



The Goethean Actor: Rudolf Steiner's Indications for the Actor

Both Steiner and Goethe call for the aesthetic self to emerge as a precondition of art making:

“All teaching in declamation and recitation should be of the kind that allows the pupil into the very art of speech formation itself, into what reverberates in the soul from speech formation...He must surrender to what is objectively tonal, musical, pictorial, to what lives in a really pictorial form...Only then shall we be adequate for all that stems from our elevated Goethean view of art and our sensitivity for art.”(Steiner et al., 1999, p. 59)

Rudolf Steiner's fortuitous meeting with actress, occult student Marie von Sivers in 1900 led to development of a new approach to the art of speech carried principally by her. I think a case can be made that Steiner tailored the development of Creative Speech to Marie von Siver Steiner's capabilities and talents. One great legacy of this is the booklet speech exercises which forms the basis of the Steiner Speech trainings throughout the world.

Steiner's karma also brought him into direct personal contact with Moscow Art actor, Michael Chekhov and German theatre director and actor, Gottfried Hass Berkow. Chekhov found his own experiences and approaches, particularly drawing on the imagination, were confirmed and extended by Steiner's indications. He struggled however to integrate creative speech into his practices. Hass Berkow, on the other hand, like Steiner himself, married the craft of speaking with the imagination of the role and bore witness to the dramatic exercises Steiner shared with actors.

If we consider Steiner's indications for the actor in totality and include the legacy of Steiner's dramatic exercises alongside the speech exercises in the Speech and Drama trainings then I think it will be quite evident to the world, that Steiner offers a unique, comprehensive training for the actor.

Steiner, R., Steiner, M., Budgett, W., Hummel, N., & Jones, M. (1999). *Creative speech : the nature of speech formation*. Rudolf Steiner.