

Year 8 - Naturalism

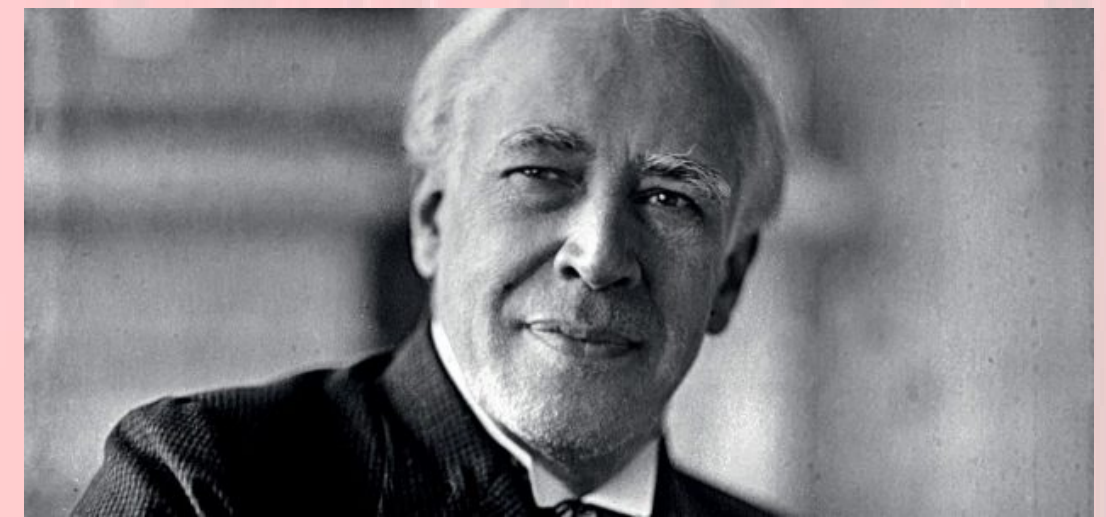
Theatre Practitioner	Someone who creates theatrical performance and/writes theatrical ideas and teachings.
Naturalism Theatre Practitioner	Konstantin Stanislavski
Born	1863
Died	1939

Stanislavski formed the Moscow Art Theatre and is most commonly known for his 'System'. The 'System' was Stanislavski's acting method, born out of a quest for realism in acting. A set of rules and exercises created a foundation for actors to work from. The principle objective of his system was to aid the actor in creating an illusion of actuality on stage and in convincing the audience that he (the actor) was portraying a real person, convincing his audience that his feeling and thoughts were exactly those of the character he embodied.

He taught that an actor must prepare his role in great detail, with a large amount of attention to the psychology, the motivation and the lifestyle of the character. It is important that Stanislavski does not teach you how to act, he teaches you how to work with yourself, how to organise you own creativeness and use your inner body to create the external show.

Naturalism Techniques and Keywords

Realism	A style of theatre that aims to mimic real life. Characters, stories, costumes and set designs should all appear as if the audience is watching real life, not a performance. This is what Stanislavski was aiming for in his theatre.
The 4 th Wall	This is an imaginary wall between the performers and the audience. The three walls of the stage (back, right, left) make up three walls of a room. The 4th wall of the room would then be the invisible wall at the front of the stage. Stanislavski would have his actors always imagine the wall to be there, so they would not acknowledge the audience, and create a more realistic performance.
Objective	Stanislavski believed people always have an objective, and their actions are driven by this objective. Therefore, in order to play a character in a realistic way an actor needs to consider their character's objective.
Given Circumstances	Put simply, these are all the facts we know about a character. The first step of Stanislavski's system was to look at everything we know about a character from the script, and then fill in all the other details with our own ideas. The more detailed a character is, the more realistic it will be.
Emotional Memory	Stanislavski believed it was not possible to pretend to feel an emotion, so instead he encouraged his actors to use real emotions they had felt in the past. For example, if a character is feeling happy because they have won the lottery, the actor may not know what it feels like to have won the lottery, but they will have felt happiness before, therefore the actor remembers a time when they were happy, and uses this memory to help them perform the character's happiness at having won the lottery.
Magic If	Stanislavski said that the character should answer the question, 'What would I do if I was in this situation?', this technique means that the actor puts themselves into the character's situation. This then stimulates the motivation to enable the actor to play the role.
Circles of Attention	Stanislavski believed that an actor needed a sense of isolation in order to produce a characterisation and avoid unnecessary tension. They needed to concentrate on themselves. This is the first circle of attention. Stanislavski referred to it as Solitude in Public. Beyond this, the actor might, in the 'second circle', be aware of the character he is addressing and in the 'third circle', the rest of the production. There's no direct awareness of the audience in this. These circles of attention are achieved through focus and concentration.



DNA by Dennis Kelly

A group of teenagers do something bad, really bad, then panic and cover the whole thing up. But when they find that their cover-up unites them and brings harmony to their once fractious lives, where is the incentive to put things right.

Success Criteria:

- 1: Land your lines! The theatre space is big! Make sure your voice reached every audience member.
2. Enter and Exit in Character! The way an actor enters tells a story, so make sure you are in character the moment you step on stage. Know your objectives, why are you there, where are you coming from, what has happened off stage? When is this happening?
3. Embrace the audience magnet! The most engaging place for an actor is to be downstage but often we are pulled towards the back of the stage by an invisible magnet. Instead, embrace the audience magnet and come closer to them.
4. Avoid the kiss or kill position! In real life we stand inches apart to talk to each other. Onstage this is called the 'kiss or kill position'. Therefore, make sure you stretch your scenes to fill the whole stage.
5. Share with the audience! The audience want to see your face and body language, and to receive your lines loud and clear. Do not put your back to the audience but remember the 4th wall.



Naturalism - EVALUATION

1. Sentence Starter:

- The performers effectively used...
- A successful/unsuccessful moment in the performance was...
- A moment that could have been improved was... Because it lacked...
- A strength/weakness was...
- The performers emphasised the use of...
- One criticism could be...
- The performance featured...
- I noticed that...
- Arguably...
- What the group failed to do...
- The key features I enjoyed/did not enjoy were...
- The creativity was expressed through...

2. Keyword

Still image
Thought track
Improvisation
Physical theatre
Flash-forward/flashback
Projections
Focus
Voice (pause, pitch, pace, tone)
Physicality
Believable
Naturalistic techniques

3. Evaluation

- It successfully created a....
- This uncovered... due to...
- This created impact by...
- This enhanced the performance because...
- This helped overall by...
- This was detrimental to the performance because...
- This was effective because...
- They could improve...
- Consequently...
- Subsequently...
- This was evidenced through...
- This portrayed...

Additional Vocabulary

Emerged, impact, comedic, elegant, tension, marvellous, depressing, exceeded, justified, sequence, powerfully, skilfully, climax, effect, emotionally, aspect, identified, compromise, prolific, consequently, crucial, therefore, structure, appropriate, distinguish, reason, similar, contrast, affect, created, accomplished.

CONTEMPORARY DANCE - EVALUATION

1. Sentence Starter:

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- What the group failed to do...
- The key features I enjoyed/did not enjoy were...
- The creativity was expressed through...

2. Keyword

Focus
Clarity
Confidence
Energy
Dynamics
Formations
Clear start and end
Levels
Directions
Original Movement
Flow
Contrast
Expression
Musicality

3. Evaluation

- It created a....
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CONTEMPORARY DANCE

- KEY ACTION WORDS
- jump
- swing
- slide
- twist
- turn
- roll
- tilt
- drop

- Choreographic Devices / Relationships
- Fragmentation
- Canon
- Unison
- Formations
- Levels
- Directions
- Mirroring
- Action/Reaction
- Contact work/ Lifts
- Start/Ending Position

STIMULUS: TIME

How can you turn some of these ideas into DANCE?

Sand – egg timers

Time waits for no man....

Time flies when you're having fun...

Clocks & Watches – ticking, tick tock

Pendulums

Time controls us all

Old Father Time

Tea time, dinner time, break time

Day into night, suns and moons

The seasons

- Performance Skills
- Projection
- Facial Expressions
- Concentration
- Clarity
- Accuracy
- Timing
- Musicality
- Focus
- Confidence
- Movement Memory
- Dynamic Contrast
- Spatial Awareness
- Commitment

Contact Work – Safety

Lifter

Wide base

Bent knees

Liftee

Core muscles engaged – plank-like body which holds your own weight

In control

Both

In a space

Hair tied back

No socks or jewellery

Clear communication and trust

LIFT IDEAS



CAPOEIRA - EVALUATION

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Contrast
Expression
Highlight
Musicality

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HISTORY

- ▶ Capoeira is an Afro-Brazilian art form that combines elements of martial arts, games, music and dance
- ▶ Capoeira originated in Africa, and was brought to Brazil by captured slaves from Angola.
- ▶ The Angolan people still wanted to be able to defend themselves against their violent overlords so they disguised their fight training as recreational song and dance.



WHAT IS CAPOEIRA?

- ▶ Capoeira is almost like a ritual and starts with two players in a roda or circle
 - ▶ There is music played by the berimbau
- ▶ The goal of the game is to catch the opponent off-guard
- ▶ Unlike most martial arts strikes are admired most when there is no physical contact. A player gains the most applause when the other player has been skillfully baited into a vulnerable, off-balance position, but has not actually fallen or been hit.

CAPOEIRA



Steps

Ginga
Front Kick
Side Kick
Fly Kick
Drop Kick
Spin
Jump

Relationships

Mirroring
Action/Reaction
Unison
Canon
Contact Work

Highlights

Leapfrog
Cartwheel
Handstand
Rolls
Roundoff
Lifts

Performance Skills

Projection
Facial Expressions
Concentration
Clarity
Accuracy
Timing
Musicality
Focus
Confidence
Movement Memory
Dynamic Contrast
Spatial Awareness
Commitment

Does my piece contain...

A clear start and end position?

My own Dance Actions?

Highlights and a climax?

A range of Capoeira steps?

A range of relationships with my partner?

Confident performers who know what they are doing?

URBAN DANCE – EVALUATION

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URBAN DANCE

TUTTING, POPPING AND LOCKING

- ▶ ISOLATION
- ▶ CONTRACTION
- ▶ FLUID VS RIGID DYNAMICS
- ▶ ARM GESTURES



STREET DANCE

- ▶ LOW CENTRE OF GRAVITY
- ▶ ISOLATIONS
- ▶ ATTITUDE
- ▶ DYNAMIC CONTRASTS
 - ▶ FOCUS
 - ▶ TIMING
 - ▶ ENERGY
- ▶ CONFIDENCE



BREAKDANCE

- ▶ UPROCK
- ▶ SIX/THREE STEP
 - ▶ SWIPE
 - ▶ WINDMILL
 - ▶ FREEZE
- ▶ POWER MOVES



SUCCESS CRITERIA

- You **must** include: Tutting, the Street Dance, Popping/Locking and Breakdance steps
- A clear and creative start and end position
- **At least 3 formations/formation changes**
- **Use of group shape and pattern**
- **Variety in the levels of the dancers**
- **Variety in facing directions**
- **Use of canon, unison, mirroring**
- **Dynamic contrasts**

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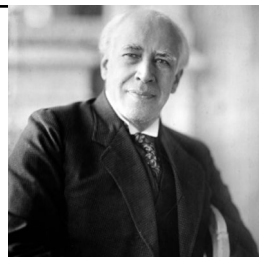
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He taught that an actor must prepare his role in great detail, with a large amount of attention to the psychology, the motivation and the lifestyle of the character. It is important to be clear, Stanislavski does not teach you how to act, he teaches you how to work with yourself, how to organise your own creativeness and use your inner body to create the external show, it gives him a purpose.

The preparatory work on a role can be divided into three areas. Textual analysis, establishing life (internal) and transferring it to physical form (external).



Elements of the System



Given circumstances - The given circumstances are the information about the character that you start off with and the play as a whole. How old is the character? What's their situation in the play and in relation to the other characters? Are there any notes provided about the play and its characters? Such notes and stage directions may not tell you everything you need to build a character but they are the starting point from which you'll work to examine the other questions.

Emotional memory - Emotional memory is when the actor finds a real past experience where they felt a similar emotion to that demanded by the role they are playing. They then 'borrow' those feelings to bring the role to life.

Method of physical actions - Imagine a simple activity like cleaning your teeth and then imagine a husband cleaning his teeth whilst deliberating on how to tell his wife about his mistress. This is a simple illustration of how a physical action can release the necessary emotions.

Subtext - The script of a play could be called the text. The subtext is the actual meaning and motivation behind the lines that are spoken and the actions taken. For example, the heroine might say to the hero, "I love you" and we might assume that it is the happy ending fairy tale moment. But the delivery would be very different if she was worried that he was about to walk out on her.

If - Stanislavski said that the character should answer the question, 'What would I do **if** I was in this situation?' Also known as the '**magic if**', this technique means that the actor puts themselves into the character's situation. This then stimulates the motivation to enable the actor to play the role.

Objective & Super-objective - An **objective** is the reason for our actions. What are we trying to achieve? Life, people and circumstances constantly put up barriers in our way. Each of these barriers presents us with the objective of getting through them. You shouldn't try to express the meaning of your objective in terms of a noun, always use a verb, eg 'I wish to...'

The **super-objective** is an over-reaching objective, probably linked to the overall outcome in the play. We use the word super-objective to characterise the essential idea, the core, which provided the impetus for the writing of the play. A character's objectives are likely to be stages in the journey towards the super-objective. If that journey is perceived as a clear path to the super objective, then you have your through line.

Circles of attention - Stanislavski believed that an actor needed a sense of isolation in order to produce a characterisation and avoid unnecessary tension. They needed to concentrate on themselves. This is the first circle of attention. Stanislavski referred to it as Solitude in Public. Beyond this, the actor might, in the 'second circle', be aware of the character he is addressing and in the 'third circle', the rest of the production. There's no direct awareness of the audience in this. These circles of attention are achieved through focus and concentration.

Tempo and rhythm - Stanislavski felt that an inner and an outer tempo and rhythm were vital if you were to enact movements truthfully and link them to the expression of emotions and feelings. He linked tempo to the speed of an action or feeling and the rhythm to the intensity or depth of the experience.