

Dramatic Interpretation- Building A Character

For any event facial expressions are important. However, Dramatic Interpretation (as with any performing event) relies more on the face than speaking events. Much is said with the face. Body language might express emotions, but it is through our face we do most of our emotional interactions and exchanges. Through our eyes and contorting of the facial muscles we articulate our feelings and broadcast them to those around us. Our face can offer insight into our soul or serve as a mask. Knowing this, there are certain warnings one should take while planning Dramatic Interpretation facials for characters.

1. **Do not be wooden.** Dramatic Interpretation is a solo event yet not. You morph into several personas, all with distinct feelings. Never slack with your face. If your character is sad you need to show it. All characters, regardless of how small their role or lines, must articulate how they feel. There are few things worse than watching a DI with a wooden performer.
2. **Do not over-express.** Just as you want to never be emotionless, having too exaggerated of a face is comical. You are not performing in a 300 seat theatre where those in the balcony should see facials. Be melancholy but there is no need to wail with every fiber and tear duct and transform yourself into a melodrama.
3. **Do not let tears ruin your performance.** Emotions have a way of making us impossible to understand. When we get swept up in sobbing we, well, sob. We can hardly talk. Just because that is how we realistically act with crying does not mean that is how you should perform. People need to comprehend the words you are saying. In fact, there is never a reason when acting that distraught is a good decision. No one wants to see the multiple ways you can screw your face up. Also, if you do end up crying then you have the issue of tears on your cheeks. This can be problematic for two reasons: first, if you have a conversation with pops you now have one tear covered, hysterical character and one who should not be on that level (imagine switching from being impassioned to being a mere listener...not only is it near impossible, it most likely will look hilarious) AND second, what happens if you do not have time to wipe those tears away? You are now stuck with wet skin and eyelashes; perhaps even running mascara!

4. **Characterization.** If you have a character with a particular facial tick designed specifically for them DO NOT use that same facial tick for another character! Dramatic Interpretation is an interpretive event and characterization is a massive component of your score, and unless that mimicry is intentional you are now devaluing your characterization.

In Dramatic Interpretation facials can be an effective tool for linking your viewers to your characters and story. People generally are compassionate and will feel for a character they believe in. The secret is to understand the balance between caricature facials and those of non-existence. Be honest and refrain from forcing a look and your facials should win over any collection of spectators.