### Acting and Blocking Worksheet

**Based on work Erik Sean McGiven**
 Blocking and Movement, McGiven

“The visual story reflects the moment to moment failure and success of each character’s struggle toward their objective, as well as the intensity (commitment) and focus (direction) of their emotions.”

- Erik Sean McGiven

#### Actor’s Job: Drama Essentials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skilled Actor</th>
<th>Nervous Actor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simplifies:</td>
<td>Makes unnecessary and distracting movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement</td>
<td>Movements continually bring the attention to the actor and result in an ambiguous character that leads the audience away from the story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocking</td>
<td><strong>Tries to act too many facets of the character at the same time</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience understands the behavior of the character and how it fits into the unfolding story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Skilled vs. Nervous Actor

- **Skilled Actor**
  - Audience: performance is natural and convincing, emotional intensity felt by everyone in the room
  - Audience: performance makes the audience feel the emotions of the characters
  - Audience: performance is conscious of the relationships between characters
- **Nervous Actor**
  - Audience: performance feels forced or unnatural
  - Audience: performance does not make the audience feel the emotions of the characters
  - Audience: performance does not consider the relationships between characters

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skilled Actor</th>
<th>Nervous Actor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The character is clearly defined by the actor's performance</td>
<td>The character is not clearly defined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The emotions of the character are conveyed through the actor's performance</td>
<td>The emotions of the character are not conveyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The character's relationships with other characters are established through the actor's performance</td>
<td>The character's relationships with other characters are not established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The character's motivations and desires are communicated through the actor's performance</td>
<td>The character's motivations and desires are not communicated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Actor’s Understates Performance without Loss

- The actor reduces body actions to allow the camera to carry the performance to the audience
- The actor performs the character as if it were played on stage

#### Actor’s Job: Blocking Marks

- Blocking and movement appear to come from the character
- Motive and objective are observable in scene movement and blocking
- The actor knows marks and hits them in rehearsal and film

#### Actor’s Job: Hitting Marks

- Actors are in sync with each other
- Actors acknowledge and support these choices for the scene with dramatic choices

#### Actor’s Job: Matching Shots

- The actor matches gestures, moves, and dialog from a long shot to a closer angle

#### Acting & Blocking is Portrayal of Strong & Weak Moments

- **Strong Movement**
  - Rising up from chair
  - Straightening up
  - Place weight on forward foot
  - Raising the arm
  - Walking forward
- **Weak Movement**
  - Stepping backward
  - Slouching
  - Placing weight on rear foot
  - Sitting down
  - Lowering the arm
  - Walking backward or away
  - Turning around

#### Actor’s Subtle Moves For Close-up

- Head turns
- Look away
- Change in body language
- Adjusting posture

#### Actor Attitudes

- **Strong, Winning Attitudes**
  - Confident
  - Direct
  - Controlled
  - Active role
  - Good eye focus control
  - Definite goals or wants
  - Aggressive
  - Assertive
  - Strong speech patterns
  - Concise movements
  - Firm
  - Stands ground
  - Good self-image
  - Relaxed
  - Dominate
  - Independent
  - Resilient
  - Self-sufficient
  - Wanting something
  - Control over life’s choices
  - Emotions open
  - Changing for the better
  - Growing
  - Sincere

- **Weak, Failing Attitudes**
  - Uncertain
  - Lacking confidence
  - Hesitant
  - Not in control
  - Reactionary
  - Unsure
  - Second thoughts about goals
  - Emotionally tense
  - Submissive
  - Intimidated
  - Evasive eyes
  - Suffering in pain
  - Masking or hiding emotions
  - Giving ground – retreating
  - Reliant
  - Needing something
  - Indecisive
  - Fragile
  - Static
  - Regressing
  - Little or no control of life’s choices
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Actor’s Job: Drama Essentials

☐ Actor plays character truthfully so the context of the scene appears to be realistic and convincing
☐ Actor moves physically and mentally in the same story as portrayed by the other performers

Skilled vs. Nervous Actor

Skilled Actor
- Simplifies:
  ☐ Movement
  ☐ Blocking
  ☐ Physical Behavior
- Audience understands the behavior of the character and how it fits into the unfolding story

Nervous Actor
- Makes unnecessary and distracting movements
- Movements continually bring the attention to the actor and result in an ambiguous character that leads the audience away from the story
- Tries to act too many facets of the character at the same time

Actor Understates Performance without Loss

☐ Actor reduces body actions to allow camera to carry performance to audience
☐ Actor performs life-like naturalness & ability to do less without loss of energy

Actor Movements & Hitting Marks

☐ Blocking and movement appear to come from the character
☐ Motive and objective are observable in scene movement and blocking
☐ Actor knows marks and hits them in rehearsal and film

Actor In Tune with Other Actors

☐ Characters and their relationships are defined
☐ Actors acknowledge and support these choices for the scene w/ dramatic choices

Actor Eyes & Sightlines

☐ Viewers look at actors eyes
☐ Viewers look at what the actors are looking at (Sightlines)

Actor Matches Shots

☐ Actor matches gestures, moves, & dialog from a long shot to a closer angle

Acting & Blocking is Portrayal of Strong & Weak Moments

The Actor’s portrayal of:
☐ The dramatic relationship
☐ The character’s wants
☐ What s/he feels
☐ What stands in the way
☐ How is the conflict presently resolving

Actor Movement & Physical Behavior

Strong Movement
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- Straightening up
- Place weight on forward foot
- Raising the arm
- Walking forward

Weak Movement
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- Slouching
- Placing weight on rear foot
- Sitting down
- Lowering the arm
- Walking backward or away
- Turning around

Actor’s Subtle Moves For Close-up

☐ Head turns
☐ Look away
☐ Change in body language
☐ Adjusting posture
☐ Leaning in
☐ Turning away
☐ Crossing legs
☐ Folding arms

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