

Hello, all. Great, innovative work today.

As we go forward in our survey of styles of plays and different ways to approach them, I want you to know the following term: "through-line." This term was first coined by Constantin Stanislavsky, also known as the Founder of Modern Acting, moving actors away from the "Grand Master Thespian" style of acting, very declamatory, and into a more natural, realistic style.

Through-line refers to the character's main drive. What is it that he/she wants/needs to accomplish? It must be something strong enough to carry him/her THROUGH the entire play. Stanislavsky also called this the "spine" of the play - what need drives the character? Holds him up? Supports her actions, words?

As the character, you ask, "what do I want more than anything? THROUGHOUT the play?" This doesn't mean you'll achieve it, just that you're struggling for it.

We'll talk more about this on Tuesday; not every actor approaches a character this way, and even then, not for every role. But it's a tool to put in the tool kit.

ASSIGNMENT: read the Glass Menagerie portion on e-reserves. Make notes of where/how the play moves you; where you enter into it. Tennessee Williams is an American playwright who wrote brilliantly at times, and terribly at other times (not as many, fortunately) but who had particular strengths. See if you can spot them.

Then, write a short, first-person paragraph from the point of view of one of the characters, expressing the through-line of that character, as you see it. We'll be back at the table on Tuesday, and we'll all share.

Have a great weekend,

MLO