

**WARM-UPS – HANDS & FACES**  
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*Sirkelen Sluttes: Pages 78-80; Completing the Circle: Pages 104-106*

**HANDS**

1. **SHAKE & SQUEEZE (Wrist/Fingers):** Let's shake wrists/fingers, fingers/wrists (repeats 4 times). Good. Put your hands up (hands are in front of you). And as if you were just squeezing a ball, and squeeze, lots of resistance, and squeeze, and squeeze, and a sharp quick move to hold it, and squeeze, and squeeze.

There are so many muscles in the hands and in the face, and we hardly ever exercise them.

And yet, we ask them to be so expressive.

Now with straight fingers, squeeze, squeeze, squeeze. Good. Shake.

2. **INDIVIDUAL FINGER STRETCH:** (little finger to finger/thumb to thumb) Now, I am just going to take the little finger of the right hand, against the left hand, you put your thumb underneath your wrist, and just pull back, and just stretch it, not too far, and then to the ring finger, still with the little finger, hold it and get that nice distance. Good. (middle finger). And pull. And the index finger. And then, thumb to thumb, and then pull.

And then put all the fingers on the one hand into the palm of the other hand and just pull back until you feel lower stretch in the lower part of the fingers. Good.

And then the same thing on the other hand. And start and pull, the little finger, stretch, that's it, and stretch, stretch, ring finger, index finger, stretch, stretch, and then, thumb on thumb, stretch. And then all the fingers and stretch.

And then shake hands/fingers.

3. **ISOLATION BEND:** And then try this, we will just pull down (one by one pulls down on each finger in isolation (both hands in front, fingers part, moves to work each finger in isolation, bending down each finger to first knuckle, one at a time). If you can't do it, you can do this (and Bud holds each finger as he does the exercise). I actually learned this, started fiddling around with this as a young man, as a mime, is it useful? Is it a useful skill? Uh, you can sometimes get a free beer at a bar. (All laugh)

I think it makes us feel good when we have control. When we can do something. And our hands, yours just as well as mine, are so much a part

of our Art, your hands are so much a part of your music, when you're playing, they are so intrical to what you do, and the flexibility and the facileness and their ability to express, whether you are conducting or playing, is so much a part of you, probably more so than in mine.

So, the ability to do that, to work with your hands and your fingers, to give them that facility, that flexibility, just gives you a step-up, in terms of what you want to do, so that this is never an impediment to your Art, this is never a thing that should get in the way, there are other things that may be crucial or important to you, but this should never be one. It is worth working on, and you know, you can do it while you are watch TV too.

4. ARCH DOWN, ARCH UP: Okay, hands up (hands are in front, arms straightened in front of torso) Shoulders down. Hands nice and relaxed. Good. Extend your fingers, fingers are together, and extend them flat, and now, you are going to turn them up, so that they are flat as possible, pulling back and pushing forward with the heel of your hand. Try not to do this (Bud pushes torso back into chair). Push forward. It doesn't feel good. And relax (And fingers extend downward).

And push down, flat, up, hold it, hold it, and relax. Now spread fingers, hold them flat, and back up, and extend forward, forward, and pull back on them, stretch your arms out, keep them straight, as you pull back, and relax. Shake. Good. Shake, shake, shake.

5. GUNFIGHTER'S STRETCH: This is called the Gunfighter's Stretch. Jack Palance did this in *Shane*. (Bud holds hands out in front of him, to be able to twirl them in front of him). Start with your little finger and you go, stretch all the way around, and back in a semi-circle, stretch, stretch, stretch, stretch, and add the arm a little bit, and shake, shake.
6. WONDERMENT: Here's a little mime. Hold your hands in front of your face. Pull your hands down in this way, and bring them up, and open. Nice. And go back around, fingers toward you, and up, and open out. Beautiful. So you can see something (Bud leans over to his right side), and hands spread out, and then the other side, and look, that's it. I love it. We all have surprised faces when we look, you can't help but do that when you look. (All laugh) It's like the moment of the child, seeing, a little bit of wonder, as it reveals something to you. Just a simple little gesture. Shake. Open and close fingers.
7. WRIST: Okay, here is an area we don't really deal with much, and this doesn't feel good. You take your left hand, and you put the fingers of your left hand on the back of your right hand, with your left thumb under the palm of your right hand. Then you bring your hands down, fingers have to be relaxed, all your hand, and you just move the wrist upward, and as you move upward, your left hand is going to pull downward on the right wrist and turn outward, until you get a shooting pain right across your wrist

here. Feel that? And then down. The pain is from the combination of the turnout and the pull down. This is actually a hold from Aikido, and it is incredibly painful, but it is also a great exercise for the wrist for stretching. And, after you do it a couple of times, your wrists will feel quite weak, because they've been stretched, because they are hardly ever stretched. We almost never stretch those tendons, so it is really good to do that though. Shake, shake, shake.

## **FACES**

Let's go to Faces. This is something you need to encourage your students to work on, because again, there is so much misinformation coming from the face, the grimace, the tension, that shows up on our face. And so, exercising it, because it's got so many muscles in it, in order to get it relaxed, it really is a crucial part of the work.

So, first we will just shake it (Bud makes noise as he does shake it). As you get older, this gets easier (All laugh). All this stuff begins to shake.

Now, just open our mouths. As you open your mouth, see if you can keep your eyes relaxed. It is fun to do, because everyone looks so silly when they do it. And close. And then take the corners of your mouth, and stretch. Try to keep the neck out of it.

And back to the "O", and way out to the "O" stretched forward, and then the open mouth, and from there to the stretch, and then the "O" stretched forward, and then open, and then the stretch. And good.

Eyebrows (Bud lifts one). If you can do one, great. If you can just do two, that's okay too. Up, relax, Up, relax (Bud repeats this four more times).

Keep your head straight and look way over to the right with your eyes, stretch, come to the center, and to the left, stretch. Eyeball, just the eye itself, stretch. Look way over. And back. And squint, and open, relax.

Lift the corners of your mouth, drop them down, so you can do your own version of Comedy/Tragedy. Up and down, up and down. Just tighten up cheek muscles, no mouth, just this (Bud signals to his cheeks) up here, and relax.

Think of moving everything on your face to one side, just think, your whole nose and everything just slides over, way over there (to the left). And then bring it all back. And then slide it over there (to the right), and then slide it over to the left, and go back, and then over to the right, and then over, way over again to the left, and then to the right, and then go back (to the center).

Shake your face, making noise as you do.

Okay? Ready to go. Questions about that? Makes sense? Face and Hands. You can do it anywhere, it shouldn't be something you have to formally do, but it should be something people do prior to going onstage.

Because we carry so much tension in our faces and in our mouths, and you can make up your own exercises. These are just a few, it goes on and on and on. Is it really useful? Yes? No? What it really trying to do is relax your face. You actually, really want to get your face to the point where you can feel there is no tension.

The forehead is a real common area of tension. And, that's one of those moments, when you see this in a player (Bud points to forehead wrinkled) what you are seeing is Effort, and you are seeing EFFORT AGAIN IN PLACE OF EMOTION.

So, we don't want that, we don't want to see how hard it is, nobody ever wants to see how difficult it is to do what you do. The whole object of doing what you do is to make it seem ... EFFORTLESS. Anybody could do it. Which is, of course, the farthest thing from the truth. But the minute you give us that effort, you watch singers, actors will do it all the time (Bud touches forehead as he says this), they act with their foreheads. But as soon as you get everyone to relax, all this stuff (emotion) comes up. Tension just stops it.

What's interesting is that most people have absolute control over their forehead. If you point it out to them, they relax it. They don't know why it was tense, but they can relax it immediately, it is not a big thing, it's not a big problem, they don't even have to look in a mirror, you only have to make them aware of it.

### **DANGER WITH USING A MIRROR**

I also think it is a good idea not to work in front of a mirror. I really urge you to stay away from the mirror. And the real reason is because you will not develop any SENSE OF YOURSELF. You will only get a sense of what you can see in a reflection, instead of knowing yourself well enough to know when there is tension and how to relax it.

And standing in front of a mirror gives you a false security. I was working with dancers once, on Performance and Projection, and working outward, and I finally realized, when I was working with them, what was going on. They were working in front of a mirror, all the time, so when they turned away from the mirror, and they were onstage...guess what was the image was in their heads?

Them, in the mirror. And it was only a few dancers, who had that natural, astonishing ability to dance off the back wall of the concert hall. Most of them stopped right there (Bud signals in front of himself). Wherever the surface of the mirror was in their studio, that was as far out as their Projection could get them. And they couldn't even create another image.

I would talk to them about images and thoughts and ideas they might have out there. and all they had was an enforced image of themselves in the mirror, moving. It just creates a circle of ego that was not very exciting, not up against a dancer who is giving you life and astonishment, like a Baryshnikov, or a Villella, when they are dancing onstage, they are not in front of a mirror.

They are in front of You.

So be careful with them. I know there are moments to check yourself, in front of a mirror, but after a few moments, turn away, it is a desperate trap.