

UNHEARD LECTURE 1: WHAT IS A CHARACTER?

What is a character? Why are the personages of a play called characters? To answer that question we need to remove the preposition from the first question. What is character?

Character is something we are all possessed of. It's the collection of qualities which combine to form our personalities, or, more accurately, our identities. We talk about strength of character, weakness of character, demonstrations of character, but what is it, this "character"?

A character is made up of characteristics.

That seems tautological, but it's a point that gets missed all the time. People are made up of beliefs and patterns of thought—of qualities—which appear, says Aristotle, when that person acts.

A character is a real person.

When you play a character you are playing a person, someone you bring to life. You're their representative; it's heavy responsibility, because that character would want an audience (and you) to understand everything about them, not just the obvious bits or the things they conclude from surface observation. And you, the actor, are the only person who can help the character achieve that. So you are on her side, 100%. You don't have to agree with everything she does. But she's your creation; you're charged with getting the world to see how your character sees the world.

Inconsistency

Many qualities in a person appear contradictory or inconsistent. Inconsistent with what? With how a person sees herself, for one thing. "I'm a good person." Most people would say that. How many qualities do they possess that give the lie to that statement? Too many actors play a person as a consistent blend of qualities—all moral, all immoral, all violent, all gentle—when a truly realistic portrayal always involves inconsistencies.

"Inconsistent with what?" Inconsistent with how others see a person. Play texts are full of information on characters, often spoken by one character about another. Apart from the subjective bias of the initial speaker's position in the world of the play, there is also the fundamental fact that *what they see is only part of the true person*.

"Inconsistent with what?" Inconsistent in how they're acted out. Have you ever found yourself the soul of kindness with a friend in need and then a callous, supercilious prick with a beggar on the street? Are you consistently kind? Neither is your character.

Another element of the inconsistency of characters is *rhythm*. Everyone has a base rhythm, from very slow (think molten lava) to very quick (think hummingbird) on the spectrum. But all characters are made up of competing rhythms. Some rhythms appear more than others, but no character carries the same operating rhythm all the time. They may *try to*, the way a methodical person tries to slow down a fast-talking friend; but they can never succeed at this. Inconsistency is the heart of authentic characterisation.

The Character Questions

The first one in building a character should be

Who am I?

To answer this HUGE question start with the facts and then develop past them: don't depend on them. Most of the time a fact is not as useful as a relationship. Saying "I work at a bank" for instance, says nothing about a character. Even "I'm a mother" doesn't help; it's too vague. Your character's *qualities* are more important than her age, or sex, or even her history, though the qualities must fit, in some plausible way, with the facts.

To really begin the research on who your character is, you have to choose a primary **archetype**. "But why? Aren't all character's unique? Isn't this limiting? Well, no. All characters—all people—belong to sub-categories of the human race. I'll talk more about this later. All of us belong to more than one, but there's one, along with the Super-Objective, which lies behind everything we do. If you lock on to your character's archetype early your research will fill out exponentially, without all the side-tracking most actors go through.

What Do I Want?

This is distinct from listing actions and Moment Objectives. (A Moment Objective is something you want right now, and it can change moment to moment.) A **Super Objective** runs through everything a character does, even when a character works against her own best interest. There are only a small number of these; every character has one that is pre-eminent. Choose it early, and keep testing it.

What are My Problems?

Problems are what stop people getting what they want. If you have a script, you find them. If you're creating a character in an original work, you must create problems. No successful character ever gets what they want; the nature of drama is that we learn the most, and are most entertained, by failure. So create as many challenging, vexing, and entertaining conditions for failure as you can. Remember that a lot of the most intractable problems a character faces are **internal**—i.e. a person is his own worst enemy, through lack of social skills, remembered grievances, lack of experience, etc.

A Word on Psychology

Here's the word: fudgetaboutit.

But why? I've just written a four-volume book on my character's background!

Everything Happens in the Present

There are only two things a character thinks about: the past and the present. And everything that happened in the past has to happen in the present, or it doesn't exist. If your character has a monologue about her cat's tragic death when she was a child, that happens in the present. If you

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look at your lover, who's just admitted he was cheating on you during your honeymoon, and you're thinking of how your Daddy abandoned you when you were five...well, you need help. Personal experiences are more distracting, and far less dramatic, than the triggers characters require. They can't be brought forward more than a few times before they fade.

Psychology exists in every acting style, not just realism. And by that I mean every character *feels something* when they *do something* (even if that doing is the absence of action). The only psychology that matters is emotion in the present. Where you find it, how you get it, I, as director or audience or fellow actor, don't care. **Don't** write the 4 volume epic.

What Do I Do About Them?

Different acting teachers call these strategies or tactics. That's a bit technical. I want to encourage you to think of this character, this person you represent, as having a vocabulary of action, just like you do. Things they do; things they never do; and things they *might* do. The better you know your character, through your work on archetype and Super-Objective, the more you'll know what your character's tool kit is, their vocabulary of approaches to getting what they want. Some of these tools are innate or acquired skills: charm, humour, seduction, persuasion, intellect, generosity (yes, it's a tactic). Some are primal: violence (both physical and emotional), sexuality (distinct from seduction, which can have nothing to do with sex). Find out what tools your character possesses, which ones they might acquire under stress, what ones they could never use. All of a sudden the paralysing infinity of choices an actor is face with becomes a comprehensible landscape.

Don't solve the problem. See what I said about problems and failure, above. This is one of the indispensable fundamentals of acting, both within a character context, and in developing a character. If you're in the shit, stay in the shit. Happily ever after is for bad musicals.

Sometimes, one answer to the question "What do I do about it?" is **Nothing**.

Do you, as a person, always act when you need to? No, clearly. So ask yourself whether your character *doesn't act* at a particular moment. Why is she silent during a stretch of text? Why does she not act when another character might be provoked to action? This is fertile ground for determining the *mystery* of a character.

An example. Most of us would like to be assertive, straightforward people, the kind who speak up for what they believe in and won't let themselves be pushed around. Even those of us who are like that much of the time have moments when we are not. What prevents us, in those moments, from being the kind of people we want to be? It's a mystery, but not a mystery with no answer; rather, it's a mystery with *several* answers. The actor doesn't have to solve the mystery; she merely has to play it, and to be able to defend her choice. Keep it to yourself. As audience members, we'll ask why. You don't need to tell us. Leave that to us.

Here are the first few fundamental questions an actor asks when building a character. This applies equally to improvisational work, such as devised theatre.

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Who am I?

What do I want?

What are my problems?

What do I do about them?

If you can create several ideas for each of these questions you have the beginning of an authentic character.

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Day One Training

Introduction to BoxWhatBox

Neutralisation, Demechanisation, Rhythm, Non-Linear Creation

Explanation of these and how they relate to building a character.

Neutralisation and the 7 Checkpoints of Alignment; Breath

The Ready or “SATS” position: pre-expressivity

Introduction to Walks

(Demechanisation)

The principles of Actor Walking: tasks (generation, breath, filling space, purpose)

Walks 1 Claps

Walks 2 Rhythms

Walks 3 Fainting

Walks 4 1st Character walk: a walk that is not yours. Observations on what it produces.

Create a purpose or a feeling based on the sensation of walking in this way.

Ball Basic

(Demechanisation)

Beat work JO-HA-KYU

Note: you won't always be able to clearly create or identify a JHK for a beat; but you should always try. Failing will at least let you know what you don't know about a beat; possible, that it isn't actually a beat, for instance.

Exercise 1 Energy Fling 1

Exercise 2 Exit Dance

Exercise 3 The Handshake

Études JO

From the SATS:

- Waiting to go onstage to receive an award
- Waiting for your name to be called as the winner of a contest
- Waiting in a waiting room for an interview for a job
- Waiting in an waiting room for news on a sick friend
- Waiting on a street corner for a meeting with an ex-partner
- Waiting at the airport for someone important who you don't know
- Waiting for a drunken speech to end at a wedding

BREAK

Non-Verbal Video Example 1**Rhythm Work**

Characters always have names. They have a way they like to say or hear their name said. The name means something to them; about who they are.

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Characters are always from somewhere. When that place is said associations occur.

Rhythm 1	Choral Round: Names
Rhythm 1a	Choral Round: one defining quality
Rhythm 2	Choral Round: Places
Rhythm 2a	Choral Round: Places by description not name
Rhythm 3	Word Orchestra: Things I like in a phrase or word

Discussion: the *sound of things*. There is factual information and then there is tonal information.

Homework Preparing For Targeted Improvisation: Character/Context/Objective

- Read Lecture 2

Project: Mr. Frond's Greenhouse of Hidden Dreams

- Pick a plant, or a flower, or piece of flora/fauna. Take the name of the plant/flower/fauna (or some abbreviation, or equivalent). This is your character name.
- You're a plant. You can take some of the characteristics of that plant, if you know any, or add some of your own, in beginning to build a character.
- At night you are returned to Mr. Frond's Dream Greenhouse. But during the day you turn into a human. As a plant you had a dream of what human being would be like. One dream. Maybe it was kind of vague, maybe it was crystal clear. But you had a dream.
- Now choose a job. One that doesn't fulfill your dream, or meet your expectations of being a human. At all. In fact, it's the *opposite* of your dream.
- And every night, when you return to the Greenhouse, you gather with the other plants. And you always have a question for Mr. Frond, who gives you all the artificial sunlight, and the sprinklings of warm rain-like water, that you require. Your question has something to do with the disconnection between your dream and the reality of being a human. Or just the reality of being a human. As a plant-like person, you observe humans doing what they do. And everything they do makes you ask questions.

Tasks:

- Pick a flower/plant/fauna
- Take a version of its name as your name
- Create a technicolour dream of what it's like to be human. An overwhelming desire.
- Put your human self in a job that does not achieve that dream

Why a plant? Animals are too easy to anthropomorphise, to copy. Plants are mysterious, they don't have a lot of things you can copy; you have to *paint on them*. This Étude can thus be transferred to a devised or community setting where talking about hopes and dreams, and the obstacles to them, is an important topic.

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UNHEARD LECTURE 2: THE VOCABULARIES OF CHARACTER

What are the ways in which we communicate who we are to others, knowingly and unknowingly? How do we order these means of expression so we can make use of them? Let's call them **vocabularies**. If expression is a language—a universal language, understood from one culture to another—then what the actor uses to communicate to an audience is a vocabulary. Every language is made up of different vocabularies. A verbal language, like English, is made up of subset vocabularies that make use of English in different ways: dialects, class-based speech, professional terms. A language of Expression also makes use of four different vocabularies: two are Vocal (Verbal/Non-Verbal), and two are Physical (Active/Gestural).

Most actors, even the very good ones, rely on one or two of these at most. The vast majority of actors rely on text for their communication, and thus on their verbal vocabularies. Really terrible actors use only their own voice; they don't even utilise the rich variations of their own language. Actors who have advanced past this amateur level utilise their bodies and voices effectively to convey meaning to the words they speak. At this level an actor can be effective, especially in a realistic context, within their own culture. If she wishes to increase her ability, to the point where any audience from any culture would (more or less) understand everything she is communicating, the actor needs to employ two more vocabularies, the Vocal (Non-Verbal) and the Physical (Gestural).

When I say that an actor utilising all four vocabularies communicates universally, I'm not suggesting that everything is understood. An actor playing Hamlet in Japanese Noh style, speaking Japanese, will not have his text understood by someone who doesn't speak Japanese. What I'm suggesting is ***the text level of understanding isn't always the primary level of meaning***. This is heresy to most English-speaking actors, and to many actors I've worked with all over the world. For them, it's all about the words, the greatness of the playwright's gift. And there is much to be said for mining the nuance and subtlety of language in playing.

An actor should always go as far as they can in developing an understanding of the playwright's text—where there is a text to be mined; many forms of theatre don't have a text, and an actor who relies on text interpretation for communication falls within the extreme conservative edge of the acting world, and is limited to their own culture (and generally only a subset of that culture, the bourgeois). But verbal language is *never* going to be understood by an audience speaking another language (unless there are surtitles). What that audience will understand is the music of the voice employed by the actor, how it rises and falls, quickens and slows, punctuates presence with silence, expands and contracts sound. This is a *universal* language. Everyone possesses, and understands, the vocal music of seduction, of pleading, of scolding. Everyone understands when a young child is taunting another, not by the words, but by the use of the voice, its *non-verbal* qualities. These are employed both in the speaking of words and outside of the use of words altogether (more on that later). In fact, if it's done well, words become secondary to the purpose. On top of this supra-linguistic level, the intercultural actor makes expressive use of her body.

Great actors can work interculturally because what they do is communicable to any audience at every moment, through one vocabulary or another. If an actor chooses to work in social justice or devised theatre, the ability to access the four expressive vocabularies is particularly important, because text may be improvised or secondary in such forms of theatre. If an actor wants her

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work to be invited to an international festival, the acting style needs to incorporate more than her home language. If an actor wants to transcend the comfortable biases and received knowledge of her own culture, whether she's performing at home or in a foreign environment, if she wants to be an artist who optimises the tools available to her rather than relying on what everyone else is doing, she will become adept at combining and alternating all four vocabularies in performance.

Let's apply this to character, because that's our focus. All people, whether they exist in a play or in the actual world, are possessed of a series of qualities. We're agreed on that. All people, similarly, are possessed versions of all four vocabularies. Like book copies, often these are only partial or incomplete. In the actual world, many people, through physical limitation, or more often sheer force of habit, come to rely (as actors do) on one or two of these vocabularies. Each person possesses the tools; each person has the ability to communicate and understand in all four vocabularies. Most people do not. That's fine, for the average Joe. For an actor, an artist, it's unforgivable laziness.

And yet, in everyday life—that life we claim to portray realistically when we imitate speech rhythms, as David Mamet does—in everyday life you'll see all four vocabularies in play, often without any use of verbal expression at all. And yet one seldom, if ever, sees this form of realism in all but the most accomplished acting. Why? Poor teaching, for one. Acting instructors have much to answer for. But the real reason is lack of intellect, lack of curiosity, lack of real research into how people communicate. To say that people communicate primarily by speaking words is factually wrong. So why do we insist that this is the basis of so-called realistic acting?

We understand the first vocabulary, Vocal (Verbal), the best, although that also deserves some scepticism; a lot of actors don't know where most words come from and how they've come to mean what they mean. So their grasp of what a word actually means can be shaky. But let's move on from that, because this is, for most actors, the comfort zone of expression.

The second most recognisable category of expression is *physical*. Most actors do what I call Samuel French acting: an amateur form wherein they move where the script tells them to move, when it tells them to move. Or they do so at the behest of a director. These are basics; a top actor adds to these with her use of a physical vocabulary. There are two sub-sets of the Physical vocabulary: Active and Gestural. Active Physical expression means, for example, leaning in at a café table when you're speaking to someone, to persuade or to seduce them; that's not something most playwrights will take the time to write in the stage directions for you (and they shouldn't, because they're not directors or actors). It might mean leaning away from someone, or taking what seems like an involuntary step back, when another character hits you with an emotional attack. As audience members, we instinctively understand such movement and what it means. There might not be one precise meaning; and that's fine, because theatre should be about more than one meaning most of the time, otherwise it's prescriptive, and therefore dead as art.

The other form of physical expression is gestural, a movement, usually of the extremities (hands and feet, the face, head and neck), voluntary or not, which connotes meaning. Shaking hands is a gesture with a meaning (which changes). Nodding your head is a gesture. Raising both hands to say there's nothing you can do is a gesture. Doing nothing when something is expected is a gesture. Now think of all the performances you've seen where the actors earnestly delivered the

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text in their most realistic manner, moved towards and away from each other when necessary, but never indicated, through gestures, any individuality of character. Maybe they slapped their thighs a lot, to tell you they felt emotion. Nothing *realistic* about that.

The final vocabulary we're going to discuss here is a subset of Vocal expression. Non-Verbal expression is amongst the most fascinating ways humans communicate with each other. It's also possibly the most universal form; it's astonishing how different non-verbal sounds are comprehensible from one culture to another. We use non-verbals as punctuation, such as "er" or "um", to give us time to think, or others time to understand. We use non-verbals as qualification, as when we say "Uh?" with a jabbing finger after making our point. Sometimes we use non-verbals as subtle indicators that we're uncomfortable, as when we're not telling the truth; clearing the throat repeatedly, for instance. We use them normatively, to indicate approval and disapproval in ways we feel are more appropriate than actually speaking, as when we cough to suggest that someone should get out of our way, or use the "tsk" sound to indicate that someone has sinned against convention by stepping in front of you in a line-up.

Non-verbals are not always units spaced in between words. They can be pieces of music, short or long. Think of women keening over a dead body in Palestine or at a wake in Ireland. No words are necessary; but there is meaning in abundance. Think of a worker, happily humming to himself, or the shrieks accompanying the love-making of the couple in the hotel room next to yours. Would you really want to replace that in performance with words?

The thing about non-verbals is that they define us every bit as distinctly as our physical mannerisms, and far more than our use of speech, which tends to fall within broader social categories. So, in developing a character, an actor benefits from building her character's non-verbal vocabulary, to help individualise that person and bring her to life.

I'm not saying that an actor can always use non-verbals as units, to insert them and slow down the text. Theatre is not real life, and we accept that characters form thoughts and express them more quickly and succinctly than in actual life. But when they are chosen carefully such non-verbals can add layers of meaning to text and to the understanding of a character, indicating ambivalence where the text seems to indicate certainty, indicating the impatient mind of a tyrant where the text is full of mild expressions. And the music of speech, if the actor is brave enough to stray away from literal, mono-tonal readings, can be one of the most powerful forms of communication humans employ.

Actors need to break their habits of expression and become comfortable with the full range of expressive vocabularies, for the simple reason that **a character is not you**. Let me say that again: **a character is not you. Nor is it based on you**. As an audience member, I don't want to know you, or see your experiences on stage; you're not interesting enough, certainly not as interesting as the character formed over time by the playwright or through improvisation by an ensemble. What an ego some actors have, to think that the vocabularies they themselves use must be the ones employed by their characters!

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Day 2 Training

Neutral Breath and Checkpoints/Roll-downs/Rise and Fall (tempos)

Walks Basic tasks
Sonic warm-up: w/ Non-Verbal Sounds w/ Gesturals
P2P + P2P with intention (active/gestural/non-verbal vocabulary)

Ball Lines + Basic

Exercise	Museum of Gesture	Groups of four, by category:
	What kinds of gestures can we list?	
	ASSENT/DISSENT	also belonging/not belonging, (lack of) understanding
	ATTACK/RETREAT	also want/rejection
	ACQUISITION/LOSS	also victory/defeat
	OPEN/CLOSED	also welcoming/defending
	TRUTH/FALSEHOOD	all gestures but with this filter: deception
	+/- JUDGMENT	also commentary/absence

Corrections, discussion, re-do

Exercise (HA + 1 Active or gesture)
The Handshake/The Embrace/The Good-Bye/The Attack

Exercise (HA + 1 NV + Active)
The Handshake/The Embrace/The Good-Bye/The Attack

BREAK

Non-Verbal Video Example 2

Rhythm	Word Orchestra: Verbals w/NV Music	Group
	Word Orchestra: Non-Verbals	Group
	Physical Orchestra: Gesturals	Group + Lines Facing
	Physical Orchestra: Actives	Group + Lines Facing

Études Non-Verbals, Gesturals, Actives

Étude 1 Mr Frond's Greenhouse

Étude 2 Plant Dreams

Étude 3 Daily Life

Homework:

- Read Lecture 3.
- Come up with 2 gesturals, and 2 non-verbals for your character. Place your character in a location, with an objective, where s/he uses these non-verbals/gesturals.
- Choose a primary archetype for your plant character, and a secondary one.

UNHEARD LECTURE 3:

CHARACTER ARCHETYPES & DESIRES

We're in Greece, so I'm going to reference Plato. Plato talked about the essence of a thing, its original form as created by the Creator. So, a table, for instance, has an infinity of forms in actuality, but all of them come from one idea, the idea of a table. Every table, therefore, if it can be recognised as a table, has a quality derived from that original idea. It has "table-ness".

So with humans. We are all distinct; that's a given. And I've already said that the facts of a person's background—father, mother, daughter, son—are not as important as their relationships to other people and other things. But all people—and all characters—fall into broad categories which help the actor to define, at the outset of her research, some of the rules of behaviour which attach to his or her character. Because while people may be capable of any and all things, each person is circumscribed by a basic outlook on life, which includes rules they abide by and rules they don't. All people, in other words, fall into categories of *archetypes*.

There are two important points to make about archetypes. The first is that they are a starting point for the actor, not a finishing point. The second is that all people—and thus all characters—combine more than one archetype in their personalities. The war between conflicting views of the world within a person—between the desires of their archetypal selves—results in the dramatic action we crave on stage.

An archetype is a starting point in actor research because once an actor has determined which archetypes a character falls into, the actor then sets about finding the ways in which the character breaks out of predictable archetypal behaviour. That's why the next point is crucial:

Archetypes are not stereotypes.

I've watched devised theatre in Africa where the actors created a play for a community on a subject that is important and topical. Then they killed their impact by creating stereotypical characters. This is because (if they're honest) many devised theatre practitioners are more interested in conveying an answer than a question, both in terms of characterisation and in terms of the topic. Thus: safe sex is 100% good and those who refuse to practice it are 100% bad. Characters in such a drama will wear victim hats and perpetrator hats. The audience will know exactly how these characters are going to behave. These are stereotypes. They limit the scope and power of a play and a performance.

Stereotypes can be satisfying, in the way American sit-coms or bad horror novels can be satisfying, the way cotton candy can, at first, seem satisfying. But they fail as drama, in the long run, because they leave people hungry—actors and audience both. Plays that tell the audience how to behave always fail to persuade. Characters who fail to exist beyond a stereotype fail to persuade, as well.

Where a stereotype is always predictable—think of the moustache-twirling villain in the old westerns—an archetypal character is *recognisable*, but not always *predictable*. The difference is critical. We recognise, through the shape of the archetype, that this is a human being like us, not just in form but in outlook; so we are ready to follow that character. An archetypal character, unlike a stereotype, is not always predictable. This is not only a further indication of their

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authentic humanity—after all, whose behaviour can we truthfully predict?—but a dramatic tool which intrigues us. We are interested in people we can't entirely figure out in life; we are less interested by people we think we know inside out. That's human nature. Even with people you love, this is true.

So once you've determined one or two archetypal categories for your character, the actor begins to see how they can break the predicted behavioural patterns of such a character. Amateur actors never break these rules; that's one indicator of the untalented (possibly skilled, but untalented) actor. If her character is a mother, for instance, you get all the recognisable hallmarks of a stereotypical mother—the maternal quality, the clucking over the children of others, the need to care for others, etc. But mothers are also women; they are lovers, daughters, workers, warriors. In **Medea**, the actor faces a situation no stereotypical mother would admit could exist: the option of killing one's children. Surely this is dramatic license of the most outrageous sort. What mother would kill her children?

Yet this hasn't only happened in Greek drama; it has happened recently, in North America. And the actor makes a mistake if she attributes such acts to one-off medical causalities, such as post-partum depression. That may—possibly—be the case in daily life, but on stage a character can't be excused for a heinous act by saying "oh, she wasn't feeling herself that day". That's *solving the problem*.

An actor playing Medea as a motherly stereotype misses the fact that she embodies another archetype, *the wronged lover*, and that this archetype takes over Medea's actions, sublimating her mother-"ness". The balance of a great performance of Medea teeters between persuading the audience that Medea was, in fact, a loving, even doting mother—before she was wronged so egregiously by Jason—and a wronged lover who believes any level of revenge is justified. The actor in such a situation must have thought deeply about both archetypes, and looks for moments where one takes precedence over the other.

So how do I find the archetypes of my character?

There are sources, like the work of Joseph Campbell, that can be helpful. But it isn't necessary to do book research on archetypes. Like the four expressive vocabularies, this knowledge exists within us; we instinctively recognise archetypes and archetypal behaviour. An archetype, after all, is nothing more than **a primal outlook on life**. With that outlook comes **primal desires**. I don't mean sex, though that part's of how some primal desires are achieved. I'll list a few—not all, by any means—archetypes here, and then we'll talk about primal desires. These are crucial, because a character never fully loses sight of these, even when they appear to be working directly contrary to achieving them: Stanislavski called such desires the *Super-Objective*.

I'll add a few recognisable dramatic characters to fill out the examples.

Remember: Every character you play inhabits more than one archetype; and this is where much of their internal conflict comes from, as well as their unpredictable, seemingly contradictory external actions.

Remember: Every character you play has one principal Super-Objective. They never lose this objective, but they almost always prevent themselves from achieving it.

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Archetypes

- The Mother (also office mama, friend who organises, etc.)
Mother Courage, Cersei (GoT), Catelyn Stark (GoT). **Not** *Chryemnestra (DH)*.
- The Father (also can be authority figure, tribal leader, president, etc.)
Lear, Agamemnon, Ned Stark (GoT). **Not** *Jaime Lannister (GoT)*.
- The Son (also the heir apparent, employee being mentored, etc.)
Andrei (Three Sisters), Orestes (Atreides), Hamlet, Tyrion Lannister (GoT). (**Not** *Oedipus*)
- The Daughter (also younger person being mentored, etc.)
Cordelia (Lear), Elektra, Iphigenia, Masha (Three Sisters). **Not** *Regan/Goneril (Lear)*,
Not *Ranevskaya (Cherry Orchard)*
- The Bonded (Sister, Brother, also any unbreakable bond similar to family)
Antigone, Orestes/Elektra, Olga/Irina/Masha (Three Sisters), Jaime/Cersei (GoT)
- The Leader (not just career-related; can be patriarch/matriarch, etc.)
Lear, Oedipus, Agamemnon, Tywin Lannister (GoT), Julius Caesar. **Not** *Richard II*.
- The Servant (also subordinate, office drone, micro-serf, etc.) Defined by duty.
All *Commedia dell' Arte* zannis, *Anfisa (Three Sisters), Nurse (R&J), Old Guy left behind in Cherry Orchard, Podric Payne (GoT)*
- The Quester (also student, seekers, wanderers, scholars (religious and otherwise))
Don Quixote, Faust, Hamlet, Brienne of Tarth (GoT)
- The Lover Any character defined by a need for love, and a belief in love as transcendent.
This can sometimes be considered a subset of The Quester.
(Don Juan, Casanova, Carmen, Benedick (Much Ado About Nothing), Romeo, Juliet).
- The Warrior (any character defined by the need to fight to survive).
Coriolanus, Achilles, The Hound (GoT), Arya Stark (GoT)
- The Dealer Any character who specialises in transactions. Also manipulator, could also be called The Insider. Focused on survival.
Hedda Gabler, Mephistopheles (Faust), Lord Varys (GoT), Littlefinger (GoT), Falstaff
- The Outsider Any character defined by their existence at the margins of the world they inhabit.
Medea, Oedipus (in Oedipus at Colonus), Odysseus, Lopakhin (Cherry Orchard), Richard III, Cassandra.
- The Arbiter Defined by the need to make judgments and resolve disputes, a need for rules or order. Most often a character who carries some authority.
Soothsayer (Oedipus). Judge Brack (Hedda Gabler) The Eumenides, Antigone.

Unheard Lecture 1

Here are the most fundamental desires (Super Objectives) attached to archetypal characters:

APPROVAL
RESPECT
LOVE
BELONGING
SURVIVAL

It's useful to compare some of these characters to other characters from the same work who appear to share the same archetype. In *GoT*, for instance, Ned Stark is a leader, one who is loved for his honesty and sense of justice. And yet to audiences he seems a little less leader-like than Tywin Lannister, who possesses more Leader-“ness”. Tywin *likes* being a leader, he defines himself through it. Ned Stark leads because he has to. He recognises its value, but it doesn't define him; he's a Father first.

Similarly Cersei is a mother, and a fierce one. But she doesn't embody mother-“ness” in the way that Catelyn Stark does. Catelyn lives for her children; motherhood defines her (and kills her). Cersei's mother-“ness” competes with equally strong impulses of Sibling and Lover, and even more conflicting, with the same object, her brother Jaime. This explains why a character who acts so extremely remains credible to us—we understand that on a primal level she is being torn apart by differing definitions of herself.

You can also see the possibilities for great character choices when a character tries to assume, or is forced to assume, an archetype they don't fit. Ranevskaya in the *Cherry Orchard* is really not a mother, but that's part of what is expected of her in her society, so she adheres to the most basic elements of it—have a child, and raise her, more or less.

Let's look at a play like *Antigone*. Antigone is a daughter (and a niece, which is a subset of Daughter). She is, more importantly, a Bonded. A great deal of the conflict in the play arises from her bond as a sibling to Ismene, her conventional and timid sister, and to her dead brothers, one of whom has been left to rot in the desert by her uncle. But above all Antigone is an Arbiter. To play Antigone effectively the actor must understand that to Antigone, the conflict is about *the natural order of things*. She disobeys her state and her family (in the person of Creon) because she believes he has broken the sacred, primal rules of civilisation; respect for the dead.

And what about characters who don't fit into the stereotypes created within their societies? Hedda Gabler fails to conform on just about every level to what's expected of a woman in Victorian society: not a Mother, certainly not a Servant, and abandoned as a Daughter (this last one is crucial, and often overlooked by actors). A character who doesn't fit into his or her society is a character at war, in every moment, with herself and others. That means she's in danger, which means *survival* is her *raison d'être*. She's a Dealer. That's fun to play.

Unheard Lecture 1

Day Three Training

Neutral Breath and Checkpoints
Roll-downs

Energy Fling 2

Walks Elephants/Camels/Attack Ducks
Axels/skipping/airplane spins
Verbal Sonic warm-up: YES NO MAYBE WHY
Fricatives: f/v th/th Plosives: b/d/p Labials: m/
Glottals: g/k/ng Tongue Tip: l/n/t/
Vowels

Exercise Oida Lunges

Exercise Back2Back

Exercise See-Saw

Instruction Throws

Étude The Dance of Desire 12 players

Try it with a configuration of five:

B C

D A + X

A throws X to B. X throws B to C. B throws C to D. C throws D into pile in centre.

Add new X. X throws A to B. A throws B to C. B throws C to D. C throws D into pile in centre.

Add new X. X throws A to B. A throws B to C. B throws C to D. C throws D into pile in centre.

Add new X. X throws A to B. A throws B to C. B throws C to D. C throws D into pile in centre.

Add new X. X throws A to B. A throws B to C. B throws C to D. C throws D into pile in centre.

Add new X. X throws A to B. A throws B to C. B throws C to D. C throws D into pile in centre.

Add new X. X throws A to B. A throws B to C. B throws C to D. C throws D into pile in centre.

Add new X. X throws A to B. A throws B to C. B throws C to D. C throws D into pile in centre.

BREAK

Unheard Lecture 1

Non-Verbal Example 3: Timothy Spall in *Mr. Turner*

Ball Lines (crossing)

Ball Bounce

Basic

Études **KYU + Vocal (NV), Physical (Gestural)**

Étude 1 The Plant Scenes

Each actor performs the short scene where their plant-as-human comes to life, inhabits a specific location, and performs a specific task with an objective, demonstrating 2 gesturals and 2 non-verbals, and one or both of their chosen archetypes. Each scene should have at least one *aftermath* moment, requiring a kyu, either at the beginning or the end of the scene.

Homework Choose a Super-Objective for your character, and tie it to that hopeful/hopeless dream you invented for your character. Come in prepared to be interviewed as your character in The Plant Interviews or to work in a context where that Super-Objective is tested in Planting the Plant.

Unheard Lecture 1

Day 4 Training

Neutral + Breath w/ partners/Roll-downs

Walks Sumos/Russians/Sillies
Sand/Water/Moon
Beats 4/6/8
Sonics legato/staccato/jumps

Game Kitty Wants a Corner
Game Cage Fight Use of NVs?

Exercise Production Line External/Internal

Categories of Non-Verbals: (include a situation, do it in character) (direct @ self/others)
COMMENTARY/ COMMENTARY ABSENCE PLEADING/DEMANDING
SATISFACTION/DISSATISFACTION SELECTING/DISMISSING
COMMITMENT/NON-COMMITMENT BUYING TIME/OUT OF TIME
COMPLAINING/CELEBRATING FRUSTRATION/ACCEPTANCE

BREAK

Rhythm Orchestra
I WANT HA HA HA HA (L. Anderson) YOU HAVE THIS

Étude 1 The Plant Interviews
Begin w/ a plant position and metamorphosis
Answer questions from audience
Demonstrate vocabularies of Vocal (V), (NV)/Physical (Active/Gestural)

Étude 2 Planting the Plant
Characters are placed in a random situation with other characters and asked to interact in line with their Super-Objective

Homework "I, Plant" The Plant Monologues
You have done something that has caused indescribable damage.

You will be placed in a glass compartment with a one-way window where you will be asked to describe yourself and justify your actions, on camera.

It is not necessary to memorise any text. What you must be comfortable with are

- Your super-objective
- Your primary archetype and conflicting archetype
- Your Non-verbal vocabulary
- Your gestural vocabulary

Unheard Lecture 1

Day 5 Training

Neutral + Breath w/partners/Roll-down/Rise & Fall
Energy Flings 1 & 2

Neutralisation
Demechanisation

Walks Tasks
In Character—Moods/JOs and KYUs
Contact
Clumping

Exercise Ball Basic

Neutralisation, Rhythm

BREAK

Exercise Horse and Kniget
V. 1
V. 2

Étude 1 I, Plant

Each plant is interviewed by Mr. Frond about what they have done
A possible second variation/interview (usually involving an opposite)

Étude 2 Whattayagonnado?

2 plants, talking about the indescribable damage both of them have caused (separately).
Plants are friends/strangers
Familiar/unfamiliar space
Same language/different language
Competing/sharing
Using NVs, Gesturals, Actives as well as text

Étude 3 Existence is Futile

Each character stands as a plant, thinking about, even commenting on, their lives as humans.
Silence and absence of movement is also permitted; lack of emotional life is not.

Homework Go over everything you did in character today. Edit your NVs, your Vocal-Verbals, your Actives and Gesturals. Look at your Archetype and Super-Objective and edit what you can/can't do in the situations you faced today, and change wherever you think it will bring more dimension to our understanding of the character.

Day 6 Training

Neutral + Breath + Roll-down

Walks Sonic
Character walks/add Gesturals/add NVs/add words w/NV music

Ball Basic

Étude 1 Mr Frond's Greenhouse of Hidden Dreams

A series of spotlights on individual plants, their relationships with each other and with Mr. Frond, the experience of changing into a human during the day, their hopes and dreams and what they've observed from human life.