

Sande Shurin Transformational Acting Studios
New York City & Woodstock
Sande Shurin (917)545-5713; Bruce Levy (917)747-8757
email: studio@sandeshurin.com
www.sandeshurin.com

Film Acting

Lets start with the misconception that an actor has to be small when they work on camera. No, they have to understand a few things about acting for film; but Meryl Streep, Al Pacino, Bobby DeNiro, Ed Norton, Sean Penn, Laura Linney are not small actors. Great acting is great acting, first learn to act and then learn the particulars for camera and theatre, versus learning on camera all of the time. If you train that way only, you start working within a box.

That being said I'm going to quote from a few excerpts about Acting for Camera from my book "Star Power"

"Whether auditioning or filming SURRENDER and let the camera in. The camera's job is to ex-ray your soul, magnify your thoughts and project your essence. Do not control or plan your reactions. LISTEN, ASSOCIATE, RESPOND. The more you have transformed into character the clearer you become about what you're listening for and what you are THINKING. Film is BEHAVIORAL, if anything is forced or contrived it becomes monstrously magnified. Behavior is memorable; I forever remember the scene in "Pulp Fiction" at the diner where Tim Roth and Amanda Plummer jump up on the table and say "Get your hands up". Without the jump it's just another robbery.

Acting for film is also about being creative move to move. You get your positions for the camera, called your marks. How you get there and what goes on for you as you get there is an expression of your talent, imagination, creativity and risk-taking.

For example Jicky Schnee (a very talented actress that I work with) in her latest film "The Afterlight" walks from the river across a field towards her house. Her walk reflected the anger, fed-up frustration, distress and dismay more than any words could say.

Here is a 8 point list of reminders for acting On Camera

1-Surrender

Allow the camera in

2- Thoughts

Just have them, don't act it out

3-Know your marks

Be creative move to move. That is from 1 mark to another.

4-Behavior

Acting for film is behavioral. It is the behavior the audience remembers.

5-Intensity

Instead of getting louder angrier (which has a tendency to be an overdone choice and scrunches up your face too much for a close up; increase the inner intensity. You can whisper and still be intense.

6-Time Lines

Chart out what's going on for you and how you are different physically, emotionally, energetically, psychologically from the last shot you did until the next shot.

7-Shooting out of Sequence

Expect to shoot your scenes in a seemingly random order. It's only that way to you. Time Lines will help you. Learn all of your lines, so that if suddenly there's a change in shooting schedule you will be ready.

8-Revealing

Put attention on what you can reveal in each take that hasn't been revealed before.

Film is a visual medium. You are a moving image that moves the story forward sometimes covering a character over their lifetime, all accomplished in the course of 2 hours. As an actor you have to go there, take after take, time after time.

How do you do it? Study, learn, and work. Filming is an encompassing event. As Anthony Rapp explains in an interview from my book *Star Power* "With theatre you put it all out, then go home and have a life; acting in film, with all its intensity, long hours and being all consuming is like going away to summer camp".

Yes it is long, but forever thrilling. Wishing you many fantastic years before the camera.

-Sande Shurin