

# Theatre Virtual Learning

**Acting 3 & 4**

**Sensory and Emotional Recall**

**May 15**



Lesson: **May 15**

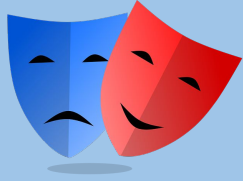
**Objective/Learning Target: Using sensory and emotional recall with endowment**



# Sensory & Emotional Recall

**Let's Get Started / Warm Up Activities:**

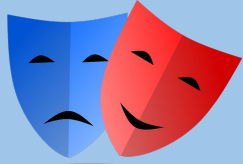
**Why would you have to use sense memory for things like picking a flower or putting on lipstick or drinking coffee?**



# Sensory & Emotional Recall

When using sense and emotional memory, an actor may have to endow objects with properties that cannot be on stage because they are dangerous to the actor in real life, or impractical to put on stage.

“Endowment” is to give something a quality.



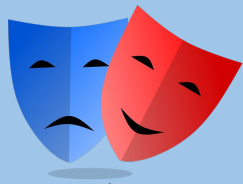
# Sensory & Emotional Recall



There are many items that will never make it to the stage. The reason could be due to safety reasons or to practical reasons.

- Example: Hot coffee could burn the actor if spilled.
- Example: Flowers will quickly wilt under the hot stage lights and they are expensive to replace for each show.
- Example: Poison is truly dangerous and possibly fatal.



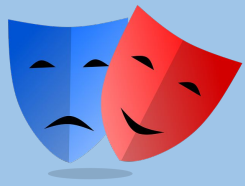


# Sensory & Emotional Recall



- Actors must analyze exactly how they use the real object and endow the substitution with those properties.
- Uta Hagen's Example in her book Respect for Acting with Haskel Frankel:

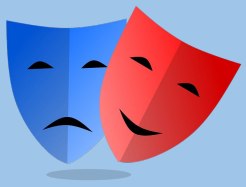
“Take a cup of water and endow it with the property of steaming hot coffee. Don't just *think* it is hot, but recall how as you bring it toward you, you pull back slightly from the steam, how you carefully blow and puff across the top of the cup to cool the coffee, how you gently test the rim of the cup with your lips before sipping a few drops and gingerly letting the liquid rest on your tongue for a second before allowing it to slide down your throat, how your eyes pull shut as you swallow and your mouth opens and you exhale and then take in air to cool your mouth. Suddenly, that cup of cold water becomes hot coffee and stays that way.” (p. 112)



# Sensory & Emotional Recall

- For each of the items you must substitute on stage, you should do a similar analysis.
- Know exactly how you work with the real object.
- Work with the substitution on stage just as you do the real object





# Sensory & Emotional Recall



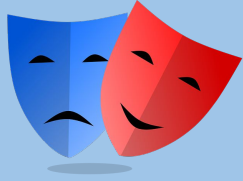
It seems strange to not be able to just use a tube of bright red lipstick on stage and have a diva apply it as part of her blocking.

Lipstick, however can be a mess. If an actress has shaky hands or make one slip, she can end up looking like a clown.

A plastic lipstick needs to be substituted

The actress would have to endow it with the color and greasiness as she applies it with her lips already made up.

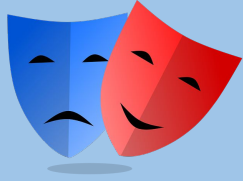




# Sensory & Emotional Recall



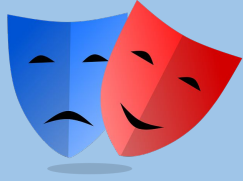
- Professionals usually do these shows 6 nights a week and a matinee performance on Sat. & Sun.
  - Depending on the food, that can add up to eating way too much
- Eating the amount designated can be difficult, fattening, and even unhealthy.



# Sensory & Emotional Recall



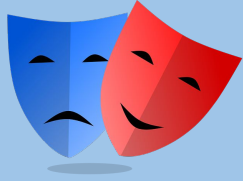
- What usually happens is that the food has substitutions.
  - Non-fat yogurt for ice cream
  - Fruit instead of a rich dessert
- The actor must find a way of endowing the substitution with the sweetness, saltiness, juiciness, stickiness of the designated food.



# Sensory & Emotional Recall



- Truly dangerous objects should never be used on stage. A real knife would never be used to stab someone. People would never burn themselves on an iron.
- You should never rehearse with the real object, like you might with the examples given earlier.
- What the actor must do is remember a time you hurt yourself. Go through the process of what you did and how it felt from memory and work with the plastic knife or cold iron in that way.

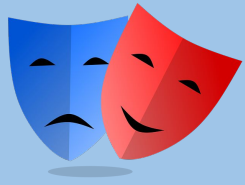


## Sensory & Emotional Recall



For each object you use on stage, you can figure out how to work with it by giving it a history.

Do you like the object? Is it one that has a bad history with it? Is it just any random object that you happened to pick up? How does that change how you use it?

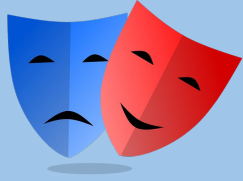


# Sensory & Emotional Recall

Think about how you would use flowers on stage in these differing situations:

- You are looking at a flower that someone gave you as a means to butter you up.
- You are looking at a flower someone your love gave to you, just because they were thinking of you and wanted to give them to you.
- You are looking at a flower you randomly picked up in a field.



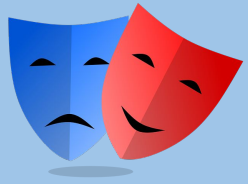


# Sensory & Emotional Recall

No matter what sense or emotion you are trying to recall, remember what the scene is about--not the emotion or the sense.

Always keep your character's main objective in mind. Know what the scene is truly about and the sense or emotional memory will just add color or flavor to that scene.





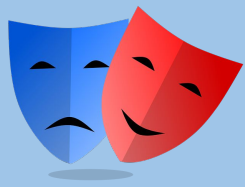
# Practice: Applying a Concept



Put together a scene to record and analyze where you must have an overall **EXTREME** emotion. In that scene you must endow 3 different objects that would not be used on stage with their real-life qualities.

See the example on the next slide



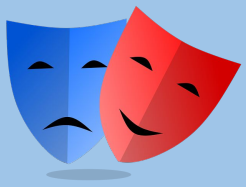


# Practice: Applying a Concept Example

- Situation (What the scene is about): Teen must clean their room to go out that evening
- Emotion: Teen is extremely angry because his/her brother is the one who made the mess.
- Senses:
  - In the process of cleaning, teen finds an old smelly gym bag shoved under the bed. (smell is not really there, but bag is endowed with odor)
  - While grumbling about the task and hurrying the teen stubs his toe on the end of the bed. (actor is not going to smash his toe)
  - A huge spider crawls out from under a pile of junk. (really no spider, but actor endows the space with qualities of spider, so audience “sees” spider through actor’s eyes.)

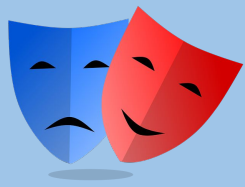






# Practice: Applying a Concept Assignment

- The scene should have a definite beginning, middle and end. You may talk to yourself or not talk at all.
- Come up with things you would not really have on stage.
  - Hot drinks
  - Soda (makes actors burp)
  - Anything that would cause pain
  - Flowers
  - Sound in earbuds (actors would not hear cues if music is really playing)
  - Ice cream
  - Something you “see” out a window--usually you see nothing



# Practice: Applying a Concept Assignment

Help in planning:

- Select a room/location
- Select an objective/goal/task (making dinner, cleaning, looking for keys...)
- What other circumstances surround the situation (late for work, bored with nothing to do, excited for date...)
- What is your overall EXTREME emotion
- Select 3 different senses to work into the scene
  - Use fake items(substitutions)--not real coffee, not a real flower, not music in headphones...



**Make a video of your scene, watch it, & analyze how real the scene looks.**