

RESISTANCE & SHAPES IN SPACE
THE ARREST & SCULPTURE
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It's called an Exercise in Sculpture, and it has several elements to it, one of which is the acquaintance with a term that we use in mime continually.

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RESISTANCE

And the term is Resistance, and what that means, the ability to push against something. And again, realizing – and here's the real difference – tension. If my arm is tense and I move my arm in Tension, that's not the same as moving it in Resistance. Does that make sense? This is tense (Bud makes fist and arm tight) and I can move it from here to here while it's tense, but it's not the same as a pressure against the arm, to move in resistance against something. And Resistance is the desirable, and Tension is the one we want to dismiss.

We want to create an **opposition**. Realize before we get into this that opposition, conflict between one pressure and another pressure, is at the heart and soul of drama. **You cannot have anything dramatic unless you have conflict.** Conflict means something in conflict against something else, not to the point of stasis, but in a continual, moving pressure back and forth. And that's Resistance. And so this (Bud makes sweeping move across) becomes a dramatic gesture, but then this is not (Bud's hand in a fist) because there's no opposition. There's only tension, internal tension, within the gesture.

So what you want is to be able to create the varying degrees of Resistance, which give you the varying degrees of conflict in the motion. Remember, this morning we were talking about gravity. Standing in this position has inherently in it drama, because if you acquaint yourself, or reacquaint yourself, **with gravity**, that means that this position requires a constant force against another force which is wanting to pull you down. And if you hold that sensibility in your Torso and in your body, then the position becomes very dramatic. If you don't, if you just stand up straight and forget about gravity, then you'll lose an inherent dramatic quality just in the act of standing up straight. Okay?

So this is an exercise that kind of gets to that. Now, just standing with your weight forward on the balls of your feet again, everything relaxed, chest up in that nice smile, up high, the shoulders nice and relaxed. Okay? And just go-- and don't think about it too much.

You're going to imagine that the air around you, it has a consistency, not so heavy that you can't move in it, but heavy enough that in order to make a

movement, you have to support it with the Torso. If it was very light, you'd just move your arm. But it'll need to be supported. So the consistency of the air has a heaviness, somewhere beyond, a real heavy kind of plane that you have to push against. Okay?

So you're going to just start by moving your arm, but you'll have to support it from the Torso. But here's the important thing, that in your mind's eye-- not by looking at it, but in your mind's eye, you're going to **see the shape that you're leaving behind as you move your arm**. You're not trying to create a shape. You're just going to see it. Okay? You'll eventually want to see the difference between the kind of shapes you create in the positions that you're moving your arm or holding your hand. But you're moving against Resistance. And when the shape, the thing that you've left behind in space, becomes too convoluted to hold in your imagination, you just bring your arm down and wipe the slate clean. You can start all over again.

We'll start with one arm. Then we'll add both arms. And then eventually, we'll add the whole body. Okay? And we'll do it fairly rapidly. And it really is an exercise in imagination at first. Okay?

Here we go. You're all by yourself. Don't pay any attention to anybody around you. And when you're ready, you can just start to move your arm abstractly. Don't think about conducting. Just move the arm. Think about the pressure that it creates.

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SHAPES IN SPACE

Now if I come up to you, what I'm going to do is try to push pressure against the movement that you're making so that you reacquaint yourself with the quality of Resistance that you're making here. You just keep pushing against me. That's it. Push so that you sense the pressure that has to come into the Torso in order to - that's it - to make the move. That's it. (Bud is walking around, putting his hand against someone's arm in the air to help them feel the push against his hand).

Imagine it. Make the consistency a little stronger so you have to have a little more impulse from the Torso, that's it, a little more pressure. That's it. That's it. It takes a little more muscle to push. That's it. That's it. That's it. It's a nice thing you can do. You can even do it in pairs sometime, where someone offers the resistance while you just move abstractions. It works really well. You can try that sometimes, too. That's it. That's it. Good. That's it.

You want the Torso making the support for the movement so that all this abstraction ... You can start adding the other arm if you want. Push. Push. Let's push the Torso. Push. That's it. That's it. Shapes in Space. That's it. You can bring your hands down and wipe the slate clean. And then again, start. Good. And push.

See what kind of shape you'll make if your fingers are open and spread, or if your fingers are soft, almost in a classic position, almost in a balletic position. But you have to push against the force of the air with that soft, soft hand. But pushing against, what kind of shape does that make? What shape is left in space if you're fisted, or if your hand cuts like a knife edge, or if your arms make very geometric kinds of shapes or right angles?

There's no right or wrong to this at all. It's just the difference, the difference in the quality of the shapes, the shapes with right angles, triangular shapes, circular shapes, curved shapes, spiral shapes. What do they make if you made both arms spiral against resistance? That's it.

Tighten the resistance a little bit so you really have to work. It's almost a workout. It can be in effect a kind of warm-up. It's almost like an isometric exercise. That's it. Support it with the Torso. Good. You can bring your arm down. Good.

Now as you're starting to move, start to use the Torso. Move the Torso. Move the Torso as you're working. Think of the Torso moving back with you, leaving a shape. And pushing, bending your knees and seeing what that does. You'd never do this when you're conducting. You're just to free yourself up physically of course. See what the shapes are, how your Torso moves forward and backward. And imagine the shapes it makes in space. That's it. That's it. That's it. Good.

Resistance. Good. Good. Now, for a little bit, start to lessen the resistance, but still leaving shapes. And you turn your Torso. That's it. Just let yourself move, but still keep exploring geometric or spiral or circular. Give yourself images to work off of. If you get tired of those geometric figures, make colors. Put some movement in red, some movement in green. What's a soft movement? What's a hard movement? What's a dark movement? What's explosive? What's reverberation? What kind of shapes do those gestures leave in space from them? Then wipe the slate clean and go on.

Tighten resistance. Lessen resistance. Lessen resistance for a while so that you can move very freely, very freely, but still, you're leaving shapes, even though your arms are moving much more rapidly. Your Torso's moving. Your arms are moving. Your legs are moving. But still, you're leaving shapes. And that's shapes in space. Good. And come to rest. And just stand there. Good. Good.

Now take a step forward and leave a Shape in Space. Take a step back, leave a shape in front of you. Scratch your head and leave a Shape in Space. Raise your hand. Shapes in Space. Every move, a little shape in space whenever you do it. Shapes in Space.

Sirkelen Sluttes: Pages: 108-109; Completing the Circle: Pages: 142-144

THE ARREST (FREEZE) & SCULPTURE

Relax. You don't have to stand in a perfect position. Just stand however you want to stand. Just relax. Good. Good. (points to musician) FREEZE. Everybody

else watch. Now look at this as a piece of a sculpture. It's a shape in space. If a sculpture did that, you would go breathless. Look at how beautiful. Go ahead. Take a look (musicians move in and around the person in a Freeze position, laughing). (Bud whispers to musician in Freeze position, saying "You're a sculpture"). Look at that power in that position when he thinks about himself as a sculpture. What does that do? Look at this. It's just beautiful. A sculpture made all these choices. Who is it they ... Freeze (Bud points to another musician) like this. Look at this. (Bud moves and points to another musician). Freeze.

The minute I say "Freeze," they think of themselves as a sculpture. If you thought of yourself as a sculpture, look what happens to you.

Now, who here is happy with the way they look? (laughter) But if you think of yourself as a sculpture, exactly as you are, look what occurs. Look what happens. By any stretch of the imagination, each of these figures is something beautiful to look at because the individual says, "I am a sculpture. I leave a shape in space if I move." Freeze right there. (Bud points to another musician, everyone else continues to move around that person).

If you came upon this in a museum like this, you will just be ... AHHH! It's like a Rodin. **It's like Life**. You want to know what she was looking at. You want to know what she was seeing. You want to know everything about her ... as a sculpture.

What kind of Power did that give you, if you can do that with yourself, if you can just think that with yourself, if you can just think that ... Freeze. You want to see what he's looking at. Come around and take a look (musicians gather around the new sculpture). You want to see what he's looking at. "What the hell is all this about?" (Laughter)

Give me two people. The two of you. Good. A good sculpture. (Two musicians come up on the little stage in the middle of the room, facing each other).

Bud points to one of them and says to him, "You're a sculpture." He points to the other and says, "You're not." Who has the Power? (The musician who is not a sculpture points to the musician who is a sculpture). Bud then points to the musician who was not a sculpture and he becomes the sculpture, while the musician who was a sculpture is not. Who has the Power? (The musician who is not the sculpture points to the musician who is a sculpture). (Bud points to the musician who is a sculpture). You can move now, and he's still a sculpture. You can move and he's still a sculpture. See the change? "What the hell is that about?" (Laughter) All right. Go sit down and just relax. (All musicians sit down).

Half our problem, or more than half our problem, is the way we image ourselves, how we think about ourselves. "I'm too thin. I'm too fat. I'm too tall. I'm too short. I'm too ... whatever. I'm unhappy with myself." Well, so you keep going to the gym. But when it comes down to **moments in life, you have to be who you are**

because the only thing we want from you in art is what you've got. We're fond in the theater of saying that you are the sum total of everything you've ever done or have not done. It is an issue we challenge with students in what that means. Whatever choices they make on a day-to-day basis are going to show up in some way. You are the sum total of everything you've done or not done, and - and here's the killer - **What you are shows through what you do.**

So every choice that you make, shows through eventually in what you do. And the one place in which you cannot hide who you are or what you are is in Art. You can't hide. And if we think we can hide in all this, we're in the wrong business.

So eventually, you have to come to some sense of, "I am who I am. Imperfect as I am, I am who I am. And that's the most valuable element I have to give."

The full, imperfect human being, the full artist, not the perfect person we try to place in front of people, but the full, imperfect, incomplete, mewling, crying, laughing, ecstatic human being that we are. That's what our Art wants. That's what our students want to see. That's what give them permission to be the best that they can be, to see us as we are.

And this odd little exercise, if you do this with students, it's magic. I mean, do it yourself. It will help you. But do it with students. It's incredible. Every student of every shape and size suddenly feels like, "I'm beautiful. I'm whole. I'm a person. I'm a Sculpture. I have Power." By the mere act of thinking it, and then to add that every movement that you make leaves a shape behind in space. When we leave shapes, it gives me confidence. See those shapes? (Bud is walking around the room). All I'm thinking about is the Shape I'm leaving behind in Space. I'm not thinking about the fact that I'd like to lose 20 pounds. I'm just thinking about the shapes. And it makes every action have a kind of Power to it, just as it did when you were doing it, to leave a shape behind, the shape of a gesture, the shape behind, the confidence in gesture because you're leaving shapes behind.

You're leaving a Resonance. You're leading us into somewhere. But something is left behind in the air-- **sound, music, resonance, shape, confidence.**

Resistance. Every move you make when you leave a shape behind in space has resistance in it. It's what makes it important, the lightest little move, scratching your head. If it's leaving a shape on his face, it has a minimal but important quality of Resistance. It has an identity. It has a history. It has a beginning, a middle, and an ending that goes on for awhile after the gesture's finished.

It stays there like one of those photographs of people exploded by flash in varying poses. You see afterimages, like you hear a note resonating when it's played on an instrument, but then echoes through the Hall.

Gesture does the same thing by the mere act of thinking it. (Bud points to musicians sitting in their chairs). While you're there now, without changing, without trying to be something and also have ego in it. You're a Sculpture right now, and that gives you Power. In any move you make, you leave a Shape behind in Space, and **that alters how people look at you because it alters how you look at yourself.**