

## MICHAEL NAVARRA'S TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

MY AIM AS A TEACHER IS TO ENABLE EACH STUDENT TO LIVE IN THE MOMENT ON STAGE WITHIN THE GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES. ALL GREAT ACTORS DO THIS AT THEIR BEST AND IT IS MY INTENTION TO REACH FOR IT. THE IMMEDIACY OF THE MOMENT IS WHAT DRAWS THE AUDIENCE TO ENGAGE WITH THE STORY AND, THEREBY, IT BECOMES THE ACTOR'S RESPONSIBILITY TO LIVE IN IT TRUTHFULLY. THIS REQUIRES A DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF THE TEXT ALONGSIDE AN UNWAVERING CONCENTRATION. IT IS MY GOAL TO IMPART THIS AESTHETIC AND TO ENCOURAGE MY STUDENT'S INDIVIDUALITY TO COME THROUGH.

EVERY STUDENT BRINGS A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE UNLIKE ANY OTHER IN THE WORLD. THIS MUST BE NURTURED AND RESPECTED. IT IS MY OBLIGATION TO ALLOW ROOM FOR THIS TO GROW. WHILE THE CRAFT OF ACTING CAN BE AS RIGOROUS A DISCIPLINE AS BALLET, I DO BELIEVE THAT THE UNIQUE SPARK THAT LIES WITHIN US IS CRUCIAL TO OUR SUCCESS AS ARTISTS. THE COURAGEOUS ACTORS AND ARTISTS OF EVERY DISCIPLINE KNOW THIS, AND IT IS UP TO ME TO ENCOURAGE ITS GROWTH IN MY STUDENTS.

MY METHODS FOR THIS AESTHETIC EMPHASIZE THE GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES. WHAT IS THE STORY? WHAT IS EACH MOMENT ABOUT? WHETHER WE ARE WORKING ON A CONTEMPORARY PLAY OR ON A CLASSIC, THE SAME RULES APPLY. IF THE GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES ARE UNCLEAR, THE CHOICES BECOME ARTIFICIAL. THE ACTOR SPENDS AN ENTIRE RUN PUSHING UPSTREAM. I DO NOT PRESUME THAT THIS FOCUS COVERS THE ACTOR'S ENTIRE TRAINING, BUT I BELIEVE IT TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT.

WITH A FULL UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR CHARACTER'S GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES WITHIN THE STORY, IT IS THEN POSSIBLE TO LIVE IN THEM TRUTHFULLY. THIS IS WHERE CRAFT MEETS INSPIRATION. THIS INSPIRATION ALLOWS ONE TO LISTEN AND RESPOND IN THE MOMENT, AS IF FOR THE FIRST TIME. THE ACTOR STRIVES TOWARDS THE GOAL OF WINNING, EACH AND EVERY TIME, WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF LOSING. WITH THE STAKES HIGH AND A VULNERABILITY THAT COMES FROM NOT PLAYING THE END OF THE SCENE, THE ACTOR THEN CREATES MAGIC.

PERFORMANCES THAT HAVE INSPIRED ME CONTAIN ALL THESE ELEMENTS. THESE ACTORS ARE FIERCE IN THEIR CHOICES TO WIN. THEY STAY OPEN TO THE POSSIBILITY OF LOSING, AND AT ALL TIMES ARE COURAGEOUS IN THEIR DESIRES AND FEARS THROUGHOUT THE PLAY. THIS MAKES THEM EXCITING, DYNAMIC, INTERESTING, POWERFUL, AND VULNERABLE. THEY ACHIEVE THIS BY A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE TEXT AND THE MOMENT TO MOMENT GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES. WITH ALL THIS LINED UP, THEY ARE READY TO BREATHE LIFE AND LIVE IN THE MOMENT ON STAGE.

ULTIMATELY, MY DESIRE IS TO CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF TRUST IN THE CLASSROOM. WE ARE EMBARKING ON A JOURNEY THAT WILL BRING US FACE TO FACE WITH OURSELVES. THIS REQUIRES A SPACE THAT IS OPEN TO RECEIVE IT. I ENCOURAGE MY STUDENTS TO TAKE RISKS. THE ONLY FAILURE IS HOLDING BACK.

THE ESSENTIAL HEART OF MY TEACHING IS TO EMPOWER STUDENTS WITH THE TOOLS OF ACTING AND WITH THE CURIOSITY TO SEEK THEIR INDIVIDUAL TRUTH AND POTENTIAL.