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International Theatrical Educational Programs: Moscow Art Theatre School Experience

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Abstract

This paper presents research results regarding the creation, development and implementation of the international theatrical educational programs organized by the Moscow Art Theatre School together with leading American universities: the first program carried out together with the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Centre; the first international Master's theatre program carried out together with Carnegie Mellon University; the international Master's theatre program, which is currently being carried out together with the American Repertory Theatre at Harvard University, and the short-term international theatrical educational program carried out together with Wayne State University in Detroit (Michigan). The results confirm the necessity of carrying out international theatrical educational programs for training foreign students which is facilitated by the ongoing rise in global student mobility.

Keywords: education, international programs, mobility, Moscow Art Theatre School, Stanislavsky's system.

Programas Educativos Teatrales Internacionales: Experiencia de La Escuela de Arte de Moscú

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Resumen

Este texto presenta resultados de la investigación sobre la creación, el desarrollo y la implementación de los programas educativos teatrales internacionales organizados por la Escuela de Arte de Moscú junto con las principales universidades de Estados Unidos: el primer programa llevado a cabo junto con el Centro de Teatro Eugene O'Neill; el primer programa internacional de teatro de maestría llevado a cabo junto con la Universidad Carnegie Mellon; el programa internacional de teatro de Maestría, que se está llevando a cabo actualmente junto con el Teatro de Repertorio Americano de la Universidad de Harvard, y el Programa Educativo Teatral Internacional a corto plazo con la Universidad Estatal de Wayne en Detroit (Michigan). Los resultados confirman la necesidad de llevar a cabo programas internacionales de educación teatral para la formación de estudiantes extranjeros, lo que es facilitado por el aumento de la movilidad global de los estudiantes.

Palabras clave: educación, programas internacionales, movilidad, Moscow Art Theatre School, sistema de Stanislavsky

Anton Chekhov had a considerable impact on the establishment and formation of the Moscow Art Theatre. The creative carrier of Chekhov was studied in the works of other researchers as Ninov (In. Al'tshuller, Danilova & Ninov, 1985) and Kovalev (1991). The problems of higher education were considered in the works of such scientists as Burdenko (2004, 2011), Kuzovlevy (2007), Pesochinsky (2007), Kulish (2007), Bazanova (2007), Gorina (2007), Sundstrem (2007), Perrotta (2013), Hamilton (2007), and others. The history of the emergence and development of the international theatrical educational programs carried out by the Moscow Art Theatre School found its reflection in "Family Albums" (Smeliansky, 2003, 2013) which are published for anniversaries. However, the complex research and the analysis of the development and carrying out of the international theatrical educational programs are conducted for the first time.

Research

The objective of this research consists in presenting the creation, carrying out and development of the international theatrical educational programs organized by the Moscow Art Theatre School from 1991 to 2016. The necessity of such programs is confirmed by the enormous annual growth in the number of students and the expansion of geography of the newly coming students from various US states and other countries.

The Historical Aspect of the Idea of Creating the International Theatrical Educational Programs

The idea of creating the international theatrical educational programs emerged in the 1920s when the Moscow Art Theatre (MHAT) came on its first tour to the United States. The productions of the Moscow Art Theatre made a great impression on the American theatrical community, the audience and Russian emigrants (Stanislavsky, 2009). At that time, the founder and art director of the theatre was Konstantin Stanislavsky, who elaborated his system of an actor's work on a role (Radishheva, 1999).

In 1923, Richard Boleslavsky, a Moscow Art Theatre actor, who immigrated to the United States presented a series of lectures on Stanislavsky's system. Together with Maria Ouspenskaya, he later organized the American Laboratory Theatre (ALT). During the 7 years of its existence more than 500 young actors were trained in ALT. As Anatoly Smelyansky put it, Boleslavsky's pupil Lee Strasberg "started the great industry of Stanislavsky in America" (Smeliansky, 2003, p. 7). Thus, based on the elements of Stanislavsky's method, Strasberg's method appeared. The affective memory of an actor laid the foundation of the method (Nemirovich-Danchenko, 2012; Soloveva, 2005).

The ideas of Stanislavsky's system were utilized in The Group Theatre (1931-1941) which was founded by Harold Klyurman, Lee Strasberg, Stella Adler and Cheril Crawford. In 1947 The Actor's Studio in New York opened. From 1951, it was led by Lee Strasberg. In 1949 S. Adler opened the Studio of Acting. Later, in 1966 Strasberg L. and in 1986 Adler S. opened branches of their schools in Los Angeles. Marilyn Monroe, Jack Nicholson, Dustin Hoffman, Harvey Keitel were trained in The Actor's Studio. The Studio of Acting is considered to be a popular acting school offering a more universal and diverse range of skills and knowledge. Among the graduates of S. Adler's school are Marlon Brando, Robert De Niro, Nick Nolte, etc. Besides in 1969 a not-for-profit drama school called The Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute opened in New York. It exists until present (Vinogradskaja, 2003).

Although Konstantin Stanislavsky and the Americans were both interested in carrying out international theatrical educational programs, the idea had never been realized in his lifetime. From the 1930s until the end of the 1960s the contact between the theatrical communities of the two countries was interrupted. Only in 1991 Stanislavsky's idea that American students and actors should come to the Moscow Art Theatre and study in Russia was put into practice.

The Moscow Art Theatre School was opened in 1943 under the direction of the Moscow Academic Art Theatre after Anton Chekhov to train students in acting skills under Stanislavsky's system. It has been training actors, directors, artists, set designers since then. Today the Moscow Art

Theatre School Studio is the best theatrical institute in Russia. Its graduates include many famous Russian actors, directors, set designers and artists.

Methodology

In order to conduct the studies of the international theatrical educational programs directed by the Moscow Art Theater School, a retrospective analysis of the idea of the appearance of such programs was used. In addition, a retrospective analysis of the creation and implementation of the short-term and long-term international theatrical educational programs was used in the period from 1991 to 2016. A quantitative method was used to analyze the dynamics of mobility of the students coming from the United States and Canada to study at the Moscow Art Theater School between 2000 and 2016 (Utkin, 2017). The graphical representation allowed us to visualize the obtained data.

Peculiarities of Organizing Joint International Theatrical Educational Programs

The international educational programs of the Moscow Art Theatre School started in 1991 with the joint program with the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Centre which was called "Moscow Semester". The initiators of the program were:

- *from the Russian side*: Anatoly Smelyansky, professor, doctor of art criticism, vice rector of Moscow Art Theatre School; Alexander Rubinstein, professor, Doctor of Philosophy, founder and head of the department "Management and economy of performing arts" Moscow Art Theatre Schools;
- *from the American side*: George Whyte, founder of "Eugene O'Neill Theatre Centre"; Gregory Nersesyan, president of the American Soviet Theatre Initiative.

In 1991, the first four American students came to Moscow. There was no customary infrastructure for foreigners: shops did not accept credit cards, there were no specially equipped classrooms and not all the teachers could speak English. These students were placed with host families. Therefore, it was necessary to adjust translation work, coordinate work with the students and organize their leisure. However, it should be noted that the best Moscow Art Theatre School teachers such as Oleg Tabakov, Anatoly Smelyansky, Michail Lobanov, Andrey Droznin were involved in the program ([Smeliansky, 2003](#); [Smeliansky, 2013](#)).

Despite all the difficulties and faults, there was a huge desire to carry out such programs and the Moscow Art Theatre School learned to work with foreign students. The popularity of the program in the United States also made it possible. The American students coming from Russia spoke in rapture of their training in Moscow.

The making of the joint program took many years. In December 2016, the program's 25th anniversary was celebrated in Moscow and New York. To mark the occasion the US Ambassador to Moscow organised a reception for the management of the Moscow Art Theatre School and the American students who were trained in Moscow in December 2016. The event was highlighted in the press ([Gostev, 2016](#)).

To analyse the joint program with the National Theatre Institute one should start with the process of the enrollment of students. The selection of students takes place in various US colleges countrywide. The majority of American students, studying in liberal arts colleges, have an opportunity to choose together with major subjects the ones that are of interest to them. These subjects may be studied in another college and students will be granted credits. This is the rule on which the practice of "foreign semesters" is built. The costs of foreign training are usually covered by the college. This increases the mobility of American students and makes training abroad affordable for many of them.

The experience of the Art Theatre School had a considerable effect not only on dramatic art where its world impact is huge, but on other art forms as well, such as painting, music, cinematography, and, of course, on playwriting and literature. Anton Chekhov as a playwright was inextricably

connected with the Art Theatre. The Art Theatre saw in Anton Chekhov its poet. That is why the teachers of the Moscow Art Theatre School place a particular emphasis on Chekhov's plays. His plays are of international character, they are understood by people all over the world: Russians, Americans, the British, the French, etc. as they make us think about the meaning of life and the reason for existence.

Every year, at the beginning of the autumn semester, the representatives of the National Theatre Institute tour various American colleges and tell about the educational programs of the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Centre and the joint program with the Moscow Art Theatre School. The application period starts in January and ends in late February of the following year. In March all the applications are thoroughly considered and the selection of students is made. At the end of April those who have been accepted into the program are notified of their enrollment.

The enrollment process of each new group takes practically a whole year. In September a group of American students comes to Moscow. Until the end of December they are trained by the leading teachers of the Moscow Art Theatre School.

Results

In the process of the study of international educational programs conducted by the Moscow Art Theater School in the period from 1991 to 2016, the following programs are singled out:

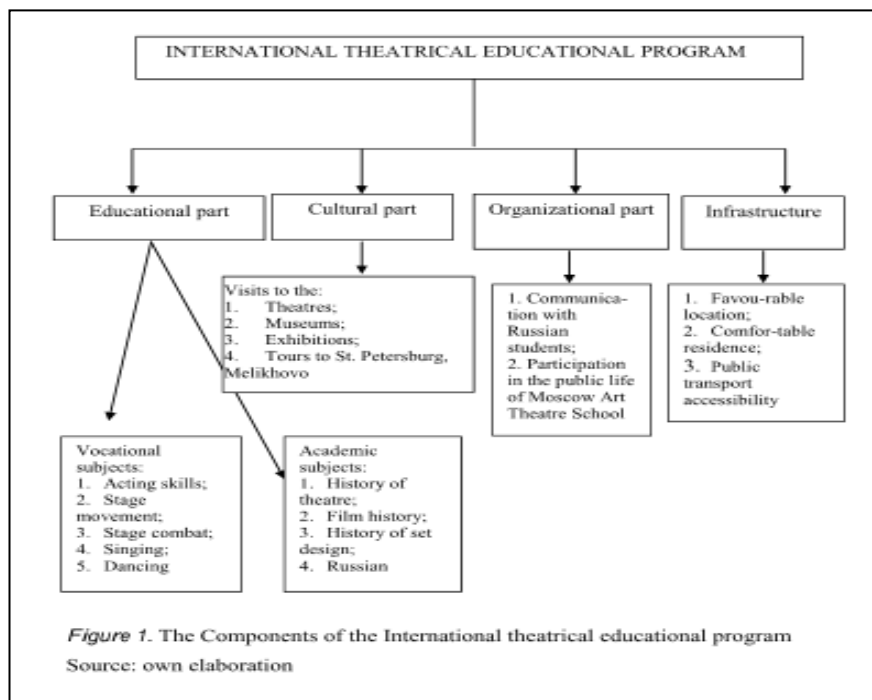
1. *Long-term programs*: Moscow semester - 3 months; International Master's Theater Program - 11 months;
2. *Short-term program*: 'Month in the Country' - 4 weeks.

‘The Moscow Semester’

The learning process at the Moscow Art Theatre School is different from that in American colleges and universities. In America students can choose disciplines and arrange their own training schedule to fit their timetable. The Moscow Art Theatre School has strict limits. The time-table for the whole semester includes daily classes from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. They are all most necessary disciplines. As a rule, in the first half of the day there are movement, stage combat, vocal, dance, fencing classes. The second half of day is completely devoted to acting skills. Besides, students attend lectures on stage and set design, the history of theatre, the history of cinematography. The international theatrical educational program "The Moscow Semester" includes the following related parts:

1. The educational part, which consists of teaching vocational and general subjects;
2. The cultural part aimed at the students' immersion in the Russian drama theatre and culture;
3. The organizational part, which is an opportunity to get acquainted with Russian fellow students;
4. The infrastructure: location, accommodation and food.

The related parts of the International theatrical educational program are presented in Figure 1.



Each related part of the program involves:

1. The educational part, which consists of vocational and general subjects. The most difficult subjects for students are the subjects which require physical training. However, upon completion of the program the result is always visible. Many students make considerable progress in stage movement, stage combat, dancing and fencing. Training in each subject ends up with an exam.

The American students master the program of acting skills within 3 months while the Russian students study it during their first year at school. The classes start with concentration exercises and scene studies: 'I am in the given circumstances'.

For many foreign students acting classes are the experience they have never had before. For the first time they deal with a system approach to mastering their profession. That is why such classes are especially important for them. Gradually separate episodes of the play, which students have to perform at the end of the semester become the topic of their scene study. In this particular case the performance of the play before the audience on the stage of the educational Studio School theatre is considered as their exam.

For the implementation of international theatrical programs our leading teachers developed special teaching methods which did not only include training under Stanislavsky's system, but also the method created by Mikhail Chekhov (2007) who is well-known in the West. His book on the technique of acting was originally written in English and published in America. He started his own theatre school in England, which before World War II moved to the USA where it turned into a professional theatre called 'The Chekhov Theatre Players'. The company gave several performances on Broadway and began touring all over the country, promoting the principles of theatre art.

Mikhail Chekhov developed several stages of an actor's work on a role called 'ways of rehearsing'. This acting technique was later successfully applied by our teachers in training American students. They developed special exercises on concentration and imagination, and on creating the atmosphere while working on the character in scenes and in the performance overall (Chekhov, 2007).

Special attention is paid to the psychological gesture during the first stage of working on a role as an expressive gesture is a basis for the implementation of the artistic conception of the role (Nemirovich-Danchenko, 2012). A system of exercises was developed in which by means of a psychological gesture it is easier for the student to evoke his own emotions and fill the role with a particular meaning. Mastering the technique of a psychological gesture, the students can go deeper into the plays of Russian writers such as Anton Chekhov, Foydor Dostoyevsky, Nikolay Gogol, and others.

Great attention is attributed by our teachers to improvisation during the student's work on a role. They create such situational exercises which help

develop students' creative thought, train them to work on their own and find "keys" which open their creative "doors". When getting down to work on the scenes from Chekhovian plays (Stanislavsky was the first to find the key to Chekhov's dramatic art), our teachers, first of all, do psychological analysis of a play. They strive to reveal to the students the profound and intensive inner life of a character, constantly repeating after Konstantin Stanislavsky that an uninterrupted physical action - i.e. "the line of life of a human body" takes a special place in the portrayal of any character (*Psychological Basis of Stanislavsky's System*, 2009).

According to Stanislavsky (1999), inner emotions and actions brought to life help to understand the core of a character, his subtext, which is hidden behind words - "the life of a human spirit" (p. 39). All these are tested in scene studies. It helps a drama student to select typical traits for the character and penetrate more deeply into the psychology of the character created.

Another important component in actor training is tempo-rhythm exercises, which help the students to loosen up, have better control of their body and find a certain tempo and rhythm for each character. This is the main task of such exercises.

The most important thing is that all these exercises are done systematically throughout the whole program. That is why most students manage to master the material and it is a lot easier for them to start rehearsing separate scenes and acts of the performance.

The question of independent work during etude studies plays a very important role. Our teachers constantly urge the students to work actively both at rehearsals and at home during their free time. They are constantly explaining to the students that only they themselves can exist in the characters they create. The teachers, in their turn, help them to reveal the super-objective and explain the circumstances of the role, etc. Without a true emotion on the stage everything ends up lifeless and uninteresting. In doing scene studies a drama student can express in his own words what later will be expressed by the author's text. This stirs up the student's imagination and helps him to capture the inner and outer world of the character. Our teachers analyze, direct and delicately and tactfully correct the work of drama students, thus helping them to create "a living person" on

the stage. All these make the international theatrical educational program more attractive and useful.

Except for the disciplines aimed at mastering acting, the students also study general subjects. They have to read plays by great Russian playwrights such as Anton Chekhov, Alexander Ostrovsky, Nikolay Gogol, Foydor Dostoyevsky. It is necessary for them to read a lot of books on theater history. As they do not know the Russian language a three-month course of Russian is organized for them (Lisina, 2016). The students have three classes a week which are conducted by our Russian teachers. The knowledge of the Russian language helps them find their bearings around the city and makes their communication with fellow-students and teachers easier.

2. Cultural part aimed at immersing the students into the Russian drama theatre and culture. The cultural program is an important part of the international theatrical educational program. In their free time in the afternoon and in the evening the American students go to theaters, exhibitions, museums, visit the country house museum of Anton Chekhov in Melikhovo and travel to St. Petersburg. The program enables the students to see the productions of various directors, performances of different cultural styles in the best Moscow theaters.

All the productions are further discussed with teachers during the acting classes and lectures on theater history. For many foreign students such frequent theatre going is very unusual. Despite their desire to become actors they don't go to the theater so often in America.

3. Organizational part which is an opportunity to get acquainted with Russian fellow students. From their arrival in Russia and during the whole period of training American students are accompanied by the students of the Arts management faculty. The first-year students who have a perfect command of the English language are informally called "angels". They accompany the American students to theatres and exhibitions; help to find the way in the subway, solve the arising problems, such as a visit to a

doctor, purchase of necessary things. Communication with the American students is a good language practice for the Russian students and a good opportunity to learn more about the culture of another country. For the American group communication with the Moscow Art Theatre School students is also a useful practice and another source of information about Russian culture and life. Together with the Arts management students the students of the faculty of Set Design and Theatrical Technology are also involved in the work with the American students. They help to stage a performance: create necessary scenery, costumes, and props.

Besides, the American students participate in the students' life of the Moscow Art Theatre School. Together with the Russian students they take part in the events held by the Studio School and the Theatre. Every fall a student-initiation ceremony is held at the Moscow Art Theatre School., which is an informal amateur students' concert party called "Kapustnik". The American students always take part in it. They prepare their own show and perform it on the Small Stage of the Chekhov Moscow Art Theatre. When the Chekhov Moscow Art Theatre celebrates such commemorative events as Anatoly Smelyansky's anniversary or the Moscow Art Theatre School anniversary on the Main Stage, foreign students participate in them. The opportunity of appearing on the historical stage of the theatre will survive in their memory for a long time.

4. Infrastructure: location, accommodation, food. Building location in the city is an important component, which works for the image of the School. The Moscow Art Theatre School is located in the historic theatrical center, Kamergersky Lane, which is within a walking distance from Red Square. From there you can easily walk to such theatres as the Chekhov Moscow Art Theatre, the Moscow Operetta State Academic Theatre, the State Academic Bolshoi Theatre, the State Academic Maly Theatre, Yermolova Moscow Drama Theater, the Russian Academic Youth Theater, the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre, the State Theater of Nations. In 2016 170 drama, musical, children's theaters, puppet theatres worked in Moscow.

Today the newly-arrived students are not placed with host families. They live in a comfortable theater hostel which is not a long way from the school. It is easy to get there by public transport - by subway or by bus. The atmosphere in the theatre hostel is homelike, the premises has been renovated, there is a rehearsal room, a gym, Wi-Fi network.

Today Kamergersky Lane has changed, it has become a pedestrian area which is pleasant to walk. On the first floors of the buildings located in Kamergersky Lane there are lots of cafes, bakeries and snack bars. So here there is no problem where to eat. Sitting in a cafe over a cup of fresh-made coffee, you can discuss what happened during the day, talk about future plans or just socialize.

On their return to the USA many American students say that the program was quite difficult, but interesting. For many of them The Moscow Semester becomes a challenge, as they are not used to such an academic load. It is in the Moscow Art Theatre where most American students begin to understand how professionals work and the theatre setup. The program makes them think whether they are really ready to devote themselves to the profession of an actor. Many graduates continue their master's degree program and stay with the theater. But some of the American students are not ready for such a job, so they work in another area.

From 1991 to 2016 the program was carried out 25 times and trained almost 500 American students. The number of students who completed The Moscow Semester program at the Moscow Art Theatre School from 2004 to 2016 is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

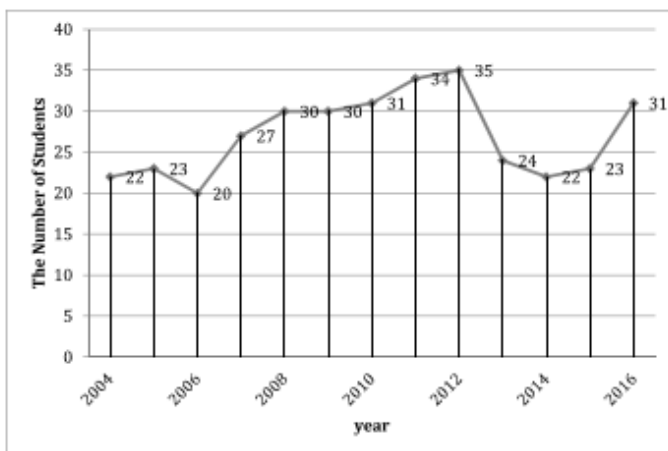


Figure 2. The number of American students who trained in The Moscow Semester program at Moscow Art Theatre School from 2004 to 2016

Source: own elaboration

A.R.T/Mhat Institute for Advanced Theater Training at Harvard University

In 1997 the joint international Master's theatrical program of Moscow Art Theatre School and the American Repertory Theater at Harvard University was launched. This program enables the students to continue their training in acting skills. It is the highest level in acting training. The selection of students takes place in four main theatrical centers of the USA: New York, Boston, Chicago and San Francisco. Every year the program enrolls 18 actors and several dramaturges and speech teachers.

As a result of this program the American Studio was opened at the Moscow Art Theatre School. The management of the international Master's

program in collaboration with the American Repertory Theater developed a project of the reconstruction of the classrooms, invested in it and carried it out. The penthouse located in Kamergersky Lane 3a was repaired, and a rehearsal hall, classrooms and a small office were built. It is a model of a professional theater. Today the American students who come to the Moscow Art Theatre School have their own premises.

The Master's program is available for those who have already left colleges and have professional acting experience. The students study for 2 years and 3 months to get a Master's degree. The Moscow Art Theatre School teachers take part in this program during the whole training period. In summer an acting teacher from the Moscow Art Theatre comes to Cambridge and starts the program at Harvard. In addition to acting, Russian teachers also train the students in speech and movement. First of all the students are acquainted with the educational system of the Moscow Art Theatre School. Then they do the autumn semester under the American teachers and in spring they come to Moscow to continue their training.

These students have already chosen an actor's career, and it is essential for them to master new skills and grow professionally. The program implies an intensive course from morning till evening. At the end of the semester the students do final tests in the disciplines they have studied. For that, heads of the program come from Harvard to estimate the results of the work during The Moscow Semester. The spring and the fall semester do not differ much in their curriculum. The American students have very limited time to master what the Russian students study for 4 years.

During the semester, the students not only study, but also rehearse the performances which are later shown on the Student theater stage. Due to the master's program productions in English are now included in the repertoire of the Student Theatre of the Moscow Art Theatre School. Actually the American Studio of the Moscow Art Theater School has become the only functioning English language theatre in Moscow which has its own spectators. The productions of the American studio attract the audience by providing them with an opportunity to get to know American culture and theater.

The productions in English were presented at various theater festivals in Russia:

- in 2010 Alice against the Wonderland was shown at the festival Your Chance and received an award;
- in 2012, The Imaginary Invalid was shown at the festival Your Chance as well as at The Future of Theatrical Russia, Yaroslavl Theater Festival, and received positive reviews;
- in 2014, Ivanova and Uncle Vanya were shown at the Melikhovsky Spring Festival.

When the program was started the following practice was used: the performance was preliminary rehearsed with an American director in the USA and then it was transformed to the Russian stage. But in 2014 the preparation procedure was changed. A director from Russia comes to America and during the winter semester he starts his work on the production which is completed in March on the Moscow stage. Thus, *The Idiot* by Fyodor Dostoevsky was released in 2014 (the Moscow Art Theater Director Marina Brusnikina adapted the novel for the stage). In 2015 two plays were produced: *The Lonely Voice* adapted from the short stories and personal letters of Ivan Bunin and *A Profitable Position* by Alexander Ostrovsky (directed by Ilya Bocharnikovs).

Such a practice appeared to be time-consuming. It is quite difficult to adjust a new production to another stage and thus a new production is directed in Moscow during a short period of time. It is not only necessary to learn the lines, but also to choose the right costumes for the cast, build up the scenery, adjust the lighting and sound. During the play rehearsal, all undergraduates gain invaluable professional experience.

The students from the Arts Management faculty help the American Studio with the organization of the production. The students from the faculty of Set Design and Theatrical Technology are responsible for the stage scenery. The participation in the program also helps the Russian students to gain new professional experience.

The master's program trains not only actors but dramaturges as well. In the American system the profession of a dramaturge implies close cooperation with the director and the author of the literary work. His responsibilities include collecting all the necessary information about the life of the author, history of the productions, working on the literary

context, historical outline, writing of play summaries, etc. The attendance of a large number of performances is very important for dramaturges. They have to be well informed of various interpretations of literary works and new theater trends. That is why they should study the Russian language more intensively. In the framework of the program they study the history of the Russian theater, the history of drama, modern drama, the history of arts and the history of set design. All the disciplines are taught with a focus on a deeper understanding of the Russian theater and culture.

During the whole semester dramaturges keep records of their stay in Moscow. These diaries are further published on the website of the Moscow Art Theatre School. Everyone can read and learn the opinion of young Americans of a particular theatrical event, a stage director or about Russia. An obligatory element of training is the participation of a dramaturge in the work on the performance, which is later staged in Moscow. A dramaturge has to collect all the necessary information, to work with the director, the designer and actors.

Upon completion of the Master's program the students receive a Master's degree from the Moscow Art Theater School and Harvard University provides them with an opportunity to join the actor's labor union (American Equity Association, AEA).

As is estimated nearly 400 American students have received a degree since 1997. The number of the American students studying from 2000 to 2016 is illustrated in Figure 3 below.

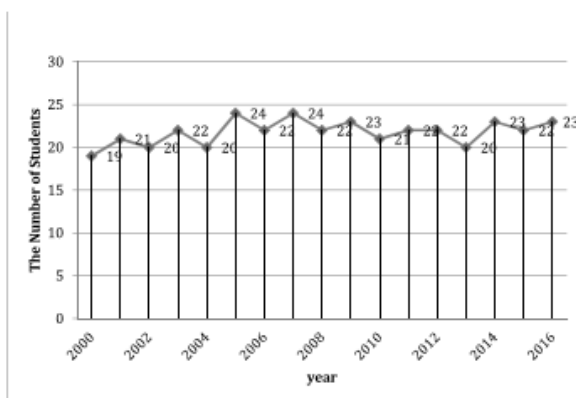


Figure 3. The number of the American students who trained in the International Master's Program A.R.T/MHAT INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED THEATER TRAINING AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY from 2000 to 2016

Source: own elaboration

‘Month in the Country’

Due to the cooperation of the Moscow Art Theatre School with Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, a short-term international theatrical educational program was launched. It is carried out annually in June. The program began in 2003 and is still on the go. On the American side, it is supervised by James Thomas. The program received its name from Ivan Turgenev's play *A Month in the Country*.

The program was designed not only for drama students, but also for theatre artists, theatre managers, etc. It is important to note that James Thomas enrolls not only Wayne State University students, but also those from University of Windsor in Canada. So, the American and Canadian students study in one group. It is a four-week undergraduate and master's program.

The program ‘Month in the Country’ is of great importance for future actors as it enables them to acquire profound knowledge of the training process at the Moscow Art Theatre School and get acquainted with Russian culture and art. The program is focused on intensive training from morning till evening, and the students also visit theaters in the evening or during their leisure time.

From 2003 to 2016, more than 220 students were trained under this program. The number of the American students trained under the international theatrical educational program ‘Month in the Country’ at the Moscow Art Theatre School from 2004 to 2016 is illustrated in Figure 4. The program is much regarded among American students.

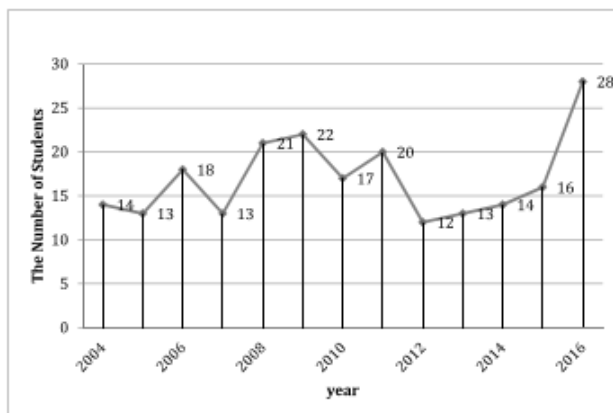


Figure 4. The number of the American students who trained in the International theatrical educational program ‘Month in the Country’ at Moscow Art Theatre School from 2004 to 2016

Source: own elaboration

Solutions and Recommendations

As a result of the retrospective analysis it was revealed that the Stanislavsky system is successfully used for professional training of actors. The Stanislavsky system is a living method, passed from teacher to student, regardless of nationality. It has been used for 100 years to train actors in different countries of the world and continues to be relevant.

According to our research, the analysis of the dynamics of mobility of foreign students coming to study international theatrical educational programs of the Moscow Art Theater School has confirmed the steady demand for such programs.

In the process of our study, four interrelated parts of international theatrical educational programs are singled out, which allow to achieve higher professional training of foreign students: educational, cultural and organizational parts as well as infrastructure. Therefore, the results of our research are important for understanding the process of professional training in theatrical specialties.

The research of the international theatrical educational programs of the Moscow Art Theatre School shows that the creation and carrying out of such programs are still of immediate interest. In the cultural and art spheres, and especially in the theatrical sphere, real life communication of professors with foreign students is very important. In this case, all ways of conveying information are used to provide better training. The unique pedagogical experience of the Moscow Art Theatre School ensures a successful implementation of both short-term and long-term educational programs. The most complete training is received by the foreign students in Moscow where all the related parts of the international educational program are effectively utilized.

Conclusion

The Moscow Art School nurses the best traditions and achievements of theater arts. It is common knowledge that Stanislavsky's system plays an exclusive role in the development of dramatic art and theatre pedagogy. That is why the international theatrical educational programs are becoming

so popular among foreign students. The modern Russian drama school uses various teaching approaches and methods based on Stanislavsky's system which include the Scene Study Method, the Method Acting Analysis, the Method of Physical Action. When working with students our teachers combine and individually apply all the said methods, which is fundamentally different from theater training in other countries. For example, in the USA the students study in different art schools, which have their own methods of training. The international educational program of the Moscow Art Theatre combines the experience of different schools in acting training which makes the program unique. It gives the students an opportunity to study various approaches of which Stanislavsky's system is the basis. As a result, drama students acquire the basis of professional acting skills within rather a short period of training (in the fall/winter semester, or within one summer month). The main objective of the international theatrical educational programs is to teach an actor to work alive. Our teachers successfully implement the creative process of teaching all-round actors. The stage acting is perceived as a logical and successive process which takes place in the "given circumstances". The scene study method, which is widely used in training, helps the students to master Stanislavsky's system in its modern sense.

Along with the class work, our acting teachers work individually with each student, helping them, at their request, to prepare monologues from A.P. Chekhov's plays for future theater casting in the USA or other countries. Aside from the participation in bits, it helps the students during the individual work to better understand the main idea of a play by using various expressive forms, which gives them a feeling of freedom and an ability of self-expression. All these make the international theatrical educational program especially attractive to foreign students including those who are determining their life journey.

The international theatrical educational programs for training foreign students, developed by the Moscow Art Theatre School have become a real breakthrough in teaching drama art to foreign students. These programs attract an increasing number of enthusiastic followers in other theatre schools of Russia. The rotation of the material and tasks of each part of the program helps to add considerable variety to presenting the material and

use different types of activities to make the learning process more active and effective. The program provides a comprehensive range of exercises - from simpler ones to scene studies, and finally to extracts from various works by Russian classics. All these allow the students to master the material more quickly and with a good result. Many exercises are intended for students' individual work to broaden their mind. Such exercises are, as a rule, checked and discussed with students and professors in the auditorium, which creates a special working atmosphere. The literary works and extracts from plays which the students will later perform onstage are carefully discussed. It all makes the international theatrical educational programs especially attractive to foreign students. The acquaintance with the Russian psychological theater is a real discovery for the students. It allows them to deeper penetrate the portrayal of different characters and expands their creative potential.

The enormous annual growth in the number of students and the expansion of geography of the newly coming students from various US states and other countries confirm the necessity of such programs.

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