**Realism history**

Realism in the theatre was a general movement that began in the 19th-century theatre, around the

1870s, and remained present through much of the 20th century. It developed a set of dramatic and

theatrical conventions with the aim of bringing a greater fidelity of real life to texts and performances.

Though never a coherent group, Realism is recognized as the first modern movement in art, which

rejected traditional forms of art, literature, and social organization as outmoded in the wake of the

Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution.

**- Characters are believable, everyday types.**

**- Costumes are authentic.**

**- The realist movement in the theatre and subsequent performance style have greatly influenced 20th century theatre and cinema and its effects are still being felt today.**

**-Settings for realistic plays are often bland (deliberately ordinary), dialogue is not heightened for effect, but that of everyday speech (vernacular).**

Realism is broadly considered the beginning of modern art. This is due to its conviction that

everyday life and the modern world were suitable subjects for art. Philosophically, Realism embraced

the progressive aims of modernism, seeking new truths through the reexamination and overturning of

traditional systems of values and beliefs.

A new type of acting was required to replace the declamatory conventions of the well-made play with a technique capable of conveying the speech and movements found in the domestic situations of everyday life.

Stanislavski went on to develop his 'system', which is a form of actor training that is particularly well-suited to psychological realism. Basically the actors try to be embodiments of their roles.

**What is Stanislavski Technique?**

You might have heard of Stanislavski and his ‘technique’; his name is used a lot in acting classes; but it

can be tricky to understand what Stanislavski Technique or Method actually is. Here, I’m going to give

you an overview of it and how it could be helpful to you on your Acting journey!

**What is Stanislavski Technique? A short history.**

Born in 1863, Konstantin Stanislavski was a Russian actor, director and theatre practitioner. Stanislavski

Technique stems from his theatre practice and is still used by actors all around the world today.

The method is an actor training system made up of various different techniques designed to allow actors

to create believable characters and help them to really put themselves in the place of a character. Much

of the technique centres around Given Circumstances and the Magic If; which I’ll look at in a little bit

more detail below.

**Stanislavski and his Given Circumstances**

Understanding the world of your character is absolutely vital to creating a believable performance;

Stanislavski used this idea to create Given Circumstances. The first step towards doing this is going

through the play and writing down all the facts about your character you can find! Example questions

you might ask as you go through the script could be: Where Am I? When is it? (The year/day/time of

day etc) Who Am I? (Name/age/family history/what you do for work) What relationships do I have?

What has happened before the play started?

Once you’ve found out everything you can about your Given Circumstances, you should have lots of

material to help you to start understanding your character. They are just as human as you are and need

to have as comprehensive a world as you do!

**The Magic If**

Stanislavski describes The Magic If as being able to imagine a character’s given circumstances enough to

understand what that character might do in any situation that arises. So when something happens to

your character in the play you can understand how they would respond because you know so much

about the world that they exist in.

**Tasks and Objectives**

Once you have understood the Given Circumstances and mastered the Magic If, Stanislavski encourages

the actor to unearth their character’s ‘tasks’ or ‘objectives’. Characters always have a number of ‘tasks’

they wish to solve. To find this out you ask ‘What Do I Want?’ in each scene and in the play as a whole.

For example, in The Lion King, Scar wants to become King, so his task is to kill Mufasa.

**Why should I study Stanislavski Technique?**

But if Stanislavski was around over a hundred years ago, isn’t it a bit old fashioned? Well, no!

Stanislavski’s training technique has been used for a century by actors across the world and still remains

thought of as one of the best systems for learning. And it’s a really helpful tool for everyone, no matter

what your level or ability.

If you want to understand the way to create a character and become a more truthful actor, studying

Stanislavski is always going to help you unlock those skills and take your training to the next level!