

A basis for physical and vocal transformation and characterisation.

Examples include Al Pacino (Caged Tiger) in "Dog Day Afternoon", and Marlon Brando (Gorilla) in "A Streetcar Named Desire". On the stage a more expressionistic example would be Anthony Sher (Bottled Spider) in Richard III.

The animal is closely observed, as far as possible in natural surroundings - e.g. a zoo or wildlife park - but video back-up may be used: And if you have a very fervid imagination then just use that. It is important to try and follow one particular animal - a group of young bear cubs, for example, will each display very individual characteristics - just like human beings, they are all unique.

Do the work at home and bring it into class.

Don't just think about it at home and try it out in the class.

1. **OBSERVATION.** Observe the animal in **DETAIL**.
2. Break up the movements and work in **isolation**- e.g. the lower back, then the back legs, then the feet and ankles etc. - then try to put it all together.
3. **CENTRE.** Where is the centre? Where does each movement start; try to trace it back to each origin. Always be aware of this centre when you work on the animal, and always work for it. Don't just intellectualise it - work until you really feel a shift in your own centre.
4. **TEMPO/ENERGY (INNER and OUTER).** What is the difference between the inner and outer tempo/energy? Connect first with the inner and then try to capture the outer. Obviously these will change depending on the situation and the animal. E.g. an adult bull or rhino might be: *Strong (WEIGHT) + Direct (SPACE) + Sustained (TIME) = **PRESSING (TEMPO) + Bound (FLOW)***
However, by starting with the position of rest i.e. when the animal is not threatened, it is possible to define the inner tempo, especially when using Laban's working actions. Don't just intellectualise it work until you really feel a shift in your own energy/tempo.
5. **ACTIVITIES.** Work on them **FULLY**. Once the inner has been found it is important to really begin to explore the animal by making full contact with activities e.g. Feeding/Preening. How might the Outers change in terms of the Laban tempi, depending on the activity? Really explore the sensations/objectives/energies/ etc. involved in each activity.
6. **ESSENCE.** What is the essence of your animal? Can you connect with it? What might be the essence which connects the examples above?

TEMPO - INNER and OUTER. How might these be different?

E.g. When a cheetah is feeding, this might be:

INNER	OUTER
sustained (still)	quick
calm	voracious/energised
Gliding	Slashing

How does this change when the activity changes? If the feeding cheetah suddenly senses danger it may become:

INNER	OUTER
quick	sustained
alarmed	alert
Slashing	Gliding

How do you arrive at this change? What is the process? Can you recreate this for yourself, truthfully, and in detail?

HUMANISING THE ANIMAL

The animal may be 'humanised' by taking the momentum of the moving rhythm and gradually getting it up onto two legs and starting to/explore the kind of person who might move in this way - asking the questions: Who are they? Where are they? Etc. Or it is possible to humanise through contacting an activity and gradually allowing this to become humanised. An obvious example might be a lion preening going to a character brushing their hair - the movement become smaller but the inner and outer tempo and, of course, the CENTRE will remain the same. If you are playing three small characters, without much of a change of costume, having three distinct animals is vital.