

THE POSSIBILITIES OF PLAY

Julie Salverson

jsalverson.wordpress.com

PLAY

What do we think of when we hear this word?

BOTH A NOUN AND VERB,
WHICH WE THINK WE UNDERSTAND...

- “Go and play!”
- “What time does the play start?”
- “There is play in this rope.”

- “At once so straightforward and so full of contradictions, layers and (creative) tensions.” (Simon Murray)

PLAY IS...

- Another way of looking,
- A quality of attention,
- An openness to options,
- A provocation to our imaginations,
- An attitude to living,
- An enrichment of meaning.

PLAY IS...

- “...as vital a function as breathing or laughter.” (Philippe Gaulier)

THE MOTORS OF PLAY

- Lightness
- Pleasure
- Beauty
- Complicité

LIGHTNESS

- The generative possibilities...
- “A pedagogical Icarus...” (Simon Murray)

HEAVINESS

- “It is hopeless to seek refuge in a cave of repentance
- and remorse.” (Philippe Gaulier)

PLAY

- Why is it so terrifying?

BLOCKS

- Trying too hard
- A surfeit of apparent confidence
- The actor who over-identifies with their role

- Goal: a perpetually creative give and take; the story that is, the story that is becoming...

BLOCK: THE TYRANNY OF TRUTH-SEEKING

- “Truth kills the joy of imagining.” Gaulier

PLAY

- How can play **INCLUDE** the real terrors of living?

WHAT DOES ACTING TRAINING OFFER DDP & PACE?

- Co-creating the story,
- The vocabulary and language of play,
- An understanding of being pushed and pulled by fates beyond our control,
- A quality of attention brought by learning to play.

THE PLAY OF A BICYCLE CHAIN...

- ... there is enough slack or flexibility to allow movement and freedom.

KEY FOR PRACTITIONERS

- To know our own capacities and limits,
- To learn the motors of play.

THE REWARD?

- The pleasure of things becoming.
- The freedom to receive.
- Rendering a moment into life.
- Enriching the available meanings.

PREPARATION, NOT TRAINING

- A process of getting ready... without knowing the future.

LISTENING TO AND FOR...

- “Students are often contradictory. We must hear what they say without listening too much.” (Jacques Lecoq)

WHAT SHAPED THESE TEACHERS?

- “We were living among extraordinary renewal. We had to throw away everything and construct a world. The world had to be made all over again.” (Jacques Lecoq)

SAMUEL BECKETT

- “Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better.” (Samuel Beckett)

IN CONCLUSION

- We want to see YOU
- Not someone safe or nice,
- Someone alive and ugly in their humanity (Sonia Norris)

REFERENCES

- 1. Murray, Simon. "Jacques Lecoq, Monika Pagneux and Philippe Gaulier: Training for Play, Lightness and Disobedience". *Actor Training*. New York: Routledge, 2010. p215-235.
- 2. Murray, Simon. *Jaques Lecoq*. Routledge, 2003.