

# ACTING TERMINOLOGY

- 1.) **Accents and Dialects**- Habits or characteristics of speech that help identify the character.
- 2.) **Action** (internal or emotional)- What you do to get what your character wants.
- 3.) **Adjustments**- Changes in the directions (actions) you are given, or the choices you've made.
- 4.) **Anticipation**- Basing your choices on the fact that you know what happens next.
- 5.) **Arena Stage**- A stage where the audience is seated around three sides.
6. **As-If**- Programming yourself to behave "as-if" a certain condition existed. (Magic If).
- 7.) **Aside**- When the character breaks away from the situation to talk to the audience without being heard by the other characters.
- 8.) **Audition**- The procedure of observing the work of actors to determine who is best suited to play a role.
- 9.) **Beats**- One unit of text denoting the beginning and end of an action. Also, a "moment."
- 10.) **Blocking**- The physical arrangement of the actors' movements on stage.
- 11.) **Breakthrough**- The point at which you either overcome an obstacle and/or reach a new emotional level previously unattainable.
- 12.) **Callback**- A request to return and audition. The director has narrowed down their choices for the role and you're getting closer to getting the job.
- 13.) **Character**- The person whom you are playing.
- 14.) **Choices**- What you do or tell yourself in order to create the role. Positive and active choices are better than negative or passive ones.
- 15.) **Cold Reading**- Reading aloud, from the script, with no rehearsal.
- 16.) **Concentration**- The ability or act of focusing all your attention or energy where you want or need it.
- 17.) **Critique**- Honest feedback on your work. What did work, what didn't, what we saw and what we didn't see.
- 18.) **Cue**- A predetermined signal to cause you to act, deliver a line, do stage business, gesture, or move onstage. A prompt.
- 19.) **DownStage**- The part of a proscenium that is closest to the audience.
- 20.) **Emotional Memory**- Exploring, or creating a past event from your life for use in a scene or character. ( also called Affective Memory or Emotional Recall)
- 21.) **Endowment**- To assign specific attributes and/or idiosyncracies to objects and/or other people.
- 22.) **Environment**- The ability to create accurately the characters surroundings.
- 23.) **Exploration**- All the different choices and ideas you try in rehearsal to arrive at a performance.

- 24.) **External Work**- The technical part of the work that pertains to the external aspects of performance—voice, body, text.. Needs to be balanced with internal work.
- 25.) **Fourth Wall**- The invisible, imagined, or implied wall through which the audience sees the performance.
- 26.) **Gibberish** (numbers, letters, etc.)- A technique using non-verbal sounds in place of the text or in place of words.
- 27.) **Given Circumstances**- The information in the play set down for you by the playwright.
- 28.) **Imagination**-That part of the mind that allows for the creation of images to bring us closer to solving a problem or to express more fully our true nature.
- 29.) **Immediacy**- A quality to be strived for in making your work look like and exist in the present. Doesn't look rehearsed-happening for the very first time—right now.
- 30.) **Improvisation**- An unrehearsed scene, in your own, extemporaneous words.
- 31.) **Impulses**- Natural causes or stimuli that can be expressed vocally and physically. A feeling, and instant message, telling you to take a certain action.
- 32.) **Indicating**- Pointing to what behavior is supposed to look like rather than creating genuine truthful behavior.
- 33.) **Inner Monologue**- Technique of expressing your real feelings between the phrases of the text.
- 34.) **Instinct**- The nonintellectual, or innate stimulus for action.
- 35.) **Instrument**- YOU. Your body, voice, mind and soul. Actor's instrument is him/herself.
- 36.) **Intention**- What you and/or your character will do.
- 37.) **Internal Work**- The part of the work that deal with feelings and emotions in order to create truthful behavior.
- 38.) **Justification**- The reason you and or your character take an action.
- 39.) **Line Readings**- Instructions on how to read or say a line.
- 40.) **Line Rehearsal**- A rehearsal specifically for running lines.
- 41.) **Mannerisms**- Physical behaviors or 'tics' pinpointing the uniqueness of the character.
- 42.) **Moment to Moment**- Living in the present from one section to the next. An actor's creative goal.
- 43.) **Monologue**- A section of the play spoken by one actor as either part of a scene or alone on the stage. Performed within the context of a play or removed from the play in auditions.
- 44.) **Motivation**- The reason for your action.
- 45.) **Mugging**- Broad facial gestures designed to entertain the audience at the expense of genuinely playing your part.
- 46.) **Notes**- Adjustments and/or critique given by the director.
- 47.) **Objective**- What the character wants.

- 48.) **Objects**- Physical items pertaining to your character and your surroundings. In sense memory, it's the thing you choose to work on.
- 49.) **Observation**- The detailed study of nature and reality for incorporation into your art.
- 50.) **Obstacles**- The barriers that prevent you from doing what you want to do.
- 51.) **Opposites**- Deepening your character by examining his or her other side.
- 52.) **Organic**- A description of a performance where the origin and progression of truthful behavior is evident.
- 53.) **Overacting**- Acting more than is necessary. Artificial acting. Pushing.
- 54.) **Personalization**- To endow an object or another person in a scene with something or someone personal to you.
- 55.) **Physical Action**- The physical manifestation of your action.
- 56.) **Preparation**- What you do prior to performance to influence your behavior and create your character to its fullest. Focusing your attention on details that propel you into the scene. (Includes instrument, character and emotional preparation)
- 57.) **Prior Circumstances**- The events in the play occurring before your scene or entrance that affect what you do. Also called "previous circumstances."
- 58.) **Projection**- Sending the voice to all areas of the theatre.
- 59.) **Proscenium**- The stage, or playing area, in front of the curtain. The arch above the stage is called the proscenium arch. In a proscenium theatre the audience is seated in front of the stage.
- 60.) **Rehearsal**- The process of making ready a play by exploration and repetition.
- 61.) **Relationship**- The connection between your character and the other characters in the play.
- 62.) **Relaxation**- Removing or reducing tension in muscles and stress in the instrument.
- 63.) **Sense Memory**- Re-creating experience and belief through the memory of the five senses.
- 64.) **Sides**- A part of a script-usually one or two short scenes used for audition purposes.
- 65.) **Soliloquy**- When a character is alone on stage and speaks, usually to the audience.
- 66.) **Speed- Through**- A rehearsal technique that involves going through the play very quickly.
- 67.) **Spine**- The central idea or theme of the play. The main action or driving force behind what the character wants and wants to do.
- 66.) **Stage Business**- Physical directions and movement (spatially or with props) done onstage.
- 67.) **Stage Left**- The actor's point of view onstage facing the audience; their left..
- 68.) **Stage Right**- The actor's point of view onstage facing the audience; their right.
- 69.) **Substitution**- Replacing the fictional elements of a scene with your own personal choices.
- 70.) **Subtext**- The real meaning "under the text." The intentions, reality behind character's words.
- 71.) **Super-objective**- The main character objective throughout the entire play.

- 72.) **Text Analysis**- Systematic examination of elements in the script to understand and play role
- 73.) **Theatre in the Round**- A theatre with audience surrounding all four sides of stage.
- 74.) **Theme**- The playwright's statement through the text of the play.
- 75.) **Thrust Stage**- Audience on three sides like arena but stage extends farther into audience.
- 76.) **Transition**- Technical switch from the end of one beat to the beginning of the next.
- 77.) **Type**- Categorizing actors, by appearance, by roles in which they are apt to be cast.
- 78.) **Upstage**- 1.) Part of proscenium farthest from audience. 2.) Stealing a scene from an actor.
- 79.) **Vulnerability**-Allowing outside elements in to touch your pain and express response.
- 80.) **What If**- A never ending choice of action. A way to stay curious—keeps acting fresh; alive.