

ON THE HIGH ROAD



The actor is the maker who models the work of his own organism.
Jerzy Grotowski

Art is not a gift from the sky, it is a conquest.
Maria Lai

A course of study and research dedicated to three specific and fundamental aspects of the actor's work: action, creation and recitation, starting from Anton Chechov's *On the High Road*.

A small immoral work, *dark and vulgar* as the censorship defined it, *not approved for representation*.

And yet in this case, as in other small treasures so deep that they seem incomplete, Chechov outlines spaces and souls with lightness and surgical precision.

For an instant we overlook an unknown location, populated by passing souls.

Figures of bodies which, as said by Augustine, conjoin to the angel like a garment, which he shapes in his desire, in accord with his action.

An action which in most cases is a stumbling. A quaint little dance of colored clothing which inappropriately stand out against a gray backdrop.

The work develops over the course of fifteen days structured into three stages lasting five days each.

The intent is to create a group of people who can work together continuously, taking responsibility for their doing in the service of a common action.

Each actor will have to read the entire work and memorize the part of the character they wish to enact.

They will have to bring:

Comfortable training clothes;

Notebook;

Complete clothing and accessories to dress the chosen character;

An object which must be both an accessory and a requisite of the character.

I. ACTION with Chiara Michelini

In the first part of the course the field of inquiry will be the very own body of the actor: de-create it so it can become a reliable instrument, ductile and organic in all its reactions. A blank sheet on which to write anew each time. The proposed work is based on an analytical approach to movement and action in light of fundamental principles such as form (what I am acting), space (where I am acting), time (when am I acting and duration of the action) and *motion* (how am I acting, energetic quality of the action). It does not offer default, ready-to-use knowledge but principles and tools which lead to the development of a stage body more aware of its expressive possibilities and ready as a creative subject. What is to be refined is a quality of action which turns gesture into full and signifying word.

1. Exercises to relax, stretch and strengthen muscles.
2. Connection between breathing and movement.
3. Exercise on positioning. Study of immobility.
4. Coordination, strength, reactivity. Activation of attention and visual focus.
5. Learning and elaborating given variations. Execution and interpretation.
6. Improvisation. Observation. Imitation-opposition. Listening.
Intuition – action. Moving and being moved. Imagination. Creation.
7. Composition. Clarity of motivation. Determination. Coherence with the given theme. Precision and repeatability.

II. RECITATION with Leonardo Capuano

“What always fascinates me is the possibility of giving shape to that which has no shape, to that which is so difficult to narrate and make understandable: giving shape to one’s own emotionality in synthetic actions, in physical or verbal subversions, translating that which stirs inside to arrive at the self, or that which one is chasing, to arrive at one’s own being, one’s own saying, one’s own look. “

The work of the actor: body, voice and inner motor. The period of study and research will be based on the expressive possibilities of the actor, on the awareness of the actions he performs while acting, together with the elements of physical and vocal work as well as the function of the text.

1. Physical training.
2. Vocal training.
3. The void as the zone of availability and listening of sensations, and as a possibility of action.
4. Work on stage presence, on the usage of the body and the conscious voice within space or the stage, work on the quality of movement as expressive possibility.
5. Work on creating images from text, physical action or the use of an object.
6. Translating emotion and one’s gaze into dramatic action or figures, through comedic or dramatic language. Figures, as creation of a visible movement and vehicle for poetic expression.
7. Work on recitation and the function of text: every script will be played and constructed with the help of the teacher.

III. CREATION with Alessandro Serra

In the last phase of the course we will be facing scenic writing, at the center of which the actor is placed as maker and object of the work itself. Tichon’s shabby establishment is the doctor’s lounge where one waits for the diagnosis. Without any weakness and emotional engagement, with a medical gaze, collect the necessary data to outline the shell of these small forgotten creatures, which are almost angelical.

Over the course of the five days we will analyze the work by Cechov focusing in particular on the dramaturgy of the image, on the study of the figures and the concept of choir. The scenic writing will then proceed starting from the anamnesis of the figures created together with the actors: identifying the colors and bringing forth the involuntary comedy in small everyday tragedies, then letting them dance and speak together.

1. Physical warm-up
2. Relationship between hips and spine: managing and directing energy. Managing weight and balance
3. Voice and listening. Singing and polyphony
4. The choir
5. Study of space in relation to shape and time. Rectangle, triangle, circle
6. Text analysis
7. Construction and composition: relationship between actor, character and figure
8. Evocative and narrative power in objects
9. Relationship between actor, object and stage space
10. Dramaturgy of the image: composing and building the scene