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The Netherlands

‘De Storm der Hartstogten Woedt’: The works of Johannes Jelgerhuis Rienkszoon as a source of stagecraft for the historically informed performer

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Citation
Neuman, L. C. (2025, December 5). *‘De Storm der Hartstogten Woedt’: The works of Johannes Jelgerhuis Rienkszoon as a source of stagecraft for the historically informed performer*. Retrieved from https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4284591

Version:	Publisher's Version
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Downloaded from:	https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4284591

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Part Two

Chapter 2, *Theoretische lessen* in practice

The previous chapter introduced concepts such as *welstand*, contrast, *attitudes*, naturalness, and *waarheid*, which form the basis of Jelgerhuis's acting style.[1] In this chapter, I draw attention to the relevance of these concepts for physical artistic practice — along with other aspects of stagecraft as described in the *Theoretische lessen* — and apply them to training and teaching. My focus, here, is mainly on chapter nine (on gesticulation), and chapters thirteen to twenty (on the expression of the passions) of the *Theoretische lessen*. Though these chapters contain information on movement, they lack — even when aided by illustrations — physical examples demonstrated in real time by a teacher or by actors performing or rehearsing on-stage.[2] In my aim to make the illustrations and the written material of the theoretical lessons useful to my own performance practice and more accessible to others, and thus to move from page to stage, I developed three exercises based on information from the abovementioned chapters in the treatise. The first two are short basic exercises on gesticulation and attitudes for the genres of comedy and tragedy; the third and more complex one is a series of passionate attitudes. Working with these exercises, as the first part of my practice-based research processes, aimed at answering two key questions posed at the beginning of this thesis:[3]

- How does physical and mental training in the *Theoretische lessen* and the study of Jelgerhuis's other works add to my acting practice, both in the preparation process and in performance?

- Which acting tools can I extract from such training, and how can I make them available and useful for other performers?

I designed the two basic attitude exercises as simple and accessible tools that help the actor to become familiar with the concepts of beauty and contrast not only by reading about *welstand* or by observing illustrations and sculptures, but also by experiencing them through practice in their own body. Having mastered the basics, teachers, students, and performers can then expand on the exercises. The paragraphs following the basic exercise structure feature examples of how these basics can be developed and adapted to the level of the performer, enriched with information from other sources, and used in different genres. The third, more complex exercise is a compilation of twenty-one attitudes from Jelgerhuis's chapters on the passions, which, apart from its initial silent

[1] For full definitions and discussions of the terms *welstand* ('that which looks good'; a concept referring to beauty in form, harmonious proportions, and/or expression), *attitudes* (full body stances, including gestures and facial expressions, which follow the rules of contrast and *welstand*), and *waarheid* (truth), see Chapter 1, the sections on '*contrast*', '*attitude*', '*welstand*', and '*waarheid*'.
[2] These are not the only chapters in which Jelgerhuis discusses movement. For entrances and exits, see Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, chapter 2; for stabbing oneself or collapsing after having been stabbed, see pp. 59–60, plate 11; and for the use of ballet and fencing for actors, see pp. 19–113.
[3] For the full presentation of the research questions, see the Introduction.

form, also advances into combinations with music, spoken text, and singing. I used the two basic exercises in my general preparations and in my training of the actors in the first case study (Chapter 3), whereas the third exercise served as preparation for my own staging in the second case study (Chapter 4). The present chapter is therefore to be seen as an introduction to both case studies.

The examples visible in video fragments and pictures in this chapter are not intended as a presentation of *the correct way* to render or interpret Jelgerhuis's oeuvre: each example is a unique outcome by a single/individual performer at a specific point in their artistic development. Rather than a *how to* guide for others to follow, I add these examples to complement my description of the practical aspect of this research, which is so difficult to do justice in words. I encourage research by others on this topic, and hope that those who come to different interpretations of Jelgerhuis's sources will likewise share their approach and/or outcomes.

The word 'gesture' and its Dutch equivalent '*gebaar*' can refer to movements of the arms and hands as well as movements of the head, the eyes, taking a step, or similar (combinations of) actions which are an aid to express the character's words and/or state of mind on-stage. When using the word 'gesture' in the following chapters, I refer to gestures with the hand(s), possibly together with the arm(s), and will specify all other gestures, such as movements of the eyes, facial expression, the head, taking a step, and so on.

As I make use of stereotypes and elements of codified stage behaviour in the exercises presented in this chapter, I briefly discuss two points of attention. As mentioned in the Introduction, I am aware of the limitations in research and staging performances when one attempts, as theatre studies scholars Magnus Tessing Schneider and Meike Wagner articulate, 'to establish codified behaviour of the past' without taking into (enough account) other aspects of theatre, such as the audience's experience and ideals of the time.[4] Balancing the information in visual documents and rhetorical treatises within its context, and observing from time to time the influence of my own (modern) stage habits and taste on my practice, is therefore a recurring part of my studies. One of the reasons why this remains a challenge is firstly, because the information left today is limited, and secondly because a certain amount of codified behaviour *is* one part of historical acting as presented in treatises and other sources (as it is in acting today). This codified language is part of conveying the characters' emotions and thoughts to the audience. In HIPP, one must consider that historical codes also change depending on the time period and culture, and not all messages in gestures, attitudes, and other forms will be recognized by the audience today.[5]

Regarding the generation of actors previous to Jelgerhuis, Albach refers to a bet between two spectators in the second half of the eighteenth-century in the Netherlands, in which both spectators attempted (and succeeded) to predict the next gestures of the actor on-stage.[6] This

[4] Tessing Schneider & Wagner, 'Introduction', in *Performing the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 7–8.
[5] Where clenched fists today may still be recognized as an indication of anger, for instance, it is less likely for the audience to recognize the gesture Jelgerhuis connotates with pity. Similarly, few audience members are aware of the various messages that could be conveyed by holding a fan in a specific position, open, closed, or semi closed.
[6] Albach, *Jan Punt en Marten Corver*, p. 126.

anecdote and other descriptions of the Dutch acting style preceding and during Jelgerhuis's time suggest not only that using certain elements of codified behaviour was common practice on-stage, but also that, when becoming repetitive and automatic, this was not appreciated nor considered good acting. As briefly touched upon in Chapter 1, the actor Marten Corver in the Netherlands — just like the actors Talma and Clairon in France — had contributed to a more natural acting style: more faithful to the character, and less to the conventional stage practices. Judging by early nineteenth-century treatises such as Austin's *Chironomia* and Jelgerhuis's *Theoretische lessen*, these changes in acting conventions increased the actors' creative possibilities regarding their personal choice of gestures. As Jed Wentz mentions in his '*Mechanical rules* versus *abnormis gratia*: revaluing Gilbert Austin's *Chironomia* as a source for historical acting techniques' of 2015, Austin explained that the gestures he annotated in his treatise are chosen to exemplify his notation system, but that the manner of delivery chosen for his texts 'might have been varied in a thousand ways'.[7] Similarly, in his *Theoretische lessen*, Jelgerhuis advises his students to freely combine his examples for gesticulations and attitudes, and to study works of art as well as people as inspiration for their acting.[8]

In Jelgerhuis's treatise, there are no gestures attributed to precise words. It is possible that those colleagues who were in charge of acting and declamation at the acting school, worked more in detail on this aspect of the craft. Because, to my knowledge, they have not documented this information, I focus here on the information available to me, which is Jelgerhuis's treatise. Iconic or stereotypical behaviour depicted and described in his lessons lies mainly in general gestures (including examples for indicating oneself, the gods, and clasping the hands in surprise or prayer) and in expressing the passions.[9] I contend that when these passions and their coded expression have been fully embodied, actors can adapt the gradation of that passion to the situation on-stage or in a concert, so that it appears natural within its context.[10] Such elements of codified stage behaviour are effective tools in the learning and teaching process and can be applied in staging. That said, representing or conveying codified messages of gestures, attitudes, or passions is not the only aim of my practice. Building up a vast vocabulary of gestures and attitudes, allowing for overlapping passions and emotional transitions, in combination with the imagination and the

[7] Austin, *Chironomia*, pp. 362–363, 368, cited in Wentz, '*Mechanical rules*', p. 49.
[8] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 68, 72.
[9] For more examples of general gestures and shaping the hands, see Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 101–103, plates 25–27.
[10] The examples of passionate attitudes and gestures as depicted by Jelgerhuis are one way of expressing that passion and do not preclude other ways or varieties of expressing that same passion. Anger, for instance, is often depicted with folded arms, with one or two clenched fists, held higher or lower, away from the body or pressing to the body, with more or less torsion in the torso, and so on. In addition, (as suggested in *Toneel Studien*) there may be anger building up already in the attitudes, facial expression, and gestures leading up to that specific angry attitude, and after it. Having worked with these techniques in practice, in teaching and with other actors, I have found that new habits, rules, codes, and even vocabulary are naturally created to discuss certain phenomena (a gesture is nicknamed after the person using them in a particular way, for instance), while others become so obvious that they are rarely discussed. Although I have not discussed these particulars in this dissertation, they exist and enable the variation and improvisation that I allow for when reading between the lines of Jelgerhuis's description of the basics in his treatise.

specific circumstances of each character in the context and situation of the play, safeguards variety of movement and leaves space for improvisation. This approach allows for acting inspired by historical sources and enriched by practice while taking into account the uniqueness of each performer and each character, which is also essential for adapting to various genres, while maintaining a sense of truthfulness to the audience and the actor. The imagination and adaptability of the actor are a means to apply elements of historically informed acting tools to modern productions that are not or little historically inspired.

2.1 NATURE PERFECTED: THE IMAGINATION, NATURALNESS, AND *WELSTAND* IN PRACTICE

My understanding of Jelgerhuis's ideal balance between an imitation of real life on-stage and *welstand* is pieced together from fragments of information in his works, and is directly linked to the relationship between the actor's mind and body — namely, their imagination and the movements on-stage. Jelgerhuis comments on the imagination in his treatise as well as in other works. All versions of the exercises in this chapter benefit from the use of imagination, as it generates the *reason why* a specific action should be taken, thereby usually making it appear more natural. Imagination and the thought work behind the passions and actions of a character were already mentioned in Chapter 1 (section 1.5.5, 'Soliloquies and the fourth wall'), and will be treated more extensively in the first case study (Chapter 3).

Although Jelgerhuis's manuscripts reveal his own work on imagination, he argues in his treatise that using imagination alone is not enough for the actor.[11] By following one's feelings only, without knowledge, one risks being overcome by one's emotions, performing actions that are clumsy or invisible for the audience, or that do not fit the propriety of the stage.[12] According to Jelgerhuis, actors are better served by knowing what to do and how to improve their art by learning how one's facial expressions appear to the audience, how to deploy makeup to one's advantage, and how to portray situations as they occur in real life, but adjusted and perfected for the stage by *welstand*.[13] Portraying an image of truth by natural acting, described in Chapter 1, is one of the actor's goals: '*wijl wij niet de waarheid, maar de afbeelding der waarheid geven; en naar mate die natuurlijker is, naar mate heeft men meer het doel bereikt*' (because we do not give the truth, but an image of the truth, and the more

[11] Jelgerhuis refers to Dutch actor Marten Corver's commentary on acting and imagination: '*Een geacht Tooneelliefhebber schreef aan den Tooneelspeler CORVER, hoe best in de rol van Cato te sterven; het antwoord was*: verbeeld U dat gij sterft. *Dit was een sober onderrigt*.' (An estimed amateur wrote to the actor Corver, how best to die in the role of Cato; the answer was: *imagine that you die*. This was a meagre instruction). See Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 163–164.

[12] For Jelgerhuis's advice on dying after being stabbed, see *Theoretische lessen*, p. 60; for collapsing on a table, see p. 64; for becoming a victim of one's feelings, see p. IX.

[13] He writes '*Al ware nu de levendigste verbeelding in staat de zaak te gevoelen, zoo zoude zoodanig Acteur zich nog verrijkt zien, met de kennis van hetgeen welstandig zij, en wat hij door kunst zoude kunnen toebrengen op het Tooneel* (Even if the most lively imagination were able to feel it [that which one wishes to portray], then still such an actor would see himself enriched with the knowledge of that which has *welstand*, and which he can apply on-stage by his art). See Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 133.

that is natural, the more one has reached the goal).[14] To improve the student's depiction of truth on-stage, he gives examples, for instance of letting the head fall in front when portraying a character dying in a sitting posture, explaining that letting the head fall backwards is not true to reality.[15] Seemingly contradicting himself, he warns against portraying other actions too much according to real life. Fragments of Jelgerhuis's criticism, on the one hand, of stage actions lacking truth, and, on the other, of actions that are too realistic (too rough, without reason, or ugly), are scattered throughout Jelgerhuis's treatise as well as in his private works.[16] Instead of a contradiction, however, the criticism as well as the different pieces of advice offered by Jelgerhuis fit together into one style: one that searches for an imitation of truth, but is filtered through the lens of ideal comportment worthy of the elevated topics and characters treated in tragedies. In comedy and other less elevated genres, actors still search to represent truth, but in order to educate the audience and to improve its taste, they are to reduce or filter out the banalities and rough behaviour. Ideally, the sum of these concepts would then result in a balance between naturalness, grace, and beauty (i.e., manifested in *welstand* and ease of movement). It would be genuinely inspired by nature, and therefore truthful, without representing a crude copy of real life.[17]

The exercises in this chapter are based on the following structure: by a combination of observing and creating mental images of good examples and through practice, moving according to *welstand* becomes what Roodenburg describes as 'a pre-reflexive, habitual process': thus *welstand*, 'resulting from habit, becomes in itself a habit, a habitual state'.[18] Though Roodenburg uses these terms to define elegant behaviour in real life, naturalized over time, the same process applies in adopting *welstand* as natural stage behaviour for the performer. Once a process of naturalization has been achieved, one's actions, guided by imagination, are at once truthful yet part of that dimension of aesthetic representation within the realm of *welstand*. In time, the performer expands their repertoire of movement, creating a repertoire of embodied practices and bodily 'habitual memory'.[19] The imagination and the internalized embodiment of behaviour through practice are

[14] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 133.
[15] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 164.
[16] Jelgerhuis's praise and criticism of other actors relating to the conceptions of naturalness, ease, and gracefulness is discussed in Chapter 1.
[17] For a discussion of imitation versus copying, see Terry F. Robinson, '"The Glass of Fashion and the Mould of Form": The Histrionic Mirror and Georgian-Era Performance' in *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 39/2 (2015), 30–65 (pp. 54–58).
[18] Roodenburg cites Saccone (1983), here, who uses this phrase regarding the courtier's grace and virtue: 'virtue, resulting from habit, becomes in itself a habit, a habitual state'. See Roodenburg, *The Eloquence*, pp. 13, 180, 198.
[19] Roodenburg follows the terms 'repertoire' as defined by Diana Taylor (2003) and 'habitual memory' by Paul Connerton (1989). See Roodenburg, *The Eloquence*, pp. 18, 177, 199. Kyropoulos refers to this repertoire as the 'thesaurus histrioniae: a depository of acting-related conceptual and procedural knowledge such as general principles, gestures, movements, routines and mnemonics, which would serve as building blocks for an approach to acting that feels spontaneous and natural in application from the point of view of the performer, but as with artful improvisation in rhetoric, may also be effective in producing a result that feels natural and spontaneous from the point of view of the audience, while making use of many of the aesthetic and rhetorical conventions, improving its overall beauty and power.' See Kyropoulos, 'Teaching Acting to Singers', pp. 196–197.

used to bring to life every action on-stage in a way that is natural and according to truth. Another balance to be found, and which the exercises in the current chapter allow for, is between gestures and facial expressions that are larger than life, so as to be recognisable from a distance (on larger stages), while avoiding becoming grotesque.[20]

2.2 TWO BASIC EXERCISES: *THEORETISCHE LESSEN*, CHAPTER 9

The following two basic exercises are derived from Jelgerhuis's lesson on gesticulation in the *Theoretische lessen*, which includes two illustrations with examples of gestures for tragedy and comedy. The plates accompany his written explanation. In order to move from his theory to my own practice, the set up for these exercises includes his definitions of gesticulation as well as selected elements from his introduction: together, they serve as a theoretical scaffolding to facilitate the explanation of the exercises developed here.

Jelgerhuis deemed his students ready for his discussion of gesticulation only after dedicating many of his previous lectures to good bearing in attitudes and the search for contrast in the body.[21] He precedes chapter nine of his treatise with the following remark:

> *Zoo zijn wij dan zoo verre gekomen, met de Attitudes en Standen, met de Contrasten en Zwier, en den Draai des ligchaams; om over de Gesticulatie eenen aanvang te maken.- Dat is die versnelde beweging, die met goed beleid voortgebracht, eene aaneenschakeling van standen, in beweging uitmaakt.*[22]
>
> We have progressed far enough with the attitudes and stances, with the contrasts and elegance, and the torsion of the body to commence with the gesticulation. That is an accelerated movement, which, when properly managed, constitutes a concatenation of stances in movement.

This passage reveals that gesticulation is not to be considered separately from the other elements and previously described concepts, as it is rooted in the attitudes and stances (which in turn are based on those subjects previously discussed). Gesticulation is part of the interplay between movement and suspension of movement: in moving a hand from, for instance, a low position to a higher position, it creates (part of) a transition from one attitude to the next. The concepts relating to ideal deportment are not enough here to achieve the variety and the right quality of actors' movements on-stage. Jelgerhuis's second and more precise definition of gesticulation also links gesture and its amplification to emotion in this often-cited passage:

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[20] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 133. Actors today must also cultivate a sense of adapting their facial expressions, movements, and gestures in order to fit different genres and different sizes of venues and situations: more nuanced and subtle facial expressions are usually to be preferred when recorded on camera, grander movements and facial expressions for large stages, and a balance of both for a performance befitting the intimate atmosphere and small audience of a house concert.
[21] Jelgerhuis's lessons were delivered in a lecture format and did not include the practical element; students observed, listened, and (if they followed his advice) practiced at home.
[22] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 76.

> *Gesticulatie,- Dit is, zich bewegen met goed verstand op het Tooneel, en wat is dit? niet anders dan zijne rede met meer dan gewoon, met meer verheven gevoel, door gebaren verzellen, naardat de storm der hartstogten woedt. Ik hoop, dat de Kweekelingen zullen beseffen, dat de bewegingen ten Tooneele, nu niet anders zijn, dan eene versnelde opvolging van standen, of als het ware eene aaneenschakeling van aanhoudende schilderachtige beweging van armen en handen, beenen en voeten, draaijing des hoofds, bij de standen des geheelen beelds, hetwelk men met zich zelven maakt, waarin men nu de toepassing der reeds geleerde contrasten moet waarnemen.*[23]
>
> Gesticulation, - That is moving on-stage with common sense, and what is this? Nothing other than accompanying one's words with gestures, with more than usual, with more elevated feeling, according to how the storm of the passions rages. I hope the students will realize that movements on-stage are nothing other than an accelerated succession of stances, or as it were a concatenation of continuous painterly movements of the arms, hands, legs, and feet, the turning of the head; with the stances of the entire image that one makes with oneself, wherein one must now perceive the application of the previously learned contrasts.

The gestures and the text are closely connected, both following the emotional intensity of the passions. Yet the stage requires a 'more than usual', 'more elevated' feeling than one would see in daily life: a higher level of expression, befitting the emotional intensity of the narration (the '*storm der hartstogten*' [storm of the passions]), the distance to the audience, and the painted stage sets of the theatre. This elevation is to be kept in mind particularly for those who are not (yet) accustomed to working in large theatres. Today, the presence of cameras allows (and often requires) actors — not only on the screen, but also on-stage when performances are recorded — to act in a manner that includes nuanced expressions and more closely resembles our behaviour in daily life. Moreover, the eyes of most of us today are more familiar with acting or singing viewed on a screen and with modern theatre performances, which means that contemporary eyes (for the observers) and bodies (for the performers) may have to adapt to the gesticulation and attitudes proposed here.

Before moving to a detailed explanation of Jelgerhuis's plates for tragedy (Figure 1) and comedy (Figure 2), I have selected additional guidelines, in a paraphrased translation:

2.2.1 Guidelines to plates 20 and 21 on gesticulation

- Jelgerhuis used a male figure in both plates, so that the legs are visible, but female students are equally encouraged to make the given examples their own to improve their practice.[24]
- The use of the right and the left hand should be varied. One can create this variation by expressing everything which is '*groots, goed en edel*' (grand, good, and noble) with the right hand, and everything '*verachtelijk en afkeerwekkend*' (despicable and revolting) with the left, including passions such as '*misprijzen, verachten, verwerpen, benijden, haten* (disdain, to

[23] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 77.
[24] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 84, 86.

despise, to reject, to envy, to hate).[25] Similarly 'turning the head to the left and to the right side, according to the nature of the subject, will contribute much to grace and *welstand*' and will avoid stiffness.[26]

- The movements and posture should match the character the actor portrays.[27]
- Too much gesticulation should be avoided. As an initial guideline, Jelgerhuis suggests 'to move with judgement not at every line, which one utters, but every sentence'.[28]

All the attitudes mentioned in the previous lessons can be considered as the basis for the gesticulation in these plates. In fact, the instructions for tragedy are to be seen, as Jelgerhuis puts it, as a 'mere opening on the track, which must be expanded through continuous study'.[29] He advises, following Gerard de Lairesse's lesson for painters, '*om het goede Attitude en beweging van het antieke beeld, op het burgerlijke leven toetepassen, door hetzelfde koncept te behouden, maar de bewegingen slechts minder uitgebreid te maken*' (to apply good Attitude[s] and movement[s] inspired by antique statues to real life by keeping the concept, but reducing the amplitude of the movements). Jelgerhuis extends this advice to acting, as it can be used (with good judgement) for navigating the difference in movement between Comedy to Tragedy and vice versa.[30]

- The movements in tragedy are generally wider/bigger than those in comedy:[31] the difference in the circumference of arm movements in both genres is shown by the dotted circles on both plates.[32] However, the exception is essential to the rule: one should not be afraid to exceed the smaller circle of movement in comedy, particularly in more vehement (*hevige*) passages, as they already tend more towards the tragic, in and of themselves.[33]

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[25] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 78–79, 83. For comparison of gestures for the right and left hand in other sources, see Kyropoulos, 'Teaching Acting to Singers', pp. 107–108.
[26] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 78.
[27] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 79. Kyropoulos gives examples of additional sources mentioning the concept of breaking the rules. He embraces this concept as a key feature of his New Teaching Method. See Kyropoulos, 'Teaching Acting to Singers', pp. 150–153.
[28] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 79.
[29] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 82.
[30] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 81.
[31] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 82, 84–85. For the dotted lines, see plates 20 and 21 (Figures 1 and 2 of the present chapter).
[32] Gilbert Austin refers to the difference in arm movement between the epic style and the colloquial style, stating that the elevations and extensions of the arm in the colloquial style are to be less bold, with a bent joint of the elbow. See Austin, *Chironomia*, pp. 313–314, plate 4, figures 34–36. See also Austin's descriptions for the magnificence of gesture, in which 'the centre of motion is the shoulder', while the upper arm is detached from the body and the arm is unfolded (see p. 453) and colloquial gesture, in which 'the upper arm [...] is barely detached from the side; and the elbow, instead of the shoulder, becomes the principal centre of motion' (see pp. 458–459). The difference in this aspect of gesticulation between the two styles, manifesting in the extension of the arm and the distance of the upper arm to the torso, is also visible in Jelgerhuis's plates 20 and 21 for gesticulation in tragedy and comedy (Figures 1 and 2).
[33] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 84–85.

Jelgerhuis cites Engel's treatise, stating that '*waarheid de eerste wet te zijn*' (truth should be the principal law), yet he argues that '*men wijkt geenszins van de waarheid, door zich goed en gratieus te bewegen, en daarop acht te leeren slaan*' (one does not move away from the truth by moving well and with grace, and by learning how to pay attention to this).[34]

The separate depictions of lower arms and hands on both sides of the main figure on plate 20 (Figure 1) are Jelgerhuis's illustrations to accompany written instructions on arm and hand movement by the author and actor Antoine-François Riccoboni (1707–1772).[35] The latter's instructions strike Jelgerhuis as '*uitpluizerij*' (nitpicking). They detail in what order the different parts of the arms should be activated in order to move the arms gracefully, but Jelgerhuis is not in favour of this technique. Instead, he advocates 'moving naturally and freely, according to rules of *welstand*, and combining *welstand* with truth, while searching to avoid stiffness'.[36]

> *weg met deze uitpluizerij, - bewegen wij ons natuurlijk en vrij, en geven regelen van welstand, zonder acht te slaan op deze nietige regelen, paren wij den welstand aan de waarheid en zoeken wij alle stijfheid te ontgaan, en door onze toonbeelden de aanwijzingen in het geheugen te planten.*[37]
>
> away with this nitpicking, - let us move naturally and freely, giving tenets of *welstand* without paying attention to these futile rules. Let us combine *welstand* and truth and [let us] attempt to avoid all stiffness, and by our example, plant the evidence in the memory.[38]

Earlier in the treatise, Jelgerhuis gives instructions on how to avoid stiffness: he presents examples of stances and actions (explaining how to optimize *welstand* in each of them), pointing out that these are to be planted '*diep in het geheugen*' (deeply in one's memory), and '*dikwerf in eenzaamheid te beoefenen, opdat men, vrij van alle stijfheid, zich dezelve eigen doet worden*' (to be practiced often in solitude, so that one makes them one's own, free of all stiffness).[39] The visual example must be applied to physical practice, so that performers may become fluent in the embodiment of attitudes, gestures, and movements, in preparation for the stage. Jelgerhuis urges his students to follow de Lairesse's advice to young students to improve their actions and attitudes in front of a mirror:

> *LAIRESSE,* [...]*, raadt de jonge Schilders aan, omtrent welgekozene Actiën, zich in eenen spiegel den besten stand uit te kiezen; hoe veel te meer moet men dit den jongen Tooneellist aanraden, om zich zelven*

[34] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 81. Engel in this passage praises the famous German actor Conrad Ekhof (1720–1778): '*Waarheid was zijn eerste regel, gelijk het behoort te wezen*' (truth was his first rule, just as it should to be). See Engel, *De kunst van nabootzing*, transl. Konijnenburg, vol. 1, p. 65.
[35] On page 81 of his *Theoretische lessen*, Jelgerhuis gives a shortened and slightly edited citation from the Dutch translation of Engel's treatise *Ideen zu einer Mimik*. See Engel, *De kunst van nabootzing*, transl. Konijnenburg, vol. 1, pp. 67–68. Engel, in turn, in his *Ideen zu einer Mimik* (vol. 1, pp. 76–77), refers to Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's German translation of Riccoboni's *L'Art du Théatre* of 1750. For the original passage, see Antoine-François Riccoboni, *L'Art du Théâtre à Madame **** [...] (Paris: C. F. Simon Fils et Giffart Fils, 1750) pp. 11–12.
[36] Unlike Engel and Jelgerhuis, Austin, citing the passage in the original language, approves of Riccoboni's instructions. See Austin, *Chironomia*, p. 375, footnote 1.
[37] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 82.
[38] The word '*toonbeelden*' can also be interpreted as the illustrations Jelgerhuis used in his lessons.
[39] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p 55.

> *voor eenen spiegel, in fraaije Attitudes te oefenen; want ofschoon ik hier niets anders doe dan aantoonen, zoo zoude zonder de oefening en proeve, mijne lessen geen nut doen.*[40]
>
> regarding well-chosen actions, Lairesse [...] advises young painters to select the best stance for themselves in front of a mirror; this advice is of even more importance to the young actor, to practice beautiful/striking attitudes; for, as I can do no more than to demonstrate, my lessons would be of no use without practice and experimentation.

It is clear from these three passages that observation of the images is combined with practice to create a mental storehouse of examples from which to draw inspiration in a body that moves with ease and grace. Jelgerhuis's students were to observe and remember the attitudes and gestures illustrated in the lessons, and make them their own through practice.

[40] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 55. For Gerard De Lairesse's advice to practice in front of a mirror, see De Lairesse, *Het Groot Schilderboek*, vol. 1, p. 49.

2.2.2 Jelgerhuis's guide to plate 20, on gesticulation in tragedy

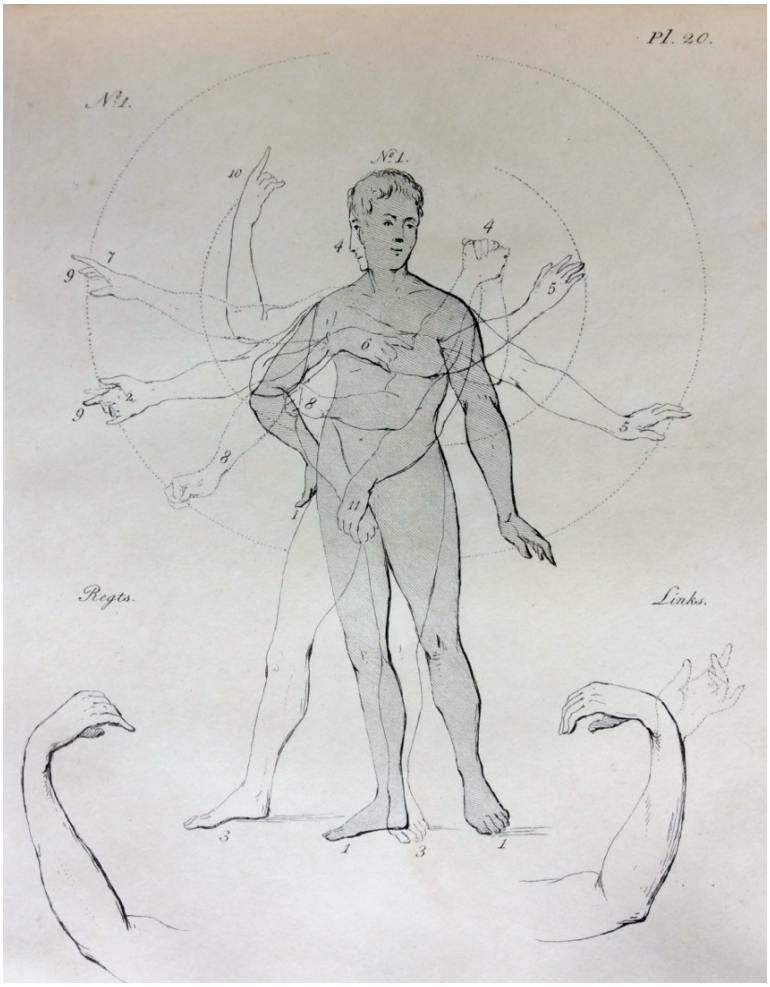


Figure 1, Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, plate 20.

Translation of Jelgerhuis's guide to interpreting plate 20 (Figure 1).[41]

1. 1–1–1–1 [the hands and feet with numbers 1 together create the first attitude]
2. movement to speaking.
3. moved feet in order to keep 1–1 and 3–3.
4. surprise on seeing an object, with face 4.
5. Lairesse's '*verachting*' (contempt/scorn), with face 4.[42]
6. hand on chest, applicable with all left hands
7. to give an order.
8. anger with the face N. 1 to the side, with fists.

[41] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 83.
[42] De Lairesse, *Het Groot Schilderboek*, vol. 1, p. 30, plate C, figure 2.

9. way of giving an order, higher or lower, when the left hand is raised, so that the hand is placed in the side
10. pointing towards heaven, while speaking to someone else.
11. silent wonder, hands together with hanging arms, and the legs and feet 1 and 3 together.

Jelgerhuis adds to these instructions the following remark on movement and contrast, applicable to all the attitudes and gesture combinations in plate 20:

> *Dit alles nu volgt elkanderen in beweging op, geschikt naar hetgeen voortedragen valt; - het zijn wenken, die ik hoop dat begrepen zullen worden, om voorttestreven. Merkt nu wel op: de contrasten, den zwier, den draai, heft zich het eene, dan daalt het andere; zoo ook wil ik het verzetten der voeten begrepen hebben; niets eveneens, altoos tegenstelling.*[43]
>
> All of these elements now follow one another in a succession of movement, arranged in agreement with what is to be portrayed on-stage. These are suggestions which I hope shall be understood, so that one can continue progressing. Now mark this: the contrasts, the elegance, the turn of the body, as one [element] is lifted, then the other descends; I want the positioning of the feet to be understood in the same way; never both sides at once, always opposition.

This passage shows that the body and gestures are to be composed in a succession of movements, according to the character's situation on-stage, while remaining within the realm of graceful deportment, in which the rules of contrast as well as the turn of the body are to be observed. Moving to the illustrations for comedy, Jelgerhuis deems repetition of all the previous gestures in the comedy plate redundant, and only gives a few examples to demonstrate that the gestures in comedy should be smaller. He adds, moreover, that the more laughter is supposed to be caused by one's words, the smaller one's gestures can be.[44]

[43] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 84.
[44] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 85.

2.2.3 Jelgerhuis's guide to plate 21, on gesticulation in comedy



Figure 2, Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, plate 21.

Translation of Jelgerhuis's guide to interpreting plate 21 (Figure 2).

2. The right hand is placed on the chest, in the vest or in the camisole, the left hangs loosely, with the feet in 1 and 2.
3. for speaking, 3 with the right hand
4. to give an order, 4.
5. pointing heavenwards, 5.
6. command someone to leave, 6.
7. disdain/contempt, 7 and 7, the face, 7 added.
8. to change the character, for instance to make the farmer or farmer's wife a bit comical, one can adjust: the stance more bent, the head as in 8, the legs, 9 and 10, the hands initially in 11 and 6, but all the other movements are also possible.

Jelgerhuis gives this last example (8) to stress the importance of the student's awareness of the body's posture, and its influence on the character and movements.[45] He adds that the circumference of a comedian's movement can be even smaller when his *delivery* must evoke laughter, and not his movements.[46] Similarly, a parallel position of the legs, feet, and gestures should be avoided unless for the purpose of creating a deliberately ridiculous moment, or situation.[47] Jelgerhuis writes that the positions of the arms and legs on this plate can be combined as desired, for each combination will result in a good stance (again, the gestures of the arms and the hands are not seen as separate, but they create a full body image with the rest of the body).[48] The plates are to be seen as a mere starting point from which the actor can develop any combination of the given arm gestures and foot positions. He further specifies that '*men dient zoo lang daar op te zien, tot men de eene uit de andere als het ware ziet voortvloeijen, en als Gesticulatie voor het oog zweven ziet*' (one is to observe these images until one can see one gesture flow into the next, as it were, as gesticulation, floating before one's eyes).[49] This is an essential point for creating a 'concatenation of continuous painterly movements'[50]: by mentally practicing the transitions from one image to the next, the imagination becomes a direct tool for transforming one or more drawings (or any other still image or sculpture) into movement in the mind, which the body can then execute. The actor's training therefore combines the tools of imagination and physical practice.

With this in mind, I created the basic exercises, following the order of the arm gestures of each plate, and combining them with varying foot positions according to what felt logical at the time.[51] My initial embodied version of the plate needed correcting to resemble the illustration as much as possible.[52] At this stage, feedback from others was helpful to create the correct muscle memory corresponding to each attitude or gesture. Such adjustments could range from tilting the head slightly more to the left, to raising the right elbow and hand, turning out the foot more, and so on. It is unlikely that Jelgerhuis intended the order of the gestures and foot positions to become a fixed series: he does not mention any order; on the contrary, every option is possible. Moreover, the numbering of the feet and hands in the comedy plate is incomplete. However, as I practiced the movements Jelgerhuis describes, adding a few small adjustments, in time they became two short series of moving gestures and attitudes that I found useful for my own practice — for training purposes and for teaching. I will refer to these as series T1–11 (movements drawn from the tragedy plate) and series C1–11(movements drawn from the comedy plate).

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[45] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 86.
[46] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 85, my emphasis.
[47] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 87. Jelgerhuis dedicates plate 22 to parallel gestures and leg positions, which should be avoided on-stage. See Chapter 1, section 1.2.2 on '*Contrast*', Figure 2 (left).
[48] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 86.
[49] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 86.
[50] For the full citation, see page 83 above, or Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 77.
[51] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 86.
[52] I did not adopt the manner of moving the arms and hands as described by Riccoboni, visually represented by Jelgerhuis's separate illustrations of hands and underarms in plate 20 (Figure 1).

2.2.4 The basic tragedy series: T 1–11

Figure 3 below is a miniature overview of the tragedy series, featuring five voice students from the Early Music department at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, who attended the 'Declamation and Gesture' group lessons in 2024.[53] Appendix F contains the separate attitudes in pictures with the annotated action written in words. In order to give momentum to the opening attitude, one can start with the weight on the left leg, and move into the first attitude by shifting one's weight to the right leg for T1:



Figure 3, The basic tragedy series performed by students of the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, 2024, photo credits, Andrea Friggi

T 1. legs and hands in 1–1–1–1.
T 2. only the right hand moves to 2.
T 3. this number was skipped, as shifting the legs happens at other moments (moving into T1, T4, T6, and T8).
T 4. moving back in surprise at seeing the object on one's left, the feet retiring to 3–3 and the hands in 4.
T 5. in order make the transition from T4 to T5 feel more natural, it can be helpful to first turn one's eyes to the left side: this makes it possible to imagine or see the object at the left that is to be rejected. Then the head moves to 4, and the arms to the left in 5–5.
T 6. placing the right hand in 6, lowering the left to 1, then moving the feet to 1–1.

[53] I want to express my gratitude to each of these students and to Andrea Friggi (photography and editing), whose participation made the creation of Figure 3 and Appendix F possible.

T 7. the right hand in 7, the left hand in 1, the feet stay in 1–1.
T 8. moving the hands into 8 and 8, retiring to foot position 3–3.
T 9. this attitude is divided into 'low nine' (feet stay in 3–3, right hand in the lower 9 position and the left hand moves up, resting on the hip) and 'high nine' (the only change is the right hand moving up to the higher position of 9).
T 10. the feet stay in 3–3, the right hand moves to 10, the left hand stays on the hip.
T 11. the left foot stays in place 3; the right foot is retracted, taking the 1 position which is usually taken by the left foot: this places the legs and feet together, as Jelgerhuis suggests; the right arm is lowered, and the left hand covers the right, both in 11.

2.2.5 The basic comedy series: C 1–8

Jelgerhuis did not number all the foot positions on plate 21 (Figure 2), or the hands in their initial position (the left in the vest and the right hanging by the side, both coloured grey).

C 1. This series starts with the position of the legs and feet that are left uncoloured (the right foot in 9 and the left foot without numbering), the right hand in the vest, the left hanging down, but with the little finger sticking out slightly, as one can see in the illustration.
C 2. shifting the weight to arrive with the feet in 1 and 2, keeping the hands in place (the entire body is as coloured grey).
C 3. the right hand moves to 3 (speaking).
C 4. the right hand moves to 4 (giving an order).
C 5. the right hand moves to 5 (pointing heavenwards).
C 6. the right hand moves to the hanging position, the left hand moves to 6 (commanding someone to leave).
C 7. the hands move to 7 and 7, the head moves to the right 7, for disdain/contempt.
C 8. (C 8–11:) the left foot moves to 10, the right foot to 6, the knees slightly bent and the lower back curved slightly (as can be seen in the dotted lines of the upper legs and pelvis: moved slightly backward), the right hand moves to 11, the left hand to 6, and the head tilts to 8.

Jelgerhuis does not give an alternative for the placement of the right hand for female characters in C1 and C2, yet their costumes do not have the vertical opening of a vest (unless playing a breeches role). Earlier in the treatise, however, he describes various options to create contrast between the arms in comedy: if one hand is lowered, the other hand, held higher, could carry a fan, hold the tip of their apron (for the farmer's wife), touch the ribbons of their hat/bonnet, and so on.[54] The last two options work particularly well as substitutes for the hand in the vest during the starting position of the comedy series. Holding a fan is also possible, but one must find a reason to let go of the fan before the gestures start from C3 onwards (for a comical effect, bordering on farce, one could gesticulate with the fan in the right hand, depending on the play and the character).

[54] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 41. For illustrations of characters holding an apron in the high hand see plates 7, and 81, 87; for the farmer's wife holding the tip of her apron, see plate 8, N1.

I recorded the basic tragedy series (T1–11) on video in 2018 in two venues in Český Krumlov in the Czech Republic: Video A, in a small room of the Studijní Centrum Český Krumlov (see also Figure 4, showing T7), and video B, on the stage of the Český Krumlov Palace Theatre (Figure 5, showing T2).[55]



Figure 4, Video still of Video A, recorded at the Studijní Centrum Český Krumlov, in 2018.

Play Video A



Figure 5, Video still of Video B, recorded at the Český Krumlov Palace Theatre, 2018.

Play Video B

[55] This video was taken during a research workshop organized by the research group Performing Premodernity in 2018, which allowed for scholars and artists to explore the archival collections of the State Castle Český Krumlov and experiment in the Palace Theatre.

The differences between performing in a small room and on a (raked) stage can be seen when comparing these examples. The facial expression, for instance, would be easier to see in Video A (there is daylight in the room and observers would be sitting closer by) than in Video B). Moreover, the inclination of the body changes due to the raked stage on Video B (one has to compensate one's balance slightly on a raked stage in order not to tilt forward, as if one were standing on heels). At the time these videos were recorded, I was experimenting with performing the series in both directions, for the purpose of expanding my own vocabulary and to offer my students a mirrored example while teaching. This practice in progress is visible in Videos A and B and in the video stills, where I execute the attitudes in the opposite direction as those presented by Jelgerhuis (here, my left arm is the main arm indicating in T–7 and T–2, whereas on Jelgerhuis's plate 20 the right is the principal arm for these gestures). I ask the reader to observe my experiments in these and the following videos as work in progress: there are many points of improvements in terms of stage deportment, *welstand*, posture, and timing, some of which I point out below in section 2.6.5, 'Reflection on the borders of *welstand*'.

2.2.6 Character: age, sex, social status, circumstance

Having established a sequence of movements and attitudes which follow the rules of contrast and *welstand* advocated by Jelgerhuis, the series can be adapted to fit different characters. Jelgerhuis mentions character on several occasions in the treatise, for instance to urge the students to adapt their attitudes and their way of walking during the entrances and exits to the character portrayed.[56] But here he goes into more detail by citing the different characteristics for different characters in the poem which he attributes to the Dutch painter Van Mander.[57] This passage includes the differences in age, social status, sex, circumstance, and culture.[58] The first four in particular are no uncommon parameters to define or shape a character in historical painting and acting treatises, as nuances in each parameter can influence and thereby reveal important information about posture and movement. I started practicing with two imagined female characters: one older, serious character of high rank (Video C) and a young, more sweetly dispositioned character of slightly lower rank (Video D). I recorded the tragedy series with these characters in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic in my own apartment.

[56] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 34, 38, 41, and plates 3, 4.
[57] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 79–80. I have not been able to locate the poem Jelgerhuis cites in van Mander's *Het Schilder-Boeck*. Golding points out that part of its content is a poetic paraphrase, corresponding to stanzas 38 and 39 in chapter IV of Mander's *Het Schilder-Boeck* (fol. 14^{v}). See Golding, *Classicistic Acting*, p. 305.
[58] For age, rank, and circumstance, see, for instance, De Lairesse's *Het Groot Schilderboek*, pp. 52–53; For examples of acting treatises mentioning this topic, see Kyropoulos, 'Teaching Acting to Singers', pp. 240–241. For social decorum of the characters on the eighteenth-century Dutch stage as well as for age, sex, social status, and emotional state of mind, see De Haas, 'De wetten', pp. 183–185, 256.



Video C, The basic tragedy attitude series in progress

Play Video C



Video D, The basic tragedy attitude series in progress

Play Video D

In these two videos, I execute the series as depicted on plate 20; the right hand is now the dominant hand for most of the gestures. However, in attitudes T–5 (0'16" in Video D, 0'30" in Video C) and T–7 (0'26" in Video D, 0'45" in Video C) my arms are lower than the arms on plate 20. One of the most important transitions, which one notices in practice, is the movement of the eyes between T–4 and T–5. In order to move from something seen on one's right to rejecting something on one's left, the eyes have to move first, so as to see or imagine the rejectable object, an actual person or a thought before moving away from it (see Video D, 0'12" –0'17" and Video C 0'22"–0'30"). This example also indicates a difference in timing depending on the character (the transition on Video D is much quicker than the one on Video C). Both videos are examples of the experimental stage of this sequence. For example, after the full sequence in Video D, I started the sequence again, this time on the opposite side. In Video C I added an entrance and an exit, and in the attitude T–8 (0'55") I shift my weight, demonstrating a variation on this attitude. In comparison with Video D (0'30"), the expression of anger in Video C is bolder, and the arms are, in Jelgerhuis's wording, more '*theatraal*' (theatrical, as in better suited for the stage).[59] I think that both expressions of T–8 can be equally functional as long as they resonate with the character and their situation on-stage. The accentuated eyebrows in Video C are an example of my experimentation with Jelgerhuis's instructions on painting eyebrows to aid the visual impact of facial expression.

2.3 TEACHING

Both series soon proved to be useful in teaching, in my own practice, and in training with others. I used various characters, including those proposed by Jelgerhuis in the *Theoretische lessen*. The treatise features examples of different basic characters and some examples of posture or behaviour specific to them, such as the farmer and the farmer's wife; a lady; a nobleman, a hero, and a gentleman, '*vorstelijke rollen*' (royal/regal roles), a '*grijsaard*' (greybeard), and so on.[60] Such characters fitted in with the casting system in use at the Amsterdam Schouwburg at the time that Jelgerhuis was first employed, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This casting system followed that of the Comédie Française, where each player's was hired for a specific type of '*emploi*' (in Dutch also spelled as '*employ*' and '*emploot*' at the time).[61] Each *emploi* comprised a set of stage characters, and required a player's predisposition for the specific acting style, including the physical build and the voice associated with that *emploi*.[62] The 'première amoureuse', for instance, would generally

[59] See Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 144.

[60] For examples, see the following in the *Theoretische lessen*: the farmer and a farmer's wife, see plate 8, N1, p. 53 as well as the abovementioned N8 of Jelgerhuis's guideline to the comedy plate 21; for a lady, see plate 7, p. 53; for a nobleman, a hero and a gentleman, see plate 4, A, p. 43; for royal/regal roles, plate 6, p. 51; and for a greybeard, see p. 34, 46 and plates 1, 4 C, plate 9.

[61] Many German theatres also followed the French model. For more on the development of *emplois* (*Rollenfächer*) in Germany before and during Goethe's time, see Ulrike Müller-Harang, *Das Weimarer Theater zur Zeit Goethes* (Weimar: Klassikerstätten zu Weimar, 1991), pp. 45–47.

[62] Arthur Pougin defines *emplois* and provides a list of the French *emplois*. See Arthur Pougin, *Dictionnaire historique et pittoresque du théâtre et des arts qui s'y rattachent* [...] (Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot et C[ie], 1885), p. 326, 772. Sabine Chaouche refers to these typologies as stereotypes that were present in many plays at the time. See Sabine Chaouche, 'The Phenomenology of Acting:

have a more delicate physique and a higher voice than the 'mère noble'. The players might continue to play the same *emploi* throughout their entire career, or change, in time, to an *emploi* that was better suited to their age.[63] The same system was also used in comedy and opera (the types of *emploi* varying slightly for each genre) and corresponded to most characters in plays and operas of the time. In the course of Jelgerhuis's career, the *emplooy* system was discontinued, and new plays featured a larger variation of characters. Yet it is difficult to say exactly when and how strictly the new rules were adopted. In her *Kijkcijfers*, theatre historian Henny Ruitenbeek describes the seeming incongruity between the officially documented changes and the actual course of events concerning role divisions at the Amsterdam Schouwburg itself.[64] Jelgerhuis still speaks of *emploi* in his treatise of 1827–1829, written in the last decade of his lifetime and acting career, but only in the introduction, because his lessons were intended for all the acting students and open to additional public.[65]

Inexperienced performers seem to benefit from portraying and identifying with clear-cut and contrasting characters first, such as those mentioned in Jelgerhuis's lessons, before moving on to psychologically complex and multilayered characters. Other examples of such basic characters may include: an evil queen, a young prince, a witch, a wise druid or priest, an innocent shepherdess, to name a few. Having explored some of these basic characters, the passions are added, and the characters as well as the imagined circumstances can become more and more complex, to increase nuance and variation.[66] These variations increase the performer's vocabulary of movements and expand their mental storehouse of options and images, which can later be recalled on-stage.[67]

Just as it is practical to start with clear and contrasting, well-known passions such as joy, anger, and sadness, before moving on to more complex passions, or overlapping combinations of passions, these stereotypes were practical aids, helpful in introducing new students to the material. However, the binary gender division in these stereotypes, based on historical sources, does not represent the variety in gender as we know it today; they also lack the variety and complexity of actual human characters. In the classroom, I alternate assigning a specific character and gender to the students (not necessarily corresponding to the gender with which they identify), with letting them create characters of their own (including all elements belonging to a character: gender, age,

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Cognitive and Creative Spaces in 18th-Century Theories', in The Stage and its Creative Processes, vol. 1, ed. by Sabine Chaouche, special issue in *European Drama and Performance Studies*, 13 (2019–2), 69–90 (p. 71).

[63] For more information on the *emplooy* system in Amsterdam and at the Comédie Française during and before Jelgerhuis's time, see Albach, *Helden*, pp. 56–60, 97–100.

[64] For more details about the *emplooy* system at the Amsterdam Schouwburg, see Ruitenbeek, *Kijkcijfers*, pp. 64–70.

[65] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. v.

[66] For a historical source discussing the study of specific characters and their societal circumstances (in this case, regarding acting/pantomime for singers), see François Boisquet, *Essais Sur L'art du Comedien Chanteur* [...] (Paris: Longchamps, 1812), pp. 102–131. For accounts of performances by theatre critics, see, for instance, Hazlitt, 'On Actors and Acting'. For a famous actress describing her creation of specific roles, see Clairon, *Mémoires*. On pages 42 to 53 of her *Mémoires*, Clairon describes specific *emplois*, such as '*Tyrans*', '*Rois*', '*Premier rôle d'Homme*', '*Jeunes premiers Rôles d'hommes*', '*Confidens*', '*Mères*', '*Rôles forts*', '*Roles tendres*', and '*Confidentes*'.

[67] Golding calls this process 'image-recall technique'. See Golding, *Classicistic acting*, pp. 106–108.

social status, and their set of passions). This has needed no explaining so far to the students, as the environment of the classroom seems to feel safe enough for them to experiment with any character of interest to them. As historical plays and operas can feature roles *en travestie*, exploring characters of different genders is not only useful to explore a wider range of expression, but may also be useful in their professional lives on-stage.[68]

In addition to variations in character, there are many other parameters that influence the series, from the viewpoint and perception of the performer and/or observers. Naturally, each parameter can be added to help create specific traits for a chosen character. Like Jelgerhuis, I present these examples as a mere starting point, a previously-mentioned 'opening on the track' to enriching one's vocabulary of gestures and attitudes. I use the term 'performer' in the following examples to describe the person who executes the series, whether student or professional, including actors, singers, dancers, or others interested, for themselves at home or with observers, in class or in other types of practice. Both series feature a small number of attitudes or movements to which Jelgerhuis assigned a passionate state (T4, T5, T8 and T11) (C7). The remaining attitudes and gestures, although they have not been labelled with a specific emotion, may have a specific function (such as pointing heavenwards, giving an order, and so on). Both the passions and the function may be affected by changing small units of movement and thought. The elements of variation in the following list do not necessarily need to be combined with a character, but in order to create the different nuances and gradations, while avoiding a combination of mechanical movements for the sake of merely performing the exercise/task, it is essential that a performer use their imagination to create the *reason why* a certain gesture or movement is performed in the way the exercise prescribes.[69] Training the imagination as an active acting tool not only for envisioning movement but also as a generator of the acting itself is therefore required from the very beginning.

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[68] Regarding inclusivity on other levels, I ask that this dissertation and the exercises proposed be read with the intention of including everyone, including (inter)national students, and students with injuries and/or chronical impairments. My work with students with physical impairments or injuries thus far has shown that each person already was accustomed to finding solutions to adapt to most situations in their daily life, and that they knew their bodies well enough to find solutions also in the lessons. Such solutions included, for instance, working from the imagination, or performing this series while seated, or with lower arm positions. With students whose sight was impaired, working with touch, text, and the imagination made it possible to exchange the information needed to create an embodied understanding of gestures and facial expressions. One student's sight was limited to the ability to differentiate a light and dark space, yet often had paintings described to them by others. This allowed them to draw inspiration from their trained mental storehouse of images. Combining discussions of the dramatic content, the passions, and movements with physical examples given by touch (by touching my hands, and following the movement of my clasped hands, for instance, from a lower position to a higher one, the student was able to recall and reproduce this movement when the passion awakened by their own imagination required it. Similarly, this student was accustomed to touch people's faces as a means of recognition, and by touching my face, I could help them recognize the expression of passions in their own face), so as to make the passions recognizable to the audience.

[69] Boisquet describes an exercise for singers to create nuances in the passions and the expressive poses of their character. See Boisquet, *Essais*, pp. 160–161. For the English translation of this passage and a discussion of acting practices for singers in France, see Laura Moeckli, "'Nobles dans leurs attitudes", pp. 23–25.

2.3.1 Variations

The following is a list of variations on the tragedy and comedy series of the two basic exercises, based on Jelgerhuis's plates 20 and 21:

- **smaller/bigger gestures** – varying the amplitude of the gestures, for instance by performing the series as if persuading an audience of thousands (using elevated and grand gestures) or as if speaking in secret to one person (with small gestures). The smaller gestures should however, as Jelgerhuis points out, always be within the realm of elevation needed on-stage).[70]
- **tempo** – executing the sequence varying the gradations of speed.
- ***draai*** **(**turn/flexure), ***zwaai***, and ***zwier***[71] – sweep and stylish/graceful movement. Experimenting with the *draai* is done by increasing or decreasing the torsion/flexure of the body.[72] This can be executed slowly at first, to observe the effect each minimal adjustment has on the expression of the entire figure. When moving from a position in which most of the body is faced forward, frontally, a slight increase of torsion will add elegance to the posture, or can express a character's shyness. When one continues to increase this torsion, the effect will generally increase in elegance until reaching the point beyond which it becomes exaggerated. Strong torsion of the figure can work well for characters such as a witch or those with bad intentions or something to conceal. In exercises of '*zwaai*' and '*zwier*', the students practice the movement of gestures, and how to achieve a seemingly effortless graceful and/or stylish quality.
- **contrast: body, head, and eyes** – first exploring contrast between direction of the head and the torso. This is achieved, for instance, when the torso is turned slightly towards the right side (the right shoulder turns a little away from the audience), while the face is turned towards the audience. Continuing from the previous example, even more contrast is created by turning the eyes towards the left: the body, the head, and the eyes each facing different directions. (Increased contrast of all three units simultaneously is especially useful for shy or jealous characters, or those with hidden intentions).[73]

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[70] Jelgerhuis emphasizes using gestures big enough to be visible, while not following each other up too quickly so as not to present too much at once to the spectator ('*dat onze bewegingen op het tooneel groot moeten zijn, zullen dezelve zigtbaar wezen, en nimmer elkander te spoedig moeten opvolgen, opdat niet aan den beschouwer op eens te veel worde voorgesteld*'). See Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 164.

[71] For an extensive list of definitions for *zwier* in Dutch, see *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*, s.v. '*zwier*', https://gtb.ivdnt.org/iWDB/search?actie=article&wdb=WNT&id=M090589&lemma=zwier&domein=0&conc=true (accessed 7 April 2025).

[72] For additional examples of '*zwier*', '*draai*', and/or '*wending*', see Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 65, and Jelgerhuis's attitude descriptions of his colleague Snoek as Achilles (p. 66), the sculptures of Antinous (p. 68) and the gladiator (p. 74). There is a limit, however, to the desired amount of '*zwier*' and '*draai*' (p. 67).

[73] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, plate 7, B (p. 52); plate 8, figure 2, pp. 53–54; plate 15, figure 2 (p. 67), plate 16, figures 4 and 6 (pp. 68–70). See also the figures depicting the lady and the farmer's wife on plate 7, C and plate 8, No. 1 (pp. 53–54). For contrast between the direction of the eyes and the head, see Antinous, plate 15, figure 3 (p. 68).

- **tilting the head** – by tilting the head slightly to one side, the performer exercises nuances which support or have a different effect on the intended facial expression. Jelgerhuis describes this as '*een oog hemelwaarts*' (one eye heavenwards), meaning that one eye is higher than the other: a way to increase *welstand*.[74]
- **eyes first** – starting every transition to the next gesture or attitude with the movement of the eyes: the eyes see something which triggers a reaction (thought/emotion) and the subsequent movement.
- **emotion first** – from each position, the character's own thoughts or emotions change first: this causes the eyes to look in the direction of the object of their thoughts/emotions, and the physical action follows.
- **noting (accentuating) or flowing** – when noting or accentuating, each movement has momentum and strength, as well as a clear starting point and an accent at its point of arrival. When flowing, the gestures and/or attitudes are more continuous; they can be gentle, and their exact moment of transition is less defined.
- **varying the legs** – improvising by performing the series without changing the position of the legs during the exercise. Another option is improvising with different moments to change the positions of the legs.
- **steps** – improvising by adding a few steps to some or all of the transitions (this gives the transition direction and intent towards or away from the object of focus).
- **timing** – dividing each transition into smaller units, and spreading those out in time. For instance, the eyes move first, a reaction and a change of facial expression follows, accompanied by the breath; this is followed by turning (and perhaps tilting) the head, turning the torso, changing the foot position, then one hand, then the another. It may also be that one or both hands precede the movement of the feet. Spreading out a transition over time is useful especially when much time must be covered without a big change in affect, for instance during the many textual and musical repetitions in an aria in ABA' form, or during musical preludes, interludes, and so on. To keep this from becoming mechanical or 'merely pretty', it is essential that the performer keeps his imagination and expression alive. It is also helpful to vary the speed and/or quality of movement between at least a few of the given units.
- **passions** – Jelgerhuis mentions examples of passions (surprise: T4, disdain: T5 and C 7, and anger: T8), but one can vary and extend emotional expression in all the attitudes and transitions by using Jelgerhuis's illustrations of facial expressions in chapters 13–20 of his *Theoretische lessen* and in sources he recommends (for instance those by Charles Le Brun and Gerard de Lairesse).[75]
- **all-in-one-passion** – performing the entire series in one passion, for instance in sadness or in joy.[76] As T4, T5, T8, and C7 already have emotional connotations, these emotions

[74] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, plate 4, figure B, p. 45.

[75] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 117–170. Probably Jelgerhuis refers to the Dutch translation of Le Brun's treatise. See Le Brun, *Afbeelding der Hertstogten*, transl. De Kaarsgieter; for the original French treatise, see Le Brun, *Methode*. See also, De Lairesse, *Het Groot Schilderboek*,

[76] My thanks for this exercise to João Luís Paixão, whose idea it was to perform the Tragedy series in sadness during the Historical Acting Summer Academy of 2019 at Leiden University.

will be coloured by the selected overarching passion. In some cases, this is more straightforward than in others. If, for instance, one performs the tragedy series with sadness as its main passion: T4 (surprise) will be a surprise within the state of sadness, T5 (disdain/contempt) will be contempt generated by sadness, and T8 (anger) may be only a moment's impulse towards anger, and is likely to be a weaker version of anger than usual (the muscle tone in sadness is generally less than in anger; therefore, it may take the performer more time to reach or suggest the muscle tension associated with anger). Alternatively, executing the tragedy series in joy, however natural in combination with T4 (surprise), may need a playful twinkle in the eye to make the T5 (contempt) milder or of little consequence (more like a short frown than actual contempt). The attitude of T8 (anger), in combination with joy often transforms into an expression of energetic courage or decisiveness. Practicing the series by varying the overarching passion trains not only the physical transitions but also the imagination; performers must find within themselves the motive to make the next action seem plausible or even unavoidable.[77]

- **passions in pairs** – similar to the previous exercise, but now the overarching passions are two, and the series is performed while alternating the passions in pairs (for example: T1–T2 in joy, T4–T5 in jealousy, T6–T7 in joy, and so on). Again, this is a useful training for the imagination and the transitions from one emotion to the next.

By creating these exercises and expanding the material in Jelgerhuis's treatise through reference to additional sources, I was able to expand my own acting practice and to develop a tool for exploring and improving specific roles and smaller units, such as orations, arias, monologues, and songs. The physical and mental knowledge gained from this work is also useful in collaboration with others, as I am more flexible in creating and adapting my role in accordance with the style of a regisseur or ensemble, in spoken and sung repertoire as well as in silent roles. Knowing which choices I made to create an atmosphere or character, helped me convey my ideas to the musicians and/or conductor. After working alone, I found that alternating teaching with my own practice enabled me to give students guidance not only in expressing that which they envisioned, but also to improve their general presentation and confidence, for instance when speaking in public. The listed elements of variation prepare the student with various gradations of *welstand*, to be adapted using their own judgement in different genres (from recitals, declaimed poems, spoken theatre, oratorio, to fully staged theatre performances). After years of working with the basic attitude exercises, I started to read the *Theoretische lessen* in a different way. My practice allowed me to recognize options for nuances of movement in the text as well as in the illustrations, which (though I had not been able to see it in my first years of study) yet which greatly expand an actor's options.

[77] Kyropoulos explains this process with an added analysis of the specific muscle tension associated with the overarching passion and of the way that muscle tension influences the other passions. See Kyropoulos, 'Teaching Acting to Singers', p. 237.

2.3.2 Exercises with two people or more

2.3.2.a The regisseur

Once performers are familiar with at least one of the basic series, they can modify the order of gestures and attitudes to any combination. In this exercise, one person performs (A) and another person (B) functions as regisseur. B calls out any number, between T1–T11 or C1–8, and A moves into the corresponding attitude or gesture. B then calls out a new number, and A makes a transition to the new attitude or gesture. Depending on the time available and the level of both participants, the series of transitions can contain anything between 3 and 10 different gestures/attitudes. The exercise challenges the improvisation and transitioning skills of the performer (A). At the same time, B trains their imagination by envisioning the next attitude. Then the participants swap roles (A takes the role of B and vice versa). In doing so, both learn how to choose the attitudes in an order that creates the amount of contrast and movement befitting a specific situation and/or character. When working with more than two participants, one person will take the role of the performer (A), one person is selected among the group as regisseur to call out the numbers (B), and the rest of the group (C) functions as the audience. Whether working with only two or with a group, rotating the functions enables the participants to experience the physical side of the exercise (A) and the visual and mental side (B and C). The exercise can be further extended by having performer (A) choose a specific character to perform the called-out attitudes and gestures. They can also adopt any of the parameters of variation listed above to explore different facets of that character, such as variation in passions, ample circumference of all gestures, and so on.

2.3.2.b Attitudes *en scene* with entrances and exits

After practicing the attitudes/gesticulation and their transitions in any order (as proposed by B), elements from the previous exercises can be combined easily with information from Jelgerhuis's second chapter on entrances, exits, and the manner of walking on-stage.[78] Many guidelines in his second chapter (for instance, on entering in a manner that matches one's character, and paying attention to contrast in the body) have been incorporated in the guidelines and exercises above. The present exercise invites the participants to apply this information to their entrances and exits, considering the following additional instructions from this second chapter. On entering the stage, the performer can prevent swinging one's arms (which are to be avoided on-stage) by holding one's hands behind one's back, folding them, or by keeping contrast in the arms.[79] The attitude, chosen to match the character, should remain '*eenvoudig en natuurlijk* [...]*, ver van alle gemaaktheid*' (simple and natural, avoiding all affectation).[80] Walking on-stage is done in curved lines instead of straight ones, as the latter make the stage seem small (the faulty lines are dotted in the illustrated examples of Figure 6).[81]

[78] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 33–42.
[79] For swinging arms and examples of arm positions for entering the stage, see Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen,* pp. 38–39.
[80] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen,* p. 39.
[81] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 36, 38, plate 3.

The manner of walking, the speed and the size of the steps are adjusted to the character (see plate 3 for examples of different characters).[82] When working on an actual stage, performers should leave enough space between themselves and the flats they enter from: (tightly squeezing around the flats will not look good).[83] No entrances are allowed through the flats representing walls or closed doors, walking through a fully opened door is allowed.[84]

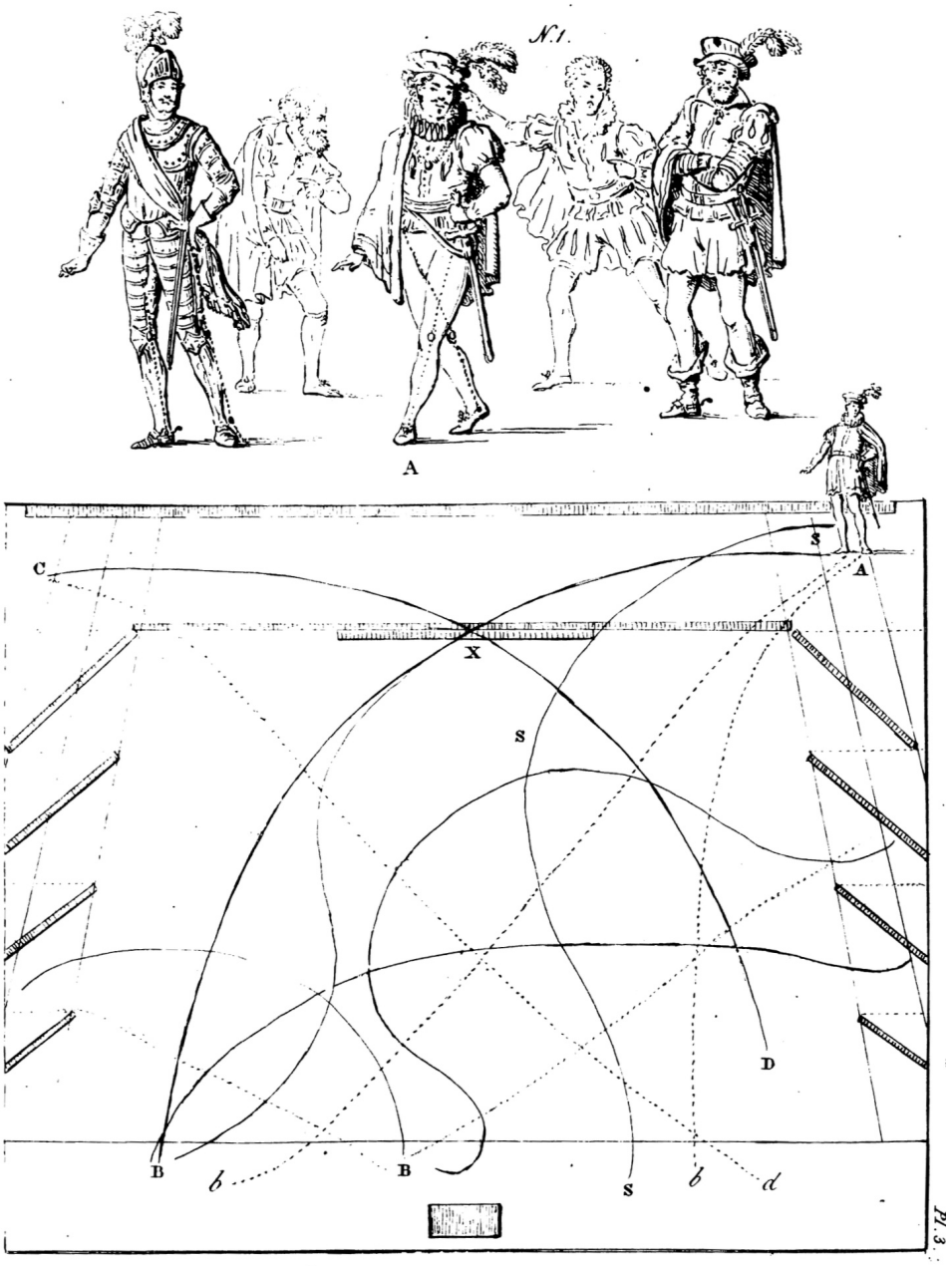


Figure 6, Entrances and exits in Jelgerhuis's *Theoretische lessen*, plate 3

[82] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen,* pp. 34, 35, 36.
[83] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen,* p. 38.
[84] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen,* p. 37–38. For Jelgerhuis's comments on French actors entering through the walls, see Neuman, 'Three Jelgerhuis Manuscripts', pp. 130–131.

2.3.2.c Exercise for entrances, exits, and attitudes

Performer A choses a character and an initial attitude for entering the stage.

- having arrived on their chosen position on-stage, A assumes a second attitude, facing the audience as much as possible.[85]
- B similarly choses a character and an initial attitude, and enters from the opposite side of the stage, approaches A, and comes to halt in a second attitude.
- On perceiving B, A reacts, changes their attitude, and subsequently leaves the stage.
- B changes their attitude as a reaction to this small event and also proceeds leaving the stage, either following in the direction of A, or exiting on their own side of the stage.

Many short stories can be told with this exercise, but the characters, the emotions and the situation must be clear in the mind of the participants. The more the intention of one character is expressed by the full range of facial expression, the manner of movement, the posture, and so on, the easier it becomes for the other participant to react. The dramatic stage situation and the attitudes for each character can be defined beforehand, but when the participants are more advanced, the scene can also be fully improvised. In both cases, the participants learn to adapt their movements and reactions to another player on-stage.

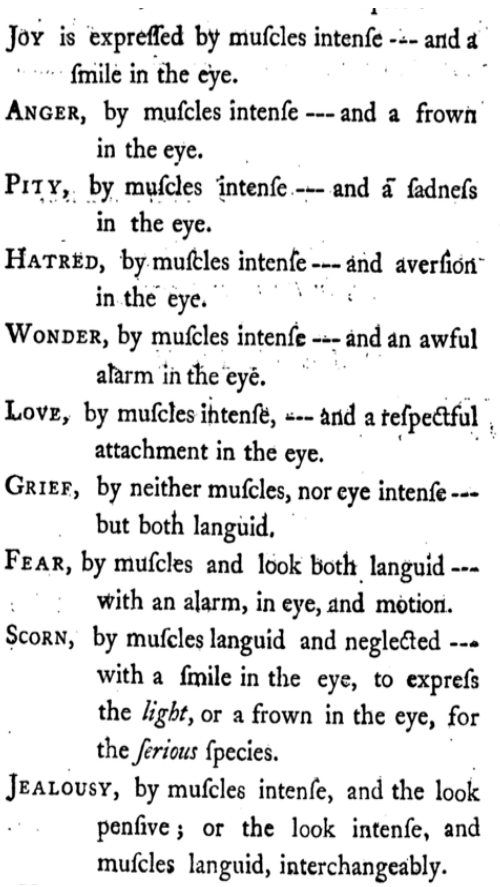
2.3.3 Hybrid exercises

I extended the two attitude series by combining Jelgerhuis's instructions with information from other historical sources on acting, including, as described in the following three exercises, the attitude plates or the notation system from Gilbert Austin's *Chironomia*, Aaron Hill's exercises on the passions in 'An Essay on the Art of Acting', and the facial expressions based on Charles Le Brun's *Methode pour apprendre a dessiner les passions*.[86]

[85] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen,* p. 44.
[86] Hill, 'An Essay', pp. 353–414.

2.3.3.a Aaron Hill

Aaron Hill, in 'An Essay on the Art of Acting', lists and describes the expression of the eyes and the intensity of muscle tension (see Figure 7) relating to ten selected passions: anger, fear, grief, hatred, jealousy, joy, love, pity, scorn, and wonder.[87]



JOY is expreſſed by muſcles intenſe --- and a ſmile in the eye.

ANGER, by muſcles intenſe --- and a frown in the eye.

PITY, by muſcles intenſe --- and a ſadneſs in the eye.

HATRED, by muſcles intenſe --- and averſion in the eye.

WONDER, by muſcles intenſe --- and an awful alarm in the eye.

LOVE, by muſcles intenſe, --- and a reſpectful attachment in the eye.

GRIEF, by neither muſcles, nor eye intenſe --- but both languid.

FEAR, by muſcles and look both languid --- with an alarm, in eye, and motion.

SCORN, by muſcles languid and neglected --- with a ſmile in the eye, to expreſs the *light*, or a frown in the eye, for the *ſerious* ſpecies.

JEALOUSY, by muſcles intenſe, and the look penſive; or the look intenſe, and muſcles languid, interchangeably.

Figure 7, Ten passions and the muscle tension and eye expression ascribed to them by Aaron Hill in 'An Essay on the Art of Acting', p. 401.

His analysis can be useful for training the awareness of the eyes and of muscle tension in every transition from one passionate attitude to the next. The application of this technique works well with the exercises listed above in section 2.3.1 'Variations' as 'passions', 'all-in-one-passion', 'passions in pairs', and in section 2.3.2.a 'The regisseur'. In the 'all-in-one-passion' exercise, for instance, one can perform the series T1–T11 with the overarching passion of anger, which, according to Hill's analysis, is expressed by 'Muscles intense, A frown in the eye'. This muscular intensity and expression of the eyes influences the way the other attitudes are performed. When using Hill's list in practice, it is important to consider his remark that the imagination must always precede the action:

[87] For comparison with Jelgerhuis's equivalents of these passions in his treatise (*Toorn*, *Vreeze*, *Droefheid*, *Haat*, *Jalouzy*, *Vreugde*, *Liefde*, *Medelijden*, *Spijt/verachting*, and *Verwondering*), see Appendix E, or see Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, chapters 13–21, pp. 117–172.

> To act a passion, well, the actor never must attempt its imitation, 'till his fancy has conceived so strong an image, or idea, of it', as to move the same impressive springs within his mind, which form that passion, when 'tis undesigned, and natural.[88]

Hill's analysis of the ten passions is a useful tool, but the imagination must be the first generator of the action. Regarding Hill's analysis and facial expression, Jed Wentz points out in his 2010 dissertation 'The Relationship between Gesture, Affect and Rhythmic Freedom in the Performance of French Tragic Opera from Lully to Rameau' that Hill himself warns actors against copying facial expressions without activating their imagination, as this would result in a 'scholastic and technical confusion'.[89] Kyropoulos elaborates on this in his 'Teaching Acting to Singers' by specifying that certain muscles of facial expression cannot be activated on command, but can be engaged by mentally envisioning a situation or feeling, allowing the imagined feeling to naturally manifest in the facial expression.[90] By using the imagination when practicing with Hill's list for the ten passions, the performers train their muscle memory and the awareness of their technique in direct relation with their imagination.

2.3.3.b Gilbert Austin: The sculpting exercise

This exercise is undertaken with participants who have already mastered both of the basic attitude series and are familiar with the basics of the notation system created by Gilbert Austin's in his treatise *Chironomia* of 1806.[91] The division between the participants is again: performer (A), regisseur (B). In the case of more than two participants, those that are not active as performer or regisseur become observers (C) until the roles are rotated. The person who functions as regisseur now has more options than in the basic regisseur exercise: they can call out any number of the selected attitude series or add additional gestures or foot positions by describing them using Austin's terms for notation. One regisseur (B) can suggest a change of foot positions, for instance: *R2*. Once the performer (A) has made this change, the next regisseur (B) might suggest, for instance: right hand to *vertical elevated oblique* (veq-) and left hand to *vertical horizonal across* (–vhc). By expanding their options from the attitude series T1–T11 and C1–C11 based on Jelgerhuis's treatise with Austin's foot positions and vast range of gestures, the participants can create almost endless combinations of gestures and attitudes. Performer A must unify the directions for physical movement with their imagination to generate a convincing transition from the previous attitude to the new one. Depending on the situation, one may also need to change emotion, and thus facial expression and muscle tension, to achieve the desired effect.

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[88] Hill, 'An Essay', p. 355.

[89] Wentz, 'The Relationship', p. 144; Wentz, '"And the Wing'd *Muscles*, into Meanings Fly". Practice-Based Research into Historical Acting Through the Writings of Aaron Hill', in European Drama and Performance Studies, 19 (2022–2), *Historical Acting Techniques and the 21st-Century Body*, 243–304 (pp. 287–289).

[90] Kyropoulos, 'Teaching Acting to Singers', pp. 215–220.

[91] I have not added the basics of Austin's notation system here, as these can be found in several places other than in Austin, *Chironomia*, pp. 293–372. For a practical summary of the basics, see, for instance, Barnett, *The Art of Gesture*, pp. 441–454; and Kyropoulos, 'Teaching Acting to Singers', pp. 96–98 and https://www.kyropoulos.com/austin.html (accessed May 2025).

2.3.3.c Charles Le Brun – Sebastiaan Le Clerc: The passion challenge

The participants receive a handout with Charles Le Brun's illustrations of facial expressions, engraved by Sebastiaan Le Clerc (1637–1714).[92] I use this version because each passion is indicated in Latin, German, Dutch, and French, which helps the students connect to the passion in the language(s) with which they feel most comfortable.[93] After studying in class a selection the facial expressions depicted on the handout (for instance: sadness, joy, jealousy, desire, fear, wonder, scorn, courage, love, horror, laughter, and anger), the passion challenge can commence, taking a week's time. I send the participants one illustration of a passion a day, asking them to take a selfie, or have someone else take a picture of them in that specific passion. Each then shares their selfie or picture with the group, and they are invited to add other pictures taken from TV series, sculptures, paintings, or anything else that they associate with the passion of that day. Once the week is over, the students usually have an improved memory of six passions (the day of their lesson is not included), and the facial expressions practiced over that week are then practiced in class with the group, in various formats. For example, they can be first applied to the format of 'the regisseur', (focusing on calling out passions only), then to calling out the numbers of the basic attitudes and gestures series, and subsequently in combination with gesture combinations from the 'sculpting' exercise described above. When these options are combined, a sequence of eight cues given by the regisseur(s) might sound like this: 'jealousy..., T8..., R2..., love..., both hands *supine elevated oblique*..., rR1..., fear..., right hand *vertical elevated oblique*..., and left hand *vertical horizontal forward contracted*.' Although these codes may look complicated, the basics of the Austin notation and both basic attitude series are usually quicky learned by the participants. Comprehension of these codes creates a mutual language between regisseur, observer and performers. It allows for rapid communication about movements and attitudes, which, in practice, can be noted down by all parties in their texts or music scores.

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[92] Sebastiaan Le Clerc, *Effigies et Repraesentatio Affectionum animi juxta delineationes D. Le Brun a D Clerico aeri incisae. / Abbild oder Vorstellung der Gemühts Regungen Nach abzeichnung des vortrefflichen Monsr. le Brun. u. von Mr. le Clerc. in kupffer gebracht. / Aftekening en verbeelding der Hartstogten, naer de tekeningen van Monsr. le Brun, in 't koper gebragt door Mr. le Clercq* (c. 1657–1714), etching, (P: Schenck Scult: Reg: Pott'. exc: Amstel', cum priv'., n.d.), Teylers Museum, Tvb G 5501.

[93] This exercise can also be done with a selection of Le Brun's original illustrations. Jelgerhuis's illustrations in chapters 13–21 on facial expressions (see Appendix E for a summary) can be used as well, but Jelgerhuis omits illustrations of '*zeer zachte*' (very soft/subtle) facial expressions for love, desire, hope, and joy, which he deems more suitable for the painter than for the actor, '*dewijl zij zich meer tot een inwendig harts- of zielsgevoel bepalen, dan wel door uiterlijke bewegingen worden aangetoond, meer door woorden dan door daden bewezen*' (because they are more confined to an inner feeling of the heart or the soul, than shown by outer movements, more proven by words than by deeds). See Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 147, 149. His decision is probably founded on his stage experience, which mainly featured roles in his own '*emploi*'. Although Jelgerhuis was initially hired at the Schouwburg as '*raisonneur*', many roles in which he excelled (such as Avogaro, Siméon, and Nero) were characters with a disposition for negative emotions (see Chapter 1). I wonder if actors or actresses specialized in the *emploi* of '*premier amoureux*', or '*première amoureuse*', would have agreed with Jelgerhuis: I suspect that they would be more inclined to give a detailed account of those 'softer' passions. I included the softer passions in the passion challenge, as I think they belong to the full range of passions needed for a performer.

The act of taking a picture while portraying a specific passion and comparing the virtual image of one's own facial expression in that passion to that of others, creates awareness of the different results in different faces. In addition, this process seems to assist the participants in memorizing the passions in a different way than when working live. Presumably, this is because the picture is a still image, which one can take time to observe, as opposed to analysing the facial expression of a person in front of you, who moves in and out of the facial expression. The fleeting moment of the facial expression is soon in the past and cannot be recalled in exactly the same way. Moreover, the week of practice removes the initial difficulties some participants experience in having their face scrutinized up close by a fellow participant (something they must get accustomed to for working on-stage), and the passion challenge gives them time to practice in private and feel more confident. Although the result of each passion on the participants' faces is different, the whole of each passion's pictures has those characteristics in common that represent recognizable variations of the passion in question.

2.3.4 The imagination: training the mental storehouse

The exercises with multiple participants are stimuli to consider the viewpoints of both the observer/regisseur and the performer. Participants practice composing series of movements or stances that work well together, that seem a logical next step. For instance, in dramatically complex moments it may be effective to let two contrasting attitudes follow each other; in more composed moments, a smaller gesture may be enough to accompany the next emotion or line of thought. The 'sculpting' exercise, in particular, allows participants to draw from their mental storehouse or '*thesaurus histrionae*' (in this case, for instance, of paintings and sculptures) and to recognize and/or recreate those visual images in attitudes. This, in turn, reinforces the information previously gathered in their mental storehouse, and potentially adds new images (for instance, of a fellow participant performing an attitude or transition in a memorable way). This process can also stimulate their understanding and intuition of *welstand* as a shared dimension between the visual arts and the theatre.

2.3.5 Singing, speaking, and working in silence

Working on the attitudes and other historically inspired acting techniques that do not involve the singing voice can be beneficial to singing students who want to improve their acting skills. The main focus of most singing students is on their vocal technique. Students therefore often have trouble in letting go of the habit of focusing on their vocal production at all times. When their concern with their technique is visible in their facial expression and in their eyes, this becomes problematic: one can see that their thoughts are not on the story/aria/text, and, occasionally, their bodies are held in a way that may be functional for the voice but inhibits physical expression. Naturally, a balance between muscular tension in the body, on the one hand, and relaxation on the other hand, is essential when singing: the singing body should not be tense, yet must produce sufficient energy to regulate the breath, the volume, and so on. By not using the voice at times during the exercises, the singers can concentrate on their acting technique without being distracted by how their voice sounds. Working in silence can be useful to find an ease of movement in the body, graceful gestures, a free use of the breath, and to search for facial expressions. Once this

ease is found, the voice can be added in alternate exercises in silence, with spoken text, or singing, so as to find the optimal balance between the muscular activity needed for singing, while the body and mind are more available to focus on telling the story.

A regularly recurring reaction to the two basic series, when working with more than two participants, is their surprise at how different performers, using the same material, produce different results. The participants' observation seems to stem from the contrast between the impression I make when performing the attitudes, and what happens when they try it themselves. Having seen the illustrations (plate 20 or 21) and my demonstration of the series, the expectation of inexperienced performers is to see a similar result not only in themselves but also in their fellow participants. When the group is then divided in observers and performers, the observers' reaction time and again is astonishment (even before having worked on character consciously) at the variation in characters, created by the differences in physical appearance, their way of moving, and other qualities each person brings to the exercise.[94]

2.3.6 Time Frame and development

My work on the basic series of attitudes and gesticulation in tragedy and comedy (T1–11 and C1–11) described here, initially preceded the staging project of my first case study (Chapter 3), then evolved alongside it and continues now. The basic series can be used to work with information from solely the *Theoretische lessen*, to study Jelgerhuis's instructions in that source. At the same time, they are adaptable to variations that go beyond Jelgerhuis's treatise and other works: the hybrid exercises described above (which combine the attitude series with Gilbert Austin's notation system and Aaron Hill's analysis of ten passions, as well as Le Clerc's engravings of the passions in facial expression by Le Brun) are merely examples. Apart from contributing to the first case study's training process, the two series also underwent a number of adaptations and variations because of additional information from other sources and the interaction with other actors. The feedback I later received from researchers and stage performers in different fields and at various stages of their artistic careers was another factor in this fine-tuning process. Both series are tools to strengthen one's improvisation skills and have the quality of technical exercises that evolve as the performer grows. The more one masters one's skills, the more profound and detailed the work becomes: the transitions become more interesting, and the characters more rounded. I used both the attitude series for teaching and experimentation purposes in various countries from 2018 onwards, with and without variations (of character, passions, staging, and so forth).

2.4 PLATE 20 IN HISTORICAL EUROPEAN CONTEXT

The attitudes and gestures in Jelgerhuis's plates for tragedy and comedy are not isolated examples. The same and similar attitudes are also found in illustrations throughout the rest of his treatise and in several of his lesser-known works, such as his individual costume designs and *Schettzende*

[94] I noted these reactions among, for instance, students from the Conservatories in Amsterdam and in The Hague as well as participants at the Historical Acting Summer Academies in Leiden of 2018 and 2019.

Herinneringen.[95] Seen in their wider context, these attitudes and gestures correspond to precepts of ideal deportment in the Netherlands and in Europe in Jelgerhuis's time.[96] Most of the attitudes from the tragedy plate are recognisable in theatre-related treatises, theatre iconography, and the visual arts throughout Europe, ranging from antique sculptures to late nineteenth-century stage practice, and in between touching on artistic genres including opera, spoken theatre, dance, and the visual arts.[97] The attitudes T1, T2, T6, T8, and T9 are frequently found in costume sketches depicting figures in theatre costumes (dancers, actors, and opera singers) and on engravings and prints representing performers on-stage in specific scenes. The other attitudes, such as T4 and T11, are more rare. Figures 9a and 9b feature examples taken from various genres (costume designs, paintings, and other sources) in Europe and Russia, illustrating all the attitudes in the tragedy series.[98] Figures 9a and 9b include abbreviated reference details, full information is provided in Appendix I.

The three examples for T4, for instance, are depictions of this attitude in sources from three different countries and offer information not only on the attitude itself but also on its interpretation. Figure 8 (left) is a costume design or study for Louis IX of France by the Dutch painter François Joseph Pfeiffer jr. The hands are held in a more central position compared to Jelgerhuis's plate 20, but the head is similarly turned to the side. Figure 8 (centre), shows T4

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[95] Examples of illustrations and attitudes and gestures in the *Theoretische lessen*: for T1, see plates 3, 64, 68, 85; for T2, see plates 69, 76; T9: 79; for T5, see plates 39, 41; for T6, see plates 58, 81; for T8, see plates 8, 44; for T10, see Plate 60, 61; for T11, see plate 34). Examples in other works: for T1, T2, T5, T9 high, see Jelgerhuis, *Schettzende Herinneringen*; for T1, see Johannes Jelgerhuis, 'Kostuumontwerp voor een Oosterling', (n.d.), drawing, watercolour, Amsterdam, Allard Pierson, theatre collection, t000731.000, KD7-16; for T2, see Johannes Jelgerhuis, 'Kostuumafbeelding van mevrouw Sardet als Josabeth in Athalia', (n.d.), hand-coloured etching, Amsterdam, Allard Pierson, theatre collection, g003506.000, GD109-13; for T9 (high), see Johannes Jelgerhuis, 'Kostuumontwerp voor Berosus in Zoroaster' (n.d.), drawing, pencil and wash, Amsterdam, Allard Pierson, theatre collection, t000812.000, GD11-1.

[96] For earlier international sources and their influence on ideal comportment in the Dutch Republic (1588–1795), see Roodenburg, *The Eloquence*.

[97] For the influence of beauty, *welstand*, and contrast in the visual arts and in ideal (stage) behaviour in the Netherlands, see sections 1.1, 'Terms and definitions' and 1.2, 'Jelgerhuis - the painter' in Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

[98] The illustrations in Engel, *De kunst van nabootzing*, transl. Konijnenburg (the Dutch translation of Engel's treatise *Ideen zu einer Mimik*) contain only two of this basic attitude series. These illustrations also appear in the English translation of Engel's *Ideen zu einer Mimik* by Henry Siddons. See Siddons, *Practical Illustrations* (1807). For the passionate attitude T5, see Engel, *De kunst van nabootzing*, transl. Konijnenburg, vol. 1, plate XVI and Siddons, *Practical Illustrations*, p. 110; for a variation of T8, see Engel, *De kunst van nabootzing*, transl. Konijnenburg, vol. 2, plate XXX and Siddons, *Practical Illustrations*, p. 276). For this and other comparisons of attitudes in the treatises of Jelgerhuis, Engel, Siddons, and Gilbert Austin, see Barnett, *The Art of Gesture*, pp. 59, 67–68. The treatises of both Engel and Siddons contain more examples of other full body passionate attitudes used by Jelgerhuis in the *Theoretische lessen*, some of which I inserted in the third exercise described below. For joy, see Engel, *De kunst van nabootzing*, transl. Konijnenburg, vol. 1, plate XVII and Siddons, *Practical Illustrations*, p. 136); for sadness/dejection, see Engel, *De kunst van nabootzing*, transl. Konijnenburg, vol. 1, plate XX, figure 1 and Siddons, *Practical Illustrations*, p. 178; and for apprehension, see Engel, *De kunst van nabootzing*, transl. Konijnenburg, vol. 1, plate XX, figure 2.

represented as attitude for sadness in the *Dissertatio de actione scenica*, a treatise on acting of 1727 by Franz Lang. This interpretation of T4 differs from the 'surprise' associated with this attitude by Jelgerhuis. The variation in emotional expression also shows in the position of the head, which is tilted to the side of the heart. The third Figure 8 (right) in these examples of T4 is a print of the English actress Ann Street Barry (1733–1801) in the character of Lady Randolf during Act III, Scene I of the play *Douglas* by John Home. She is portrayed in T4 as she expresses her astonishment upon the recognition of her long-lost son as she exclaims the line 'Tis he, tis he himself, it is my son!' (visible on the print).[99] Precise indications such as those by Lang, Jelgerhuis, and those on the print of Barry, corroborate the versatility of these attitudes as I experienced and continue to encourage, for instance in the exercises 'all-in-one-passion' and 'passion in pairs' (in section 2.3.1 of this chapter). For instance, apart from surprise and sadness, T4 can also be associated with pity or despair, but also with malicious plotting, delight, rapture, and imploring. The hands can be folded or clasped, lifted and lowered, and can be hidden from the view of another character by turning away the torso and hands (in malicious plotting or secretive delight).[100]



Figure 8, (left) François Joseph Pfeiffer jr., costume design or study, annotation: 'Philippo, Louis 9, 1226' (1800–1900), drawing, pencil and wash, Amsterdam, Allard Pierson, theatre collection, t003616.000;
(centre) Anonymous artist, illustration in Franz Lang, *Dissertatio de actione scenica* (Munich: Mariae Magdalenae Riedlin, Viduae, 1727), figure vii;
(right) 'Mrs. Barry, in the character of Lady Randolph' (1780), print, published by Harrison and Co., London, V&A, Harry Beard Collection, S.61-2013, detail.

[99] The tragedy *Douglas* by John Home premiered in 1756 and was published in 1757.
[100] For a discussion on these and other attitudes in the visual arts and on the stage, see Mickaël Bouffard-Veilleux, 'Attitudes de théâtre, civilité et dispositif narratif dans la peinture d'histoire française entre 1700 et 1760', in Le Tableau et la Scène: Peinture et mise en scène du répertoire héroïque [...], in *Annales de l'Association pour un Centre de Recherche sur les Arts du Spectacle aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècle*s, 5 (2023), 11–39.

T1



Boquet, costume design for opera singer (French)
Francois J. Pfeiffer jr., costume design, (Dutch)
Lepautre after Berain, costume design (French)

T2



Jelgerhuis, a French actress on stage, (Dutch)
Boquet, costume design for a ballet (French)
Del Bianco, costume design for a ballet (Italian)

T4



Francois J. Pfeiffer jr., costume design (Dutch)
Anonymous, illustration in acting treatise (German)
The actress Ann Barry as Lady Randolf (English)

T5



Francois J. Pfeiffer Jr., costume design (Dutch)
Girodet, illustration in *Phèdre* by Racine (French)
Meil, illustration in acting treatise (German)

T6



Lortzing, illustration in periodical (German)
Anonymous, singer in opera comique (Russian)
Videostill from a cartoon (Russian)

T7



Boquet, costume design for ballet (French)
Cruickshank, the actress Sarah Siddons (English)
Atelier Ziesenis, stage illustration of actor (Dutch)

Figure 9a, The short attitude series in a historical European context: T8–T11

T8



Atelier Ziesenis, stage illustration of actor (Dutch)
V.M., illustration in acting treatise (Italian)
Terry, the actor Spranger Barry as Varanes (English)

T9



Burnacini, set design for festa teatrale (Italian)
Bonnard, singer in opera (French)
Bertoli, costume design (German)

T9



Per Krafft the Younger, painting (Swedish)
Huot after Briulov, singers in opera (Russian)
Anonymous, illustration in acting treatise (German)

T10



Lairesse, illustration in painting treatise (Dutch)
V.M., illustration in acting treatise (Italian)
Geoffroy, illustration in *Mahomet* by Voltaire (French)

T11



Atelier Ziesenis, stage illustration of actor (Dutch)
Anonymous, illustration in periodical (German)
Anonymous, the actress Kleine-Gartman as Medea (Dutch)

Figure 9b, The short attitude series in a historical European context: T8–T11

The captions of two examples from the Museum of Theatre and Music in Saint Petersburg (showing the attitudes T6 and T9 above) reveal an international interchange of artists: Figure 9a, T9 (centre)shows Giovanni Battista Rubini, Pauline Viardot, and Antonio Tamburini in the opera *Bianca and Gualtiero* of 1844 by Alexei Lvov, (Saint Petersburg, 1845). Figure 9b, T6 (centre) shows the singer Vassili Samoylov as 'the hermit' in the opera comique *Le Solitaire* of 1822 by Michele Carafa.[101] Based on my observation of historical sources depicting singers, actors, and actors who sang occasionally, I argue that, for early nineteenth-century repertoire, acting techniques such as facial expression, gesture, and attitudes as described in this chapter can be used in opera repertoire too.[102] This is taking into consideration the problematic side to using iconographic sources as indicators of theatrical events and varieties in style in different countries.[103]

2.5 CREATING THE PASSIONATE ATTITUDES SERIES: *THEORETISCHE LESSEN*, CHAPTERS 13–21

After a year of training and teaching with the two basic attitudes series, and having come to understand the importance of the transitions between the attitudes, I took a similar approach to exploring Jelgerhuis's chapters on the passions. Chapters thirteen to twenty of his treatise concentrate on facial expression and postures for a selection of passions. Jelgerhuis uses examples from, among others, Gerard de Lairesse's *Het Groot Schilderboek*, Charles Le Brun's *Methode pour apprendre a dessiner les passions*, Johann Jakob Engel's *Ideen zu einer Mimik* (the latter two in Dutch translations), and his own examples, to illustrate and describe the characteristics of each passion in the face and in the body.[104] He advises the students to observe and reflect on the examples he

[101] As a point of interest and to observe the presence of this gesture in later times, I add a videostill of a Russian cartoon of 1951, in which the character's attitude recalls the movements of a fairytale princess of the past. For the video, see Ivan Ivanov-Vano & Y. Olesha (directors), *Skazka o mertvoj tsarevne i o semi bogatyrjah* (The tale of the dead princess [*tsarevna*] and the seven knights [*bogatyrs*]), adapted from the epic poem by Alexander Pushkin of 1833 (Moscow: Soyouzmultfilm, 1951).

[102] There are many examples of connections in theatre practice between singers and actors. In the Netherlands, for instance, the Dutch Theodorus Majofski ([baptized 1771]–1836) performed as actor in various genres and sang in operas by, for instance, Rossini and Mozart. See Albach, *Helden*, pp. 106–107). As mentioned in Chapter 1, some students attending the music school attended Jelgerhuis's lessons on acting theory. See Ruitenbeek, *Kijkcijfers*, pp. 91–92. For a discussion of opera singers' acting practices and education in France, see Moeckli, "'Nobles dans leurs attitudes'", pp. 14–18, 23.

[103] I am aware that isolated examples of costume designs and other iconographical sources often are insufficient to measure actual acting practices on-stage. However, the fact that these attitudes appear so frequently in various genres — such as various theatrical genres, (history) painting, sculpture, and treatises on acting — and continue to be used throughout centuries, suggests that they held recognisable visual messages of reference to depict certain characteristics related to a character or situation. For a discussion of iconographic sources as indicators of stage practices in nineteenth-century France, see Anette Schaffer 'Der beredte Leib: Das Bild und die französische Schauspielpraxis des 19. Jahrhunderts', in *Sänger als Schauspieler: Zur Opernpraxis des 19. Jahrhunderts in Text, Bild und Musik*, 5, ed. by Anette Schaffer, Edith Keller, Laura Moeckli, and others (Argus, 2014), 41–73.

[104] De Lairesse, *Het Groot Schilderboek*; Engel, *De kunst van nabootzing*, transl. Konijnenburg; Le Brun, *Methode* and its translation into Dutch: Le Brun, *Afbeelding der Hertstogten*, transl. De Kaarsgieter.

provides and to imitate the illustrations in the lessons in order to become familiar with them.[105] The majority of the examples depicting facial expressions in the *Theoretische lessen* are accompanied by illustrations of full body attitudes, associated with a certain passion, such as fright, relief, sadness, shame, and spite (see Figure 10).

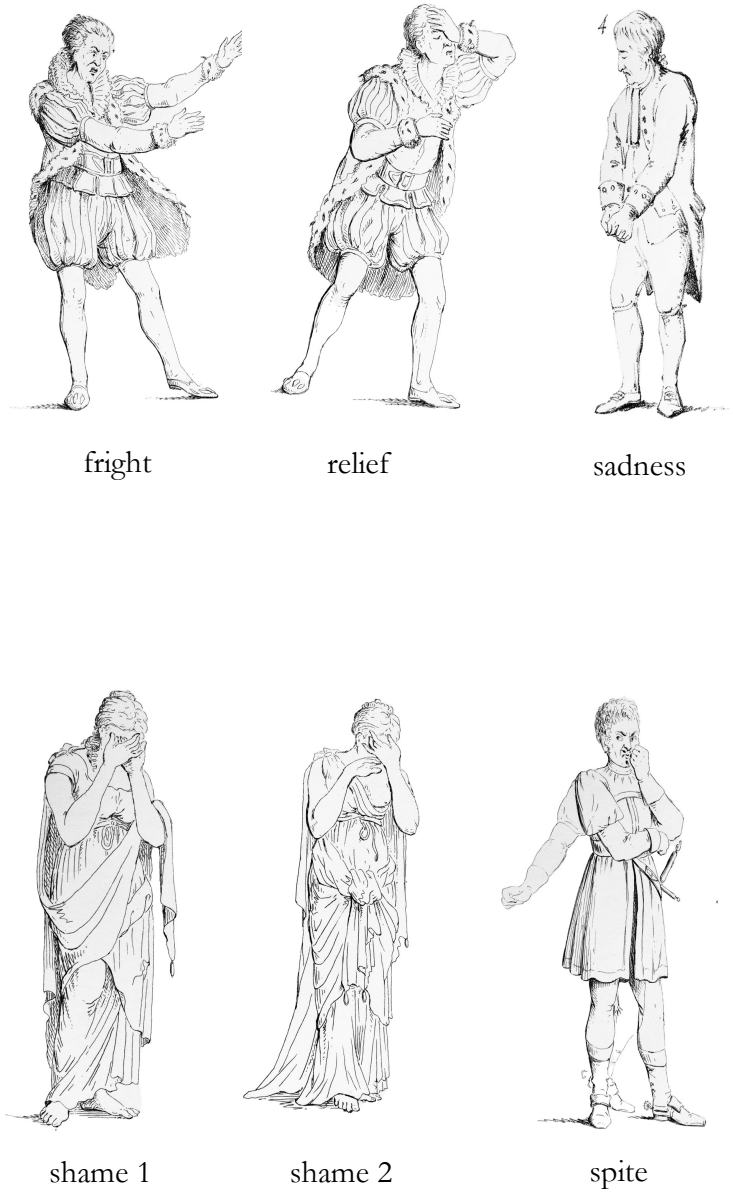


Figure 10, Engravings of passionate attitudes.
See Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, fright and relief, plate 42, detail; sadness, plate 45, detail; shame 1 and 2, plate 23, detail; spite, plate 40, detail. Author's collection.

[105] '*De bespiegeling dezer zaken kunnen niet anders dan den Tooneelspeeler nuttig zijn, die dikwerf te beschouwen, natelezen, natemaken en er eigen mede te worden, is het doel dezer lessen*.' (Reflection of these matters cannot be other than useful to the player; to observe them frequently, to read, to imitate, and to make them one's own, is the aim of these lessons). See Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 138.

My embodiment of these attitudes can be seen in Video E, below. The attitudes of fright and relief are of particular interest, as they not only demonstrate how two attitudes can be linked together, but they also document the way Jelgerhuis's colleague Andreas Snoek (1766–1829) performed them on-stage.[106] Jelgerhuis writes how the attitude of fright can be anticipated by fleeing backwards with trembling hands. In the subsequent relief, the hands move to the heart and the head, where the feeling was suffered the most, and afterwards, one might sit down on a chair. These were examples of attitudes which surprised me with their beauty and effectiveness in practice, perhaps because I found these two illustrations somewhat awkward on the page, and I had not envisioned the additional movements. The transition in between these attitudes requires more time than I had expected, and felt more convincing when moving one hand to the head first, and only then the other to the heart (or vice versa, but not both hands at once). Similarly, Video E shows how I use shame 1 and shame 2 on Figure 10 in sequence. Jelgerhuis adds several other written descriptions of characteristic movements applicable to a particular passionate attitudes, such as stamping one's foot in spite or in rage; restlessly walking back and forth in apprehension; pressing one's arms against the body in fear or in jealousy; and, on turning away from a person in contempt/scorn, measuring them with a movement of the eyes from low to high.[107] Although today attitudes are often conceived of as being static poses, Jelgerhuis's indications of movement in specific attitudes suggest that they can be dynamic: not only is movement a feature of transitions, the attitude itself can also be a manifestation of a passionate state *in movement*, and can be extended in time according to the actor's needs in a given scene.

To better understand Jelgerhuis's chapters on the passions, I studied both the facial expressions and the attitudes by imitating his illustrations and translating the textual descriptions into my body and imagination. I combined a series of passionate attitudes so that I could practice the attitudes and the transitions between them. The series includes attitude combinations between 'neighbouring' passions (moving from pity to sadness, for instance) as well as transitions between contrasting passions (for instance, joy and fear). The following list contains the attitudes I selected:

Hartstocht	**Passion**	**Plate nr**
verrukking 1	rapture 1	37
verrukking 2	rapture 2	37
medelijden (hoog)	pity (high)	51
medelijden (laag)	pity (low)	51
droefheid/treurigheid	sadness	45
schaamte1	shame 1	23
schaamte 2	shame 2	23
schrik	fright	42

[106] The attitudes of '*schrik*' (fright) and '*zich hernemen van de schrik*' (relief) Andreas Snoek in the role of Hamlet. See Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 146, plate 42, figures 1 and 2.
[107] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*: stamping foot: 125, 144, 151; walking back and forth: 125, 151; pressing the arms against the body: pp. 150, 153; turning away and moving the eyes in scorn: p. 143.

zich hernemen	relief	42
het lachen	laughter	50
de vreugde	joy	37
vrezen	fear	43
lang duchten	prolonged apprehension	44
lichamelijke smart	physical pain	47
tegenstand	resistance, opposition[108]	41
spijt/haat	spite/hatred	40
jalouzij	jealousy	44
hoogachting	esteem	35
eerbied	veneration	36

2.5.1 Choice and order of the images

In preparation to constructing a series with Jelgerhuis's passionate attitudes, I spent a few weeks cleaning, cropping, printing and then cutting the images that I wanted to use.



Figure 11, Selected images from Jelgerhuis's *Theoretische lessen*, in their final arrangement of the passionate attitude series.

[108] While working on the series, I had mistakenly interpreted '*tegenstand*' (resistance or opposition) as courage. Although this did not follow the instructions in the *Theoretische lessen*, it shows that, as I stated above regarding performing the basic series (T1–11 and C1–8) in various passions, these attitudes often can function to express more than one emotion.

When I had the cut-out figures ready, wondering in which order to organize them, part of me had absorbed or understood the images better than I thought. I had, without realizing it, 'observed these images' as Jelgerhuis suggests in his chapter on gesticulation, 'until [I] could see one gesture flow into the next' through the process of cropping and cutting.[109] I was surprised at my acquired feeling for arranging an order which made physical sense (see Figure 11); if one of the attitudes did not fit, this would become clear quickly. This process also reminded me of Jelgerhuis's comment on the importance of illustrations, and how much easier it is to learn about the attitudes with the aid of illustrations, as compared to reading written instructions.[110] Having passively observed those drawings for so long, I now feel that my body and mind had learned something that I had been unaware of.

The subsequent learning process was as follows: 1) creating a mental image by observing the depicted attitude and its facial expression, 2) embodying a single attitude, 3) practicing a sequence of two or more attitudes until the series was complete. To correct, at this early stage, any details differing from the visual sources I was imitating (for instance, the angle of the head, the position of the hands, the direction of the eyes, and so on), I regularly worked with a mirror or with feedback from colleagues. Practicing in front of a mirror is advised by Jelgerhuis, and the practice itself and discussions in favour and against it are documented by many others before him, going back to the ancient orators.[111] Yet working with a mirror was more helpful when alternated with practice away from the mirror; the act of observing oneself and adjusting can take place simultaneously with moments of artistic free practice, in which the imagination informs the passions and the movements; but, more often, observing oneself limits the creative process. Good solutions or unknown expressions were frequently found through intuition rather than by planning. In addition, the expression of the eyes can rarely be checked in the mirror: to see oneself, one's eyes have to be on the mirror, whereas in order to practice the attitudes and their transitions, the body, the head, and the eyes constantly change direction.

2.5.2 Facial expression challenge

To reinforce my knowledge of Jelgerhuis's instructions on facial expression, I set myself the following challenge: I selected eighteen illustrations and their accompanying text (see Appendix E for the illustrations and a shortened version of the text), following the order in which they are presented in the *Theoretische lessen*. My task was to practice one facial expression a day, so as to 'become acquinted with these images', following Jelgerhuis's advice: '*maak U bekend met deze afbeeldingen, dat ze gemakkelijk voor den geest komen onder het speelen, en bedien uw altoos van de beste*' (acquaint yourself with these images, so that they come to mind easily while playing, and always avail yourself of the best [option]).[112] During this period, I alternated moments of analysing the illustration of

[109] Edited citation. For the full citation, see footnote 49, or Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 86.
[110] *Theoretische lessen*, pp. 39–40.
[111] For a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages for actors of practicing in front of a mirror for eighteenth-century actors, see Robinson, '"The Glass of Fashion"', pp. 33, 38–40, 45–47. Kyropoulos cites Jelgerhuis and gives other examples of theorists, actors and ancient orators famously known to use mirror for practicing and ancient orators. See Kyropoulos, 'Teaching Acting to Singers', pp. 41–42, 168, 177–178, 192.
[112] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 142 (regarding facial expression).

the day and its corresponding text with practicing the facial expression in the mirror.[113] Relying only on my memory of the image, I then practiced using my imagination to trigger the passion. I experimented with high and low gradations of each passion, because Jelgerhuis warns against making expressions so quickly or so minutely that they would be lost on the audience due to the distance to the audience and the size of the stage.[114] At the same time, Jelgerhuis advises to use his examples '*met beleid en goed verstand*' (with discretion and with good judgement) to keep *welstand* in the facial expressions while at the same time remaining natural and consistent with the character.[115]

Today, one can only guess at the ideal balance intended between these pieces of Jelgerhuis's advice, so I relied on my own taste and on feedback from others to find expressions that are grand enough to be recognisable on-stage, while seeming natural and true to the character. It was a struggle at first to get certain facial expressions to resemble their illustration, but my efforts improved when I accentuated and expanded my eyebrows with makeup, following Jelgerhuis's illustrations and instructions (see Appendix E). This was needed, in particular, to resemble the illustrations of 'rapture' and 'crying', where the head of the eyebrows on the illustrations move upwards. Yet I had also seen colleagues the head of whose eyebrows move upwards easily and seem to have an actual predisposition for passions such as rapture and sadness. It became clear to me that the aim of this practice should not be to produce a near exact copy of the illustration, but that through observation and imitation one becomes more aware of one's own possibilities regarding one's muscles of facial expression.[116] This awareness and practice are helpful to adapt one's facial expressions when one's own natural instinct of a passion does not result in renditions that are effective on-stage. For instance, some actors, in attempting to portray love, may appear sad from the viewpoint of the (distant) audience, while others, as Jelgerhuis points out, may seem to be laughing when they want to express crying, and vice versa.[117] Knowing the disposition of one's face not only makes performers aware of which expressions to improve through practise, but also allows them to manipulate their facial expression (enhancing certain elements with makeup to hide others) so as to achieve the desired effect from a distance:[118]

[113] This challenge inspired me to propose the passion challenge exercise as part of the 'gesture and declamation' classes at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, from November 2021 onwards.
[114] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 133.
[115] For natural facial expression with *welstand*, see Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 119 (see also Chapter 1, on 'naturalness, ease, and gracefulness'); for '*beleid en goed verstand*', see pp. 127–128.
[116] For an example of actor/researcher João Paixão's experimentation with facial expression based on historical sources, see João Luís Paixão, 'Facing the Passions: An Embodied Approach to Facial Expression on the Eighteenth-Century Stage', in Historical Acting Techniques and the 21st-Century Body, ed. by Jed Wentz, special issue in *European Drama and Performance Studies*, 19 (2022–2), 153–187.
[117] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 119.
[118] One aspect of facial expression Jelgerhuis chose not to teach the students is the anatomy of the facial muscles, as he deemed this science/knowledge more of service to painters. See Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p.136.

> *men moet de grootheid des Tooneels, den afstand der aanschouwers bedenken, en* [...] *waar het behoeft, door schildering ondersteunen en te hulp te komen, op onze aangezigten. Nu is de kennis der deelen, den weg en aanwijzing waar men schilderen, en wat men beweegen moet.*[119]
>
> One must consider the size of the stage and the distance to the audience, and [...], where necessary, use the help and support of paint, on our faces. The knowledge of the parts [of the face], shows the way and indicates where to paint, and what to move.

To support by painting, Jelgerhuis suggests thickening the eyebrows when needed, and indicates how to accentuate the eyebrows and lines on the face in order to fit the stage character to be portrayed or, as I experienced with the passions rapture and sadness, an emotional state.[120] For students or performers as yet inexperienced at working on a historical stage with candle light or a modern imitation, it is valuable to realize how much makeup needs to be added so that one's own face conveys the facial expressions to the audience properly. This knowledge is relevant particularly in small productions in which the performer must apply their own makeup. Through awareness of one's own facial traits, its tendencies towards certain passions and the potential effect of one's facial expressions on the audience, the performer is more likely to manifest the character and portray emotions as they envisioned them.

2.5.3 The passionate attitude series

Having gained sufficient command of the facial expressions, I applied them to the passionate attitudes series. I noticed how not only the awareness of my facial muscles had increased, but also how the larger variety of nuances in facial expression connected with the entire body: the full attitudes and especially the transitions. I became more courageous both in prolonging certain attitudes, and in taking time in transitioning between them. The breath and the imagination were essential tools for keeping these suspended attitudes and facial expressions from becoming static. In fact, the imagination and the breath were key in enacting all the passions and transitions, while the attitudes themselves triggered my imagination further. Each element influenced the other, and yet they merged at the same time into a unity. Having reached this stage, I felt ready to combine the passionate attitudes with music, later with spoken text, and eventually with singing. The following video recording of 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogut09So6DM, shows the series of passionate attitudes (see Figure 12) based on Jelgerhuis's illustrations, accompanied by a musical improvisation by fortepianist Artem Belogurov:

Play Video E

Like Jelgerhuis's illustrations, the video stills below each show one moment of the sequence, whereas the video also shows the transitions. On Figure 12, the second attitude shows the head and eyes lowered (as figure number 3 on Jelgerhuis's plate 36 (Figure 13, number 3), and then with the head

[119] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 133.
[120] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 146.

and eyes raised as the seated figure (Figure 13, number 2). The third picture in Figure 12 shows the attitude of '*lang duchten*', (apprehension).



Figure 12, Video stills from Video E, 'A Sequence of Passionate Attitudes after Jelgerhuis' (2021), featuring attitudes of jealousy, veneration, and apprehension.



Figure 13, Engraving by Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, plate 36.

When observing the engraving only, one not necessarily suspects the instructions on movement given in Jelgerhuis's accompanying text, which include a tense walking back and forth as visible on Video E.[121] In time, the series underwent two changes compared to the initial concept, which can be seen when comparing the passions listed above and Figure 11 with the video. I exchanged the order between hatred and jealousy, and I opened and closed the series with the attitude depicting silent wonder (T11) from the basic tragedy series. The two main differences I experienced between attitudes performed in silence versus attitudes performed with music had to do with the timing and the imagination. In silence, I had to rely on my own thoughts as the stimulus for the enactment. With the music playing, my thoughts were joined with the emotion and the impulses stimulated by the music, and they both came together to inform my movements. I then united the movements in the passionate attitude series to spoken text. To add words that would correspond precisely to each attitude's passion and transition, I chose the lines 'I don't love, but I could'. This gave me the freedom to improvise each transition, varying the timing and intensity of each passion in the moment. Later, I expanded the text slightly by adding, for instance: 'I don't love, but I should', 'you don't love, but you should', and so on, increasing my options to tap into different qualities of passion combinations. I then added the singing voice to this format, by singing the same lines of text on a basic melody that I repeated with variations according to the passion expressed. The passionate attitude series was shown, in its different stages — live without music, the video recording with music (Video E), live with spoken text, and sung — and was incorporated in lectures and in publications, with the aim of demonstrating the difference between Jelgerhuis's illustrations and the effect of the embodied attitudes, and of the transitions between the attitudes.

2.5.4 Stage right and stage left

In retrospect, I realize that I have not been consistent in observing Jelgerhuis's advice to place positive passions on one's right and the negative passions on one's left: I had composed the passionate attitudes into a varied sequence which moved well in the space. Reflecting on how to adapt the series in accordance with this rule raised the following question: how can one respect this rule when the very object causing the emotional transition is the same, and therefore comes from the same direction? For instance: I place fright on the left side (as if imagining something moving in the dark — a monster?); then I realize that the supposed monster is a person (fright turns to relief, and then to laughter); on seeing more clearly, I recognize in the person a long-lost beloved friend (laughter turns to joy); I advance to welcome my friend, at which point my friend unveils herself as the Goddess of rage and madness (I shrink back in fear). I still lack a definite answer to these questions, but the rules laid down by Jelgerhuis allow for exceptions when required by the context on-stage (for instance in the difference between the circumference of the gestures in comedy and tragedy, or in other instances where he clearly repeats 'as much as possible').[122] There are many

[121] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 151, plate 44, figure 4.

[122] For other examples in the *Theoretische lessen* see the following citations and references: '*zich tot eene wet stellende, om zoo veel mogelijk, (ik zeg zoo veel mogelijk), aan de tegen hem over zijde, naar binnen te gaan en op te komen*' (to make it a rule for oneself, to exit on the opposite side of the stage as much as possible [I repeat, as much as possible]), p. 37; for turning 'as much as possible' to the audience, see p. 44; on avoiding hiding the legs under a table when sitting at a table: '*het spreekt van zelven, dat ik uitzondere de gevallen, waarin de noodzakelijkheid deze wet verbreekt*' (it goes without saying that I make an exception for the cases in which necessity breaks this rule), see p. 46.

examples in plays performed in his time in which a character sees or envisions something or someone transforming unexpectedly, during which the actor would show their change of emotion accordingly.[123] In other situations, an actor might reveal their character's secret change of mind during an aside, showing their change of intention and facial expression to the audience without changing the direction in their body. Such examples of stage practice in plays of the time persuaded me not to change the directions of the passions in the passionate attitude series, yet this experience gave me a stronger sense of how and when to apply the rules for stage left and right in the situation on-stage.

2.6 CONCLUSION

2.6.1 How to keep the attitudes from becoming static, and how to make the transitions seem natural?

Of the different processes pertaining to the application of Jelgerhuis' illustrations of attitudes, gesticulation, and facial expression as didactic tools, finding appropriate connections and transitions between these elements is perhaps the most difficult and at the same time the most rewarding. Even if the performer has studied the previous chapters in Jelgerhuis's treatise and has developed a sense of how to keep *welstand* in the body and facial expression at all times, it is in bringing the attitudes to life and in transitioning that the experience of the performer and the observer can radically differ.[124] An experienced performer imitating a clumsy-looking illustration may actually make them look good, whereas an inexperienced performer may make a graceful figure look inept and stiff. Similarly, each transition can range from results that seem awkward, stiff, and/or disengaged, to results that come across as natural and touching.

2.6.2 Imagination - emotion - breath - direction - transition

In Roodenburg's *The Eloquence of the body*, he refers to the Dutch Painter Samuel Van Hoogstraeten (1627–1678), who stated that the audience will not be moved unless there is a suggestion of movement in a painting.[125] Roodenburg also explains that movement could be of the body and the soul. In acting, the physical imitation of an image is likely to become more exact and more moving when one moves into the attitude from a previous position, using one's imagination. Each transition can manifest in various orders and combinations, ideally containing imagination (triggering the emotion), breath, eyes, direction (feeling attracted towards the object of one's imagination, or the desire to reject/move away), and physical transition (all elements within the

[123] See, for instance, Racine's *Athalie*, second act, scene five. Speaking of a terrible nightmare, Athalie relives her desire to approach the vision of her mother. Athalie reaches out to her, only to see her mother devoured by hounds before her own eyes in the next moment. See Jean Racine, *Athalie*, Act II, Scene 5 in *Oeuvres complètes de J. Racine* [...], 5th edn, 6 vols (Paris: Lefèvre et Furne, 1844) vol. 3, pp. 396–400.

[124] Roodenburg points out that transitions are 'a problem facing any actor drawing inspiration from prints and paintings', Roodenburg, *The Eloquence*, p. 158.

[125] For van Hoogstraeten's treatise on painting, see Samuel van Hoogstraeten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der Schilderkonst* [...] (Rotterdam, Fransois van Hoogstraeten, 1678), pp. 292–293. See also Roodenburg, *The Eloquence*, p. 120.

realm of *welstand*).[126] For instance, it is possible that first the eyes see something which triggers an emotional and physical reaction, but in another scenario, say, when someone is kneeling with eyes cast low, the inner thoughts and imagination may have a stronger impact on the character than what the eyes see: an inner emotional reaction is triggered, after which the physical reaction follows (for instance, the eyes look up and the character moves to standing. Movement, even the slightest, is essential for a lively rendition of any attitude or passion. This involves keeping the imagination going, ensuring that the breath, the muscle tension, and the expression in the eyes are compatible with the imagined passion or character's circumstances. This is even more important for attitudes which are meant to look still (momentarily suspended) but not stiff or empty.

2.6.3 Creating a role

A sequence such as the passionate attitude series is an exercise in the attitudes as much as in transitions, and can also be useful for the preparation of a role. In the process of creating a role and its staging, the performer can combine a specific series of attitudes befitting the character to be portrayed. By exploring the way this character moves into an attitude, how the character would sustain it, and how they would transition into the next, one gets to know and shape their character's physicality, extending their imagination and mental storehouse of possibilities for this character. The key elements for transitioning, including imagination, breath, gaze, and so on, as mentioned above, are part of the process. Examples of experimenting with the character can include the variations listed in section 2.3.1, such as the size of the character's gestures, the speed and manner of motion, intensity, muscle tension, and so on. By varying the passions and their intensity, different emotional tendencies of the character may be revealed, which can later be useful on-stage. The attitudes and especially their transitions may be rehearsed intensively, but the embodied understanding of *welstand* allows for the freedom to make small changes or adaptations within the style when needed or desired during the performance. If any of the attitudes or gestures in the created series fit the character or a precise situation in the play/opera, parts of the series can be established as anchor points in the blocking of the scene. Such anchor points can consist in a stage action: an attitude or an element of an attitude, such as a change of passion, a gesture, or a change in vocal colour (if the series contains text).

2.6.4 Balancing identification and passions

If desired, the interpretation can be intensified through identification with the character or by intensifying a passion, and lowered in intensity by shifting back one's focus to thoughts or physical aspects, which might be called technical — muscle tension, the voice, and so on. The latter option may be required when one has entered the passion of, for example, sadness so deeply that one loses control of the voice, thereby risking the inability to deliver the text in the desired manner. By focusing on external or other physical elements, one lowers momentarily the grip of the imagination and emotion on oneself. Once the balance has been restored, the performer again

[126] Kyropoulos organizes the order of movements, informed by historical sources, for analysis and improvement of movements that do not feel organic or natural to the performer, while taking into account Jelgerhuis's advice not to over-analyse movement. See Kyropoulos, 'Teaching Acting to Singers', pp. 143–146.

invites elements of the character — or becomes the character — depending on the measure of identification they desire.

2.6.5 Reflection on the borders of *welstand*

In Chapter 1, I discussed various definitions of the term *welstand*, but the limits of the realm of *welstand* also require attention. On the one hand, focusing on *welstand* only in its meaning of aesthetic propriety or decorum, may result in a performance lacking in 'truth', as well as in 'naturalness'. On the other hand, portraying realism, (natural behaviour as observed in daily life without improving it through *welstand* is not considered satisfactory to the informed observer either, as it displays too much 'nature'. The following examples are markers on paper of the borders as I understand them between depicting realism (reflecting behaviour as seen in daily life without adapting it for the stage) and acting based on nature (on behaviour in daily life) but with *welstand*: a lack of decorum in acting or costume (as in what looks good and is proper); involuntary repetition of (a particular) movement; a lack of gracefulness and ease (rigid movements or stance); exaggeration of emotion (also in the voice); exaggeration in physical contortions; depiction of physical deformity; a lack of contrast in the body.[127]

However, in practice, it takes time to gain awareness of the external effect of one's movements and facial expressions. What is more, Jelgerhuis's examples (following Le Brun and de Lairesse) of facial expressions such as anger, fright, fear, and weeping, do not strike me as merely pleasant depictions of those passions.[128] They are stronger than I imagine when reading the ideals of keeping nobility and *welstand* in the face, even in the most horrible situations.[129] This is probably influenced

[127] This list concerns the genre of tragedy. In other theatrical genres, some of these points may be used for a comical effect.

[128] For these illustrations, see Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*: anger, see plate 32 (figure 4); fright, see plate 33 (figure 4) and plate 42 (figure 1); fear, see plate 43 (figure 1); and weeping, see figure 1on plate 45).

[129] I insert two international examples regarding this topic. The first example is the following passage in the *Encyclopedie Methodique. Musique*, vol. 1, ed. by Framery and Ginguene (Paris, Panckoucke, 1791), p. 49: '*tous ses mouvements annoncent la plus horrible souffrance; & cepandant, dans cette situation si violente, son attitude est belle, & son visage conserve sa noblesse. Voilà les modèles qu'il faut étudier; c'est par cette étude que l'acteur se formeroit à lui-même des principes pour apprendre à donner de l'energie à l'action* [italics in original] *théatrale en conservant la grace & la beauté, même dans les situations extrêmes de la tragédie.* (all his movements betoken the most horrible suffering; and yet, in this situation [which is] so violent, his attitude is beautiful, and his face preserves its nobility. These are the models which must be studied; it is through that study that the actor would acquire for himself some principles for learning to give some energy to theatrical *action* while maintaining grace and beauty, even in the extreme situations of tragedy). This English translation is by Barnett, who cited this text in his 'The Performance Practice of Acting', part V (1980), p. 4. The second example is by Jean-Nicolas Servandoni d'Hannetaire who writes (regarding the actors 'le Sieur de la Rive, la Dlle Rosalide Dhan') '*cet Acteur & cette Actrice, dans le désordre des plus vives douleurs, sembloient ajouter encore a la beauté de leur figure. Combien d'autres, dans de pareilles situations, ne savent rendre la leur, que grimacière, convulsive & même rebutante.*' (this actor and this actress, troubled by the most acute pains, seemed to add even more to the beauty of their countenance. How many others, in similar situations, do not know how to render theirs other than grimacing, convulsive and even repelling). See Jean-Nicolas Servandoni d'Hannetaire, *Observations Sur L'art Du Comedien* (Paris: Ribou, 1776 [1st edn 1764]), p.

by my having grown accustomed to the naturalness in movies and series at the cinema and on computer screens today. It is possible for one's perception of exaggeration, however, to adapt in relation to the visual circumstances at hand (such as the space on-stage, the distance to the audience, and lighting). The more time I spend in a (historical) theatre (as opposed to a studio or smaller rehearsal spaces), whether in the audience or on-stage, the more my concept of *welstand* allows for and even requires more intense (facial) expression.[130]

In retrospect, my first renditions of the basic tragedy exercise recorded on in 2018 (see Video 1) lack the attention to detail that I developed later. At some moments, the chin is too high, for instance, and my transition from T4 (surprise) to T5 (contempt/scorn) is too vehement in the context of its preparation and continuation. Of the three video stills taken from the 2018 video (Figure 14), I consider the third video still beyond *welstand* for a small stage or for a video recording. The whiteness of the eyes might be effective on a candlelit stage such as that of the Český Krumlov Palace Theatre (see Figure 5) but my mouth is distorted. Were I standing near the footlights, my chin and jaw would obscure the light from below, creating further optical distortions in the face. Jelgerhuis warns against lifting the head too high, as, due to the footlights, the face would be dark, and the facial expression lost.[131]



Figure 14, Video stills of Video A, capturing headshots taken in different moments of the basic tragedy series, recorded in the Studijní Centrum Český Krumlov in 2018.

The limit of *welstand* in facial expression or other physical actions also depends on the circumstances and timing: as Jelgerhuis writes, an ungraceful attitude of sadness is allowed as long as it is kept for a short period of time only. Similarly, this idea of not lingering in extreme

275 https://archive.org/details/observationssur00dhagoog/page/n289/mode/2up (accessed 14 April 2024).

[130] In the section titled 'Amplified', Kyropoulos cites sources by Luigi Riccoboni (1676–1753), Aaron Hill (1685–1750), and Jelgerhuis in searching for the balance between 'natural behaviour' and the amount of exaggeration (amplification) needed for the stage. See Kyropoulos, 'Teaching Acting to Singers', pp. 127–130. Kyropoulos also cites Denis Diderot (1713–1784) for an eighteenth-century vision of how stage gestures must be adjusted when performing in a smaller room. See Kyropoulos, 'Teaching Acting to Singers', pp. 128–129.

[131] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 164.

expressions should be observed in the third facial expression on Figure 14.[132] My recording of the passionate attitude series of 2021 is within the realm of *welstand* as I understand it at present. In time, my own idea regarding the limits of *welstand* had become more defined, and I have learned to bring together the image in my mind of what I want to express and the actual result on the outside. I continue to explore the balance between those moments in which I remain within the borders of *welstand*, and those where trespassing is acceptable or even desired within the on-stage circumstances.

2.6.6 Coda

Working with the attitudes, gestures and facial expressions as described in Jelgerhuis's *Theoretische lessen* is an ongoing learning process. The embodiment of the illustrations reveals unexpected qualities of emotion or gracefulness, but the performer must also interpret the continuation of the suspended moment represented in the illustration. In the transition from one image to the next, the interaction between the embodiment and the imagination can generate countless different outcomes. The attitudes and gestures of the two basic attitude series (T1–T11 and C1–C11) proved to be useful for personal practice and as didactic tool — a practical approach to introduce performers to basics of physical embodiment of gestural attitudes, while using concepts such as *welstand*, naturalness, and truth, through physical experience. The order of the attitudes in these series is only an example: any order can be created to suit the needs of a performer. By varying different elements of acting (such as the addition of passions, characterization, the amplitude of the gesture, the speed of transitions, and the separate smaller components which together constitute *welstand*, naturalness and truth), the series become a tool to expand one's acting horizon within a specific style and to experiment in the creative space that combines the imagination and the physical, potentially also feeding into or bringing about different facets of a character.

An example of this process is described in the first case study (Chapter 3): the two basic attitude series, both in their basic form and with alterations, are used as warm-up and training tools during a project that features the staging of three scenes of a play in which Jelgerhuis performed. The sequence of passionate attitudes in its basic form is an exercise in transitioning between various passionate states. My experiments with this sequence included the interconnection with music, spoken text, and singing, yet future development could also include teaching, preferably with experienced participants, who are familiar with historically informed or inspired stage practice and the concept of *welstand*. Although Jelgerhuis does not discuss the influence of the costume in movement, this sequence is also useful to practice with one's costume and anticipate its movements, with specific accessories such as a veil, a cape, a cane, and so on. In the second case study (Chapter 4), I apply the knowledge gleaned through my study described in the present chapter, but particularly through the work on the passionate attitude series, to additional images of attitudes by Jelgerhuis and other artists, in a full staging created for the character of Goethe/Eberwein's *Proserpina* of 1815. Experimentation with the influence of costume on movement is included in this study, while I merge Jelgerhuis's attitudes with different gestural attitudes by women, to explore his acting tools in a broader context.

[132] Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen*, p. 156.