

Uta Hagen's Object Exercise #1

PHYSICAL DESTINATION

This is about Self Observation. You are NOT INVENTING ANYTHING.

Choose something that happens between now and class: some simple, physical activity, i.e., folding laundry, making a sandwich, organizing a desk, straightening up a room. Something that you're doing in your daily life. You'll find yourself in the middle of doing it or having just done it and realize – Oh, that would be a good Physical Destination Exercise. This exercise should be between 2-4 minutes. Jot down a few notes; make an outline of what you did (Outer Objects) and a few notes of what was running through your head (Inner Objects). These thoughts will often be about something that you have to do in the future (soon) – or that you just did. Just make a note or two on this. The Inner Objects will be more fluid than the Outer Objects (what you do physically).

• MAKING PLACE:

You will recreate your space (living room, or studio apartment, or bedroom or kitchen) as closely as possible in the Studio using the flats and furniture provided, along with personal items that you will bring in to allow yourself to live the life authentically in the Studio space. It won't match exactly what you have at home, but you'll do the best you can. Your personal items give you belief as you're "making place" in the Studio, that, yes, this is now my bedroom (bring in your own bedding so you're not having to look at the studio's duvet cover or throw pillows, etc.): this is now my kitchen with my magnets on the fridge and my dishtowel, my canisters, etc. Do not skimp on the personal items you choose. No large or tall furniture can be on the 4th side as it would block you.

• PROPS/OBJECTS:

When you're doing something with an object (an activity) be careful that it doesn't control you. Example of the jar lid being stuck. If you have to open it, don't have it be so difficult that, in fact, you can't. Don't let props control you.

• ENTRANCES & EXITS:

You must begin with a physical entrance and end with an exit from the room. You may have internal exits and entrances. I don't even like to use these terms. You're simply coming from one place where you were doing something and now you've come into the place where we see you're doing something and then you leave the room to go to another place to do something

- Where are you *coming from?* And what were you just doing?
- Where are you *now?* And what are you doing now?
- Where are you *going?* And what will you be doing?

Remember it's called "Physical Destination" so make sure you're choosing a time when a physical task is involved and there's a need to do it. Do **not** choose exercising or dancing, bouncing a ball, etc. - *anything that is a repetitive motion could go on endlessly*. Do **not** choose passive, intellectual activities for this exercise. Reading a book or working on your laptop won't allow for Physical Destination. They can be part of your exercise, but they cannot be the main part or focus of it.

NO MIMING. Do **not** have a TV or radio on. However, you're welcome to have music playing, if listening to what was playing when you experienced the original 2-4 minutes. You have to use the same music because of how much music can affect us emotionally.

Do not talk to animals or other people. No phone calls in this exercise (#1 – Physical Destination). We're focusing on being grounded and alive in the space.

• **SOME OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Entering in Circumstance. (*Where from and preceding circumstances*)
- Experiencing it as if for the FIRST time. Newly alive.
- Have an objective. Physical as opposed to mental. Although what you're doing will require attention and focus to perform the task. But remember, thoughts and images (Inner Objects) are happening, too.
- Correctly placing your attention is crucial.

• **EXPECTATIONS:** What keeps it fresh every time.

• **TALKING TO YOURSELF:**

Hagen – “Why do we talk to ourselves?”

- To gain control
- Making a List
- Out of boredom
- Self-soothing

Set up 2 rehearsal times: First for 1 hour or 10 times through consecutively; and Second rehearsal for at least 30 minutes or 5 times through. Do it FULL OUT EACH TIME.

FINAL NOTES ON THE DESTINATION EXERCISE

This is all about **self-observation.**

It's imperative to be grounded in time and place. *If you are spaceless, you will become self-conscious.* Know where you are, what you're doing and why, and your attention will be placed correctly: off of yourself and on to the task at hand. Also, you're Inner Objects (thoughts and images) will be running through your head, so your attention will also be on those. Again, you won't have time to be self-conscious. Pay attention to how focus can switch between Outer and Inner. We may be doing a task and thinking about something else for much of it.

We think we do the same thing every day, but we are always impacted by specific circumstances: physical, mental, emotional, etc. Maybe it's raining or I'm tired or I have to go to the grocery store or work was good today and on and on.... In other words, pin down the circumstances and you'll believe it to be that specific day and time when you're rehearsing and performing it. It will be newly alive.

We're living in the moment, NOW. This exercise is not about recreating how you did it at home. Be specific about the physical life (Outer), and the images and thoughts (Inner), then leave them alone, and focus on what you have to do within the circumstances. This requires keen self-observation.