

THE WORLD AND ITS MOVEMENTS

walk on all fours. Not until they meet the ground on its own terms, and make full contact with it, can they progress.

Real observation of animals is essential here. I can soon tell which students have cats and which don't, which have observed insects and which are just imagining them. The first ones act, the others demonstrate. They have to go to the zoo to observe and to analyse, however difficult it may be: the walk of a giraffe or a bear are extremely complex and cannot easily be embodied.

The laws of motion

Movement analysis gives rise to a few common laws of motion, which I sum up as follows:

1. There is no action without reaction.
2. Motion is continuous, it never stops.
3. Motion always originates in a state of disequilibrium tending towards equilibrium.
4. Equilibrium is itself in motion.
5. There is no motion without a fixed point.
6. Motion highlights the fixed point.
7. The fixed point, too, is in motion.

These principles can be elaborated by examining the results of the ceaseless play between forces in equilibrium and in disequilibrium: oppositions (in order to stand upright, man must oppose gravity), alternations (day alternates with night as laughter with tears), compensations (carrying a suitcase in the left hand forces one to compensate by lifting the other arm). These notions may appear abstract, but they are, physically, very concrete on the stage, and are central to my teaching. They are particularly valuable in production, involving the whole art of knowing how to situate oneself in relation to a fixed point, in a given situation, defined by a relationship with another person. If everyone on stage moves simultaneously, the sense of movement disappears for want of a fixed point, becoming incomprehensible and impossible to make

Movement Technique

sense of. Actors have to be able to place themselves with reference to others, in a clear relationship of listening and response.

Paradoxically, this work on movement, evidently so applicable to performance and production, should be even more useful to the writer. Whatever the themes dealt with, the ideas expressed, the stories or styles employed, it is essential for playwrighting to be structured from a dynamic point of view. In particular, it must have a clear beginning and an end, for any movement which fails to end has no true beginning. The sense of an ending is essential.