

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

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Actor plays character truthfully so the context of the scene appears to be realistic and convincing | <input type="checkbox"/> The opposing goals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Actor moves physically and mentally in the same story as portrayed by the other performers | <input type="checkbox"/> The emotions |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> The failing-winning aspect of the struggle have to be: |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Seen |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Heard |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Felt |

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:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The dramatic relationship | <input type="checkbox"/> What stands in the way |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The character’s wants | <input type="checkbox"/> How is the conflict presently resolving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What s/he feels | |

Actor Movement & Physical Behavior

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

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Head turns | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaning in |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Look away | <input type="checkbox"/> Turning away |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Change in body language | <input type="checkbox"/> Crossing legs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adjusting posture | <input type="checkbox"/> Folding arms |

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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