



## **Prep Document for *Live Improvisation* work on 492Korna Klub and information on *Radio of the Oppressed***

*We rely heavily on live dramatic improvisation from all actors to carry this project forward. It means you will be trained to perform scenes involving your character(s).*

*To save time, it's useful to set out a few points re the conventions operating for the scenes to have dramatic tension. Familiarity with the vocabulary outlined below will help us deliver our aims and keep the series alive at a cracking pace.*

First, a likely breakdown of the focus for the different workshops:

### **The workshops will be a mixture of Improvisation training and Development of relationships and storylines**

During series you will be expected to do some research around your character or an evolving plot line.

Dramatic improvisation is a big house and lots of different things go on in there. There will be certain conventions that we will use in this project, and it's worth setting these out:

If you are playing one characters or two, it's very important you're your characters are *STARKLY* different from each other. The determination of your character(s) will be the result of working through certain exercises. The tone, accent, rhythm and speech of your characters must be believable. **It's worth knowing or creating back stories for each character as you will be interrogated in order to help develop your character.**

You will also be expected to be able to play other supporting characters 'instantly' according to what the storylines demand, but these are unlikely to develop very much psychologically. We might know in advance that for the next episode we need a doctor, so you might be asked to prepare a role for that scene only. Alternatively, during the series it's evident that we need a doctor and you will be called on to do that. Generally speaking, you won't be expected to just jump up and be a doctor unprompted, although sometimes the action moves in a way that clearly calls for a doctor and then it's down to someone in the company that day in the studio, doing precisely that - jumping up. There will probably be a minimum of 2 actors in any live broadcasts for each episode.



There will be other kinds of scenes which are an ensemble scene, for example set at a racecourse or funeral. There will be a lot of people on the microphones all acting together, essentially performing the same activity. We will probably not know your names or individualities. What is important here is acting together as a group. It's also possible that there may be an ensemble scene in which actors work together as a group opposite a single actor whose story we are involved with.

Scenes *may* be played with very few words, perhaps with a music soundtrack. There will be an arrangement to cue this kind of scene.

There may be commentary from myself or Richmond over the top of the scene, using a microphone. This may be of a narrative kind, it may be your **thought process** or it may be **the voice of a ghost** or **something else** again.

Each series will probably start with music being played (written and recorded for the show) over which the characters introduce themselves using the mikes, and/or summarise important plot points so far.

There will be a series song which we will use on episodes, again with the instrumentals either live or pre-recorded. Everyone will need to learn the vocals for our theme song.

There will be a convention where your character will speak directly to the listener, which you will be encouraged to do so when appropriate.

There are certain concepts or understandings which will be useful to know and share:

**The essence of drama is change; people being changed by each other.** We will talk about

DEFINING (making decisions about what's happening here; who is who, etc. In the kind of series we're doing, there's less room for defining in on air because most factual information about characters and locations will have been already defined.)

ACCEPTING (agreeing with definitions offered by other actors)

DEVELOPING (extending these definitions to make a coherent world). Might also be called ESTABLISHING.



**TRANSFORMING** (a slow, gradual process of change for one or more people involved in the scene.) May also be called **EVOLVING**. The policeman reads out the charge to the doctors' boyfriend. He's slowly transformed emotionally by the knowledge.

**SHIFTING** (a change that is expressed suddenly – affecting one or more characters in the scene). The boyfriend is initially subdued in appearance and says nothing. Outwardly he pretends innocence. After a couple of minutes of this, he confesses to punching the doctor.

There is also

**SUB-TEXT** (change or emotion or thought is experienced by a character but not expressed, or is expressed indirectly).

**ENDOWMENT** (where an actor endows an object, a place or a person with a particular quality.) This knife is valuable, this room is cold, this person is dangerous.

**RESISTANCE** (a legitimate tactic within improvisation, not the same as)

**BLOCKING** (which is about denying the reality of the decisions made by other actors. Sometimes blocking is justified if an actor makes a decision that conflicts with something that has been accepted earlier. If it's established that Jack lives in a castle and someone asserts he lives in a bedsit, the actor playing Jack may legitimately 'block' that and assert that the other character is spreading lies about him to make him look bad.) Resistance is about playing the state of conflicting desires between you. It's perfectly legitimate to say 'No' if it's an exploration of resistance. 'Will you let me stay here tonight?' The initial answer may be No (because of the implied sub-text). However, this may turn to Yes if the other character plays against and defeats the resistance. That would cause a shift.

**ADVANCING/Progression** (moving the scene on, perhaps through a shift or by bringing in new information which causes transformation or shift.) Scenes which don't advance and don't have sub-text become very tiring for the listeners.

**DRIVE** (motivation towards an objective or the achievement of desire)

**STATUS** (better as something given as an attribute or endowment to others rather than claimed by yourself.) If your character prefers



playing high status, this means that she likes others to play low – towards her. Status can also be given to an object, a location, a task, a profession or an idea – almost anything.

GAME OF THE SCENE, GAME OF THE RELATIONSHIP (the pattern of the scene or the relationship – this may be found within the scene or imposed from the outside). I may propose this strategy to the actors in performance. Playing a scene using only 'one word at a time' would be a game of a scene.

FOCUS (what you are encouraging the listener to focus on).

PATTERNS AND GAMES IN PERFORMANCE (something which evolves within the scene at a micro level and is possibly not concerned with what the scene is about. The doctor and the boyfriend in the rest room keep picking up a magazine left by another worker. The scene is about something different, but there's a little game that emerges around this fascinating magazine. It exists in the sub-text, it isn't mentioned. Finally the boyfriend steals the magazine.

THEME (the social or philosophical questions which the series or scene might be engaged with throughout its run – we find out these through play and then can construct scenes to enable an exploration of them.)

STANCE (the way the character looks at the world)

ATTITUDE (the emotional position taken by the character towards a character, object/prop or location)

Some of the skills you will be expected to have or develop include:

Defining  
Accepting  
Developing  
Advancing  
Increasing and decreasing tension  
Rapport (ability to find complicity with another actor)  
Amplification (ability to magnify – or shrink – how you are expressing what you are feeling)  
Work with sub-text  
Take or give focus / play low focus  
Take attitude



## **Radio of the Oppressed**

This a participatory development project based on the notion that members of a community are the best people to identify problems, set priorities, design strategies and carry them out.

This process can mobilises human creativity to solve social problems and, through transformation of the listeners, address the underlying causes of those problems.

People cannot be developed; they can only develop themselves ...man develops himself by what he does; he develops himself by making his own decisions, by increasing his understanding of what he is doing, and why; by increasing his own knowledge and ability, and by his own full participation - as an equal - in the life of the community he lives in.

*Radio of the oppressed* our term for this project is a participatory radio project that fosters democratic and co-operative forms of interaction to analyse and discuss problems of oppression and power and to explore community solutions to these problems.

In *radio of the oppressed*, listeners have the opportunity to interact with the cast and characters who present (provoke) problematic situations to them with a view to act out their (suggestion) solution. *Radio of the oppressed* becomes a conscious intervention, a representation and rehearsal for real life and collective analysis of common problems.

492 Korna Klub radio project is a place to gather, dialogue, explore, express, share, learn, teach, develop and build community. Its noh budget films way to interact with individuals within communities to analyse oppression and oppressive systems, learn about our history and significance of our presence in the UK from Africa. It's also a way for us to share our experiences and our stories and challenge to develop new ways of dismantling systems of oppression and promote critical thinking and social justice through our liberatory radio project.

We want 492 Korna Klub to help combat local oppression, contribute in political struggles, contribute in social justice, in community organizing, in education, in employment, and in social policy to explore how to transform dehumanizing systems into systems that move toward social and economic freedom and justice.



492 Korna Klub are made up of individuals who are change-makers, educators, global activists, local leaders, artists, organizers, advocates, rabble-rousers, hair-raisers and instigators.

