

Character Development Workshop

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IESA Speech Workshop

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Introduction

Casting by Type:

- Encourage new actors to play in their type.
- Stock characters vs. Stereotype
- Theatre generally casts within type; asking/allowing new actors to go against type is not a realistic expectation.

Line Memorization:

- Lines must be by rote
- Don't memorize with inflection.
- You can't be as good of an acting coach unless their lines are memorized.

Character Homework:

Uta Hagen's Nine Character Questions:

1. Who am I? (character-search for character's life prior to play's/scene's beginning)
2. Where am I? (environment: location, conditions)
3. What surrounds me? (persons, objects, color and texture)
4. What time is it? (hour, minute, date, year, century, era)
5. What are the given circumstances? (those events, facts, and conditions occurring before or during the play/scene that affect the character and /or action)
6. What is my relationship? (to all of the above and to other characters-solid or shifting?)
7. What do I want? (Objectives or Intention –includes the overall character objectives as well as more immediate beat-to-beat intentions).
8. What's in my way? (Obstacle)
9. What do I do to get what I want? (ACTION – VERBS; physical, verbal, psychological)

How does my character talk:

Dynamics – Communicating subtext.

- In acting, dynamics are what separate acting from reciting.
- Communicating subtext through dynamics is the most important aspect of acting.

Accents:

- Do them.
- We learn accents through listening.
- If you can, do the accent throughout rehearsal.
- Encourage them to use accent outside of rehearsal
- Movies, youtube, Internet.

Theatrical vs. Authentic Accents

- Do not let an accent interfere with communication. Modify it as necessary so that the audience understands you.
- If your actors can't do the accent, don't do the show.

What does my character do:

- From an acting standpoint, what do I do is more important than how do I talk.
- An actor's job is to engage in **truthful behavior in imaginary circumstances**.
- Really do what you're really doing for real.
- No "neck-up" acting. Pay attention to what they are doing with their bodies.
- Don't replace emotion for action. "Being sad" is not an action, it is a state of being.

Notes: