

Rehearsal for Revolution: Using Theatre as a Tool for Community Engagement

Workshop presenter:

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List of Games and Exercises practiced during workshop:

Walk around the room balancing the space (plate on the tip of a pencil)

- Variations:
 - Find your walk
 - Neutral walk
 - Fast pace
 - Slow pace
 - President of the United States
 - Famous Superstar
 - Someone who just lost their job
 - 8-year-old child
 - Someone you know

Hypnosis: Partners hypnotise one another using the palm of a hand

- Variations:
 - Partner A leads Partner B, vice-versa
 - Partner A and B lead each other at the same time
 - Create groups of 3 and have 1 leader lead 2 followers, 1 with each hand
 - Create circle and have 1 person in the middle hypnotise remaining actors using the whole body. Each actor chooses a spot on the actor in the middle's body and is controlled by it in the same way as in the previous variations.

A Round of Rhythm and Movement: The actors form a circle. One of them goes into the middle and makes any kind of movement, as strange or unusual as she likes, accompanied by a sound. All the others imitate her, trying to reproduce exactly her movements and sounds, in time with her. Then, still making her movement and sound, this leader approaches and stands opposite someone in the circle, challenging them to take her place; this person goes into the middle and slowly changes the movement, the rhythm and the sound in any way she likes. Everyone follows this second leader, who then challenges a third person and so on.

- **Variation – Orchestra:** Actor stands in middle, and points at each actor to make the sound and movement on their own. The actor can then 'play' the sounds and movements by pointing at a particular actor creating an orchestra.

Changing Movements: At a given signal, each actor takes a particular rhythm and does a movement in time with it. After a few minutes, each actor tries to get closer to one or more of the others, choosing according to rhythmic affinity. Little by little, those who have the greatest affinity homogenise their rhythm until practically the whole group has the same rhythm and movement. It may not happen – which doesn't matter, as long as the subgroups which have formed have their own well-defined rhythms and movements.

The Plain Mirror: Actors stand in two lines facing a partner, one line is A and one line is B. Line A are the 'subjects'; Line B are the 'images'. When the exercise begins, each subject undertakes a series of movements and changes of expression, which his 'image' must copy as closely as possible.

- **Variation:** Subject and Image Swap Roles
- **Variation:** Subject and Image become one and move simultaneously

The Modelling Sequence – The sculpture touches the model: The actors form two lines facing each other, one line is A and one line is B. Line A are the 'sculptors'; Line B are the 'statues'. The sculptors create an image relating to the theme using the statues as their clay. This can happen through touching or mirroring.

Sculpture with four or five people: One sculptor creates an image using a number of actors as statues. When the sculptor is happy with the image, he or she takes the position of one of the statues in the scene created, and that person then has the opportunity to sculpt the image from their viewpoint.

Image of Transition: A group of actors creates an image using their bodies that represents the theme. The subject matter of this model must be an oppression, of whatever kind, which the group has suggested.

Speed Gestures: All actors stand in a line, with one actor starting on the stage. The first actor creates a gesture on stage. The first person in line walks onto the stage, experiences the gesture, and then responds with a gesture and then exits the stage. The next actor in line does the same.

- **Variations:**
 - Actor one gives a gesture; actor two gives a response using one word; actor one responds with one word.
 - Actor one gives a gesture; actor two gives a response using a sentence; actor one responds with a sentence.

Scarf Play: All actors create 4 images using a prop (scarf). The actors memorize their images in sequence and perform them simultaneously for one another.

Dynamisations:

Dynamisations are ways to further explore a scene or image by going deeper. You can use leverage dynamisations on any of the exercises noted above. Some examples include:

- Have those outside the image tell the 'story' of what they are seeing in the image
- Ask participants in the image to give an "I feel" statement
- Ask participants in the image to tell us an "I want" statement
- Ask participants to move on a clap, using as much of their body as possible in one movement, toward getting what it is they say they want. Several claps could also be used.
- Have actors in the image simultaneously speak an 'internal monologue'

Questions to go deeper within a scene or image:

- How do you feel you have contributed to the current situation?
- How have you been a part of past situations or events?
- How could you contribute to the future vision of your community or group?
- What is your role with your community/group?
- What do you wish it could be?
- What is standing in your way?
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Debrief Questions:

- What did that exercise bring up for you?
- What was in that for you?
- How was it helpful?
- How does this relate to your life/work/community?

Resources:

- Theatre of the Oppressed: www.theatreoftheoppressed.org
- Boal, A. (1992). *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*. Trans. Adrian Jackson. New York: Routledge. (Book)
- Boal, A. (1979). *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Trans. Adrian Jackson. New York: Urizen. (Book)
- Diamond, D. (2007). *Theatre for Living: The Art and Science of Community-Based Dialogue*. Victoria, BC: Trafford. (Book)

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- Perry, J. A. (2012). A silent revolution: 'Image Theatre' as a system of decolonization. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 17(1): 103-119. (Article)