

Towards a Programme for training Actor-Students to perform on the Open (Globe) Stage.

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Towards a Programme for training Actor-Students to perform on the Open (Globe) Stage



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Zizek, Ivan

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to solve a problem found in contemporary actor training in Great Britain and the United States of America. Notable contemporary actor training institutions in these countries train the actor-students for representational performances in representational settings. In this study, methodologies are examined for training actors who will perform on open stages or in presentational settings. The subject matter of this study fits into the broader field of performance studies, with an emphasis on training and the body in performance, with a particular focus on performing on open stages such as the New Globe. This thesis is not intended to negate the benefits derived from the representational actor training available, but to create a methodology which can be infused or taught concurrently with readily available actor training curricula. The argument is made that often in contemporary actor training the examples taught and paradigms used are Shakespearean, although Shakespeare did not write his plays with the intention of representational performances. Whilst the primary focus of this study centres on presentational actor training for the New Globe stage, the findings are applicable to other open stages or presentational settings that present the same or similar challenges. This qualitative research through practice utilizes two of the current models for actor training taught at the New Globe. These methodologies were documented, practiced, taught and examined. This thesis was aided by the historical research conducted on Shakespeare performances, their presentational performance settings, and contemporary presentational performance spaces available. Possible training methodologies that can address the unique demands of open stage work have also been surveyed. The two new models, *lazzi* of the *commedia dell'arte* and *capoeira*, are introduced as applications to enhance the study's findings. At the end, it is clearly understood that there is a need for others to build on this work, to accept some tenets, to challenge others, and to suggest innovations not previously considered. The training process is an ongoing dynamic that will benefit from scrutiny and improvement. As a result of this written presentation, there should be clarity between those actor training programmes that prepare actor-students for the open stage and those that prepare them for the proscenium stage and settings. Without denigrating the value of the more common and highly regarded actor training programmes for the proscenium stage, a claim is made for the need to give greater attention to performances on the open stage and to the preparation necessary to adequately equip the actors who expect to perform there.

Advisor

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