

A BALANCING ACT

Testimonials and Book Reviews

"It is rare to find a subject that urgently needs to be discussed and about which too little is written. The need to train the entire being of the performing artist is just such a subject. Emmanuelle Chaulet's *A Balancing Act* is a godsend to performing artists of any sort. Knowing how to Energize allows us to endure and even thrive during the rise and fall, the constant state of transformation, the juggling of feelings, styles, jobs, and colleagues while maintaining an even keel."

**Lisa Dalton, Co-founder, International Michael Chekhov Association,
Award-Winning Actor/Producer/Director
and Co-founder and Certifying Board,
National Michael Chekhov Association**

"A groundbreaking book written by a groundbreaking artist. Ms. Chaulet uses her vast experience as an actor and director to offer both a brilliant book on the craft of acting, and a comprehensive guide to the very difficult act of rebalancing the artist's energies once the performance is over. A MUST for any serious, contemporary performer."

**Sean O'Connor, NY actor, award-winning playwright
(Circle Rep, La Mama) and winner of Hollywood's prestigious American Accolades
Award**

"Chaulet's explanations of the chakras and energy systems are tangible and never come off as ephemeral or wishy-washy. I found her take on some Strasberg and Chekhov exercises fresh and exciting, and some of her original exercises strike me as very useful. She seems to have found healthy and innovative ways of approaching a technique that can be emotionally draining and sometimes harmful. And although some background in energy and visualization work would help to understand some of the theories she explores, she writes simply and elegantly, and any actor with an interest in polarity therapy and the energetic system would find this book very interesting and useful."

NYC Drama Book Shop Inc.

"In fifteen chapters and six appendices, Chaulet's carefully crafted method takes the actor on a journey from a personal awareness of his/her energy system, to an application of that knowledge in the creation of a character. Chaulet acknowledges acting theorists, from Stanislavski to Lee Strasberg, noted for their promotion of realistic acting styles. This acknowledgment is integrated in the first four chapters, which offer a very personal reflection on her study of acting and the evolution of her "energetic approach" that is the result of the discovery of various Asian associated approaches to the body such as polarity, yoga, and so on. The weaving into the text of prior realistic acting methodologies provides a strong basis for her approach, which she begins to describe in chapter 5, "Anatomy of the Energetic System." It is here that she articulates an approach that unites realism as an aesthetic ideal with the energy of the body based on the Hindu chakra system."

**Barbara Sellers-Young, York University
for Theatre Topics, September 2009 issue**

"While reading F. Emmanuelle Chaulet's book, I completed a very enjoyable run as Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*. On closing night, after walking offstage from the wrenching wedding scene, I burst into tears. In the dressing room, I mentioned it to the actor playing Hero, who admitted she had experienced the same thing. I couldn't shake those feelings for the rest of the evening. Such

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an experience is precisely what Chaulet's method grapples with: How can actors who convincingly pretend they're having heart-rending, tumultuous experiences let those experiences go at the end of a scene? How can actors fully and believably take on other people's lives without damaging their own?"

Jackie Apodaca
Backstage.com October 2008

"Chaulet readily concedes that she has picked up the trail where others ceased blazing, but she is deft in weaving the ideas together into a relevant system" ... "after participating in an ENERGIZE workshop, the undergraduates and pre-professional students were demonstrably more focused and self-aware; the clamor to buy copies of A BALANCING ACT confirmed Chaulet's theory that there is a collective thirst for solutions to this frequent dilemma"... " Plainly, Chaulet makes her case. The craft of acting has had an unspoken need for a system that dedicates itself solely to balancing who we are with who we are required to become. The structure of ENERGIZE is accessible because it provides an overview of various holistic centering techniques, and successful because it serves as a solid launching platform for those who want to develop their own pre- and post-performance rituals with further research."

J.J. Cobb, Eastern Connecticut State University
for The New England Theatre Journal

"Fortunately, a new generation of acting teachers and textbooks offer an infusion of non-Western practices within which to frame our naturalistic approaches, a welcome counterbalance to the hegemony of The Method. See, for example Adrian Cairns, Jade McCutcheon, Paul Kassel, F. Emmanuelle Chaulet, and Phillip Zarrelli's *Psychophysical Acting*."

Leslie O'Dell,
The Charismatic Chameleon: The Actor as Creative Artist

"The act of transformation is at the heart of acting. To see the world through other's eyes and share that insight with the world is why I chose to pursue acting as a profession. But after many roles, I found my energy depleting more and more after performances, and began to wonder what was wrong. I had put my heart and soul into a recent one-person show, and though exhilarated by the challenge was struggling post- performance. Enter Emmanuelle Chaulet and her Energize work in tandem with the RYSE work developed by Nancy Risley. The holistic RYSE tools helps toward transforming oneself to consciously become clearer, more aware, and charged to consciously be capable of managing life's daily challenges. The work stretches the imagination, one's visualization capabilities, strengthens our abilities to trust, welcomes a host of characters or sub personalities that tend to make our lives interesting, and much, much more. The RYSE work is needed in conjunction with the Energize acting work. While the RYSE work helps the individual transform as described above, the Energize work helps the actor reach higher levels of performance through energized intention work, higher vibrational sense memory, finding the best vessel to let the character be revealed, and the essential work of preparation and post-performance rebalancing which was critical relating to my individual problem. The Energize work allows you to fully transform and embrace the character while still maintaining one's own health and balance. Truly some of the freshest and most innovative 21st century contributions to the art of acting. Anyone who has the privilege and honor to work with Emmanuelle is in for a treat."

Mel Shrawder
NYC AEA/SAG actor, most recently seen on Law and Order
Former Head of Performance University of Miami,
Faculty at the Michael Chekhov Acting Studio in NYC

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"Emmanuelle Chaulet's work was a revelation to me. I found that her work with the 'Disowned Self' was a relevant to my work as a playwright as it was to my work as a performer. *A Balancing Act* is long overdue!"

**Carolyn Gage, award-winning lesbian-feminist playwright,
performer, director, and activist**

"The pattern of the energetic systems in the body indicates the personality with its joys and pains. A truly great character actor, although usually unaware, naturally changes their energetic systems when they are fully in character. Knowing how to do this consciously will help the actor arrive at their full character sooner and leave it faster when the acting is complete. Knowing how to get out of character by changing your energetic system back is a fast and important self-help skill. *A Balancing Act* by Emmanuelle Chaulet introduces this important skill to help you get to your character faster and leave it sooner."

**Nancy Risley,
Author, RYSE, Tools for Life, Holding Your Personal Power and Life Force and
developer of RYSE**

"I wish I had discovered *Energize* and *A Balancing Act* while I was training as an actor, it would have given me a stronger spine and a more colorful spectrum of the character 's energy. Our vital force is our engine, so how can an actor perform and not be aware of that energy? It is about time to accept the osmosis between art and energy..."

Marie Preaud-Hamann, actress, model, & photographer

"Just letting you know that I have just finished reading *A Balancing Act Energize*- it has taken me a while as I wanted to really enjoy every part of the book. I absolutely loved it and felt it addressed a lot of the issues that I face as an actress. I already work with the Michael Chekhov technique and feel that this takes it all a step further and answers questions that I still didn't think had been answered. I am looking forward to putting it all into practice and will be reading it again. I would highly recommend this book. Please pass on my best wishes to Emmanuelle and thank her for creating such a much-needed acting book. Warmest wishes."

Claire Cordingley, actress. London

"Members who experience post-performance stress disorder may be interested in a new book, *A Balancing Act*, by Emmanuelle Chaulet, international film actress and theatre director, Fulbright scholar and adjunct faculty member at the University of Southern Maine Department of Theatre."

Actors' Equity Association -Winter Newsletter 2008

"Emmanuelle Chaulet's work with the actress whom I directed was transformative. After their work together, Jude's command of her character was indelibly set into place. As her director, my work with her on character ceased. I could then only step back and watch with profound engagement as she located - performance after performance - the heart of the role, conjuring her character with confidence, clarity, humor and grace. Emmanuelle Chaulet is an alchemist."

Richard O'Brien actor, director

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"To me the most beneficial aspect of the energy work is beginning the character development process with a clear system. With this clarity you can begin work with an open mind, body, and energetic system. I currently use Emmanuelle's techniques in all of my performances."

Sean Demers, actor, playwright, and USM Theatre Alumni '06

"Personal centering and role building in one seamless technique-Chaulet will re-teach you what you thought you knew."

**Caleb Wilson, actor, USM Theatre Alumni '05
winner of Dawn Wells' Outstanding Irene Ryan Partner award**

"The holistic approach employed by Emmanuelle Chaulet allows an actor to totally embody a character without fear or restriction, and has the power to safely guide you home again."

**Michael Toth, USM Theatre Alumni '06,
University of Florida, MFA in acting (candidate)**

"I found the Energize workshop very helpful to me as both an actor and a director, and would recommend it to anyone wanting to jumpstart their creative engine. The process I had been using intuitively for over twenty years to get into character was clarified and intensified, and I felt my imagination and creativity rejuvenated."

**Jane Bergeron, Senior Lecturer and Director of the Theatre Program,
University of Notre Dame, Australia**

I just wanted to tell you how much your relaxation exercises helped me during my senior recital on Sunday. I took about 7 minutes before the beginning and again at intermission and I felt like I was able to access a level of honesty in my performance that I never had before; the comments I received confirmed my suspicions. Thank you so much for introducing me to this practice. It has helped me sleep, calm my nerves at work, and even focus better in rehearsals and lessons. I am ever grateful for this tool and I will pass it on to my future students as well! Again, thank you.

**Jesse Wakeman
USM Chapter, President, MENC, The National Association for Music Educators**

When I took on "*The Columbine Project*" as Eric Harris [the school shooter] I knew I was going to have to go to a very dark, dark place to get there, and I would have to go all the way to the bottom because this was a story that needed to be witnessed through truth. My first thought was Emmanuelle Chaulet and the training I had received through her workshops at VCU [Virginia Commonwealth University]. I knew that I had to be safe going in and out of a character like this and Emmanuelle gave me that power by physically visualizing my character's energy, giving it a color and bringing it into my body. Not only does this achieve a safe entry into a character like Eric Harris, it provided me focus and a complete comfort knowing I was always Eric while that energy was in me. Doing this dissipated any nervousness converting it into focused energy. Leaving this character at the end of each show was a must in order to remain mentally healthy. Visualizing Eric's energy as black with grey speckles and a

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touch of white I took my time releasing that through my body. After all of Eric's energy was drawn out of me, I cleansed my energy system by bringing in a pure light, allowing me to become fully present as myself. Through Emmanuelle's technique and making it my own I have avoided unnecessary stress, gained focus, and have brought a sense of honesty to life that was unachievable before. Thank you Emmanuelle.

Collin Chute

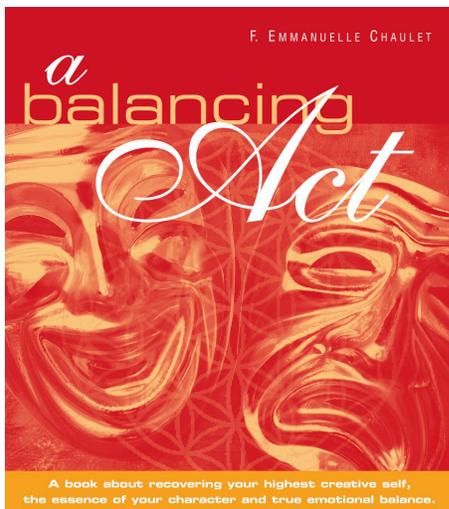
**Actor, playing 'Eric Harris' in "The Columbine Project" 2012
Avery Schreiber Theatre in North Hollywood**

I'm in the throes of reading Emmanuelle's book, *A Balancing Act*. This has been an amazing read through the chapters I've finished. It provides an easy-to-follow integration of Michael Chekhov and Lee Strasberg (her initial basic training) with much input from her training with Lisa Dalton, Wil and Mala Powers, Lisa's editing input, as well as a Foreword by Lisa. Emmanuelle goes beyond the basic Michael Chekhov with her integration of modalities involving energy bodies, the Energetic System, and her own version of actor exercises, warm ups and clearing work that ties it all together. And using Voice Dialogue and many other sources, she presents her own practical way to a character which sits squarely in the middle of the debate on inside-out and outside-in, both of which have some merit and are more integrated than most people teach.

I haven't put this book down for the past few days and I absolutely recommend it for anyone wanting to understand Michael Chekhov more and how to integrate his tools into the practical side of acting. Kudos to Emmanuelle and thanks for the extensive research and contribution to the Chekhov canon.

Charlie Bowles

Producer, National Michael Chekhov Association



The development of *Energize!*
a holistic approach to acting



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PLEASE CONTACT,

Emmanuelle Chaulet
emma@emmanuellechaulet.com

www.emmanuellechaulet.com

www.voice-dialogue-acting.com