

Articoli/Articles

PSYCHOLOGICAL GESTURE,  
CONCENTRATION AND MEDITATION  
ON CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT  
WITH RUDOLF STEINER AND MICHAEL CHEKHOV

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SUMMARY

*PSYCHOLOGICAL GESTURE, CONCENTRATION AND MEDITATION*

*At the beginning of the twentieth century two masters, Rudolf Steiner and Michael Chekhov, dedicated themselves to the actor's pedagogy and to the work on the character, with particular attention to the development of the imagination through meditation and concentration exercises. The recovery of images in the unconscious memory and their elaboration - together with the study of the correspondence between sensations, moods and movements - gave life to the so called Gestures of the soul Steiner's method and to the Psychological Gesture in the Technique of the actor of Michael Chekhov: two methods hinged upon on the functioning of the cognitive system for creative work on the character. The essay illustrates the fundamental principles on which the actor's creative work is based and how some of these are relevant to the anthroposophical vision of Rudolf Steiner.*

Hence I once described psycho-analysis as dilettantism, because it knows nothing of man's outer life. But it also knows nothing of man's inner life. These two dilettantisms do not merely add, they must be multiplied; for ignorance of the inner life mars the outer, and ignorance of the outer life mars the inner. Multiplying d x d we

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get d-squared:  $d \times d = d^2$ . Psycho-analysis is dilettantism raised to the second power<sup>1</sup>.

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)<sup>2</sup>, the Austrian philosopher and founder of Anthroposophy, which he defined as a 'science of the spirit', on several occasions found himself at odds with psychoanalysis, specifically with what he called the excessive 'materialism' that characterized psychoanalytic thought, which too often attributed the diseases of the psyche to the sexual sphere, neglecting what for the anthroposophist was one of several constitutive parts of human being, his spiritual element. If psychoanalysis had the merit of leading people to consider certain processes of the soul, it did so with insufficient means of awareness<sup>3</sup>. To compensate for this inadequacy, Steiner suggested the alternative of anthroposophical research, which investigated human beings in their three constituent parts: body, soul and spirit. The particular vision of man as tripartite in a physical body, an etheric body and an astral body, was the basis for all of Steiner's research, whether in the medical, educational or artistic fields, therefore also implying the principles on which he based the creative work of actors. It was precisely on man's spiritual and most esoteric dimension that Steiner established part of his method for actors in creating their characters. Before entering into the heart of Steiner's theatrical teaching we must therefore give a brief introduction to a few of his concepts: the human being's threefold nature, the states of consciousness in man and the link between the spiritual element and artistic creation.

#### *The human being's threefold nature*

Man is made up of a physical body, the visible part in tangible reality; an etheric body that nourishes the physical body by providing the energy that enables the organs to function. Unlike the physical body, the etheric one is visible only through what Steiner called 'superior vision', revealing itself in its effects through the functions of the physical body, as in breathing and heartbeat.

There is also an astral body, namely the intellectual, cognitive and spiritual dimension of man, which makes possible the waking state of consciousness.

This threefold nature is governed by the Ego, the source of needs and desires, as well as the element that keeps the astral body alive and enables us to recall the impressions that the latter apprehends in the external world. The essential property of the etheric body is to live; the essential property of the astral body is to possess consciousness (as well as regulate the alternation of waking and sleeping); and the essential property of the Ego is to remember<sup>4</sup>.

*The states of consciousness in man and the dimension of dreams*

In human beings three states of consciousness alternate: waking, sleeping and dreaming. The dream world is situated between the natural world (which follows the laws of nature) and the world of the spirit: dreams are therefore a sort of passage between these two levels. Steiner distinguished ordinary consciousness – by which, through the senses and the nervous system, man participates in the life of the physical world around him – from the subconscious, where the hidden aspects of the life of the soul are found and what he defined as the three super-sensible faculties: imagination, inspiration and intuition<sup>5</sup>. While ordinary consciousness operates in the waking state, the subconscious manifests itself through dreams or through a path of initiation through which we gain access to super-sensible reality. While the perceptions captured in the surrounding physical world are fixed in memory through the agency of the Ego, certain spiritual details do not immediately penetrate memory, and instead are stored in the form of images in what Steiner called ‘unconscious memory’.

In dreams there also come into play experiences in the waking state but turned upside down and associated by a logic different from that of everyday life. They are often objects, events and details we gather

during the day but pay no attention to. Instead we perceive it all in dreams, whose content also has the peculiarity of appearing as image. Steiner emphasizes that in this dimension we also experience words as images. It is precisely these images that reside in the deepest part of the soul – the subconscious – and manifest themselves in dreams, a world in which the astral body lives<sup>6</sup>. Dreams manifest what is hidden in the soul, and we cannot retrieve it even with an effort of will because ordinary consciousness is unable to bring memories to light. One of the reasons is that generally dreams are not immediately connected to the specific experiences of daily life, in the external world, because it does not have the same appearance, but rather consists of images of external reality transformed and elevated to symbol. Nonetheless, what mattered to Steiner was not so much the faithfulness of the images that emerge, as much as their dramatic sequence and the sensation that derives from it. He maintained that dream life contains the full range of sensations that can be experienced by man. Ultimately, the subconscious stores an archive of images accessible only through dreams or long meditation, enabling us to reach our deepest consciousness.

In his lectures and writings, Steiner described some of these exercises for undertaking a path of initiation<sup>7</sup>, and later adapted them to the theater during the last professional course for actors which he taught in Dornach<sup>8</sup> in September of 1924 (also demonstrating how to develop the imagination in order to create character by working on dreams)<sup>9</sup>. In one of his meditation exercises he suggested focusing on a person (previously observed) caught in a moment in which he desired some object, paying attention to that person's sensation and expression of desire and in particular on the moment when this was most intense and it was still not certain that the person would obtain that object. The exercise demands abandoning oneself to the image of what is observed in memory, by trying to estrange oneself from everything that is happening around one and allowing the image

thus evoked to stimulate an emotion. After several attempts, one will come to experience the state of mind of the person observed and will achieve a spiritual vision, translated into an image of that very same state of mind<sup>10</sup>. As will be seen later, in theater these exercises became a means for creating that archive to draw on for creating character, or for achieving and reliving a particular atmosphere in a drama.

*The link between works of art and the spiritual element*

Steiner placed the artistic process at the innermost levels of the subconscious: what resides in the depths of the soul tends to emerge and transform itself into vision and it can only be satisfied by being counterpoised with an outward form. By offering the soul the right plastic impression, the artist satisfies his tendency to vision: only in this way can the sensations and impulses of the will and the emotions that manifest themselves in that vision emerge and that in a healthy life of the soul otherwise remain hidden (if not, they would lead to mental illness). This is how art emerges from the spiritual sphere.

Steiner believed that even hidden and unconscious memories collaborate in artistic creation and reception: in a work of art the artist's perceptions, what remains connected to the faculty of memory, continue to act in his subconscious up to the moment of being led to expression<sup>11</sup>.

It is important to clarify these fundamental concepts in order to fully understand the work that first Rudolf Steiner and later the Russian director and actor Michael Chekhov (1891-1955) developed to enable actors to achieve an imagination that was objective and unspoiled by personal emotions and feelings.

As already mentioned, in September 1924 Steiner taught his last course for actors in Dornach, focusing above all on what he considered the most esoteric part of an actor's work, that dedicated to creating a character, precisely because it employed a set of exercises for probing the subconscious (the deepest part of the soul) and for drawing from it the elements that fulfill the creative imagination.

What was most important to Steiner was to provide actors with the appropriate tools for creating and typifying a character, while avoiding the identification or emotional involvement that he believed could harm them. So, contrary as much to a naturalistic representation, which imitates reality and brings nothing artistic to the stage (which instead has its own special, different reality from that of daily life), as to a psychological immersion in the character that calls into play the actor's own experiences and emotions, Steiner developed a method that began with his instructions on initiation and included the threefold nature of human beings and the existence of an unconscious memory that one can reach and draw upon.

Precisely because it is unconscious, this dimension gathers impressions and images which an actor can look at objectively, with no risk of getting emotionally involved in reliving the memory.

His method then phased into an exercise of observing the details of daily life, in meditation exercises and in the Soul Gestures, which Steiner had previously described and depicted for the eurhythmy, the art of movement he had founded, a dance that choreographically expresses the spirituality inherent in a poetic, dramaturgical or musical work.

We come then to the first type of exercise, that of observation. An actor is invited to observe the reality and the people around him, seeking to practice what Steiner called an 'active' observation for understanding the correspondences between expressions, physical movements and gestures with a human being's inner states. He explained how to go beyond the usual way of observing, in order to grasp the spirituality that dictates a person's attitudes and therefore to reach his deepest essence.

Likewise, to create his precious personal archive of images to draw on for creating a character, an actor also needs to work on his own perception, in order to refine a whole series of often neglected visual, olfactory and auditory impressions, despite the importance they have in shaping moods. These can also be used to define the atmosphere of a

scene, a drama or a character's mood. Once again Steiner referred to the exercises developed for initiation, especially those based on the synesthetic correspondences between sounds and smells, shapes, colors and flavors: working with meditation on a color to imagine its sound, from observing the shape of a flower to obtain its corresponding sensation, from a sound to evoke a sweet or bitter taste, and so on<sup>12</sup>.

In Steiner's method the actor achieves the perception of an emotional state or temperament that urges a gesture or a movement through exercise with the Soul Gestures. These are a series of 'figures' which grant expression to gesture, or to certain body positions, to inner states such as anger, joy, introspection, despair, wisdom or determination. By reproducing one of these gestures, and repeating it like a mantra, an actor comes to experience the corresponding emotional state. Once he gets the gesture down, this will add to other images he can draw on to create the character. At this point all it takes is for him to review the gesture in his personal repertory in order to evoke the corresponding sensation in the character, thus avoiding, in acting the part, to resort to his own emotional memory and personal experience. On stage, an actor will therefore not have to imitate the gesture but can simply utilize it as a source of inspiration, considering it a sort of guiding image or subtext<sup>13</sup>.

Dreams can be another very important source of images. As we have seen, Steiner believed that the substance of dreams emerges from the subconscious, the soul, and consists of a series of images recorded there but not present at the level of ordinary consciousness. Therefore, images that, while connected to an actor's actual life experiences, are yet lived on an unconscious level and hence cannot harm him if they are dredged up. Moreover, they are no longer linked to the signification of their context of origin but take on a symbolic valence in dream reality. An actor can again use meditation exercises to draw these dream figures into memory, reliving his dream in inner calm and abstracting himself from daily reality. In advancing a

process of this kind, Steiner built a bridge between the dimensions of the stage and of dreams, to accompany the actor on an inner journey towards his deepest esoteric essence, the subconscious.

Even memories of dreams are therefore an inexhaustible source of materials to exploit in bringing a character to life. This is how an actor's imagery is enriched each time with new nuances, and through an in-depth encounter with his 'Higher Ego' he detaches himself from his own ego, from his immediate egoistic reactions and everyday emotions.

Gottfried Haass-Berkow, an actor and director<sup>14</sup> who, along with his company, followed Steiner's anthroposophic research and participated in the theatrical works staged at the Goetheanum, recalled some of the exercises that Steiner suggested:

*I once asked Rudolf Steiner how it is that you get closer to the dramatic art by starting from a scientific-spiritual point of view; he told me – not right away but some days later – roughly the following: “In the evening, try to fasten on an imaginative idea, to see before you a monologue or a small scene of a drama. It takes no more than five minutes. The next day, try to see the images in reverse. This is really excellent because then it is no longer tied to your thread of thought.” – We all know about the nature of dreams: they speak to us in images. With this exercise, a part must be transformed into images, roughly like this. Little by little you settle into the part, get drawn in by imagining it. Gestures and words come to life, the dynamics arise from their contrasts, and comparisons and different times become conscious. In short, you come to recite the part by starting from an image objectively grasped image. Detached from yourself [...]”<sup>15</sup>.*

The anthroposophical actor gives life to his character by starting from the sounds present in the dramatist's text, which, being in the Steiner's conception gestures that emerge from the poet's soul, they already define part of the character, precisely because the words he pronounces can grasp the character's traits and temperament. With the meditation exercise the actor then retrieves useful images to outline his on-stage life, which will have nothing to do with his own



life. The on-stage character will then be an exterior, bodily representation of what lives in the images that take shape as projections of the actor's imagination.

The method Steiner developed enabled an actor to keep the actor-self separate from the character-self, so that their respective thoughts and emotions could not cross over. An actor does not live the life of the character but portrays an on-stage image, modeling himself like an art object and thus able to observe himself from the outside and look at his character self while keeping clear the distinction between what is created and what is, between the "I" that creates and the "I" that feels: in other words, between the actor's role and his own personality.

Michael Chekhov too used dream and images in unconscious memory, considering them useful in the creative process because they develop independently of one's will and are therefore objective. Even for him they could be retrieved from the subconscious and made concrete by means of concentration and meditation. He thought of an objective world in which images have a life of their own beyond the actor's control, a reality we can compare to what Steiner defined as man's spiritual dimension.

Michael Chekhov's acting technique – described in his book *To the Actor* (published in Russian in New York in 1946 and only in 1953 in English)<sup>16</sup> – aimed at developing imagination through a series of concentration exercises for retrieving images from one's unconscious memory, observation exercises and what he called Psychological Gesture.

Michael Chekhov, born in St. Petersburg in 1891, was an actor, teacher and director, a collaborator of Konstantin Stanislavsky (1863-1938), who from 1922<sup>17</sup> was at the head of Moscow's First Studio (MAT), where until 1924 he worked with his students to develop a new acting technique. In 1924 he became artistic director of the Second Moscow Art Theater (MAT2), where he remained until 1928, the year he emigrated to Europe.

Chekhov was involved in different esoteric currents, as a member of the Order of the Knights of the Rosicrucians and a frequent of the Theosophical Society. Thanks to his meeting with the poet Andrei Bely (1880-1934), an anthroposopher and husband of Assja Turgenieff (1890-1966), a collaborator of Steiner, approached the, Anthroposophical Society and eurythmy<sup>18</sup>.

In 1928, Chekhov first emigrated to Germany, where he worked with Max Reinhardt, and then moved to Paris to direct his company with the help of his friend, the Swiss actress (anthroposophist herself) Georgette Boner (1903-1998). He then continued his work in Riga and Kaunas to finally settle, at the invitation of the couple Dorothy and Leonard Elmhrst<sup>19</sup>, at Dartington Hall in England, where he devoted himself to teaching and developing his Technique for the Actor along with a company of young actors he had organized. He remained in England until 1938, and then emigrated permanently to the United States. His studio in Ridgfield was active until 1942, when most of the actors left to join the war effort and Chekhov himself moved to Hollywood, where he worked as an actor<sup>20</sup> and a trainer for film actors until his death in 1955.

Chekhov based his method on images, concentration and, as already mentioned, Psychological Gesture. Certainly, his technique was born under the influence of several encounters, first the one with Stanislavsky, but also thanks to his friendship and collaboration with Leopold Sulerzhitsky (1872-1916) and Yevgeny Vachtangov (1883-1922), who at the time of the Art Theater happened to be working on imaginary forms<sup>21</sup>. But, as we will see, there were many connections with the teachings of Rudolf Steiner. In fact, by refusing to exploit the actor's emotional and personal memory, as Stanislavsky's method suggested, he based his own method on developing imagination, precisely in order to maintain a distance between the actor as a person and the actor as an artist, two identities that belong to two very different dimensions<sup>22</sup>.

Chekhov illustrated the first steps of his anthroposophical studies (we are in 1917) and the application of Steiner's teachings to his work as an actor in one of his autobiographical memories:

*[...] I did a good deal of reading, studied lecture cycles by Rudolf Steiner and continued to commit my thoughts on acting technique to paper. So it was that my attention was gradually drawn to phenomena in which rhythm was manifest. Lying in the garden on bright, sunny days, I observed the harmonious forms of the plants, I imagined the process of the rotation of the Earth and the planets, I searched for harmonious compositions in space and gradually came to the experience of the movement, invisible to the external eye that was present in all phenomena in the world. There even seemed to me to be such movement in motionless, solidified forms. It was movement that had created form and still maintained it. When I observed it, it was as if I were witnessing some creative process: whatever I looked at seemed to be in the process of coming into being before my very eyes. I called this invisible movement, this play of forces, 'gesture'. Finally, I began to notice that they weren't merely movements, but that they were filled with content: they manifested will and feelings that were of a diverse, profound and exciting nature. It seemed to me that through them I could penetrate into the very essence of phenomena<sup>23</sup>.*

But for the purposes of understanding his Technique of the Actor, it is above all his subsequent reflection that is of particular interest:

*By this stage, I no longer just spoke of 'gesture' (i.e. the form and direction of the movement), but also of its 'qualities' (ideas, feelings and will). I started to search for 'gestures' not only in nature, but also in works of art, and I was struck by the clarity and power with which they presented themselves in the works of classical painting, architecture, sculpture and literature. The divine works of Shakespeare became my school, where I could study mighty, varied 'gestures' that were filled with beauty and power. When I then performed 'gestures' that I myself had created, they invariably called forth feelings and will-impulses inside me and gave rise to creative images. I then felt a new appreciation for Rudolf Steiner's Eurythmy. Its gestures and forms embody the creative forces of man and nature. What a wealth and diversity it contains! [...]*

*I then turned my thoughts to using 'gesture', which has such a powerful effect on the psyche in the art of theatre, and I realized that every play, every stage character, costume, set, mise-en-scène, speech (expressed through the gestures of Eurythmy) – in a word, everything that the audience sees and hears on the stage can be expressed as a living, evocative 'gesture' with its attendant 'qualities'<sup>24</sup>.*

Surely the most interesting element in the actor's technique is precisely Psychological Gesture, the combination of physical movement by way of imagining a psychological state, in order to form a memory trace that is repeatable and helps the actor to communicate clearly and intensely. An element that is not just a mental construct, but rather derived from movements and positions that in reality express certain psychological states that enable an actor to provide immediate psychological responses and communicate effectively with his audience. Chekhov spoke of these gestures as well as of archetypes, not strictly in the Jungian sense of primitive psychological forms found universally in individuals and their cultures, but to refer to gestures that reveal an individual's psychology through the interaction of image and experience. The Psychological Gesture should therefore be considered more a mechanism of focusing, a key element in constructing the actor's script, in order to build the emotional life of his character. It is likely that there is an affinity with the studies of Delsarte<sup>25</sup>, but in our opinion Chekhov's Psychological Gesture was closely linked to the Soul Gestures described by Steiner for eurythmy and for the art of acting – an idea corroborated by comparing the sketches made by the two masters, which in some cases show figures in very similar poses and in correspondence to the same moods<sup>26</sup>. Here too we are dealing with images which an actor practices upon to give life to his character but which he will not imitate on stage. Instead they will be a guideline to refer to in constructing his character's traits. However, gesture should not be considered a static position adopted by one's body, but as an incessant movement, consisting of a succession and

union of principal and transitory gestures and movements (in synchrony with the variations of the character's moods) that mentally accompany an actor during his recitation.

The scholar John Lutterbie explains the Psychological Gesture in terms of the cognitive sciences, stressing how in daily life one continually has emotional experiences, many of which remain unconscious and become clear in association with physical positions that can be named: joy, introspection, despair, wisdom, determination, and so on. In this case the Psychological Gesture does not provoke the emergence of a single emotion but rather a complex of neural activations that evoke emotions reflecting a range of personal experiences associated with that gesture. The actor's challenge is to find the best image for creating the desired effect<sup>27</sup>.

Hence the Psychological Gesture works through a series of associations on a range of cognitive and sensory modalities: reproducing the gesture provides perceptual information to the brain in the form of proprioception, which in turn stimulates emotions and memories. Therefore, there are two cognitive processes that underlie the functioning of the Psychological Gestures and the Soul Gestures: memory, and what we now know to be the action of mirror neurons. In the exercise, physical movements arouse emotions, which in turn cause sensations. What the exercise with the Psychological Gesture is based on is the connection between physical action, the memory of it, the emotional response it evokes, and the "as if" of the mirror system (the response activated in observing another's action or fantasy image)<sup>28</sup>. Once incorporated into the actor's script (as subtext and not necessarily performed on stage), the gesture acts as a trigger that activates the performer's imagination and his sensory-motor system, stimulating emotions and preparing the body to undertake the action. Rudolf Steiner's method and Michael Chekhov's Technique of the Actor, by being based on a long process of introspection and meditation, draw from unconscious memory the elements for creating char-

acter and for effective stage acting. The research these two masters had in common is of considerable interest, for its philosophical and aesthetic bases – in particular Steiner’s investigations of the human spiritual dimension. Moreover, the knowledge of the psychoanalytical studies revealed by both Steiner and Chekhov, has led to the development of easy, elementary exercises suited to the various phases of actorial preparation, albeit based on the complex cognitive mechanism of the human mind.

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2. Rudolf Steiner, founder of the Anthroposophical Society, after having been secretary of the German section of the Theosophical Society, devoted himself from the time of his university studies in Vienna to research on human spirituality, esotericism and the occult sciences, later applying the principles of anthroposophy to different disciplines: from education and pedagogy to biodynamic agriculture, architecture and medicine. A little known fact about Steiner is his commitment to the theater, to which he devoted himself from his university years and later concretized by publishing a series of reviews in the magazine “Das Magazin für Literatur” and founding a Dramaturgical Society, active in Berlin between 1898 and 1900, where he worked along with playwright Frank Wedekind (1864-1918), devoting himself mainly to directing. From 1907, as president of the German section of the Theosophical Society, together with the secretary (later collaborator and partner) Marie von Sivers (1867-1948), he introduced theatrical performances into the society’s meetings, first staging dramas by Edouard Schuré (1841-1929) and later four Mystery Dramas, written by Steiner himself for the occasion. In this context,

- he began his work as a theatrical pedagogue and founded Eurythmy, an art of movement that gives form to speech and music, a sort of spiritual dance that also evolved from the needs of the stage, namely in shaping imaginary, spiritual and hard-to-portray characters through the conventional acting techniques of the time. In addition to organizing his group of actors, Steiner developed what can be called a true method for the actor and transmitted the principles in his lessons on the Art of Speech or Sprachgestaltung and acting.
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  7. It is a path toward knowledge of man's spirituality and of superior worlds, the dimensions that stand behind tangible, visible reality.

8. On the hills of Dornach, in Switzerland, near Basel, there rises the Goetheanum and the garden city, headquarters of the Antroposophical Society since 1913, devoted to antroposophical research applied to various scientific fields and disciplines: from theater arts to medicine, agriculture, architecture and pedagogy.
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13. Some indications on the practice of Eurythmy for actors are contained in Steiner R, Regia e arte drammatica. Milano: Editrice Antroposofica; 1994. Puglisi C (Translation by), from Sprachgestaltung und dramatische Kunst, GA282. The Italian volume contains the collection of talks Steiner gave in Dornach from September 12 to 18, 1924. The last five talks, held from September 19th to 24th, have not been published by Editrice Antroposofica and are only available in German. His September 19th talk was published in Italian



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14. Haass-Berkow graduated from the Jacques-Dalcroze Institute and taught in Berlin at the acting school of Max Reinhardt and Maria Moissi. Around 1910, during a Steiner talk, he met Steiner for the first time and took part in the Eurythmy lessons. In this period Steiner founded the Anthroposophical Society and staged the four mystery dramas he wrote in Munich, and Haass-Berkov took part in some of these performances. See: Gottfried HB, *Esperienze nell'esercizio dell'arte drammatica*. In: Krück MJ, see: Poturzyn KV (edited by), *Abbiamo conosciuto Rudolf Steiner*. Milano: Terra Biodinamica Editrice; 1987. 53-66 pp. See: Haass-Berkow G, *Esperienze nell'esercizio dell'arte drammatica*. In: Poturzyn KV (edited by), *Abbiamo conosciuto Rudolf Steiner*. Milano: Terra Biodinamica Editrice; 1987. 53-66 pp.
  15. *Ivi*, p. 59.
  16. In Italian there are two publications: Chekhov M (edited by Falletti C, Cruciani R), *La tecnica dell'attore*. Roma: Dino Audino Editore; 2001 (this is the edition closest to the American edition edited by Mala Powers); and Čechov M, *All'attore. Sulla tecnica della recitazione*. Firenze: La Casa Usher; 1984. Translation by Mantovani R and Sacchetti L.
  17. Chekhov joined the MAT in 1912, also taking part in the activities of the First Studio. See: Chekhov M, (edited by Kirillov A, Merlin B), *The Path of The Actor*. New York: Routledge; 2005. The text includes the English translation from the Russian originals of Chekhov M, *Put' aktera* (The path of the Actor), an autobiography written in 1927 at the age of 35, when Chekhov was artistic director of the Moscow Art Theater and some extracts from *Zhizn' i vstrechi* (Life and Encounters), autobiographical texts published in the American *Novy Zhurnal* (The New Review), 1944-1945, VII-XI. The translation also took into account the Russian edition Chekhov M, *Literaturnoe nasledie*. V 2

tomakh. Izdanie 2-e. Moskva: Iskusstvo; 1995. Although the Russian edition was based on original typescripts, the translators report several omissions (due to Soviet censorship) in the first edition of 1986. The autobiography is not complete but covers Chekhov's life from childhood up to his first tour in the United States in 1935.

18. Chekhov took eurythmy lessons from Assja Turgenieff during his meetings with her. Regarding Chekhov's relations with the Anthroposophical Society, Andrei Bely and Turgenieff, and for an in-depth study of his theatrical research, see: Autant-Matieu MC (edited by), Mikhaïl Tchekhov/Michael Chekhov. *De Moscou à Hollywood. Du théâtre au cinéma*. Montpellier: L'Entretemps; 2009; Autant-Matieu MC, Meerzon Y (edited by), *The Routledge Companion to Michael Chekhov*. New York: Routledge; 2001; and Faccioli E (edited by), *Due maestri del Novecento: Michail Čechov e Rudolf Steiner*. In: *Culture Teatrali* 2014;23:7-90. There are many references to Steiner, although often unreported, in the writings of Chekhov. In one of his lectures to the teachers of the Technique of the Actor, held at Dartington Hall on May 7, 1936, in talking about concentration, he explained: "Concentration' for us is a special thing. It is a special term for us and has a special meaning. It is not only the ability to concentrate in the usual sense, but the ability to concentrate on the spiritual objects. We must study our 'Chart of Concentration' to find our special approach. It is our method of contacting and merging with the creative spiritual forces, which is the door by which we can enter into the creative spiritual world." Chekhov M, *Lessons for Teachers of his Acting Technique*. Hurst du Prey D (edited by), Ottawa: Dovehouse; 2000. p. 42. The 'Chart of Concentration' is shown on page 50. In the text there are descriptions of some exercises for working on the character and atmosphere of a given scene.
19. In 1925 Leonard and Dorothy Elmhrst started their Dartington Hall project in Devon, England, by which they financed artistic and pedagogical research.
20. The most important roles Chekhov played were Dr. Alexander Brulov in Alfred Hitchcock's *Spellbound* (1945) and the impresario Max Polikoff in Ben Hecht's *The Specter of the Rose* (1946).
21. Byckling L, *Michael Chekhov's Work as Director*. In: Autant-Matieu MC, Meerzon Y, *The Routledge Companion to Michael Chekhov*. pp. 21-39. Of his friendship and teaching with Russian masters Chekhov speaks in *The Path of The Actor*, reporting exercises and anecdotes about the moments shared at the Studio. On the transmission of energy in acting, see: Andrew White R, *Radiation and the transmission of Energy: from Stanislavsky to Michael Chekhov*. *Performance and Spirituality* 2009;1:23-46.

22. Chekhov M, *The Path of The Actor*. London and New York: Routledge; 1927.
23. Chekhov M, *ivi.*, p.187.
24. Chekhov M, *ivi.*, pp.187-188.
25. In this case we refer to the work of François Delsarte on mime and gesture as a direct expression of the soul and to Delsarte's studies of human attitudes; these were known to Chekhov thanks to his proximity to Prince Sergey Grigor'evič Volkonsky (1788-1865) who at the beginning of the 19th century had brought Delsarte's teachings to Russia. See: Calvarese O, Michail Čechov tra proselitismo e sacrilegio. *Culture Teatrali*, 2014;23:56-67; Delaumosne J, *Pratique de l'art oratoire de Delsarte*, Paris: Joseph Albanel Librairie; 1874; Randi E (edited by), *François Delsarte: le leggi del teatro. Il pensiero scenico del precursore della danza moderna*. Roma: Bulzoni; 1993. Randi E, *Il magistero perduto di Delsarte. Dalla Parigi romantica alla modern dance*. Padova: Esedra Editrice; 1996; Brunetti S, Randi E (edited by), *I movimenti dell'anima. François Delsarte fra teatro e danza*. Bari: Edizioni di Pagina; 2013.
26. Unfortunately, it wasn't possible to publish the illustrations here. For a comparison of between the drawings see Raffe M, Harwood C, Lundgren M, *Eurythmy and the Impulse of Dance*, Forrest Row, east Sussex: Rudolf Steiner Press; 1974; and Chekhov M, *Il gesto psicologico*. In: *La tecnica dell'attore*. Roma: Dino Audino Editore; 2001. pp. 57-88.
27. Lutterbie J, *The dynamics of Psychological Gestures*. In: Autant-Matieu MC, Meerzon Y, *The Routledge Companion to Michael Chekhov*. New York: Routledge; 2015 pp. 96-109.
28. *Ibid.*

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