

Michael chekhov research paper examples

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Part One: Biography

Theatre has been in existence for decades passing on concrete messages to the audience for purposes of entertainment. Behind the scene, there exist significant art directors who make this possible. One such individual is Mikhael Aleksandrovich Chekhov, a Russian American actor, director, author and theatre practitioner majoring on stage acting. Michael Chekhov was born on 29th August 1891. His father was called Alexander Chekhov while his mother was called Natlya Golden. Michael Chekhov had two wives namely Olga Chekhov and Ksenya Ziller. Olga Chekhov who was also an actor was the first wife to Michael Chekhov. He later married Ksenya Ziller in 1918 after their divorce. Michael Chekhov lived in various countries including Russia and The United States of America. He had a unique acting technique that was admired all over the world. This is attested to the fact that numerous actors adopted it in their own work as they referred to it as brilliant work. The notable actors who used Chekhov's work include Yul Brynner, Clint Eastwood, and Marylyn Monroe. Moreover, other actors appreciated and recognized Michael Chekhov's work and contribution towards the film industry as revolutionary. This is because Michael Chekhov was a scene stealer who made use of any opportunity to do and show his best ability. Indeed, Michael is a legend to many people for the hard work and determination he portrayed throughout his career path. Well, Michael Chekhov excelled and worked hard due to both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. This began way back when he was still a kid. Michael used to construct sketches which were elaborate enough to present particular information. His teachers were a significant source of motivation since they

realized his potential early enough. They always encouraged and supported him through his course. It was the motivation from his local teachers that saw Michael Chekhov enrol at the Alexei Suvorin School. This was a dramatic school through which students were taught various aspects of drama, film and theatre studies.

Michael Chekhov later on attended First Studio of the Moscow Art Theatre under the tutelage of Konstantin Stanislavski. Konstantin was impressed by Michael's performance and described him as one of his brightest students. While at School Michael Chekhov acted, directed and studied Stanislavski's 'system' that focused on emotional memory. Nonetheless, Michael Chekhov later criticized Stanislavski technique, stating that it led too readily to a naturalistic style of performance. This is because his understanding of the creative nature of human beings and the practical needs of the actor led him to find tools for the director. His understanding comprised of imagination and psychophysical techniques that respected the actors as free creative artist.

Part Two: Central Ideas

Michael Chekhov's central ideas and contributions towards theatre are numerous. This section of the paper seeks to discuss various aspects of theatre that existed before Michael Chekhov and the manner in which he wanted to change them. Secondly, this section will address the innovations that Michael Chekhov proposed to actor training and the theatre at large. Before Michael Chekhov, theatre aspects revolved around the use of one's emotional and personal memoirs. This was also Stanislavsky, Michael Chekhov's teacher's view and take towards acting. Stanislavsky believed that the use of personal memoirs was the best approach towards acting.

Nonetheless, Michael Chekhov strongly believed that imagination was the key to successful representation and exclusive acting. As such, Michael Chekhov throughout his career life worked hard towards changing the long held theatre approach from the use of emotional memoirs towards the use of imagination and psycho-physical approach. This is because he believed that an actor could limit his or her abilities in case they made use of emotional memoirs. Michael Chekhov felt that theatre should be approached in a psycho-physical manner. Psycho-physical approach towards theatre includes a myriad of factors brought together. An actor who decides to apply a psycho-physical approach includes feelings and significant imagination that brings out a clear and true picture of the message he or she wanted to pass across to the audience. Chekhov believed that theatre should be approached with entire truth. According to Michael, an actor is supposed to express his or her true feelings as well as the current occurrences through his or her works. Nonetheless, his proposition and approach towards theatre and artistic work made him receive a lot of critics, more so from the government. In fact, his approach made him to flee to The United States of America from Russia after he met too much critics from the government which did not want artists to express the true occurrences at that time. Michael Chekhov was uniqueness towards the question of training actors was seen from the ways in which he delivered his teachings to his students. Firstly, Michael Chekhov recorded his lectures on tapes which could be accessed by students from various parts of the world. The tapes have been since edited over time to fit the needs of the current students. Secondly, Michael Chekhov trained actors through various publications that were enriched with literature on theatre and film at large.

Additionally, Michael Chekhov is considered as a very unique person in training actors since he advocated for imagination and truth throughout his life. It was his deep feeling that an actor should base his work more on imagination than emotional memoirs. While at The United States of America, Michael Chekhov left many of his students with the feeling that his contribution towards theatre, film and actor training was more of a calling than a career. This is because he worked diligently towards ensuring a better industry than what existed before his time.

Part Three: Legacies

In this section, this paper seeks to discuss about the legacies of Michael Chekhov. This section will also discuss whether Michael Chekhov`s innovations still affect the world. Michael Chekhov`s significant legacy is publications dubbed Russian Life and Encounters and O tekhnike aktyora. Through, O tekhnike aktyora, Michael Chekhov was able to present both his beliefs and ideas towards theatre and the film industry at large. The innovations made by Michael Chekhov can be summed up as the emphasis on intuition, psycho-physical and imaginal approach towards theatre. His innovations are still relevant up to date since for any individual to succeed in the film industry, one has to ensure he or she is imaginative enough. It is through imagination and expressing one true self that an actor can present his or her message clearly to his or her audience. As such, it can be argued that the world is indeed still affected by Michael Chekhov`s innovations. Moreover, his publication, To the Actor, is still referred to by many people who seek to gain immense knowledge on theatre and artistic work.

Works Cited

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