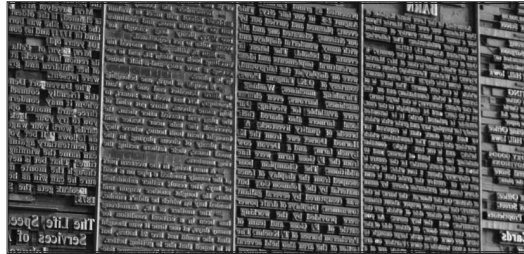


LEARN YOUR LINES – LINES OUT OF CONTEXT

by Lindsay Price



Learning lines comes easy to some, and not-so-easy to others. One of the biggest problems actors can have is that they learn lines solely within the context of the play: they know their lines because of a move they do, or another actor does. They know the line before and the line after. They get into a very specific rhythm.

But what if another actor blanks? Or changes the blocking? Or jumps three pages ahead? If actors are so dependent on a certain rhythm or everything going perfectly, it's a recipe for disaster.

Here are a couple of exercises to get actors out of the habit of learning lines by rote.

Line-Caphony

Have the actors spread out around the space. Ask them to close their eyes and think about their lines.

At the count of three, have the actors start at the top of the play and say their individual lines, all at the same time, as fast as they can.

After a couple of minutes, call out stop.

Question the actors about the exercise:

- ❖ Did anyone have trouble saying the lines without acting?
- ❖ Did anyone get stuck?
- ❖ Where did they get stuck? Have those actors pull out their scripts and circle the lines - this is where they need to do some more memorization work.

Shout Out Game

Pull ten individual lines from the script. Pull them from the middle of monologues, from the beginning, from the end, anywhere. Make sure the list does not go in chronological order.

Next, call out the lines. See who knows what the next line in the play is. Give the actor whose line it is first guess, but then see if anyone else knows. This will give you a clear indication who really knows the play! 🎭



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The Fine Print

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