(Inter)acting with the Inner Partner

A Model First Lesson

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You are on stage alone in front of a row of ten people. You have been asked not to contact the audience in any way – visually or otherwise. You have been given no specific subject or theme about which to interact. You have no props. You are there to have a spontaneous interaction with your inner partner (or partners).

Just a moment ago, you were sitting in a now empty chair in the middle of the row listening to the class leaders introduce (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner and its founder, Professor Ivan Vyskočil.[i]

The class leaders began this introductory lesson for beginners in English by explaining that Professor Vyskočil, the creator and principal developer of the discipline, leads beginner groups and advanced groups for class leaders throughout the academic year in Czech. Most intermediate classes – in Czech or in English - are lead by trained class leaders, often in pairs. Class leaders are advanced students who have been studying the discipline for many years and have also undergone training and apprenticeship. Most of them still continue to study in advanced groups taught by Professor Vyskočil. The class leaders explained that Vyskočil visits all classes from time to time. There are special English speaking classes, like this one, for international students. (Vyskočil does not speak English, but when he comes to visit someone will interpret.) After briefly introducing themselves, including their experience studying and teaching the discipline, as well as their professional experience and how it related to the discipline, the class leaders proceeded to present (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner.

The class leaders said that (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner - translated from the Czech “dialogické jednání” or “dialogické jednání s vnitřním partnerem” - is a solo improvisation discipline, a holistic psychosomatic methodology of studying and practicing the elementary dynamics of creative, disciplined, playful and spontaneous (inter)acting in a performance situation.

The student next to you immediately posed a question regarding this definition: “What do you mean by a *performance situation*?”

One of the class leaders defined a performance situation as an interacting context in which a person’s activity (behavior, interacting, performing, acting) takes place in front of an audience.[ii] He went on to

explain that in order for the interactor in the performance situation to experience it as such, she needs to be *aware*, on some level, of the audience's presence and attention, otherwise it is only a performance situation as far as the onlookers are concerned. Performance situations can be artistic events, like a theatre or dance performance, as well as everyday contexts, like teaching a class or conducting a meeting. Even two people interacting can make a performance situation, since each member of the interaction serves as a spectator of the other's actions; for example, a solo performance for an audience of one, or a doctor treating a patient. In many performance situations, the interactor is also often faced with and aware of meeting a challenge and/or achieving a standard in front of the audience (Komlosi 2009:114-5), like convincingly portraying "character-emotions and captivating and moving the spectator, [which] is difficult and complex" (Konijn 2002:66). The class leader went on to emphasize that the presence and attention of a *live* audience is vital. It creates a "field of energy" (colloquially, the class leaders said it "heated the oven") that "magnifies" the student's experience of her interacting and creates a potential for feedback between the student and the spectators or, as Stanislavsky wrote, the audience serves as a "sounding board" for our interacting.[iii]

Another student then asked, "So that means I can't do this at home alone?"

In reply, the class leader joked that: "It is perfectly safe to try it alone at home," but clarified that the attention of a live audience is vital for creating the potential of achieving some objective distance from your self and actions, to see yourself through the audience's eyes "as if" you were someone else watching yourself. In that sense, Professor Vyskočil states that the audience's presence *objectivizes* – makes less subjective – our interaction, which allows you to relate to it and, potentially, learn from it (and yourself).[iv]

"So, of course, experiment on your own, but it will lack the potential for objectivizing your actions and an important source of energy that the audience provides," the class leader explained.

The class leader also asked everyone to keep in mind that many performance situations, especially ones that are new to us, like interacting alone with your inner partners on stage in front of an audience, are often nerve-racking and debilitating, full of stress and tension, at least initially. In time, however, a performance situation, and (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner in particular, can become an inspiring and creative experience. In fact, (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is very much about studying the preconditions for a performance

situation to become spontaneous, delightful, and creative – an experience that gives something meaningful back to you (and your inner partners).[v]

The class leaders noted that since (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner works with a rather general, open idea of a performance situation, our experience with the discipline was potentially relevant, could be "carried over," to a host of other performance situations. This is based on the fact that the discipline understands "interacting" in both the more general, universal sense as "existing," "doing," "behaving" *and* the more particular, artistic sense of "acting" and "performing."[vi] Actors, students of acting, as well as all people who "act," "do," and "perform" in front of others in their professional or every day lives tend to find the discipline relevant.

"But," the other class leaders said, "there are also philosophers, linguists and visual artists, for example, who find meaning in the discipline."

She also said that (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner can also have a positive effect on the individual beyond professional life, in terms of authorial creativity and personality development. Perhaps most fundamentally, as Vyskočil has said recently: "(Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is a kind of instance of caring for the soul. Not that it is, but that it can be that. It is, but we have to become aware of it as such for it to be that" (2011a).

At this point, one student asked, "So is this a technique for helping people free themselves and become better people?"

In reply, she clarified that Professor Vyskočil states (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is neither a method nor a technique, nor for any one thing in particular (2005:13; 2003b:177). Its focus is on *process* rather than on *product*. Professor Vyskočil repeatedly emphasizes that (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is a holistic, experiential, hands-on psychosomatic *discipline* through which students study the basic principles of public, creative communication (2005:13; 2003b:177). In a sense, it is a discipline like yoga or the martial arts are: It is an activity practiced regularly. It provides a particularly structured experience that conditions and trains. It is based on studying certain principles, i.e., a body of knowledge.

"What do you mean by *psychosomatic* discipline?" another student inquired.

The class leaders explained that the term psychosomatic (also called psychophysical, especially in contemporary acting theory) describes a holistic approach to the individual and his/her being and doing.[vii] It is based on an understanding embracing the "organic connection between

the body and mind," resonating with "thinking [that] assumes the bodymind as a *gestalt* to be developed […]for immediate expressivity and 'presence' in the theatrical moment" (Zarrilli 2002b:14). When discussing the term psychosomatic, Vyskočil writes:

> We speak of and practice a psychosomatic foundation for public behavior/performing. Where "psychosomatic" (or "somatopsychic") has a similar meaning as "holistic," "ontological," "having to do with the personality." (2000:6)[viii]

So the conceptual demarcation between the terms *psycho* and *somatic* (*psycho* and *physical*) is not meant to create or maintain a duality between the mind/body, nor to perpetuate the thinking that the body is an object for the mind to manipulate. On the contrary, the duality of the term is valuable in how it can provoke and evolve an awareness of the interconnectivity of the psychosoma, especially at early learning stages. (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner works with this basic dynamic, as well as others, to cultivate *psychosomatic fitness* - a general condition of psychosomatic preparedness for experiencing spontaneity, freedom and authorial creativity in a given performance situation. Vyskočil emphasizes that for (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner, the path of *being* in condition is more important that *having* a level of psychosomatic fitness (2000:7). In other words, the individual gradually becomes "more fit" to act in an optimally creative manner in her given circumstances according to her particular capabilities.[ix]

It was at this point that another student asked, "So (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is for cultivating psychosomatic fitness?"

"Studying and cultivating psychosomatic fitness is one of the discipline's important themes, yes," a class leader said, "but it is also about many other dynamics and principles vital to authorial creativity and personality cultivation like: a faith in our selves, others and the world; fostering the ability to approach yourself as a collaborative partner instead of a meddling critic; the ability to focus on the task at hand; daring to be expressive in public." They then quoted Professor Vyskočil speaking about what (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is for: "If the individual does it *for* something, then that which is useless, that which I will not use, will not be present" (2008b).

In other words, (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is also about noticing those "useless" aspects of our selves and our interacting. (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner exists so that play can play itself; so the individual playing can come to know play, her playing, and herself. The class leaders said they understood the need to immediately know what the discipline was for, and promised to discuss the discipline's "applicability"

after an initial foundation in the discipline. They were saying as little as possible now, they said, not to be frustratingly vague, but so that each of us could have the space to discover and decide what the discipline is, and what it is for, if for anything at all.

Seeing as Professor Vyskočil was not present, and because his experience and knowledge was important in creating the discipline, the class leaders gave a brief snapshot of his life.[x]

The class leaders then noted some of the literature and core concepts that inspired Professor Vyskočil in developing the discipline: Jung (introvert-extrovert, archetypes), Berne (Parent/Adult/Child), Huizinga, Caillois, Goffman (principles of dramatic play and performance); Buber (I-thou), Fink, Lévinas, Marcel (humanism, existentialism); and Stanislavsky (public solitude, fundamental acting principles). One of the class leaders mentioned there were many connections between the discipline's central concepts and discussion in the fields of performance studies (Barba, Schechner, Carlson), acting theory (Gordon, Hodge, Zarrilli), somatics (Hanna), dialogical self theory (Hermans) and creativity studies (Csikszentmihalyi). These various connections would be discussed at another time, once students had a foundational experience with the discipline. It was important to try (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner first.

The class leaders said that before rehearsing begins they would like to highlight a number of primary values and the principal idea that (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner draws on and seeks to cultivate.

A mutualistic, therapeutic encounter: Rather than an emphasis on producing theatrical performance, (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is based on studying what it means to enable a "mutualistic and authentic encounter." Such an encounter is not therapy, yet it aims to be therapeutic; in other words, to lead to catharsis for the actor and the audience.[xi] What does it take to create an atmosphere of mutuality and reciprocity between inner partners, not to mention the author-actor and the audience? How can we "meet" in the fullest sense of the word? How does encounter involve articulating our experience communicatively so that an audience can perceive our themes and respond to them? What does it mean to give and receive empathically based on a shared need? The class leaders said that a mutualistic, therapeutic encounter like this can take a myriad of forms, for example: a conventional theatre piece; an experimental performance; an applied theatre workshop; an open class; a teacher talking with students; a social worker consulting with a client; or two friends talking.

Another value central to (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is **freedom**.[xii] This is not freedom primarily in the political sense, but in the existential sense: an experience of inner freedom and its expression. (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner asks: What does it mean to make choices based on a profound awareness of the rich scale of inner possibilities at our disposal? What are those possibilities? How free are we to express our inner world with ourselves and with others? When and how do we act based on stereotypical, clichéd and ingrained behavior models or instinctual responses about which we are little or completely unaware? Cultivating freedom necessitates an ever-expanding awareness, a "bringing into consciousness" of the behaviors and potential(s) we are less familiar with. Freedom means the person experiencing herself fully in her given context and situation; it is inextricably linked to responsibility and empathy. The experience of individual and personal freedom is a response to estrangement from our selves and the world. It remedies alienation.

From the breadth of formative human experience, **play** is one we know well from childhood. Can we recall what it meant to play as a child? Can we discover what it means to play as adults? As Vyskočil says, play is a basic existential phenomenon that is the deciding factor in an individual's ability to act (behave) spontaneously (Čunderle & Roubal 2001:113). (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is about the individual learning to relearn what that spontaneity is about, understand what it takes for play to play itself in her and in the context of a dramatic situation. (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is about studying the principles of play in dramatic situations.

Authorship involves identifying and articulating the needs and themes of a maturing personality. What are our needs in a given situation? Nowadays? Generally? What are the themes that resurface in our interacting? Vyskočil contends that the most "unique expression of authorial theatre […is…] the discovery and clarification of a common theme, where the theme is not given in advance, neither as an idea nor as a story" (quoted in Roubal 2003:38). Articulating and playing with a theme – or thematizing *not* discovering one – is what Vyskočil sees as the fundamental significance of authorial theatre.

Authorship also involves individual creative responsibility. Whose doing is it? It is *my* doing for which *I* am responsible in terms of the origin of my interacting as well as its affect on myself and others. The class leaders explained that (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner, especially in its more advanced stages, provides a structure through which we can identify and share personal themes in a creative and responsible manner.

An author, according to Vyskočil, is a triunity: She is an author, actor, and spectator in one. These roles are neither separate nor exclusive, but interchangeable and alternating (Roubal 2003:39). (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner allows you to distinguish between the different roles of author, actor, and audience and how each of these roles plays out from within you. Describing this dynamic, Vyskočil states:

> A person achieves a state where he has doubling at his disposal. Not only does he behave as an 'actor' in a concrete and concentrated manner, but at certain moments he begins to monitor and interpret his behavior as an 'onlooker.' That usually happens when he gets an idea, impulse, a 'message'[…] (quoted in Roubal, 2003:40)

To Have or to Be: In terms of Fromm's famous distinction between "to have" or "to be," (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner seeks to cultivate the latter in opposition to consumerism and existential alienation (Vyskočil 2000:5,7).[xiii] According to Vyskočil, an orientation that prioritizes having, owning and obtaining prefabrications is actually antagonistic to the need to create, perceive, reflect, communicate and be (Roubal 2003:42-3). (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner asks: What does it mean to *be* through the body, movement, voice, speech? Cultivating individual creativity is more than about "acquiring technique(s)." It is about *being* in a state of creative preparedness and responsiveness. It is about cultivating that "psychosomatic fitness" for spontaneous, free interaction through disciplined practice.

The class leaders summarized: "(Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is founded on these values, ones that Vyskočil believes are central to an authorial personality and creativity. He understands ethics as being inextricably connected to aesthetics."[xiv]

They went on to explain that (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is based on a fundamental human experience they expect most students can relate to: the experience of interacting (talking, playing) with you self.

They asked if the students could relate to the experience of interacting with our selves: "Had you ever found ourselves in a situation where you needed someone's advice, but there was no one else around so we said, maybe out loud?: 'Don't worry, trust yourself and do it how you feel.' Had you ever criticized yourself?: 'Boy, that was dumb thing to do!' What about the opposite, praising yourself for a job well done?"

All of the students said that, yes, they had talked to themselves "in our heads." Some students said they even did it out loud, but usually when no one else was around.

The class leaders said that (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner moves the fundamental dynamic of relating to your many selves, which usually takes place in private, into a public space, establishing the conditions for you to discover and learn from it with the supportive, objectivizing feedback of spectators. (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner involves experiencing and studying what this kind of creative "public existence" is about and means to you. Some of the basic questions the discipline proposes include: How do we study and learn from our interacting (behavior and experiencing) in a performance situation? How do we enable spontaneous, playful, and co-playful interacting through a dialogue, a relationship with our inner partners? How can we learn from our selves through interacting?

The class leaders then stated what was needed to practice (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner, and how the experimenting would proceed:

Ideally, (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner takes place in a well-lit, spacious room with a high ceiling and good acoustics.[xv] Except for as many chairs as there are participants, and perhaps a curtain and an upright piano, the room should be empty (Vyskočil 2005:19). The chairs are set up in a row (n.b., not in a semi-circle) at one end of the classroom and face a vacant space where the students will go, individually, to make their attempts at (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner. This space is referred to as 'the stage'. The class leaders sit on the audience-left end of the row of chairs (Komlosi 2002:52; Vyskočil 2003b:176). The rest of the chairs in the rehearsal space are populated by students. The minimum number of recommended student participants is two, the maximum is twelve or thirteen.[xvi] There were eleven of you in total, including the two class leaders, in a room much like the ideal one described.

"(Inter)acting with the Inner Partner procedure is straightforward and it would remain more or less the same from class to class", the class leaders said.[xvii] A student goes on stage alone in front of the onlookers for a short (average 2-3 minutes) "attempt" or "trial" during which he/she explores, investigates, discovers, rehearses, tries out, and perhaps even develops spontaneous interactions (relationships) between "inner partners."

The class leaders asked you to refrain from contacting the audience visually or otherwise while on stage, to act "as if" the onlookers were not present. Stanislavsky referred to the positive, creative experiencing of this kind of a performance situation as "public solitude": An individual is in public (in front of an audience) but does not make visual or other contact with them and, ideally, experiences a sense of ease and a readiness to enter a creative state.[xviii] Maintaining public solitude would

help you focus your attention on your interaction and your inner partners. For the same reason, the class leaders also encouraged you to keep your attention in the space (rather than, for example, looking out a window) and asked you to refrain from playing with props, so that any impulses you had in you hands and arms would be unencumbered, and so that you could express them directly to your inner partners. They also suggested you to try to stay on your feet (refrain from sitting, lying down or otherwise resting) in order to keep the legs open to impulses and to keep yourself involved in the dramatic balancing act standing up entails.

Lastly, they asked you to keep practicing until one of them stopped the attempt with a "Thank you." The class leaders would then give reflections on your experimenting in terms of the basic principles of the discipline.[xix] Taking advantage of a common (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner terminology, they would use terms like intensity of expression, conductive corporeal tension, provoking, accepting, etc., when commenting on a student's trial.[xx] Initially, these terms will be just abstract concepts. Gradually, however, you will discover the meaning of these terms experientially. You will "fill in" and "fill out" what *intensity of expression*, for example, means based on our own experience.[xxi]

Reflections would consist of observations of what a student did on stage as well as suggestions or questions for further exploration.[xxii] When asked what specifically the class leaders "look for," they said that they will keep the basic principles of the discipline in mind and reflect primarily on the form and qualities of a student's rehearsing and only secondarily on thematic content, especially at the early stages.[xxiii] Class leaders will point out those aspects of the attempt that were fruitful primarily in terms of exploring and establishing the conditions for a spontaneous interaction with their inner partners. They may indicate actions and/or psychosomatic attitudes blocking or frustrating such interaction. They may make suggestions or pose questions for further experimentation and investigation. They said that since the focus was on the interaction and the character of psychosomatic expression, it was possible to engage in multi-lingual classes where students and class leaders do not share the same language. In these classes, like this one, English is used as the *lingua franca* for reflections and discussion, but you are free to practice the discipline in any language at all – even in gibberish.

Reflections are not instructions on how to "do it correctly," the class leaders emphasized, but observations of students' attitudes, actions, and themes in their on-stage experimentations. When a class leader makes a suggestion for a certain path to pursue, it is an offer made based on his/her more advanced experiential understanding of the discipline and its principles. The student is free to accept or reject these offers and

pursue his/her own paths of experimentation. What is vital is that each choice a student makes be a conscious one, or at least one the student eventually becomes conscious of. As Vyskočil states, (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner is about "bringing into consciousness" within freedom (2003a:9).

After the class leaders finish giving their reflections, another student will take his/her turn to rehearse (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner. All students will make at least two, but not more than three, trials per 90-minute session. The class leaders asked you to keep a journal of written reflections of your studies as a way of continuing your investigations through writing.

The class leaders reminded you that being on stage in front of others – being in a performance situation – can be difficult, so they encouraged all the students to give the student alone onstage what Vyskočil calls *wishful attention* – infuse it with an empathetic hope for the individual rehearsing to 'do well' (2005:16,17). Wishful attention can be colored by specific hopes. For example, it can include a wish for the student to meet and get to know her inner partner and establish a mutualistic relationship where all partners benefit from the interaction; for her time on stage to be full of spontaneous and playful interaction; that she surprises herself and makes new discoveries about how she acts; that she gives something to her inner partner and notice what they offer her; or that she goes beyond the limits of her inner fourth wall. Wishful attention is based on the fact that all the students are in the same shoes: You will all eventually take the risk of rehearsing in front of the group, so each one of you will need the supportive attention of the audience. This "shared predicament" cultivates sympathy and empathy in audience members (Čunderle & Roubal 2001:90).

At the end of this introduction, the class leaders asked you to take all the information they had given and "shift it to the back of your head!" They asked all the students to stand up. The group did a few simple warm-up exercises to activate the body and voice, and to get you out of your heads.[xxiv] Afterwards you sat down again and the class leaders repeated the basic procedure:

> Go up on stage. Maintain public solitude: Don't contact the audience visually or otherwise. "Go with" your first impulse to express. Don't wait for the "right" one. Engage your voice and body so that the gesture leaves you, goes out into the space, and returns to you as if towards another.[xxv] Engaging the voice – and this need not mean speaking - is essential. The voice profoundly and personally activates your whole being. It is also the only gesture, the only action that can leave you, go out into and through the

space, and return to you. If possible, notice, perceive, and respond to your expression as a whole, or some aspect of it you find significant, something that attracts your curiosity. Above all - play. So who wants to go first?

You are on stage alone in front of a row of ten people. You have been asked not to contact the audience in any way – visually or otherwise. You have been given no specific subject or theme about which to interact. You have no props. You are there to have a spontaneous interaction with your inner partner (or partners).

What do you do?

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[i] The introductory lesson differs from all other lessons in that it includes a theoretical and procedural introduction to the discipline and its founder. Subsequent (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner classes proceed like the first minus this introduction.

[ii] For a more detailed discussion of performance situations and their potential influence on the interactor (deleterious and empowering) see Komlosi 2009:112-129.

[iii] "A theatre full of people is a splendid sounding board for us. For every moment of real feeling on the stage there is a response, thousands of invisible currents of sympathy and interest streaming back to us. A crowd of spectators oppresses and terrifies an actor, but it also rouses his truly creative energy. In conveying great emotional warmth it gives him faith in himself and his work." Constantin Stanislavski (1989:262-3).

[iv] Vyskočil explains that the audience's attention, "[…]the fact that they're observing, seeing and listening, experiencing what you're doing, what's happening to you in the space with you, *objectivizes* you." (2005:16). This self-objectivization is the result of a debsujectivization: the reduction of one or more selves from a human "singularity" caused by distance between those selves (Makonj 2003:30).

[v] This positive creative experiencing of a performance situation can be understood in terms of Csikszentmihalyi's "Flow." See, for example, Csikszentmihalyi 1996:110-113.

[vi] This is similar to Gordon's dual view of acting:

> […]the verb *to act* has two different meanings. These meanings are complementary and in some respects overlap. In one sense, acting signifies *doing* (i.e., action in the real world); in a secondary sense it signifies *pretending to do* (i.e., symbolic action), usually through the assumption of a role[…] (2006:1)

[vii] This conception of the psychosomatic and (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner's approach to studying interaction through the *experience* of interacting and cultivating an awareness of (and toward) our interacting has resonances with the field of somatics, which understands knowledge as constructed *through* experience and requires that experience be directed or focused through *awareness* (Schiphorst 2006:174).

[viii] Vyskočil chooses "soma" for his understanding of the body (corpus) as a form for man (an individual) incarnate. By employing this term instead of "physical," he distinguishes his existential view from a materialistic one (2006).

[ix] For a detailed discussion of psychosomatic fitness and optimal creative experiencing, please see Komlosi 2009:144-57.

[x] For a detailed discussion of Professor Vyskočil's life and career, please see refer to chapter one of this book. Other literature about Professor Vyskočil in English includes Burian 2000 and Hořínek 1993. Numerous studies have been written about his artistic and educational oeuvre in Czech, notably Michal Čunderle's biographical study and Jan Roubal's treatments of his impact on Czech theatre in Čunderle & Roubal 2001.

[xi] Vyskočil has never seen (his) theatre or (Inter)acting with the Inner Partner as therapy. However, he does acknowledge that it can and tends to have a secondary therapeutic effect (Čunderle & Roubal 2001:81). This is because creative encounters can be a "self-discovery and maturation; a path towards adulthood, creative activity, sensitivity, responsibility and delighting in and rejoicing from existence" (Vyskočil quoted in Čunderle & Roubal 2001:185). This is not a self-centered, self-obsessed activity. It is one based on cultivating mutualistic relating and partnerships.

[xii] Vyskočil states: "I keep realizing that what has motivated me towards authorial acting and its study is freedom" (2003a:9).

[xiii] Vyskočil states: "I was never interested in politics, rather I was more interested in overcoming a feeling of alienation in a way the American beatniks were trying to" (2011b: 12).

[xiv] Vyskočil has gone so far as to state that his theatre: "[…]was more about meeting and studying, about cognition than about producing precious bits[…]it was more about noëtics and ethics than aesthetics" (2003a:10).

[xv] Vyskočil speaks of the ideal space measuring 7m X 4m X 4m (2005:19). A black box theatre/rehearsal space is ideal. Vyskočil characterizes an exemplary space as one "[…]that prompts you to enter into it, be in it and go out of, and beyond, yourself. A space that inspires, doesn't restrict, discourage, or inhibit" (2005:16-7).

[xvi] Vyskočil has made different statements regarding the optimal number of students-participants. In one text, he states that the optimal number ranges from nine to thirteen (2003b:176). In another, he puts the range at seven to ten students, plus one or two class leaders (2005:17). Vyskočil recently remarked that "The optimal number of students shouldn't exceed the number of apostles – twelve…or thirteen" (Vyskočil 2008a). Each class leader has his/her own opinion on the ideal number.

[xvii] There have been a few experimental variations of the standard procedure. These are introduced once students have integrated the standard procedure.

[xviii] "Make a note of your mood; it is what we call Solitude in Public. You are in public because we are all here. It is solitude because you are divided from us by a small circle of attention. During a performance, before an audience of thousands, you can always enclose yourself in this circle like a snail in its shell." (Stanislavski 1989:82). Public solitude is linked to and involves a creative state (1989:262). It typically includes a feeling of ease and comfort similar to that felt when in solitude (1989:7; Carnicke 1998:178).

[xix] At the initial stages of the study process, overwhelmed with the stress and chaos of being in a performance situation, and one they are unfamiliar with, students are limited in the support they can give themselves in meeting with this need. The confusion that invariably inundates students at the beginning stages leaves them with little awareness of what their rehearsing is about. This means that class leaders have a vital role of supporting and encouraging nascent investigations and clarifying possible directions for further study. As external partners who are not fully "in" the rehearsing, class leaders have a more objective view of students' actions, psychosomatic states and themes. At the same time, class leaders are not cold, detached observers; they are engaged with the student through a kinesthetic empathy, so are able to identify subjectively with the student and provide emotional support and encouragement as well.

[xx] Vyskočil is the original author of the basic core of this terminology. He has articulated, discovered, and investigated it throughout the development of the discipline. Class leaders often introduce new concepts and add their personal nuances to already existing ones.

[xxi] The students discover and define these terms based on their own experience, thus articulating and objectivizing their interacting and gradually structuring what is initially a chaotic experience into a more structured one.

[xxii] Each class leader's reflections are indubitably colored by his/her own personality, experiences, interests, and talents. Class leaders are encouraged to be aware of and

open about the subjectivity of their reflections. Class leaders' reflections also provide a model process for students to train their own ability to reflect upon their attitudes and actions with some distance; i.e., more objectively.

[xxiii] In giving their reflections, also class leaders keep in mind the developmental stage (including how long and often the student has been rehearsing) and imagine the student's optimal potential (Hančil 2005:38,45).

[xxiv] Few class leaders do warm-up exercises. Vyskočil does not do them in the classes he leads.

[xxv] This involves being able and willing "to cooperate with what is being created and what is happening without intervening unnecessarily in this process of creation." (Hančil 2005:38).

A version of this text will appear in *(Inter)acting with the Inner Partner – Principles and Practice,* eds. Michal Čunderle & Alexander Komlosi (forthcoming).