

Title: Interpreting Stanislavsky's System: Innovations of the Body in Performance  
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During the beginning of the twentieth century the Russian theater director Konstantin Stanislavsky developed the first systematic acting training which continues to be taught today. This paper focuses on investigating innovations in the system's development, the interpretation of which has been distorted by abridged English translations and clouded by Soviet censorship. English translations of Stanislavsky, first published in 1924, maintain that he worked solely with exercises of psychology and only towards the end of his teaching explored physical training. The Soviet regime, on the other hand, published in Russia in the 1930s Stanislavsky's work with physical actions to reflect the healthy working body of the proletariat and neglected his writings on spiritualism. A look at Stanislavsky's personal writings which appear in two publications (1958 and 1990) of his *Собрание Сочинения* (*Collected Works*) reveals that from 1902-1934 Stanislavsky continually sought a balance between physical and psychological training. Moreover, his exercises for rehearsal established an exploratory realm in performance that could be cultivated by physical warm-up that engaged the mind and senses to train the "актёр-творец" ("actor-creator") to lissomely enter and exit in and out of the scenic world.

Stanislavsky's *Collected Works*, lesson plans, as well as biographies written by his disciples reveal his innovations in articulating the tacit inner spirit through scenic movement. The terminology that Stanislavsky devised to teach his system contributed to the experiments of the Russian modernist period by bringing about a new language of gesture in inventive art, what he referred to as the "новое качество искусства" ("new type of art") of the stage. He taught his actors to amplify their performances with gymnastics, acrobatics and *plastika* technique that could reflect compositions of the great classics through movement of the body. This paper will also include reference to Moscow theater institutes that are re-examining Stanislavsky's holistic training today.