

Drama as notes – katie mitchell essay



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Our Chosen Practitioner, Katie Mitchell has taken some inspiration from Stanislavski's System of Realism. She believes in researching and developing characters as deeply as possible as to portray a very realistic character so the audience can feel involved and feel part of the character life. To do this Katie Mitchell suggests making a list of actions, events and questions of what happens before the extract whether specified in the script or improvised by the nature of the play and characters, she suggests focusing on the last 24 hours so the actor can understand how the character is feeling in the scene. She emphasizes creating a back history as another way for the actor to understand and feel involved with the character, this focuses more generally on the characters entire life rather than specifically on the recent history, if the fact so the character are not specified in the script or playwrights notes, the actors are encouraged to improvise the back history. Building a character biography is one of the most important techniques used by Katie Mitchell, to give the actors an in depth approach to performing a character. Stanislavski uses a technique of given circumstances, a given place and time in order to perform the scene knowing the characters surroundings. Katie Mitchell, although taking inspiration from this, uses her own immediate circumstances, giving the actors a chance to discuss what the characters have done between scenes and between time gaps in the script.

Katie Mitchell's aim is for actors to fully immerse themselves into a character, imagining the view of the rooms in a 360° rather than just seeing set and drawing on past experiences to trigger emotions, although she believes it is not as important for the actor to feel the emotion, more that the audience feels it. And is quoted as saying " the audience should be flies on

the wall” and feels the impression left on the audience is most important part of a production. The actors are encouraged to do extensive research into the character and playwright; they should be discovering what the character says about themselves and others and integrating this into their characters framework. Investigation into the playwright can reveal information that may have influenced the script or character or that may change the actors view on parts of the play or how they react to the characters. Katie Mitchell believes in using improvisation or a mixture of learned and improvised lines as this can give an actor a better scene of the scene or on character relationships, she also believes when improvising to focus on physicality as this can give the actor dramatic ideas and understanding on the specific extract. Although we haven’t studied Katie Mitchell before or seen any of her previous productions, we have studied Stanislavski in depth and from who Katie Mitchell is influenced.

Like Stanislavski, Katie Mitchell wants the audience to feel as involved as possible and have actors fully immersed in the characters lives and emotions to be believable and convey true emotions to the audience. Katie Mitchell has previously directed *The House of Bernada Alba* by Lorca and is influenced by realism and believable characters so is perfect to influence our production of *Yerma*. Our long rehearsal period gave us lots of time to introduce Katie Mitchell’s ideas of rehearsal being one of her main focuses.