Michael Chekhov developed an acting technique, a ‘psycho-physical approach’, in which transformation, working with impulse, imagination and inner and outer gesture are central. It offers clear and practical tools in working with imagination, feelings and atmosphere.

Chekhov's technique is a completely imaginative approach to experiencing the truth of the moment. According to Chekhov, the work of the actor is to create an inner event which is an actual experience occurring in real time within the actor. This inner event as it is being experienced by the actor is witnessed by the audience as an outward expression related to the contextual moment of the play. This event and the ability to create it belong to what Michael Chekhov calls the Creative Individuality of the actor, and is not directly tied to his personality. This Creative Individuality allows the artist actor to use parts of themselves that are not just the smaller, meaner, more banal elements that make up their daily life, but rather parts of their unconscious, where dwell more universal and archetypal images.” *Lenard Petit*

Workshop Exercises

WARM UPS

Walking the Space **pulled from View Points (which so happens to connect back to the work of Michael Chekhov!)*

- Inner to outer tempo
- Opening the artist's awareness of the space they will be creating in
- Sharing the space with other artists

Full bodied gestures

EXERCISES

4 Qualities of Movement **30 minutes**

- molding, flowing, flying, radiating

Atmosphere **30 minutes**

“A company of actors working together to imagine the space filled with an atmosphere can make an astonishing impression.” *Lenard Petit*

Character Archetypes

- [Carolyn Myss Archetype Cards](#)

Introducing the Michael Chekhov Technique

Taught by Heather Willingham

Texas Thespians, November 2023

Archetypal Actions

30 minutes

- I want. - I give.- I take.- I reject.- I hold my ground.- I yield.

VOCABULARY:

Principles

- Thinking / Feeling / Willing CENTERS
- 4 Brothers (*a feeling of ease, form, beauty, and the whole*)
- Psycho-physical acting technique
- Radiation **read pg. 21 in Lenard Petit's book*

Tools

- Spy-back
- Energy Body
- Staccato / Legato
- 4 Qualities of movement (*radiating, molding, floating, flying*)
- Expanding / Contracting
- Psychological Gestures
- 5 Archetypal Actions (*I Give; I Take; I Hold My Ground; I Yield; I Reject*)
- Character Archetypes

Method of Psychophysical Action

*Originated from the work of Stanislavsky (beats) and
further developed by Michael Chekhov*

OBJECTIVE

WHAT I want.

ACTION

(verbs)

What I DO to get what I want.

QUALITY

(adverbs)

HOW I do, what I do, to get what I want.

STAKES

What I stand to LOOSE or GAIN, if I DO or DO NOT get what I want.

OBSTACLE

What is IN THE WAY of what I want.