

What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba?

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Abstract: Starting from the article by Leslie Forster Stevenson, professor at the Department of Philosophy and Anthropology at the University of St Andrews in the UK, entitled *Twelve Conception of Imagination*², which lists (without pretending to be exhaustive) twelve of the most used and influential conceptions on imagination, we have succeeded in identifying some of the most important characteristics of scenic talent. The actor or theatre pedagogue can thus use and work with the concept of talent, create creative strategies, develop different stratagems of practice and development, depending on the skills that will be trained.

Key words: creative imagination, intuition, inspiration, prediction, internal elaboration, transposition, invention, internal vision, adjustment, creative personality and individuality, innovation and originality, talent

*O! what a rogue and peasant slave am I:
Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit
That from her working all his visage wann'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!*

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2. Leslie Stevenson, "Twelve Conceptions of Imagination," *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 43, no. 3 (July 1, 2003): 238–59, <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjaesthetics/43.3.238>.

For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba

*That he should weep for her?*³

What's Hecuba to an actor? Inspiration or prediction? Internal elaboration, fusion and transposition? Internal vision, adjustment and belief? Emotional intelligence, affectivity and spontaneity? Affective memory? Creative thinking? Creativity? Originality? Scenic expression? Affectivity and transposition? Scenic transfiguration? Internal elaboration, intuition? Perception and sensation? Or maybe empathy? Analogy and fantasy? Emotion? Talent. But what's the talent? Imagination, the place where images and representations come to life. Imaginary. The sum of these processes. Basic tools in the creative process and important characteristics of scenic talent.

The imagination of an actor is a tool for artistic creation, but its impact goes beyond the mind and soul of the artist as it constantly engages the mind and soul of the audience; it becomes an instrument of seduction, stimulating the receptor through various analogies, similitudes and fantasies. The ways in which an actor manages to materialize and transpose the products of his/her imagination on stage and, equally important, the way in which he/she makes an invisible (imaginary) object present to the perception of the spectator should be at the core of any theatrical performance. An actor's extraordinary capacity to create images, to give life to representations, to transform them into real facts or beliefs, and to deform them with equal force (by ensuring and facilitating both the selection and combination of images stemming from a subject's previous experiences, as the production of new images, with no correspondent in the material reality), all come from imagination. The imagination of the actor allows him/her to create and project fictional realities or fantastic events that go beyond perceived reality, in front of the audience; it gives an actor the power to provide different versions of reality, to defy the limits of verisimilitude and to explore not only what seems possible but also the impossible. Therefore, one of the primary instruments the actor works with, the *thing* Hamlet is talking about is his imagination, a mechanism that connects with all the other mental processes

3. William Shakespeare, "Hamlet," in *Shakespeare's Hamlet*, ed. Sidney Lamb (New York: Hungry Minds, 2000), 92.

necessary in the art of stage creation. Thus, imagination is not only an integral part of the scenic talent but is the element that makes the work to be expressive, which gives individuality and artistic originality.

Starting from the article by Leslie Forster Stevenson, professor at the Department of Philosophy and Anthropology at the University of St Andrews in the UK, entitled *Twelve Conception of Imagination*⁴, which lists (without pretending to be exhaustive) twelve of the most used and influential conceptions on imagination, we have succeeded in identifying some of the most important characteristics of scenic talent. The actor or theatre pedagogue can thus use and work with the concept of talent, create creative strategies, develop different stratagems of practice and development, depending on the skills that will be trained.

Stevenson offers a broad philosophical view on some of the most common approaches of the concept of imagination. Very rich in examples and extensively preoccupied to show the theoretical productivity of the concept of imagination, her perspective makes reference to different fields of research, ranging from the philosophy of the mind to aesthetics, ethics or poetry to religion.

Being extremely diverse, these conceptions tend to vary a lot, and, at the same time, they shed a new light on the different capacities of the individual. Among these, as formulated by Stevenson, some of the most common are:

the ability to think of something not presently perceived, but spatio-temporally real; the ability to think of whatever one acknowledges as possible in the spatio-temporal world; the liability to think of something that the subject believes to be real, but which is not; the ability to think of things that one conceives of as fictional; the ability to entertain mental images; the ability to think of anything at all; the non-rational operations of the mind, that is those explicable, in terms of causes rather than reasons; the ability to form perceptual beliefs about public objects in space and time; the ability to sensuously appreciate works of art or objects of natural beauty without classifying them under concepts or thinking of them as useful; the ability to create works of art that encourage such sensuous appreciation; the

4. Stevenson, "Twelve Conceptions of Imagination."

ability to appreciate things that are revelatory or expressive of the meaning of human life ; the ability to create works of art that express something deep about the meaning of life⁵.

In the lineage of Stevenson's philosophical perspective and conceptual classifications concerning imagination, which were a stepping-stone to our investigation, we illustrated the most important qualities of creative imagination and those of scenic talent. As a result, we have identified the following characteristics depending on each conception. We will start from the first definition that Stevenson gives to the concept of imagination:

The ability to think of something not presently perceived, but spatio-temporally real⁶

The absence of a thing in the playing area is for both the actor and the viewer, the magic of a dream waiting to be revealed to them in the mind and in the body; to bring to present an absent object. Through his/her imagination, the actor is able not only to reproduce his/her past, but to transform it, to point it, to signify it, to transform it into symbolic images, and last but not least, to bring it at present. Depending on a certain artistic approach, he/she evokes, completes, provokes and recreates some previously perceived material in pictorial, vivid and significant images. Reproductive, creative imagination has this feature to update the subject's experience based on a certain present and the extraordinary feature of creating new images without a correspondent in the previous experience of the subject. The actor will combine and transform, voluntarily and intuitively, the concrete, the image, the sensory impression with abstract evaluations, will associate some abstract concepts with the most interesting images, will build, develop and create original projects, will be able to design both in the future and in past, in the space of memory, but also in the space of unreal, the non-existent and the fantasy. Imagination, through its mechanisms of amalgamation or agglutination, can reorganize the lived memories, create them in the sense of the scenic situations, thus exploring unknown things and unknown events,

5. Stevenson, 238.

6. Stevenson, 239.

but possible in the future. This reproductive imaging operation procedure provides the actor with the infinite possibilities of creating fantastic worlds, through amalgamation and sticking together real, objective elements consisting of invented imagery and fantasy. The actor uses logical operations in the process of creation through various methods: analogy, induction, deduction, and comparison of two objects or situations in order to establish a series of similarities and common traits. It creates fiction where his/her memory or reproductive imagination does not find support, includes, modifies and analyses. Conclusions, analogies, hypotheses, and inventions of imaginations will permanently drive the actor into his/her cognitive and affective analysis of the role. They are the ones who guide the imaginative process, guide the elements and details necessary for the scenic situations, create the fantastic and the fictional world.

Imagination, memory and affection, by deducting, understanding and mental shaping to the smallest details of the embodied model, through substituting and scenic prefiguration. The prefiguration consists in the elaboration of an expressive internal image in *which suppositional imagination*⁷ takes place, i.e. the imaginative deduction of a behavior, its understanding and knowledge through a process of replication of the mental state of the other, *then enactment imagination*⁸ involving substitution by adopting this behavior and act of self-projection by correlating the elaborated mental images and the elements of the scenic movement on which the character is born. The latter is a clear indicator of scenic prefiguration, where the actor, from the multitude of imaginable elements of movement, will only project those that serve the scenic task. A person's ability to think of a certain mental state of another person, whose existence is deducted, scenic becomes visible by prefiguring an expressive internal image of the model and correlating it by self-projection with the elements of the scenic movement on which it is made. The actor is himself/herself the instrument of his/her own creation, he/she carries out an act of self-projection. Expression of emotion is a form or a means of expressing attitudes, behavioral patterns, and relationships with real or imagined world. It is for the actor a form of expression of the entire imagined world.

7. Alvin Goldman, *Stimulating Minds: The Philosophy, Psychology and Neuroscience of Mindreading* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 47.

8. Goldman, 47.

The ability to prefigure and translate the actor into scenic reality. Thus, drawing a parallel between Stevenson's first conception of imagination and scenic talent, we have determined the following qualities of the creative imagination and implicitly of the scenic talent: the capacity of imagination to illustrate a certain imaginative content or an absent object, which was previously perceived under the form of a concrete-intuitive image, of a symbolic image. The capacity of imagination to amplify or diminish a previous experience. The capacity of imagination to reproduce or reiterate an experience, to evoke and update an experience. In this case, the imaginative product is seen as an authentic perception. The capacity of imagination to evoke expressive and original representations with the help of memory. The capacity of imagination to create an indirect causal relation between an actor's previous experience(s) with an absent object and his/her present thoughts concerning it: accommodation. The capacity of imagination to anticipate and to attribute significance to a certain product, by creating an adaptive situation of correspondence between the products of imagination and present reality; the capacity of imagination to amalgamate and agglutinate segments from a single experience or from a number of situations in order to create a new image; the capacity of imagination to transform what is familiar into something that is unknown and its ability to create, transform and combine representations into new and original imagistic sequences; the capacity of imagination to mentally represent images from a part and from the imaginary world a part presupposes; the capacity of imagination to speculate with respect to the past and the future, to anticipate; the capacity of imagination to adapt to possible innovations; the capacity of imagination to participate in creating concepts and notions, its capacity to create mental representations: imagination as background for logical thinking; the capacity to detect and speculate on different imagined states or behaviors, to adopt them and project them under the form of a significant internal image.

Stevenson's next definition refers to the *ability to think of whatever one acknowledges as possible in the spatio-temporal world*⁹ or in our context, the actor's ability to think of anything and perceive that anything as being possible in the space-temporal world, that is, in the scenic reality. The actor constantly generates fictitious truths and beliefs, behaving according to the

9. Stevenson, "Twelve Conceptions of Imagination," 241.

same principle *as if*. In order to be able to generate these fictitious truths and beliefs, the actor must first create the context that will cause such behavior.

If does not speak about an unrealistic fact, but about one that might be, about a possibility and a possible context. In this case the internal or external action will be generated without the involvement of the lie, and it brings with it an assumption that will become through imagination an authentic reality. The real possibility of a fact will make the actor move and act, excluding any kind of physical or physical effort, because it is an impulse and an excitative. Thus, the possibilities and the assumptions will bring about the faith and the feeling of truth, because the invention has become possible and realizable in reality. Therefore, the creation of the scenic context starts from an assumption, from an *if* that will give rise to a possible reality in which the actor will act *as if*, logically and consistently. The creation of the imaginary material of the character in the smallest detail, from formulating the assumptions with the help of *if*, until their invention, has the practical aim of creating *skillfulness* through which imagination will create possible, logical, consistent and truthful probabilities. Following this convention, we determined the following characteristic of the creative imagination and implicitly of the scenic talent:

The capacity of imaginative self-projection: the ability of imagination to create, develop and motivate a presupposition by using the *if* notion; to create possible realities in which the actor behaves *as if*.

The third definition underlined by Stevenson is *The liability to think of something that the subject believes to be real, but which is not*¹⁰.

This conception brings into discussion the existence of premises from which the fictional playing starts, that will determine the player (performer)'s belief in the subjective reality. Thus, the creation of a possible reality by the actor, the seriousness of the playing and the power of self-illusioning, the creation of analogies with the objective reality will implicitly attract the feeling of truth and faith in the truth of the supposed and claimed playing. The actor's reaction and behavior towards an imagined, fictional world is influenced by the righteousness and logicalness with which he/she builds the possible reality, his/her desire to replicate. The actor's interaction with this possible reality will lead to the emergence of justifications, scenic truth

10. Stevenson, 242.

and belief. Imagination has the function of adapting the actor to an unreal and fictional hypostasis. This gives the actor the opportunity to fit into new, previously unknown and unrecognized contexts, not limiting his/her knowledge to a perceived experience. The actor will be able to experience a presumed and whenever possible reality, through the adaptive function and the ludic ability of imagination. Here we talk about the fluidity of imagination, of creative, productive imagination. The actor must permanently justify the inventions and assumptions of his/her fabrication. By creating logical conditions and circumstances, the belief and the feeling of truth will be born fair, sincere and authentic. Therefore, the next four abilities of creative imagination form the capacity of imagination to develop the initial premises: its elasticity and fluidity, the capacity of imagination to facilitate the production of a requested type of behaviour: the identification, the prefiguration and expressivity of imagination, the capacity of imagination to induce a process of quarantine: the double power of imagination and the ludic capacity of imagination are part of the scenic talent.

*The ability to think of things that one conceives of as fictional*¹¹ is the next definition given to the concept of imagination in a broad sense. As for the scenic world, imagining and building the fictional world of the role implies the originality and creativity of imagination and thought. The two instruments provide the actor throughout the complex creative process of internal and external elaboration, actions and solutions of symbol value, structured, projected, transposed and materialized in an expressive form until, as Gheorghe Neașu states, the mental image is identified with expressive realization of the actor as an instrument and his/her emotional attitudes will correspond to the imagined and projected scenic situations¹². The internal and external elaboration of the fictional world of the character and their exteriorization in an expressive scenic way are part of the originality of creative imagination of realizing and communicating organically and originally a product of great value to all those involved in the transposition act, partners and audience. The relationship between the imaginary, fictional, actor's inner world and its external elaboration, expressed in a symbolic and expressive way,

11. Stevenson, 243.

12. Gheorghe Neașu, *Transpunere și expresivitate scenică* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei RSR, 1971), 94.

emphasizes the originality of imagination and, implicitly, the actor's talent. We therefore have the capacity of imagination to think up and represent the unreal or even the absurd, without any rejection or any loss of its value and aesthetic function, the capacity and expressivity of imagination and reason to assume and develop a purely fictional material, be it internal or external, and to impersonate it in a composition, in an artistic form and the capacity of imagination to communicate a product, in an original and organic, way by merging two elements: the internal elaboration of the scenic message and its scenic, original expression.

*The ability to entertain mental images*¹³ is the fourth conception being analyzed. The actor's ability to have mental images and representations on stage is the primary condition of talent and expressiveness of imagination. The actor needs to know how to develop this capacity, to work with imagination and with his/her own creative visions. He/she must allow them to enter into his/her subconscious, to transform them and let them return to the surface in a new, powerful, living and original form. He/she must be in the search for active images, he/she must know how to transform, evoke and create them. In this respect, we can highlight the following characteristics of imagination: the capacity of imagination to develop internal visions, strong images, visual and auditory sensations, to generate and attract similar emotions that concur with an imaginary object and which will further reflect other visions that are related to the visions of the character, the capacity of imagination to play an internal film made of images which is in conformity with *if* or with different inventions of imagination and with other suggested situations, and the ability to generate internal and external actions.

The fifth conception brought into discussion is *the ability to think of anything at all*¹⁴, in our case, not only the actor's ability to generate mental images, but especially his/her power to conceive, create and represent them on scene. The actor's ability to create mental images and representations, to find original solutions, to develop new ideas and to represent them scenically is part of the actor's power to materialize, concretize and incorporate the unseen, imaginary world of the character. Intensity and veracity of representation,

13. Stevenson, "Twelve Conceptions of Imagination," 243.

14. Stevenson, 245.

as well as the actor's belief in his/her own image. Thus, as an image to be expressive, it must first of all have a great intensity, be strong, pregnant, alive, fresh and very clear.

The intensity of representation can be determined by many conditions. It must be well fixed; the subject must have a large number of perceptual or imaginative contacts with the object and be constantly updated. Given that in our case we are talking about representations that have as their generative source memory and imagination, their creation on a scenic plane underlines the actor's capacity of imaginative transposition, the degree of involvement or the belief in the evoked image. Also, the stability of the image, that is to say, the duration of maintaining in the clear field of consciousness of updated or generated representations at the moment of imagination¹⁵ shows the significance of the representation. The expressive power of imagination: the organic relationship between representations evoked by memory and reproductive imagination, physical expression, scenic embodiment. In conclusion, scenic talent also means the capacity of imagination to develop an internal model and to translate it into a certain expression (the expressive power of imagination: an organic relationship between representations evoked by both memory and the reproductive imagination and the physical expression, the scenic transposition), the uniqueness of imagination: the blending of imagination, of an internal vision, of the image that arises from this process (the relationship between the body, the voice and the psychological level).

*The non-rational operations of the mind, that is those explicable, in terms of causes rather than reasons*¹⁶ is the seventh definition given by Stevenson to the concept of imagination.

In the scenic context, Stevenson's sixth definition refers to the non-rational operations used by the actor to construct his/her work, operations closely related to imagination, thinking, feeling and sensation. They are the ones that contribute to perceiving the invisible, either through perceptual, cognitive and sensory knowledge, or through extrasensory knowledge, by an understanding, assumption or intuitive anticipation of things, events, emotional states or behaviors. Through unpredictable elements, the actor creates an intuitive,

15. Mihai Golu, *Fundamentele Psihologiei*, 5th ed. (Bucharest: Editura Fundației România de Măine, 2007), 418.

16. Stevenson, "Twelve Conceptions of Imagination," 247.

visual, auditory, kinesthetic model. An intuitive acting image that has, through its originality and its artistic suggestive power, the ability to be communicatively-scenically exteriorized, as Neacșu said¹⁷. In this case, the feeling, sensation or intuition of things gives the conduct a purpose (the development of the intuitive model requires a "functional conduct"), guides it and delivers the energies necessary for the action. Therefore, the characteristics of scenic talent in this case refer to: the intuitive capacity as a fundamental trait of creative imagination and creativity: the ability to predict stage tasks in a non-rational, plastic and symbolic, to create live and flexible images concerning the partners on stage and any other stage signals. The capacity of imagination to generate and then operate with representations and images: the flexibility of imagination to interpret and reflect purely intuitive traits of an experience, the capacity to restructure and to reproduce a representation or a previous situation in an intuitive way, the capacity to develop and intuitively anticipate, to invent original images, to predict and to intuitively transform emotions and an imagined model.

The eighth conception on imagination is *the ability to form perceptual beliefs about public objects in space and time*.¹⁸

If, in the case of inspiration and intuitions, the actor or artist continuously relates and combines the reflexive and methodical work of thinking and imagination with a certain spontaneous ecstasy, in the case of convictions through synthesis, in the most general sense, imagination is the necessary ingredient for perception itself. Imagination is the one that involuntarily interferes with the understanding and sensitive knowledge of things, it is the one that forms beliefs without the subject being aware of its action on its senses, it is the one that in the case of the scenic creation manifests itself originally. The ability of imagination to create beliefs based on perception, but which are not justifiable, understandable and motivated in a certain way. They are irrational, just as fictions created unconsciously by the individual points out not only the capacity of imagination to form and create convictions and beliefs based on impressions and spontaneous previous perceptions that are involuntary and irrational: the natural tendency

17. Neacșu, *Transpunere Și Expresivitate Scenică*, 64.

18. Stevenson, "Twelve Conceptions of Imagination," 249.

of an actor to illusion, a fundamental trait of artistic personality and talent but also the capacity of imagination to trigger emotions and irrational or negative affective states.

The ninth definition given by Stevenson refers to *the ability to sensuously appreciate works of art or objects of natural beauty without classifying them under concepts or thinking of them as useful*.¹⁹

In the case of the empathy of reception, the actor's imagination should have the capacity to insight and facilitate communication and empathic exchange through the two forms of conduct proposed by Jeanine Maucorps. These two forms refer both to self-empathy as signaling an inverse direction from the other toward me, determined by the way we believe we are seen by another²⁰ (in our case the partner and the audience) and the allo-empathy in which the direction of the relationship is from the other to the other, that is, the way in which we believe that a person stands in the place of another person²¹ (i.e. the ability of the actor to choose, create and communicate expressive forms that will strike a chord by transposing into the reference system of the other).

The actor's ability to appreciate with the help of senses the works of art, without classifying them in terms of use, or finding them useful in the context being analyzed, emphasizes the ability of the imagination to build, rebuild, and play with analogies and associations, with representations of memory and to anticipate, visualize and mentally test different possibilities. This conception also highlights the productive function of imagination to create forms and to put them in original contexts and the affective-empathic side through which the subject manages to understand, transpose or prefigure a certain imagined model.

Some other characteristics of scenic talent can be so the capacity of imagination to adapt and to communicate a stage reality that will influence both one's own perception and the receptor's perception, the capacity of imagination to play with ideas, images and forms, to create them and to transpose them on stage; the capacity of imagination to associate information, representations and perceptions by using the following processes: analogy, omission,

19. Stevenson, 253.

20. Stroe Marcus, *Empatie Și Personalitate* (Bucharest: Editura Atos, 1997), 169.

21. Ibidem.

appropriation, amalgamation, association, prediction, invocation, substitution and emphatic fusion.

The tenth conception, *the ability to create works of art that encourage such sensuous appreciation*,²² refers to a special kind of imagination, as Stevenson says, which is involved in performing works or works of art, that creative or genius imagination that produces something truly original, something that has no definite rule. The actor's visions are controlled and integrated into a general anticipatory plan, in a guiding plan outlined according to the criteria of conventionality and the plausibility that the actor will cover in relation to the theme or product he/she wishes to obtain. In this case, the product can embody not only the unreal but also the absurd, without losing its value and aesthetic function or without being rejected. The creative imagination is synonymous with the invention, with the permanent creation of new hypotheses and hypostases of the man of genius, being the power with which the spirit brings, revives and gives life to missing objects, situations and events, or those that have never existed. Innovation and invention consists not only in the recombination of the already existing elements into a new form, into a product with new look and properties, non-existent to the original object, into changing a point of view about a certain object and putting it in various hypostases and relationships, but also in the action of imagining things in a new, special way, resorting to a fake thing as if it was true. The power of imagination to create, develop and conceive of complex projects and virtual worlds, to generate images without correspondence in reality or in the previous experience of the subject, and the imaginative product is mirrored in various expressive, symbolic, plastic and original forms.

In this case, we will highlight some other predispositions of the acting talent that relate to the capacity of imagination to combine scattered elements and transform them into meaningful, plastic and organic images; these images are at the basis of a new, original and revelatory product; the flexibility, mobility and adaptability of imagination that make it able to complete, restructure and invent images, to generate ideas and solutions, to evoke representations of memory or to create and think up illusions - the resolving power of imagination. The capacity of imagination to adapt to an imaginary model, substitution and expressive transfiguration.

22. Stevenson, "Twelve Conceptions of Imagination," 253.

The last two concepts analyzed refer to *the ability to appreciate things that are revelatory or expressive of the meaning of human life*²³ and *the ability to create works of art that express something deep about the meaning of life*.²⁴

The visionary side of the creative imagination that reveals the sensitive and profound expression of human life and universal truth through the aesthetic form of the artist's feelings and ability *to appreciate things that are revelatory or expressive of the meaning of human life*. In this case, the creative imagination has the function of expressing the real or the unreal and revealing some hidden truths. When the actor manages to penetrate into the hearts of his/her letters, his/her words, his/her phrases, his/her thoughts and his/her pictures, as Stanislavski says, and when he/she succeeds in transfiguring them scenically through his/her creative imagination, he/she brings the spectator closer to his/her poetic work and his/her own soul. So we will uncover the new elements necessary for the actor in his/her artistic approach and implicitly some new characteristics of the scenic talent: the capacity of imagination to create revealing images or to find legitimate analogies between an actor's inner life and the life of the author, of the playwright: the capacity of the actor to find or create inner, individual, correspondences between the themes suggested by the author and his/hers own creative personality (idea, image, super-theme) that will guide him/her throughout the duration of a stage work; the capacity of imagination to create plausible and veridical realities and worlds that will act upon the receptor in a revealing way generating emotions; the capacity of imagination to stimulate, to indicate or to evoke and reveal hidden contents; the capacity of imagination to project, anticipate, explore and substitute.

*The ability to create works of art that express something deep about the meaning of life*²⁵ highlights the extraordinary power of the creative fantasy of an artist through which he/she creates fabulous, fantastic and original worlds. It refers to his/her ability to complete an artistic product with a great aesthetic value and its cathartic function.

23. Stevenson, 254.

24. Stevenson, 258.

25. Ibidem.

In this case, the ability to create works of art expressing the depth of the meaning of life, as opposed to the products of simple fantasy, complements and completes through the following characteristics the global and full image of the actor's creative imagination: the capacity of imagination to compensate, to create emotional discharges (*catharsis*) and a feeling of purification. The capacity of imagination to adjust the moral standard of humanity through aesthetic emotions.

The actor creates live images of his/her imagination, which will create powerful sensations, and imaginative products can become the object of perception, of imaginary as a product. The artistic imaginary is a return of the artist in the past, in the privacy of his/her inner space, from which he/she will extract his/her seemingly forgotten objects, in which his/her fancies, phantasms and fantasies are hidden, in which memory and imagination create oneiric realities. It is all about the artist's context of creating and inventing, it is subconscious, creativity, memory, pulse, desire, dream and imagination. The imaginary of each artist is in a permanent connection with his/her past or his/her future, with the fantasies, dreams and desires that will shape his/her personality and being.

In the case of scenic art, the imaginary has a double meaning. The first refers to the individual and personal world of each actor (from which he/she will extract the elements necessary for the future creation), and the second refers to the material the actor creates, namely his/her work or his/her stage representation. Therefore, the actor's imaginary is the material through which imagination will project elements of the past or will create a possible future, will structure or restructure strategies by multiplying, amplifying or diminishing mental experiences, will creating or solve possible situations, will bring into reality images and representations, will work independently both in dream and in reality, will easily grasp the suggested things and will develop, transform and recreate them (through a "imaginative initiative"²⁶). The actor's imagination will also encompass the outcome of these processes, a new creation, a virtual, fictional, imaginary and new world, a concrete, present and possible world, the work of art itself, represented in a scenic way.

26. v. Konstantin Stanislavski, *An Actor's Work*, ed. Jean Benedetti (London: Routledge, 2008).

In conclusion, the imaginary, in a scenic context, allows the actor to close himself/herself, to live, experiment and extract the material with which to build his/her artistic work, but will also become the product of his/her imagination by creating a world that is parallel and competing with the real world, because, in the words of psychologist Mielu Zlate, it does not appear to be the equivalent of objective reality, but as an illusion, a separate world, a fiction²⁷. How will he/she make the impossible, possible, how will he/she make the invisible visible? Through his/her talent.

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27. Mielu Zlate, *Psihologia mecanismelor cognitive* (Iași: Polirom, 1999), 492.