**Viewpoints Training**

The Viewpoints allows a group of actors to function together spontaneously and intuitively, and to generate bold, theatrical work quickly. It develops flexibility, articulation, and strength in movement and makes ensemble playing really possible.

"As training, the Viewpoints function much as scales do for a pianist or working at the barre does for the ballet dancer." For later rehearsals, "they become a shorthand for communication.”

– Tina Landau

The Nine Viewpoints Are:

The Four Viewpoints of **Time** (Tempo, Duration, Kinesthetic Response, Repetition)

and Five Viewpoints of **Space** (Shape, Gesture, Architecture, Relationship and Topography).

Part I:

Exploring the viewpoints separately.

By exploring each viewpoint individually, the actor will:

1. begin to discover a range of choices available to her in performance.
2. gain an awareness of where her comfort levels/habits are as an actor.
3. begin to push beyond her comfort levels to find greater freedom and range.

Part II:

Exploring the viewpoints together.

By exploring the viewpoints together as a system of performance, the ensemble will:

1. like a jazz ensemble, the actors will begin to anticipate their fellow ensemble members so as to work as a cohesive whole.
2. Discover the subtleties of storytelling through movement.
3. Learn how to be both a leader and a follower
4. Listen and cultivate a heightened sense of physical awareness.

Part III:

Exploring the Viewpoints in Performance.

By exploring the viewpoints in performance, the class will:

1. Collaborate creatively and effectively with an ensemble.
2. Learn how to create original composition performances.
3. Expand their individual understanding of performance and storytelling.

**\*\*Suzuki Method**

Along with Viewpoints we will be peppering the training with elements of Suzuki work. It is very intense and physically demanding so it will be more of an introduction than a full training.

Developed by internationally acclaimed director Tadashi Suzuki and the [Suzuki Company of Toga](http://www.scot-suzukicompany.com/en/" \t "_blank), the Suzuki Method’s principal concern is uncovering the actor’s innate expressive abilities. A rigorous physical discipline drawn from such diverse influences as ballet, traditional Japanese and Greek theater, and martial arts, the training seeks to heighten the actor’s emotional and physical power and commitment to each moment on the stage. Attention is on the lower body and a vocabulary of footwork, sharpening the actor’s breath control and concentration.

The Suzuki Method and Viewpoints are two of the most essential components of my creative toolkit. They afford the artist control in order to make conscious, deliberate choices; they encourage flexibility and freedom in the exploration of one’s instincts; they demand presence and moment-to-moment living in space; and they promote a range of versatility beyond the constraints of one’s habitual nature. Essentially, they continually awaken the fact that my mind, body, and spirit are tools for expression, with as many possibilities as are present in the human experience. Not a bad tool, I think.”

—Adrian Rieder, theatre artist/playwright

Like the Viewpoints, [the Suzuki Method](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ek7S1japgw4" \t "_blank) is a relatively new form of training, originated in Japan by Tadashi Suzuki. "Many people think the Suzuki Method is a lot of grueling exercises that make them stronger. Indeed you will sweat, your muscles will be sore, you will spend a lot of time deep in your quads stomping and moving so slowly that all your muscles shake. But what's the difference between that and a really gruesome gym workout? Suzuki is actually actor-training. The strength and agility and the bigger voice and the better breathing that you get are good side effects, while you are actually practicing focus and commitment and imagination and awareness. But you can't practice those things without a rigorous form.

"If I could just use two words to say what Suzuki is about, I would say: whole body," Fracé adds. "The audience can see the whole body on stage, so you may as well be aware of what it's doing and be using it to say everything that you mean to say."

Orenstein speaks of Suzuki's psychophysical benefits: "Which came first, the psychological or the physical? A lot of people think that the psychological comes first. I think that the physical comes first, and the psychological can follow. If you can put yourself in a true physical circumstance—the more extreme the better—you don't have to generate anything. You can just live through it."

(from *American Theatre Magazine*, January 2011)

What does this training prepare you for?

1. Period Styles including Greek, Commedia Dell’arte, Restoration Comedy, Shakespeare and Clowning.
2. Heightened language text work.
3. Devised Theater projects
4. Any kind of naturalistic, modern acting.