

ADEM

AUSTRALIAN DRAMA EDUCATION MAGAZINE

NO. 14 2018



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Contents

Editors' notes	Page 4
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Member association contributions

Drama NSW	Page 6
Drama Queensland	Page 8
Drama South Australia	Page 10
Drama Victoria	Page 15

Member contributions

Process Drama: A sure way to ignite student learning by Robyn Brentnall	Page 20
Doctors in Schools Program – an interview with Professor Helen Cahill by Nina Rossini	Page 33
Interview with Kate Sulan, Artistic Director of Rawcus by Vanessa O'Neill	Page 38
Imagine the dramatic (r)evolution	Page 41
A good revolution always involves a lot of drama by John Nicholas Saunders	Page 42
Drama (r)evolving through pedagogical encounters by Associate Professor Mary Mooney	Page 47
(R)evolving in the imaginative ecology of the drama classroom by Dr Madonna Stinson	Page 50
Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander CCPs and The Arts – Approaches to Breaking Boundaries by Marie Ferguson	Page 54
A description and explanation of a character development system for young actors by Sarah Legg (Corresponding author: Robin Pascoe)	Page 65

Editors' notes

It is our great pleasure to re-launch the *Australian Drama Education Magazine* (ADEM) since its last publication in 2014. Thank you to all those who have contributed and made this 14th edition so rich.

One of our aims in the new look ADEM, is to encourage on a national level, drama educators from primary, secondary and tertiary sectors to submit articles enabling them to share their field of expertise as well as their passion for teaching Drama and Theatre Studies. We also invite artists and theatre organizations to contribute and inform readers of their work with young people and help promote creative educational partnerships.

The Drama teaching and learning community, as well as all subject areas, continues to experience ongoing changes and improvements in both curriculum content and in the delivery of new initiatives. What a privilege it is for drama educators to be working in such an exciting educational field where we are constantly exposed to unique challenges and skills development! The very nature of our partnership between the learner and the educator, along with the work we do and share with our school community, keeps us energised to strive for exciting, productive and imaginative endeavours! What other subject has the exposure and therefore scrutiny of principal, colleagues and students?

The responsibility to continue to be productive and innovative in what we do is best shared when we can engage in relevant and stimulating discussions with our like-minded colleagues. Let's hope that ADEM can play its part in promoting and supporting those conversations and partnerships.

Nina Rossini **Editor (Director of Guidelines and ADEM)**

Robyn Ewing **Associate Editor (Director of Publications)**

Member association contributions



Imagine the creative revolution

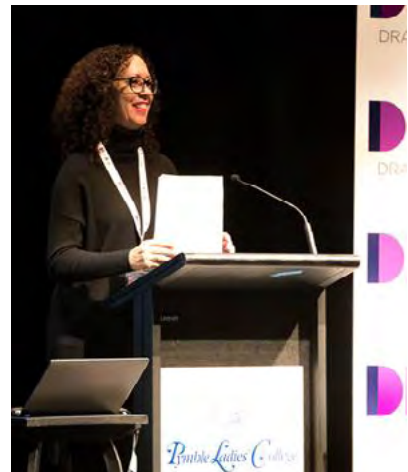
Drama NSW has enjoyed a tremendously exciting year in 2018, with an enthusiastic, passionate committee who has worked exceptionally hard to support our association in its dynamic growth.

We have been able to offer our members an unprecedented increase in professional learning opportunities, including broadening our events to primary school P/L and offering smaller, bespoke curriculum and assessment development for beginning teachers. This is of course, anchored around the central event of the year – the NSW State Conference, which has grown enormously in its scope.

The Drama NSW Membership Team has also developed exciting events to celebrate our community this year. Alongside our inaugural Professional Learning Calendar Launch at the Sydney Theatre Company's Bar at the End of the Wharf, Drama NSW introduced our first Ambassador's Program, designed to support selected Drama Education undergraduates as they move from their final year of study into their teaching careers. With free access to our P/L events and their constant, enthusiastic presence at each event, our Ambassadors have made a significant contribution to the dynamism of Drama NSW.

This year has seen Drama NSW advocate strongly on behalf of its members as the NSW Government (NESA) began the process of rewriting the K – 6 Creative Arts Curriculum. Lead by some of our community's best thinkers, advocates and leaders, Drama NSW represented our primary members in line with Arts Education best practise. Our spokesperson, John Saunders, President of Drama Australia, worked tirelessly with Professor Robyn Ewing, Associate Professor Mary Mooney, Dr Christine Hatton, Sue McIntosh, Jenny Nichols and Kelly Young, President of Drama NSW, to ensure that the students of NSW are able to access an education rich in all art forms – including Drama.

As Drama NSW looks forward to 2019, we are aiming to consolidate our significant successes and the growth of 2018 in order to continue to support our members and to ensure our wonderful association moves from strength to strength.





Drama Queensland – A year in review

Hello Drama educators!

Here is a very quick snapshot of what has been going on in Queensland this year.

Drama Queensland has had a wonderful year of social events, advocacy, publications and professional learning opportunities. Our State Conference, *EMBRACE18*, took place in Term 1 and received excellent feedback from our delegates. We always have a strong turn out of around 300 people each year and we love the energy and commitment we see from teachers across the state as this event. Early in Term 4 we run *Nuts and Bolts* which is a professional development day for beginning and primary school teachers. This year we even had an international guest, Geoff Readman, who delivered a primary session. This was a great day with very practical ideas and help for the classroom.

Advocacy has been, and continues to be, a big focus for us in Queensland as we move into a new Senior System. As you may know, we have had an OP system for many years now and are making the shift to ATAR as of 2019. This has meant that not only are we supporting teachers with National Curriculum implementation but also have a focus on the senior space. Part of this advocacy has included meetings with the Minister for Education and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) as part of the combined group called Queensland Advocates for Arts Education (QAAE). QAAE is the state version of our national advocacy group – NAAE. This group is made up of Presidents and other committee members of different arts subjects. We work together to ensure a strong and positive outcome for students across Queensland.

Our publications team continued their great work with monthly DQ News, Musesheet each term and our annual journal. All of these publications have a different focus and the committee members responsible continue to produce high quality documents for our members.

A passion of mine is creating a strong culture for our teachers so that we feel like we belong to our community. To this end, Drama Queensland has started a ‘social calendar’ which has held three events throughout the year. Our community has been invited to a brunch, evening drinks and dinner and a picnic in a park. The aim is for us to come together and spend time with other passionate drama teachers from our community without a meeting or workshop attached. It has been wonderful to get to just ‘hang out’ with our tribe!

Next year we will be facilitating ‘Communities of Practice’ across Queensland where our members can get together to share their work and get help with cross-marking in our new senior system. This will hopefully assist our teachers in regional, rural and remote schools, and the schools where there is only one Drama teacher who needs another set of eyes.

Take care everyone,



Dana Holden

President | Drama Queensland



Drama South Australia – Annual update

Drama SA has had a very busy year with a hard- working and extremely passionate committee of volunteers.

We have just had our AGM on 15th Sept 2018 and below are the results for our committee:

ROLE	ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE
President	Trent Phillips
Vice-President	Daniela Zagari
Treasurer	Lisa Bartemucci
Secretary	Jordana Montesi
Membership Secretary	Rebecca Wigg
Communications Officer (up to 3 positions)	Renee Fort
Communications Officer (up to 3 positions)	Matthew Maloney
Drama Australia Liaison Officer (DALO)	Valerie Harrold
Educators SA Representative	Graham Cox
Arts Industry Officer	Anthony Kelly
Arts Education Officer	Karen Inwood
General Committee (up to 5 positions)	Danii Zappia
General Committee (up to 5 positions)	Emily Burns
General Committee (up to 5 positions)	Tess O'Callaghan
General Committee (up to 5 positions)	Druscilla Fabretto

Earlier in the year at the annual CEASA (now Educators SA) Volunteers day celebrations, Matthew, Daniela and Jordana were recognised for their work in the first-year volunteering for DSA while Rebecca Wigg was recognised for her work up to five years. We acknowledge all our executive members for the hard work they do as volunteers for Drama South Australia.

Social Media

Our social media reach has continued to climb. In the past twelve months our Facebook page has gone from 477 to 613 Likes. This means our Facebooks posts have more opportunities to be seen and inform users of what is coming up for Drama South Australia. The single largest post was viewed by 1484 people.

Website

The Website has now been active for twelve months after being launched at last year's AGM. Since then it has received 968 unique visitors. With each of those visitors averaging two-page visits for a total of 2911 page views. Most visitors find our site by typing the URL directly into their web browser at 56%, while 9% link from Facebook and 23% from Google. However, the future clicks from Google is likely to increase as we are now the number one result for Drama South Australia and Drama SA. Over the coming year it is our aim to launch a member's portal on the site where members can download resources and information from past professional learning events offered by Drama South Australia. Also, it is an opportunity to share resources with one another that have either been shared at past resource swaps or to upload new resources. Our goal is to make the website more than a place to book events but to extend our drama educator community online.

Strategic planning

We have continued to build towards our goals set out in the 2017 strategic plan, developing an internal and external communication strategy. As an executive we have been using the Office 365 platform for our communication with other members of the executive as well as the public across the five accounts of President, Info, PL, Communications and DALO, we have sent and received over 4000 emails in just the last six months.

Professional Learning Opportunities:

This year has been quite eventful for the professional learning of our association. We have provided many opportunities to liaise, learn from and share information with educators from a variety of Arts industries. The professional learning events that took place from this year are summarised in this report.

1. Drama SA Technical Theatre Workshop

Wednesday 4th October 2017 held at Mount Carmel College

Attendees: 27

2. In Between Two – Drama Teacher Event

Friday 6th October 2017 Space Theatre

Attendees: 11

Drama South Australia members were invited for a tasty treat from Hoy Pinoy on The Riverdeck before viewing one of the Oz Asia performances *In Between Two* in the Space Theatre. Members were invited to stay with the two artists for a post-show talk.

3. Primary Drama Resource Swap and Networking Drinks

Friday 26th October at St Joseph's School Hectorville

Attendees: 19

4. Senior Drama Forum

Friday 17th November at Cabra Dominican College

Attendees: 25

Teachers were able to converse with one another over the future of the Drama subject. Participants shared new ideas about how to undertake the Interpretative and Group Presentation tasks.

5. DSA hosted the Slingsby production of *The Tragical Life of Cheeseboy*

Monday 19th March 7.00pm at Cabra Dominican College.

Attendees: 19

Inside an enchanting travelling theatre tent, a storyteller shared a timeless tale.

With ingeniously simple lights and mirrors and set to lush original music by Quincy Grant, *The Tragical Life of Cheeseboy* transported the audiences to a fantastic world.

6. Producing School Performances

Presenters: Daniela Zagari & Druscilla Fabretto (Performing Arts Educators) offered two workshops that provided a step by step guide to producing a school or community performance. The presenters provided delegates with a variety of examples and activity based ideas for storytelling through movement, characterisation, choreography, music, recording, costuming, sets, props, lighting and promotions.

(Workshop 1): Saturday 24th March Nazareth Catholic College. Attendees: 27

(Workshop 2): Saturday 19th May Nazareth Catholic College. Attendees: 32

7. Middle School Drama PLC with Windmill Theatre

Attendees: 10

In collaboration with Windmill Theatre Company, professional artists and Drama colleagues, participants were provided an opportunity to further develop their professional growth as Drama educators in an action research inquiry. Six professional learning events for the MSPLC took place over 2018.

Session 1 – Saturday 23 June: Sam Haren & Elena Carapetis

Topic: What is a creative development and how does it work?

Session 2 – Saturday 21 July: Nicki Bloom & Emily Steel

Topic: The Writing Process

Session 3 – Saturday 4 August: Rose Myers & Andy Packer

Topic: Directing New Work

Session 4 – Thursday 16 August: Sasha Zahra & Duncan Graham

Topic: Amphibian Briefing & Meet the Creative Team

Session 5 – Saturday 25 August

Amphibian Rehearsal Room Observation, 10:30am – 12 noon

Session 6 – Saturday 8 September 2018:

Amphibian Performance & post-show Q&A

8. Plato and Beyond: An Interactive Clarifying Forum

Friday 11th May at Cabra Dominican College

Attendees: 30

The clarifying forum was held for Stage 2 Drama teachers. The day was broken down into two sessions.

Session 1: Participants worked in collaborative groups to complete PLATO, putting in their answers using the standards, and then discussing and asking any questions of the SACE officers present.

Session 2: Participants worked in groups to brainstorm new and inventive ways of teaching tasks, create resources boards and plays performed in the past list. Ideas were collated into a booklet and emailed to attendees.

9. Primary Drama Resource Swap and Networking Drinks

Friday 22nd June at Liquid Espresso

Attendees: 9

Participants shared resources for Junior and Primary classes. They brought along one or two of their favourite resources and in a speed sharing scenario liaised with others and promoted their resources. It was a great opportunity to network with Drama educators and chat about strategies and ideas for the Drama/Arts classroom

10. Drama SA State Conference *Shifting Spaces*

Saturday 11th August at University of SA, Magill Campus

Attendees: 102

The Drama SA's 2018 State Conference – *Shifting Spaces* highlighted some of the best South Australian arts practice on offer. Suitable for teachers from Early Childhood through to Senior Secondary, the day was an opportunity to inspire and be inspired by like-minded educators. Featuring in the sessions were renowned Australian playwright Finegan Kruckemeyer and State Theatre Company Artistic Director Geordie Brookman, plus many more of South Australia's experienced practitioners. A range of door prizes and goodies was offered with thanks to; Credit Union SA, Windmill Theatre Co., Adelaide Festival Centre, Australian Plays, Menz Fruchoc. The day was a huge success and many participants were asking for more!





Drama Victoria – Reflecting on 2018

2018 has been an exciting and productive year for Drama Victoria. We celebrated our 50th birthday milestone by launching our Archive Project as part of our National Conference. We also unveiled our new website and logo and offered a range of workshops across the school year, including the following regular events:

- Teachers New to VCE Drama & Theatre Studies Night
- Primary Days
- Middle Years (Years 5-8) Days
- Regional Days (for teachers and students)
- VCE Drama & Theatre Studies Performance and Written Exam Days (for teachers and students)
- Drama Victoria Theatre Festival which included pre-service teacher training
- School Drama (Sydney Theatre Company)

The VCE workshops provided an opportunity for teachers and students to meet assessors, learn about the assessment criteria for their respective subject examinations, suggest areas of focus, and learn exam preparation techniques. They allowed participants to network with other teachers and students of Drama and Theatre Studies across Victoria.

The inclusion of Regional Days was particularly important as it provided an opportunity for teachers and students living outside of Melbourne to overcome their relative isolation and engage with their peers.

Jumpstart

Jumpstart is an event for P-12 teachers with specific workshops designed for Primary, Middle Years, VCE Theatre Studies and VCE Drama. Designed to kick-start the year, *Jumpstart* enables both new and experienced drama teachers to share ideas and resources and offers the opportunity to establish networks. *Jumpstart* also provides experiences for Drama and Theatre Studies teachers that are not achievable in school-based programs.

The *Jumpstart* program attracts delegates from both metropolitan and regional Victoria and is renowned for providing exceptional professional learning for drama educators. Presenters are sourced from all aspects of Drama education including practicing teachers, arts industry professionals, academics and VCAA assessors.

In 2018 Drama Victoria's *Jumpstart* conference was held at the Malthouse Theatre on 17 March. At this conference we focused on making our members aware of the vital role Drama Victoria plays in raising the standards of Drama education and inspiring change within the industry. Participants had the opportunity to engage in stimulating forums and participate in workshops that modelled best practices in drama education.

State Conference

Drama Victoria's annual State Conference takes place towards the end of each year, and provides an intensive combination of industry networking and professional development opportunities for Drama teachers across Victoria, as well as a forum for Drama teachers to share their practice, experiences and wisdom.

The conference is held at the Victorian College of the Arts in the heart of Melbourne's Performing Arts precinct in Southbank, in order to allow participants to be fully immersed in Melbourne's renowned arts culture, though it also takes advantage of a number of additional venues, including the University of Melbourne, the Malthouse Theatre and the Melbourne Theatre Company. It provides an ideal opportunity to connect teachers with industry, with a number of performance companies and service providers exhibiting at trade displays, as well as a theatre forum giving insight into the best productions on offer and processes that can be incorporated into class / extra-curricular productions.

The Drama Victorian Awards are also presented at our Conference each year and offer opportunities to honor excellence and achievement in Drama and Theatre Studies Education.



This year Drama Victoria is hosting the 2018 Drama Australia National Conference which will be held in Melbourne on Friday 30 November and Saturday 1 December. The conference theme is CONTINUUM: Drama education past, present and future. At this conference we ask our presenters and delegates to contemplate the notion of the continuum of Drama education in Australia. This is a particularly important notion for us as we celebrate our 50th birthday as subject association. Some of the highlights of this year’s conference include:

- An Ethnodrama performance entitled ‘The Greatest Love of All’ – A research play based on the Drama Victoria MAMA project (Memories and Memorials Archive, written by Dr Jane Bird, Kelly McConville and Dr. Richard Sallis and co-directed by Andrew Byrne and Nina Rossini
- The unveiling of the Drama Victoria Archive Project which allows us to present and honor the rich history of Drama Education in our State. Our Archive project focuses on documenting the history of our association and the members that have contributed to its existence.
- The official launch of our MAMA Project. This project encompasses a program of interviews with Drama and Theatre Educators of distinction and wisdom, with 30 or more years of experience working in the field – our so called ‘Legends’.

The Future

Each year we review our program through analysing attendance figures to see which workshops are subscribed to and which are not. Via surveys and regular communications with our members, we note the areas that teachers are seeking development and offer opportunities to support teacher demand. We liaise with the VCAA (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority) and note changes to curriculum - planning our program around curriculum reviews, changes and educational trends.



Snapshot of a Drama Victoria Theatre Festival performance

Throughout 2019 and 2020 we will continue to focus on celebrating and exploring inclusivity via Drama Education. We are pleased to announce that our 2019 Conference Theme will be ‘Unity through Diversity – Celebrating & Exploring Inclusivity via Drama Education.’ Drama Victoria will continue to invest in professional development that assist teachers in the implementation of programs that promote acceptance and understanding through dramatic exploration. This will enable teachers to equip children and young people with the knowledge and skills to participate in, and contribute to, our diverse society as active and informed citizens – interacting harmoniously and creatively with diverse cultures and abilities.

Our 2019 Jumpstart Conference will be held in February and will focus on the implementation of the new study designs for VCE Drama and Theatre Studies. Next year we will continue to bridge the tyranny of distance with regional members via webinars and industry partnership workshops that can tour to regional areas – Our ‘MTC Teacher as Artist Workshops’ were very well received in 2018. We will also continue to support ‘The Aside Podcast’ – podcasts for drama teachers. These podcasts have been conceived by Nick Waxman, one of our Drama Victoria members, who has been committed to creating resources that can be accessed by all.

We will continue to develop our new website with further member resources and opportunities. Our Drama Victoria Theatre Festival will be reinvigorated – working with multiple universities and high schools. We will also be attempting to put our archival information and MAMA interviews on line so that they are able to be easily accessed by our members.

Eli Erez
President of Drama Victoria

Member contributions

Process Drama: A sure way to ignite student learning

Robyn Brentnall

Robyn is a drama teacher at Braemar College, Woodend Campus, Victoria. Currently she is responsible for designing and implementing the Drama Curriculum in the Middle Years from 5–8. Robyn has 33 years' experience teaching Drama from VCE through to Year 5. This year she has joined the School Drama Hub. This is an artist-in-residence professional learning program for primary school teachers, which focuses on the power of using drama as pedagogy with quality literature to improve English and literacy in young learners.

Cemetery Path by Leonard Ross

Ivan is the village coward who lives across the cemetery from the saloon he frequents. Ivan is so fearful that he always walks around the cemetery rather than taking the shorter path through it, even though it is bitterly cold. He is constantly being teased by the men in the saloon. The leader of the men dares him to walk through the graveyard and sweetens the challenge with a bet of five gold rubles if he can prove it by stabbing a blade into the ground at the centre of the cemetery. Trying to save face at the saloon, Ivan takes the challenge, but inadvertently stabs his coat, leaving him trapped. Pinned in the graveyard by what he thinks is a ghost, he dies of fear and is found the next day.

The Story: <https://www.sjsd.k12.mo.us/cms/lib3/MO01001773/Centricity/Domain/662/ThePathThroughtheCemetery.pdf>

Summary and analysis:

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/cemetery-path-by-leonard-ross-summary-analysis.html>

Young learners love to explore a story that invites them to wonder ‘*what would happen if...?*’

Drama provides an opportunity for participants to examine, explore, invent and celebrate new beginnings. By applying Process Drama learners are more engaged. Our students become critical thinkers, imaginative story tellers and independent or inspirational artists. The teacher becomes a facilitator and works alongside his / her students. The unit employs a number of Process Drama strategies (See Appendix C), followed up by a small group performance outcome. Warm-up games start each session (suggested time 10 /15 minutes) and are chosen for their relevance to the main focus of the session. Refer to Appendix B for clarification.

In this project the ending is not revealed until after the major performance task. This task requires the students to construct and reveal how Ivan has died. The setting can be as macabre as you wish and the story provides a wonderful opportunity for students to deepen their understanding of how to create and manipulate dramatic tension and mood.

Suitability: Years 6 – 7 **Duration:** Ten sessions of 80 minutes.

THE UNIT

Anticipated outcomes

Students will continue to develop:

- Work collaboratively
- Discuss complex abstract concepts such as helplessness and facing one's own mortality
- Reflect on their own learning and expectations
- Communicating ideas using drama techniques
- Exploring ideas and feelings through role-play
- Refining expressive skills of voice, movement and gesture

SESSION 1 – The protagonist and the plotline (or story structure)

Warmup: Pigeon, Cabin and Storm (See Appendix B)

Adapted from People, Shelter and Storm. A simple fast paced warmup based on 3 concrete shapes.

Introduction:

Teacher leads a discussion focusing on students' experiences around the themes of challenges, dares and teasing.

Questions could include:

- What does it mean to mock someone?
- How does it feel to be teased?
- Why do people taunt each other?

Teacher reads The Story – not including the ending. Teacher leads a discussion focusing firstly on the story details, followed by themes and then perhaps linking back to the student experience having played the warm up game.

Teacher casts the two big questions.

- What do you wonder about this story?
- What would you ask Ivan or the young lieutenant?

Task 1: Freeze Frame

In small groups students plan, rehearse and present the story as a series of frozen images. Freeze images depict a scene or event from the orientation, complication and resolution of a traditional linear narrative.

Each image must have:

- A title capturing a verb that is recorded on large sheets of paper. For example, “Ivan Cemetery Fear” or “Ivan, Trapped”.

Task 2: PD Thought tracking (See Appendix C)

Music is played (For suggested music options see Appendix A).

During the presentations, Teacher may stop and tap individuals on the shoulder, prompting them to reveal what they are thinking.

Extension Task:

Teacher may set an extension task. Students consider how they might add transitions as each image is presented. For example the use of chorus, a repetitive synchronised action and or a phrase that reinforce the taunting of Ivan in the tavern.



SESSION 2 – The night in the tavern: An eyewitness account. *The Bystander*

Warmup: A simple story telling game in 3's.

Student A is instructed to think of a story based on something that they have noticed in the playground that has caused some concern. Student A tells B and C. As A is telling the story, B and C try to distract them. A must keep the story going. Rotate roles.

Introduction:

Teacher informs the class that this session focuses on the night in the tavern. Not just the main characters but also the other characters that witnessed (bystanders) or may have played a minor role in the taunting.



Teacher could ask: Who was there that night? What did they see and hear?

Teacher then leads a discussion around eyewitness accounts. *The Bystander* is introduced as a person who watches, listens and plays a role on the peripheral.

This session opens out inviting students to consider other characters who might have been in the tavern that night. These roles help build opinions about the protagonist and antagonist, extending role relationships and offering further roles that will become vital when building the final performance task.

Task 1: PD Gossip Mill (For explanation of strategy see Appendix C)

Task 2: PD Collective Role (See Appendix C)

Alternatively the class plays *PD Collective Role*. The whole group returns to a circle. All the students play the role as the bystander.

Teacher then introduces a talking stick (the sabre – artefact / symbol). Teacher starts the process in role:

“I arrived early that night, and there was Ivan sitting alone again in the corner. Then the tavern door flung open. That young lieutenant stood in the doorway and with no hesitation raised his sabre and launched into the most ... (taking stick passed on)”

Teacher directs a discussion on symbolism. What is the symbolic meaning of the sabre?

Lists meanings on board along with other symbols in the story.

Extension activity:

Role play. In small groups students can now extend eye witness accounts or possible roles such as police officers, nose neighbours. In this role play, students must communicate what they saw and heard.

SESSION 3 – Setting the Challenge. Was Ivan bullied? How was he persuaded? What made him accept the challenge this particular night?

Warmup: Cat and Mouse

(See also Appendix B)

Post-game – In what way can we relate these two roles to our story?

Introduction:

Discussion is based around student experiences of either setting a dare/challenge or being persuaded to doing something risky. Types of persuasion/bullying are listed on board.



Task 1: PD Teacher in Role

(See also Appendix C)

Teacher plays the role as the lieutenant. Students question the lieutenant’s motives.

Role play – In small groups students plan and present a scene that reveals how Ivan was persuaded to accept the challenge. Teacher may stop the scene and ask for hidden thoughts by either players or the audience.

SESSION 4 – Ivan: A timid little man – so timid that the villagers called him pigeon

Warmup: Lifecycle (see also Appendix B)

Introduction:

Teacher sets the scene by introducing the notion of a time line.

Who was Ivan? What type of man was he? What type of childhood did he have? Family? Occupation? Fears and aspirations? We know from the story that Ivan is in his twilight years.

Task 1: PD Role on the wall (See Appendix C)

A large outline of Ivan is drawn on the board or butcher's paper. This can be done as a whole class or in small groups on butcher's paper.

Teacher leads a class discussion. Questions could include:

- What do we know about Ivan?
- What's Ivan's backstory?
- What does Ivan look like (external features)?
- What might be some of Ivan's attitudes, thoughts and feelings (internal features)?

Task 2: PD Role Walk (for explanation of the strategy see Appendix C)

Teacher pays particular attention to his nickname "pigeon" and also stresses that he is a man in his twilight years.

Task 3: PD Adjective Call Out / Word Circle (See Appendix C)

Role play- In small groups, students focus on various stages of Ivan's life or a day in the life of Ivan. Each role-play must be built around a conflict situation. Students may offer interesting role relationships such as a distant relative of the lieutenants, or may focus on the symbolic meaning or significance of the sabre or why Ivan refuses to travel through the cemetery. All these story ideas can be woven into the final performance task. At this stage the main focus is walking in the shoes of Ivan.

SESSION 5 – That fatal night. Leading up to the climax

Warmup: Keeper of the keys (See also Appendix B)

Introduction:

Discussion: Teacher refers back to the warmup game and asks the following questions:

- In what ways was it similar to our story?
- Who could the keeper be?
- Where could this game be set?

This game builds team work and creates tension. Students are asked how they felt and also the various strategies played by individuals as the large group set out to steal the keys. This game sets up the main event and also provides an experience whereby the students can imagine how that night may have unfolded in the cemetery.

Task 1: PD Conscience Alley (See Appendix C)

Teacher sets up the context by stating the following:

“What was going through Ivan’s mind when he reached the gates of the cemetery? It was too far to return to his old ways. As he reached out to push the gates of the cemetery open, thoughts flashed through his mind. Should he keep going or turn back?”

Task 2: PD Sculpting (See Appendix C)

Teacher now invites the students to explore themes, ideas and symbolism. In pairs students explore the following:

- Late one winter’s night, when bitter wind and snow
- The cold was knife-sharp
- Darkness was a massive dread
- Drowned in the wind

Task 3: PD Soundscape (See also Appendix C)

In small groups students plan and present a soundscape. In this case it’s the cemetery. Students are encouraged to explore real sound and fantasy sounds that may enrich their work and overall audience engagement.

Share and discuss as a class.

Session 6 – Introducing the performance task – It is now time to set the performance task

Teacher introduces the Major performance task – “Visitor arrives in town...”

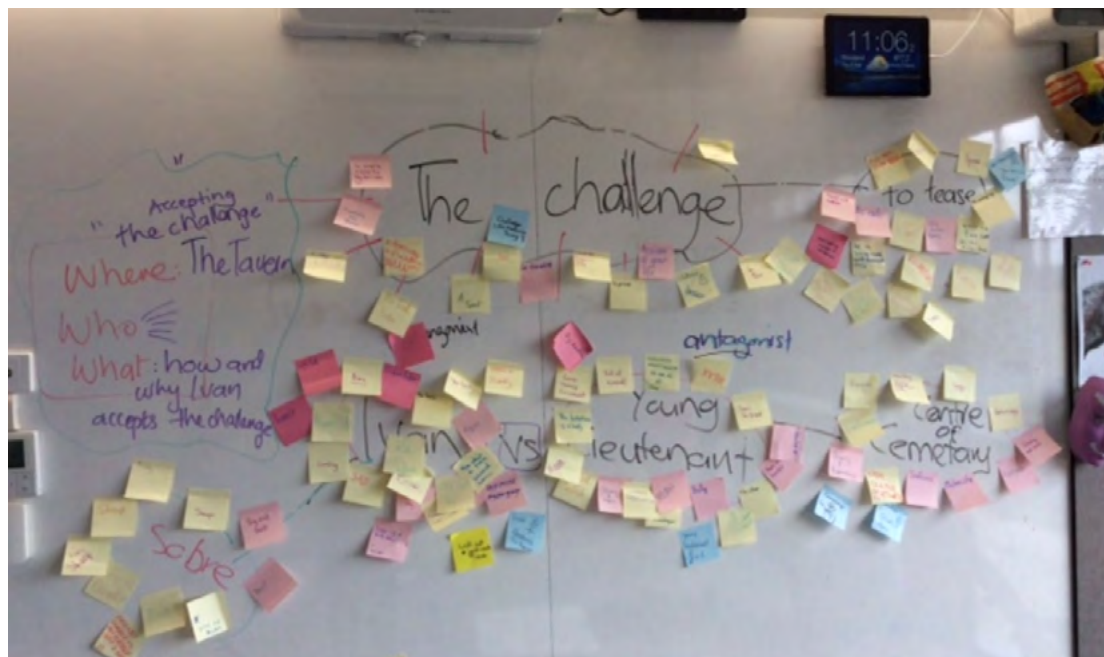
Context:

10 years have passed and a visitor arrives in town. It is believed to be someone connected to Ivan ... looking for Ivan. Who is this visitor? What do they want? The truth must be revealed about the circumstances around the death of Ivan. Who is responsible? Your story must also explain:

1. How Ivan died?
2. Was he alone?
3. Who found him?

Your performance must use the following elements:

- At least three scenes
- A soundscape – voices that capture a setting, mood and atmosphere.
- Slow motion or stylised movement
- Frozen image / tableau
- Dramatic tension
- A flashback



Outline assessment criteria:

1. Rehearsal phase

Allow approximately three or four sessions to build and refine the performance task. During the rehearsal stages monitor how well they are developing the overall structure as well as the specified dramatic element such as dramatic tension. Towards the end, focus on where they might place the audience such as traverse or end on.

Diagram shows whole group mind-map planning. This is an ideal strategy used at the beginning of the devising stage, as it consolidates past learning and opens new ideas.

2. Performance phase: Apply assessment criteria

3. Post-performance phase: Teacher reveals the real ending to the story.

4. Student evaluation and creative writing task: Students evaluate the effectiveness of certain techniques used in the project and complete a creative writing task.

“It has been many years since we discovered Ivan in the cemetery. No one sits on his chair in the tavern. The young lieutenant has since left the village. Was it right for us to treat Ivan like this? Write from the point of view of your character. And find a picture or draw a picture of this man. It can be a poem or prose.”

(Student samples see also Appendix D)

In conclusion

Cemetery Path is a charming story that appeals to young people. They can relate to both the protagonist and antagonist as at some stage in their lives they have walked in these shoes. The traditional story structure helps to strengthen the students understanding of plot and storyline. In the beginning we revel with the nightly customers in the tavern but by the end, we feel sympathetic towards this little man who stumbles and *falls down* in the dead of night.

Appendix A

Suggested music

www.youtube.com/watch?v=M73x3O7dhmg

www.youtube.com/watch?v=zloJ_yptWU0

www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4oZZhpMXP4

www.youtube.com/watch?v=atELVQ9aVGw

www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0JEw3u-5Vc&t=84s

Appendix B

Warmup games

Pigeon, Cabin and Storm.

<http://www.bbbpress.com/2015/03/drama-game-people-shelter-storm/>

Cat and Mouse

All players in pairs. One player is cat, one other player is mouse, and all others stay in pairs, arms hooked together. Cat chases mouse; when mouse is caught then mouse becomes cat and vice versa. However, mouse can escape chase by hooking into any pair of other players. At that point the player at the other end of the pair becomes cat and the cat becomes mouse.

Lifecycle

Students line up in one line across the back of the space. Teacher at the far end. Students are to imagine that in front of them is a path representing their life time. Along the path there are stages such as childhood, adolescence, young adult, middle age and twilight / old age. As they move down the path they show how they are aging in a physical way.

Keeper of the keys. (Very similar to what's the time Mr Wolf)

A student stands at one end of the studio, keys placed on the floor, facing away from the group. The group has to sneak up behind the keeper without being heard or seen and steals the keys. Keeper turns round and if they see someone moving, they send them back to the start. A wonderful game that demonstrates tension and team work. This game can be adapted to any story. In this case the keeper could be Ivan and the others could be villagers, ghosts. Or the keeper could be a gate keeper who has accidentally left the keys to the main gate to the cemetery on the ground and the others could be Ivan. This game provides a meaningful framework for narrative building, developing suspense and tension and frozen images for the performance project.

Appendix C

Process Drama Strategies

Gossip mill

Students mill around the room. When you signal by clapping hands, students stop and tell the person next to them their idea. “I’ve heard that Ivan never goes through the cemetery at night because …..” If they like an idea, they capture it and spread it around. Otherwise, they can stick with their own ideas. Keep sharing until the students have had a chance to speak to six or seven people, changing ideas as they wish.

Thought tracking

Participants in a freeze frame or tableau are tapped on the shoulder and speak aloud a response to the dramatic situation.

Teacher-in-role

It allows you to model being in role or out-of-role to students, and to control the direction of the drama narrative from inside the imaginary context.



Collective Role

The key roles in a piece of drama or role play can be played by more than one person. This can greatly encourage those who are less confident about being in the spotlight. They do not have to speak simultaneously as they should take it in turn to speak as the shared character. This also encourages purposeful listening so that points are not repeated or contradicted. Use of collective role during hot seating can also enable it to flow far better as they are able to have thinking time and bounce off each other’s responses.

Soundscape

A soundscape is a moment in a story that is communicated only through sound. A soundscape should evoke mood and suggest a place.

<https://dramaresource.com/soundscape/>

Role on the wall

A way of recording thoughts and responses about a character. Draw a big outline of a head or body and display centrally. Encourage learners to add notes to it e.g. inside the outline what they know; outside what they want to know, inside - positive characteristics; outside-negative characteristics, inside – a response to a characters actions; outside – a comment on the responses of others, inside – what a character would say to justify their actions; outside – the conscience of the character or opinion of another character.

www.wjec.co.uk/uploads/publications/13646

Role Walk

Role Walk is a guided imagination exercise allowing students to create a character.

Adjective Call Out / Word Circle.

Students return to a circle. With their eyes, the teacher asks the participants to think of an adjective that describes the subject/ character, the predicament he/she is in or where he/she lives. This is then followed by a gesture or action that accompanies the words and adds meaning. Side coaching steers the students to find vocal expression so as to emphasise its meaning.

Conscience Alley

Also known as a ‘decision alley’ or a ‘thought tunnel’. Use to explore responses and opinions at a key moment in the plot where a decision has to be made. Every individual has the opportunity to influence the actions of the character as they make their decision. Students form a tunnel i.e. two straight lines, facing each other and voice their advice as the teacher (or a pupil) walks down the centre of the tunnel. Pupils should be given the opportunity to ‘pass’ if need be or repeat what someone else has said (*mirroring*). Encourage the recording of possibilities that reflect the learners understanding of the key points and themes of the text.

Sculpting

Students are moulded into a pose to depict and embody a particular character, role or idea. A plays the sculptor and B plays the thinking clay. A provides direction and B reacts to the directions. You could play with various characters but I prefer to explore ideas and imagery from the original text.

Appendix D

Student work

Student 1 – Sophie Culpan, Year 6

The tavern is quiet,
Now that Lieutenant has left
There has been no riot,
And no grand theft.
Although everyone lives in peace,
Where did Lieutenant go?
Some say he fled to Greece,
But I do not know.
Now that Ivan is dead,
Bullies are wishing that they were nice.
Each night they toss and turn in bed,
Knowing they will have to pay a price.
In the tavern Ivan's chair is neglected,
It makes all the bullies run outside,
They all think it's infected,
It has sat there since the day he died.

By Sophie Culpan

Student 2 – James Selby, Year 6

The Lieutenant is quite greedy
Whenever he feels needy
So he reels Ivan in
For his challenge to begin
While offering him some gold
That night Ivan was bold
And walked past the graves
While not feeling too brave
He unbuckled his sabres
Still not feeling any braver
And drew it through the greatest and largest
grave stone
He woke up the spirit
Which stabbed Ivan in the back right through
to the bone

By James Selby

Sandra's Perspective (Sophie Played Sandra)

I sit in the police office in terror. My manicured hands are shaking terribly. Oh, this is all Lieutenant's fault! I should never have married that horrible, horrible man. The two police officers clear their throat, ready to start the interrogation. I could feel my palms sweating, I wiped them on my silk scarf nervously, waiting for the officer to talk. As he started to question us, more and more evidence was revealed. I pretty much knew that we were guaranteed to go to jail. As each second passed, I was becoming angrier and angrier. Angry at Lieutenant for dragging me into this awful crime. Before I could stop myself, I felt all the words tumbling out of my mouth. I told the officers everything; how lieutenant had brutally killed Ivan, the challenge, his whole mischievous plan. I was avoiding looking him in the eye but I could still feel his glare on me. What had I done?

By Sophie Culpan

DOCTORS IN SCHOOLS PROGRAM – an interview with Professor Helen Cahill

Nina Rossini

Professor Helen Cahill is Director of the Youth Research Centre, and Deputy Dean of the Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne. She initially worked as a Drama, English and Health teacher in secondary schools. She researches the use of drama-based pedagogies for wellbeing promotion.

During semester one, my year 10 Drama class was invited by Helen Cahill to prepare and work through a specific character called 'Jo' (gender neutral) with a profile encompassing a series of teenage issues. We worked through the character in class and then spent 2 different days at Melbourne University with Doctors in training for the Doctors in Schools Program.

What was interesting about the whole process was the seriousness with which the students undertook the task and how instrumental they were when being interviewed by the doctors to help them understand how to communicate with young adolescents. The doctors felt that it was one of the best things they had done in their training. Below is an interview with Helen post production.

Nina Rossini

Helen, thank you for agreeing to take time from a busy schedule to do this interview. Having just completed the Doctors in Schools training workshops with you and my Year 10 Drama students, I wanted other drama educators to read about the wonderful and vital work you have been doing regarding adolescent health.

What was it that motivated you to leave the classroom and take a new direction in your profession?

What took me away from the classroom was the possibility of a broader reach into the methods that teachers use to promote youth wellbeing. I had always been passionate about the ways in which participating in drama classes could build social wellbeing and give students a chance to enquire into social justice issues. Even though I left the classroom, I have managed in every year since to teach multiple classes of students, usually Year 9 drama classes, involving them in the use of drama to educate adults, including those training to be teachers and doctors. This has helped to lessen the sense of loss and to keep me connected to the challenges and opportunities that the drama teachers face in using drama to explore social health issues.

Was the transition from being a classroom Drama teacher to the work you are currently undertaking an easy one? What were some of the challenges?

One of the biggest losses about leaving the classroom was the chance to work in an ongoing manner with groups of students, and to develop relationships and learning over time. It is not

as rewarding to only get to engage in a short-term way. I had to find meaningful ways of working with groups of students that I might only meet once or twice. Despite that it did not initially seem possible, I have found that rapport can quickly be built when collaboratively engaged in a purposeful and real world task, such as involving students as co-contributors in adult education. I have also benefited from the working partnerships with the drama teachers who share their classes with me.

Did your experience as a Drama teacher prepare you in any way for the work to follow?

The ongoing work of improvising and responding to both predictable and unpredictable student offerings in the drama classroom has equipped me to work creatively in a range of diverse projects. The courage to create collectively from a blank slate is one the muscles developed by drama educators! Another key way in which my drama experience has stood me in good stead is via the presumption that learning can be based on a participatory or reciprocal exchange between all of the parties. This helped to equip me to do cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary work with a diverse range of stakeholders.

How did your Doctors in Schools program evolve and how long have you been working in this field?

I initially developed the drama-based doctors training program at the invitation of Professor Glen Bowes who was then the Director of the Royal Children’s Hospital Centre for Adolescent Health. He had seen a presentation I had led with my Year 9 Drama class in which we presented youth perspectives on social health issues at a Youth Health conference at the University of Melbourne. He wanted a youth centric and rehearsal based approach using some of the methods we had demonstrated via an interactive improvised session involving the audience members. I ran the prototype workshops for his Adolescent Fellows with my then drama classes, and evolved the method based on that initial experience. I then used the method, and my classes provided the actors for a project to training experienced GP’s in youth friendly approaches. This was for the PhD study conducted by Associate Professor Lena Sancı. Later the method was provided for all medical students at the University of Melbourne (where it has been provided ongoing by a range of generous drama teachers and their students for the



last 20 years). Associate Professor Lena Sanci remains an advocate of this approach to this day, as it demonstrated such positive outcomes in her research study. We work together to conjointly provide this approach into the professional learning program for the Doctors in Disadvantaged Secondary Schools program.

The training program has a very precise step by step approach for both the doctors in training and for the Drama teachers and the students preparing to play out the character Jo (male or female or non-gender specific) that goes for a consultation. Was that process created by you or through a collaborative process?

I engaged in a range of collaborative exercises to develop the program. Firstly I collaborated with a number of different drama classes to establish a meaningful and credible set of case characters for the students to perform when in role as the simulated 'patient'. Secondly I read the research into effective approaches to conducting a psycho-social health screening of an adolescent patient which came from the medical research. I did this in partnership with the medical experts. This was to establish the key skills and steps that the medical students or GP's needed to develop to do their job well. Thirdly I sought feedback from those who participated in the workshops (including the students, the medical experts and the medical students). This was important in establishing which of the learning activities they found most useful. Out of this process I refined the guide for running the session. Because I also conducted my PhD research into this process, I benefited from a rich set of data, as well as from additional data collected in using the method with experienced GP's.

The Doctors in training were very delighted to work with young people and felt that they had learned more working with them than they had in preparing for this work via study. What do you believe are the most vital elements of your approach that help students open up and feel comfortable talking to doctors about any issues they may be facing?

There are a number of elements that make this such a meaningful learning experience for the doctors. Firstly, they are presented with authentic and credible 'data' from the mouths of the young people themselves. Whilst they can read advice about effective communication, it is when this advice comes directly from the mouths of the young people themselves that they really take note and believe its importance. Secondly, they get to actually rehearse a screening conversation with the actor in role as the patient. This screening conversation allows them to ask questions about home, school, drug use, sexuality and mental health. Some of these topics are sensitive and if they do not manage them in a respectful and non-judgemental way, the young patient is reluctant to engage. Thirdly, the doctors benefit from multiple rounds of formative feedback from the actor working with them. They are asked to move in and out of role during the simulation. When out of role, the young person gives their doctor feedback about their communicative style and coaches them about how to put the patient at ease and how to be helpful to that character. This is so powerful because the feedback is immediate and personalised. Fourthly, the doctor then gets a chance to re-play their interaction to try

out different ways of taking on the advice of their young ‘coach’. This use of a penalty free space to experiment is much valued by the doctors, and not readily available elsewhere in their professional life. My research has shown these to be the key benefits for the doctors. However, the process is also hugely beneficial to the drama students. They find that it’s uplifting and meaningful to make this kind of social contribution to adults. It enhances their sense of self-esteem, and their confidence to have these kinds of conversations about the issues that affect wellbeing.

What advice would you give to Drama teachers (and teachers overall) who, by the very nature of the subject, are very often confronted with adolescent mental health issues in their classrooms?

I would remind Drama teachers that when they provide a collaborative, inclusive and non-judgemental space in which students can work on meaningful projects together, then this is a key way to contribute to mental health. Students who feel connected, respected and engaged in learning are less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety. I would also remind teachers that between 1 in 5 and 1 in 4 students suffer from a mental health problem, and thus there will be many students they teach who are affected. Students affected by mental health distress are commonly reluctant to let anyone know or to seek help. Thus if you sense a student is troubled, it is important to initiate a checking-in conversation and to refer them to the wellbeing support team. Overall, I would just remind people that it is important to use the drama-making process to provide some fun, hope and meaning – all of which are protective. I have written articles for drama teachers to help them think through how to avoid taking an undue focus on traumatic material or triggering issues in the classroom, and to think about how to ensure protective framing when working on troubling material. (See for example Cahill, 2006).

One of the observations I made during the two workshops that I attended, was that students feel very much respected when they are asked to provide the doctors with specific feedback about their approach. I suppose confidentiality works two ways. It certainly is a key factor in allowing young people to feel safe enough to open up and seek help. What more can schools do to support our young people achieve happy and healthy lifestyles?

There are a number of key things that schools can do to support the social and mental well-being of students. Firstly, the research demonstrates that a positive teacher-student relationships make a major contribution to both wellbeing and learning attainment. The work teachers do to show positive regard for their students, and to take an interest in their development makes a significant contribution. Secondly, student wellbeing is greatly affected by peer relationships. Bullying and exclusion is bad for mental health, and inclusion and peer support is productive of better wellbeing. Research shows that one major way in which schools can foster social health is through the provision of explicit social and emotional learning programs. Students who engage in these programs are less likely to engage in bullying and less likely to suffer mental health problems. I recommend the Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships

program which I have developed for Department of Education Victoria. It includes a focus on both social and emotional learning, and positive gender relations. It is available open access via FUSE. (Many of the games and activities can be used in a drama class.

See this link <http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/ResourcePackage/ByPin?pin=2JZX4R>)

It has been a real pleasure working with you and getting to know you. Watching you during the workshops certainly made me reflect on how sensitive we need to be when approaching delicate matters in our drama classrooms. Your friendly, firm yet relaxed disposition towards the work you do is admirable and so vital in a world where mental health issues have taken such a prominent focus not only among adolescents but with adults as well. You hinted that perhaps it was time for you to pass on the reigns to others and to move into other directions. What are your plans for the foreseeable future?

I wish I could make some clear statement about plans for the foreseeable future. But I have never been much of a one to hold a plan. Rather, my approach has been to look for opportunities or to make them, where they have been absent. Thinking ahead with this project however, I can see that it has been very much handed into two capable sets of hands: the drama teachers who step forward to contribute their skills and the engagement of their students, and the Royal Children’s Hospital team, who have also invested in strategies to ensure the sustainability of the program in the medical degree. I continue to be an advocate and practitioner, as well as a researcher. But the real test of contribution will be if this initiative lasts after the original champions and innovators have left the scene. I do hope that as I ‘age out’ – whenever that might be – that the program survives and evolves for coming waves of students.

Professor Helen Cahill

Deputy Dean

Director Youth Research Centre

Melbourne Graduate School of Education

Nina Rossini

Director of Guidelines and ADEM

Drama/Theatre Studies teacher

Reservoir High Melbourne

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Interview with Kate Sulan, Artistic Director of Rawcus

Vanessa O'Neill

The following interview was first published in *MASK*, September 2018 edition.

Drama Victoria's Co-Resources Manager, Vanessa O'Neill, interviewed Kate Sulan, Artistic Director of Rawcus, about the Rawcus Ensemble, the devising process of the company and their upcoming return season of *Song for a Weary Throat*.

Could you start by telling us about your own training and background and the inspiration to found Rawcus?

I graduated from the VCA with a graduate diploma of Animateuring in 1997. Since then, I have worked as a director, dramaturge and performance maker across a range of companies.

Rawcus grew organically over many years. It started as a one off project to develop a performance for the National Cerebral Palsy Conference. The theme of the conference was unlocking potential. We gathered a group of artists with and without disability who wanted to extend their skills and develop their practice. There was so much energy within the group and a strong desire to keep collaborating together, we made another work together. This enthusiasm continued and so we fundraised to make another work and then another. Eventually we formed a company and now 18 years later we still feel as excited and interested in creating work together.

Can you tell us more about Rawcus (its mission and vision)

Rawcus is an ensemble of fifteen performers with and without disability who create contemporary performance together. It's a long term artistic conversation between the Ensemble, the Artistic Director and the design team Jethro Woodward (sound), Richard Vabre (lighting) and Emily Barrie (set and costume).



*Song for a Weary Throat production image.
Photo by Paul Dunn.*

At the core of Rawcus is a collaboration between a diverse group of artists. The work is developed in collaboration with the Ensemble in the rehearsal room over a long period of time. It comes from hearts, minds, bodies, imaginations and experiences of those in the room.

Our aim is to make and present exceptional art whilst nurturing and investing in a long term Ensemble. We rigorously challenge artistic process and practise and we champion diversity as a way to make extraordinary art.

The Rawcus Ensemble is made up of performers with and without disability. Could you tell us how artists and performers become part of the Rawcus Ensemble?

Performers go through an audition process to join the company. The Ensemble members have a large input into who joins the Ensemble.

Could you tell us about how the company devises work in collaboration with its artists and ensemble members?

Rawcus rehearses once a week and then has intensive blocks of creative development and rehearsal. The work is developed slowly over a two to three year period through a process of improvisation, discussion, research, scripting and rehearsals.

The Rawcus Ensemble are co-devisors of the work.

The work that the company produce combines dance, theatre and visual arts disciplines. Can you explain further how you combine these three disciplines in your work?

The Rawcus Ensemble love to move and so our work is always highly physical. When embarking on a new work we get our inspiration from a variety of art forms, such as music, visual art and existing text. When generating content we work with multiple art forms and elements. I often ask questions of the Ensemble and invite them to respond with answers in different modes – answer in a drawing, in a dance, a song or a poem. This all feeds into the final version of the work.

Could you discuss how you collaborate with Jethro Woodward for the Sound Design of your productions?

As with all of the designers, Jethro is involved from the beginning of the project and is deeply embedded in the creative process from the dreaming stage through to production. The sound is not something that is layered on at the end of the rehearsal period. It develops alongside the creative process in conversation with the work created by the Ensemble.

Song for a Weary Throat had a hugely successful season last year (winning 3 Green Room Awards including Best Production and Best Ensemble). The work returns in October as part of the Melbourne International Arts Festival. Can you tell us about this particular work and how it was devised?

Song for a Weary Throat is a work about hope in the face of trauma. In the rehearsal room we explored the question- what propels us to get up after trauma, after heartbreak, after loss, after failure. *Song For A Weary Throat* is our collective response. The 15 extraordinary performers in Rawcus had much to say and offer on the subject of resilience and hope.

Song for a Weary Throat is a collaboration with the Invenio Singers, an amazing vocal ensemble. In the rehearsal process we improvised together around the themes and the work grew out of these long form improvisations and investigations.

Could you also tell us about workshops and programs offered by Rawcus, that may be of interest to Drama teachers and Drama students?



Song for a Weary Throat production image.
Photo by Sarah Walker.

Rawcus runs master classes about our devising process on inclusive practice. We also run a public program with workshops and projects available for young people. We also do commissions where organisations can hire us to conduct workshops.

Follow us on facebook <https://www.facebook.com/rawcustheatre/> or on our website www.rawcus.org.au

For information about these workshops and programs or contact our General Manager Jacque on jac robin@bigpond.com

Song for a Weary Throat was on at Arts Centre Melbourne during the Melbourne International Arts Festival from 10–14 October 2018.

Imagine the dramatic (r)evolution

John Nicholas Saunders, Associate Professor Mary Mooney and Dr Madonna Stinson

Introduction

The contents of this article have been adapted from three keynote addresses presented at the Drama NSW State Conference (May 2018).

John Nicholas Saunders is the author of the section, ‘A good revolution always involves a lot of drama.’ John explores what the future of jobs and employment might be like in the Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, Automation and Machine Learning age and what skills will be needed in this revolution? Will STEM skills adequately prepare students for the future or will the skills developed through drama education be more important?

Mary Mooney is the author of the section, Drama (r)evolving through pedagogical encounters. This section is framed within transformative and transdisciplinary drama encounters, with a focus on ethical, artistic and imaginative interactions that instigate active citizenry.

Madonna Stinson is the author of the section, (R)evolving in the imaginative ecology of the drama classroom. Madonna’s presentation draws on Maxine Greene (“I am what I am not yet”) and Paulo Freire (Pedagogy of Hope). Madonna shares some research¹ involving teaching-artists and students in a Brisbane government school, and considers drama as offering pedagogical encounters that promote agency, reflexion, and renewal.

¹ Y-Connect, 2016-2018, is a Community Innovation Fund, partnership between Yeronga SHS and Griffith University. The research team comprises Julie Dunn, Madonna Stinson, Penny Bundy, Linda Hassall and Adrienne Jones.

A good revolution always involves a lot of drama

John Nicholas Saunders

John Nicholas Saunders (Sydney Theatre Company) is a former secondary school teacher and the current Education Manager at Sydney Theatre Company and President of Drama Australia. He has extensive experience in Arts Education and is currently completing his PhD exploring the impact of drama-based pedagogy in primary schools at The University of Sydney.

Introduction

We've entered the next revolution. It's a revolution not of creativity or drama, but rather a revolution of artificial intelligence (AI), Robotics, Automation and Machine Learning (ML).

We've entered this revolution with the false idea that Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) learning will 'future proof' young people and adequately prepare them for a world that we are struggling to imagine.

Now, I know what you're thinking: 'John, I didn't know you are an expert in AI, Robotics, Automation and Machine Learning'. No boys and girls, I'm not an expert in this area at all.

So I'm going to draw on the work and research of some real experts in the field: Dr Jim Chalmers (who is the Federal Shadow Minister for Finance), Mr Mike Quigley (former Chief Executive Officer of the National Broadband Network) and Dr Carl Frey and Dr Michael Osborne from Oxford University. I think they know what they are talking about.

I'm going to share some ideas about what the future of education and employment might be like in the AI, Robotics and Automation and ML age and I'd like you to consider what the role of Drama should and could play in this new age.

I have been wondering about the future of education and employment a lot recently, because eight weeks ago I became a first time uncle. My niece has been named after one of Australia's greatest living artists, Sia. I've been thinking about Sia and what her education might be like and what her life might be like and what her career might be like. Sia will graduate school in 2036, probably study at university for four years and enter the workforce in 2040. What will that world look like?

Our world is changing dramatically (pun intended) ... Yet our education system isn't.

Chalmers and Quigley (2017) argue that the six previous revolutions (from the First Agricultural Revolution to the Digital Revolution) are very different to what is still to come.

Chalmers and Quigley argue that “while earlier revolutions replaced human effort, this one goes a step further to directly challenge some intrinsic traits that make us human – thinking, problem-solving and decision making.” (p. 3).

Now I have a terrible confession to make: I’m a huge *Star Wars* fan. Don’t judge me! This is a safe space. Growing up, I thought that R2D2 and C3PO were total fiction. A figment of George Lucas’s brilliant imagination. Droids who could speak, think and even feel. Droids who had personalities.

It looks like George Lucas was right about quite a lot (obviously not about the three prequel films ... and he was totally wrong about Jar Jar Binks). But in the *Star Wars* galaxy, far, far away, many jobs from our universe were replaced by Droids and researchers believe that this is exactly what is going to happen in the future (Chalmers and Quigley 2017).

In *Star Wars*, translators were droids, medical operations were performed by robots, transports and spaceships were piloted by Artificial Intelligence units. Of course, we aren’t quite there yet and AI, Automation and ML is still in its early stages, but what we’ve seen is that it’s developing at an incredible pace.

So what will this mean for jobs in the future? (I’m so glad you asked!)

Some Research

In 2013 two academics from Oxford University, [Frey and Osbourne \(2013\)](#) examined 702 occupations and explored how susceptible they were to being replaced by computerisation. The findings are a bit scary. They estimate that “47 percent of total US employment is in the high risk category, meaning that associated occupations are potentially automatable over some unspecified number of years, perhaps a decade or two.” (Frey and Osbourne, 2013, p. 38). Isn’t that unreal?

So what is at risk? Frey and Osbourne (2013) suggest that “employment in routine intensive occupations – *i.e.* occupations mainly consisting of tasks following well-defined procedures that can easily be performed by sophisticated algorithms” (p.2) are most at risk.

Of the 702 jobs that Frey and Osbourne (2013) identified, they were able to sift them into twelve categories. (A graph of this data is available on page 37 of Frey and Osbourne’s 2013 article [here](#)). The categories are: Management, Business, and Financial; Computer, Engineering, and Science; Education, Legal, Community Services, Arts and Media; Healthcare Practitioners and Technical; Service; Sales and Related; Office and Administrative Support; Farming, Fishing, and Forestry; Construction and Extraction; Installation, Maintenance, and Repair; Production; Transportation and Material Moving. In its simplest form, Frey and Osbourne’s study put these employment categories into three areas regarding the probability of replacement by computerisation. 33 percent of employment was in the low risk area, 19 percent of employment was in the medium

area and 47% of employment was in the high risk area. That 47 percent of employment that is in the high risk of being replaced by computerisation include work areas such as; Office and Administrative Support; Sales and Related; Services; Production; Transportation and Material Moving; Construction and Extraction. In contrast, the 33 percent of jobs in the low risk area include categories such as Education, Legal, Community Services, Arts and Media (we are safe in Education and The Arts!); Healthcare Practitioners and Technical; Computer, Engineering and Science; and Management, Business, and Financial (Frey and Osbourne, 2013).

Certainly science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) will be important in the future, however, it seems that they aren't necessarily going to protect jobs against computerization.

Frey and Osbourne (2013) repeatedly argue it is the jobs that require “creative and social intelligence” that are less susceptible to being replaced by computerization. They state that:

Our findings thus imply that as technology races ahead, low-skill workers will reallocate to tasks that are non-susceptible to computerization – i.e., tasks requiring creative and social intelligence. For workers to win the race, however, they will have to acquire creative and social skills. (p. 45).

I wonder where kids are going to learn creative and social intelligence? Probably not in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics classrooms ... well not in any of the classrooms I've seen.

Frey and Osbourne (2013) reported that occupations requiring skills in fine Arts, originality, negotiation, persuasion, social perceptiveness and assisting and caring for others are the least susceptible to computerisation. And many of those skills are deeply embedded in Drama Education.

So STEM isn't really enough!

The World Economic Forum – why prepare robots?

You may have seen a clip earlier this year that did the rounds on social media. It was published by the World Economic Forum following a speech given by chinese brilliant co-founder of the Alibaba Group (which is a multinational e-commerce, internet, AI and technology conglomerate), Jack Ma. He's worth 42 Billion US ... so people listen to him. He said:

Education is a big challenge now. If we do not change the way we teach, 30 years from now we will be in trouble. Because the way we teach, the things we teach our kids, are the things from the past 200 years – it is knowledge based. And we cannot teach our kids to compete with machines – [the machines] are smarter.

We have to teach something unique, [so] that a machine can never catch up with us.

When asked what we need to teach our children if we move away from knowledge, Ma replied:

Value, believing, independent thinking, teamwork and care for others, these are the soft parts. Knowledge will not teach you that. That's why I think we should teach our kids sports, music, painting, arts – to make sure humans are different – everything we teach should be different from machines. If the machine can do it better, you have to think about it.

These soft skills that Ma mentions are inherent in quality Drama education. Through our subject, young people explore values, develop independent thinking skills, learn teamwork and collaboration and develop empathy for others.

Google

Earlier this year Google published a report that they conducted called 'Project Oxygen' that investigated what were the most important skills of a Google employees, particularly Google managers. This is particularly interesting for those of us in the Arts and Humanities, because the founders of Google "Sergey Brin and Larry Page, both brilliant computer scientist, founded their company on the conviction that only technologists can understand technology. Google originally set its hiring algorithms to sort for computer science students with top grades from elite science universities." (Davidson, 2017). Davison summarizes the findings by acknowledging that the outcome of the research project 'shocked everyone' as it found that "among the eight most important qualities of Google's top employees, STEM expertise came in dead last. The seven top characteristics of success at Google are all soft skills: being a good coach, communicating and listening well; possessing insights into others (including different values and points of view); having empathy toward and being supportive of one's colleagues; being a good critical thinker and problem solver; and being able to make connections across complex ideas." (Davidson, 2017). She summarized by noting that "those traits sound more like what one gains as an English or theatre major than as a programmer" (Davidson, 2017) which simply reinforces our argument that the skills learnt in Drama and The Arts are more critical than STEM.

So there, I think STEM is totally inadequate the needs discussed above and that drama is central to preparing young people for the world of tomorrow. That is why we need the dramatic revolution!

To conclude

I want to finish by sharing a poem with you by an American educator, Ivan Welton Fitzwater because we are continually told by politicians, by government reviews, by the media, what should happen in our classrooms, but it is you, you as a teacher in a classroom, that has the ultimate power to change the future of the world through a dramatic revolution ... one that involves a lot of drama.

I am a teacher!
What I do and say are being absorbed by young minds
Who will echo these images across the ages.
My lessons will be immortal,
Affecting people yet unborn,
People I will never see or know.
The future of the world is in my classroom today,
A future with the potential for good or bad.
The pliable minds of tomorrow's leaders will be moulded
Either artistically or grotesquely by what I do.
Several future presidents are learning from me today;
So are the great writers of the next decades;
And so are all the so-called ordinary people
Who will make the decisions in our democracy.
I must never forget these same young people
Could be the thieves or murderers of the future.
Only a teacher?
Thank God I have a calling to the greatest
Profession of all!
I must be vigilant every day
Lest I lose one fragile opportunity
To improve tomorrow.

Drama (r)evolving through pedagogical encounters

Associate Professor Mary Mooney

Associate Professor Mary Mooney (Western Sydney University) researches and teaches in the field of drama/ arts education and teacher effectiveness with a keen interest in theoretical framings of the cultural practices of young people. Mary is a recipient of the Drama Australia President's Award (2016) and a life member of Drama NSW.

Imagine the positive effect of a creative (r)evolution inspired by considering pedagogical drama encounters. Pedagogical encounters, according to Bronwyn Davies and Susanne Gannon open us out to the future with emergent possibilities that go beyond the limitations of intended curriculum. They 'open up the possibility of learning differently', of creating "meaning through entanglements" (Springgay, 2008:95) of becoming reflexive, creative meaning makers rather than mere recipients of over-coded, fixed knowledges' (Davies & Gannon 2009:7).

A proposition for an overarching frame of a drama (r)evolution in schools:

- Position: Values of democracy, sustainability, social justice, ethical practices with inclusive, artistic and imaginative interactions in an arts-led curriculum that reinforces active and empathetic citizenry.
- Reference points: Drama education practitioners including Dorothy Heathcote and John Carroll.
- Roles: Advocates and activists of drama for a creative curriculum with social justice connecting students and teachers in radical ways.

To gather courage for a radical drama (r)evolution I examine four enabling pedagogical encounters (Table 1 – following page) that evoked ethical, artistic and imaginative interactions in spaces that transpired from a tangle of possibilities.

Table 1. Transformative pedagogical drama encounters

	Pedagogical Encounters	Position	Reference points	Drama roles	Evolution of practice
1	Dr Lister – <i>process drama</i>	Imaginative & empathetic interactions	Heathcote Carroll	Frozen effigy activated	Transformative & transdisciplinary. Digital identity. Avatar role.
2	Homeless – <i>video drama</i>	Ethical & inclusive practices	Carroll	Writer Director Producer Camera operator	Ubiquitous devices for storytelling. Media producer role.
3	Water reckoning – <i>global rolling-role drama</i>	Ethical practice Environmental sustainability Active citizenry	Heathcote Davis, Simou, Hatton, Kennard, Kulik, Mooney, Nicholls, Wales	Scientists Members of a devastated community	Teachers & students connect in radical ways. Ubiquitous drama beyond the classroom. Social media commentator role.
4	Artists in schools’ partnerships – <i>Fresh AIR project</i>	Democracy Artistic & imaginative interactions	Harris Hatton & Mooney	Artists Teachers & students as artists	Funding of schools & arts community partnerships. Partnerships for drama excellence.

Following is a description of the significance of these transformative pedagogical drama encounters (Table 1) as an inspiration for a creative (r)evolution.

The Doctor Lister process drama was facilitated in a primary school in England by Dorothy Heathcote (Heathcote, 1984; Carroll, 1986). The character of Doctor Lister, played by John Carroll, was a frozen effigy activated by the primary students in role as medical students investigating the history of medical practices. In this way, Heathcote and Carroll instigated imaginative and empathetic interactions in a transdisciplinary space. The ‘medical students’ in-role questioning of Doctor Lister revealed how the work and presumptions of medical doctors had evolved and transformed health and well-being over time. In an evolutionary process, the frozen-effigy role technique can be re-presented in the image of an Avatar, a digital icon representing a created virtual identity of the person who manipulates the icon.

The video drama about the homeless was created by a drama student for her Higher School Certificate video drama Individual Project, which presents a screen documentary-narrative of the plight of a homeless man and his life as a resident of a men’s refuge. The student’s screen presentation of this homeless man signifies a counter-narrative of the stereotype of ‘homelessness’ and dramatically documents life on the fringe of society. This pedagogical encounter is positioned as ethical and inclusive where the video-maker wrote, directed, produced and operated the camera to negotiate meanings across cultural, screen, and educational dimensions (Carroll, 2006). This type of encounter is evolving from the role of video maker into media producer and a generator of knowledge using ubiquitous devices for storytelling.

The water reckoning global rolling-role drama (Davis, Simou, Wales, Kulik, Hatton, Kennard, Mooney & Nicholls, 2014) expanded Dorothy Heathcote’s technique to include digital connections with classrooms around the world. We invited drama students to participate in role as scientists, historians and other technical experts to investigate recovered underwater

artefacts in order to understand how members of a fictional underwater community called Ardu Unda fared in an environmental catastrophe. In this extended drama, the students also created roles as inhabitants of Ardu Unda, who at a town hall meeting decide who would be frozen for re-activation in a future post-devastation period to warn and teach others/their descendants. This pedagogical encounter is positioned as ethical practice, environmentally sustainable observance and active citizenry. This encounter supports the evolution from students adopting roles within the drama to those of social-media commentators through online publishing of pertinent moments of the drama. Rolling the drama online across the globe through virtual and imaginative interactions can ubiquitously connect teachers and students in radical ways.

Artists in schools' partnership encounters in the New South Wales Fresh AIR project demonstrated how artists-in-residence, teachers and students all worked creatively as artists in reciprocal/collaborative relationships over a period of three years. Analysing this project (Hatton & Mooney, 2017), funded by the Australia Council and Arts NSW, reveals how these pedagogical encounters extended the models of collaborative artists-schools' partnerships. These partnerships for arts excellence involved a model-mix of arts organisations together with teacher-curriculum led learning interactions advancing to a sustainable creative school ecology with an emphasis on the creative environment rather than the creative individual (Harris, 2014). The benefits of these artistic and imaginative encounters are a democratising of the arts, which increases the visibility of arts learning and products.

In conclusion, drama educators can be at the forefront of drama (r)evolving through pedagogical encounters as instigators and advocates through:

- Using mobile ubiquitous tools for making, performing and responding to drama in constructing knowledge by critically adopting adaptive learning technologies that elevate drama education beyond smart classrooms and digital content.
- Joining the struggle to juggle augmented and virtual realities with embodied in-role interactions when telling stories like the frozen effigy role of Doctor Lister which can be aligned to the creation of avatar by a computer user.
- Connecting with others from within a creative school ecology (Hatton and Mooney, 2018 adapted from Bronfenbrenner, 1979) by framing drama practices, products, processes and pedagogy as transformative and transdisciplinary learning in creative environments where collaborative arts partnerships leverage creative community-building (like the Fresh AIR project) and imagined global virtual communities (like the Water Reckoning Rolling Role project) that highlight radical implications for schools and their communities.

In our classrooms pedagogical drama encounters can provide an evolving 'place in which becoming artistic is fostered and in which both collective and individual evolution and transformation can occur' (Davies & Gannon, 2009:2).

(R)evolving in the imaginative ecology of the drama classroom

Dr Madonna Stinson

Dr Madonna Stinson (Griffith University) has worked as a primary/early years teacher, a secondary HOD Performing Arts, a curriculum writer, an artistic director, actor and playwright. Her work considers innovations within drama teaching/learning, creative pedagogies and curriculums, and learning across the lifespan. She is a life member of Drama Queensland.

Some time ago I was in a class of five-year-old children watching a little girl write in her play diary. The children had set up the corner of the room as a campsite and then decided that they needed to show that it was for overnight camping. In working to make it night-time, this little girl planned to make a star the next day. She wrote, “To make my star I will need a circle, some triangles, and some gilter.”

Three things really appealed to me about this classroom event:

1. The children were planning to play, knowing that play was important in their learning. The play diary was just one of the ways that the teachers were connecting play and learning for the children, their parents, and the school community showing the value of imagination and creativity.
2. The children had agency in their play and learning. By writing what she needed for her play session, the child was informing the teacher about what needed to be prepared in advance.
3. The identified need for ‘gilter’, so that her star would sparkle. As far as I am concerned there is a great and urgent need for more ‘gilter’ in education.

Play is foundational to learning in drama as Richard Courtney pointed out so long ago (Courtney, 1968). Having agency (opportunities for learners to make decisions about, contribute to and control their own learning) means that learners can be independent and self-directed. Although learner agency is important, many educators don’t pay it sufficient attention and the reason for that may be that we live in a chaotic, changeable, unpredictable, challenging, and exciting, sometimes confronting world, where it’s easy to feel a sense of hopelessness because of the multiple facets, issues, problems and challenges that we face day-to-day.

One of the traps that we may fall into as advocates for our field is to speak entirely positively about what we do and the changes that we can make for ourselves, for our students, and the society at large. This is a trap that Michael Apple calls “romantic possibilitarian”

rhetoric (Apple, 2001), where we talk entirely positively of the changes that we can make, rather than interrogating the balance of forces operating around us, and how we and our students may influence them. I turn to Paulo Freire, and try to keep his sense of a pedagogy of hope at the forefront of my practice. Freire believes that acts of “imagination and conjecture” (Freire, 1992, p. 23) are central to education, but that there is an important first step of interrogating and “unravelling” the contexts in which we live, learn, and work, which underpins those acts of imagination. Rather than a pedagogy of unsubstantiated hope, or optimism alone, Freire believes that we need *critical* hope, by which he means a belief that the future can be made and changed through human action. Freire contends that by harnessing humankind’s curiosity, relentlessness, inventiveness, and ingenuity the future can be improved, and this comes about through “unravelling the fabric in which the facts are given, discovering their ‘why’” (Freire, 1992). When we develop a critical understanding of the present we may find glimpses of possibility for change, for hope, for the belief that things can be different. This suggests that our practice needs to involve explorations of power, of authority, of relationships, and should consider the driving tensions and perspectives that contribute to cause and effect. Rich, complex and nuanced exploration of these components of human endeavour are rightfully the stuff of much of our drama work.

Another inspirational educator is Maxine Greene, an advocate for the arts and imagination. She gives us these two quotes: “I ask myself what is the meaning of what I have done?” (Pinar, 1998, p. 1); and “I am who I am not yet”. The first is an important reminder in our busy lives where we concentrate on ‘doing’, often neglecting to reflect on the moral imperative of education: to make meaning. Like Maxine Greene, I see the possibilities for renewal in arts and drama learning. She also makes clear that she is not a fixed identity, but rather is always in a state of becoming. She is what she is not yet. She “futures” herself and allows “possible selves” to emerge.

John Carey wrote about the arts as a medium for “redemptive self-respect” (Carey, 2005), and there is certainly a great deal of research to support the notion that young people who feel solitary, marginalised, or disenfranchised can move towards a greater sense of connection and belonging when they participate in arts learning. This is because learning in the arts and the processes involved in art-making involve self-evaluation, reflection, and revision; they develop the capacity for self-evaluation and a greater understanding of self which in turn generates enhanced self-respect. This brings me to the school context in which I am working at present. It is Y-Connect, a three-year government funded research partnership between Yeronga State High School (SHS) and Griffith University. Y-Connect involves artists, teachers and researchers collaborating to understand the impact of employing arts-infused pedagogies across the curriculum in connected ways to enhance belonging and participation in the school community. The 733 students at Yeronga SHS come from 62 different countries, with 75% with a language background other than English. Some of the students are in home detention and are transported to and from school daily.

Further reflection on the important themes of agency, critical hope, and the imagining of possible selves. American academic, Kim Kyung Hee (2011), analysed results from over 272,000 Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking, from 1966 to 2011. Her analysis of this very large data set concluded that “we are becoming less verbally or emotionally expressive or sensitive and less empathetic, less responsive in kinaesthetic and auditory ways, less humorous, less imaginative, less able to visualise ideas, less able to see things from different angles, less unconventional, less able to connect seemingly irrelevant things together, less able to synthesize information and less able to fantasize or be future oriented” (Kim, 2011)

Despite the connectivity afforded by smartphones, the internet, and “friendship” apps, young people are members of the “loneliest generation”, reporting increased depression as a result of isolation, and a stronger sense of being disconnected to their peers, families, and communities. It is more important than ever that we work in ways that allow our students to have agency, hope and imagination in the drama classroom, where they can contribute, own and control their learning, and where they can feel connected to their community.

Some of the Y-Connect students have told us that through drama they can see the difference in their current selves and can thus see the possibilities that their futures may be different and that there are other “possible selves” (Erikson, 2007). They have hope for the future.

Drama educators are self-shapers who build the capacity for imagining possibilities that will become probabilities because the young people we teach can see where and how they can act upon the world in which they live. When we use relational and dialogic pedagogies, we embed agency, hope, and possibility thinking. By stepping into the shoes of others, we learn to understand ourselves and others better and find shoes that are a better fit for ourselves. We build agency and empathy. A drama teachers’ moral work is located in the realm of shaping selves that can shape the world. And wouldn’t the world be better with a bit of gilter?

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Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander CCPs and The Arts – Approaches to Breaking Boundaries

Marie Ferguson

Marie Ferguson is currently completing her Masters in Education (Specialising in the Arts), at the Australian Catholic University. With 12 years teaching experience in the areas of Dance and Drama, Marie has a passion for The Arts, and encouraging others to consider more creative practises and pedagogies in their teaching and learning.

Despite the positive, yet somewhat vague, government-mandated inclusion of the cross-curriculum priority (CCP) of *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Histories and Cultures*, implementing this mandate presents numerous challenges. A lot of positive opportunities and practices have been enacted—driven by teachers who are passionate in this field. Nevertheless, the overall image that continues to emerge regarding the attitudes and approaches to embedding ATSI perspectives and knowledge in curriculum, is riddled with complexity and some negativity within this context. How can we re-educate and re-culture staff to embed, incorporate and embrace Indigenous perspectives and knowledge more meaningfully, so that students can engage in a more holistic, balanced and authentic viewpoint of Australian and Indigenous people?

This project in particular, sought to embed perspectives held by the Murri peoples, who are the Indigenous Australians of Queensland and north-west New South Wales, along with advice and consent to engage in various teaching and learning activities with the traditional custodians of the land, for both Indigenous and non-indigenous students in this context.

This article has been shaped by the author's position as an Arts educator, and a non-indigenous teacher-researcher, seeking to use arts-based practises and pedagogy in conjunction with the ATSI and Murri protocols and guidelines, to meet curriculum requirements.

School context

Working within a P-12, co-educational, Catholic College poses many benefits and also challenges, yet, it is a vibrant and dynamic place to be. This school operates on 10-day timetable across four precincts that include Early Years (EY) Prep-Year 2, Junior Years (JY) Years 3-5, Middle Years (MY) Years 6-9 and Senior Years (SY) Years 10-12, across one large campus, with over 180 staff employed. Currently, we have 36 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students enrolled across P-12.

In my experience, although it may seem that we have strong inclusive and positive practices, plans and opportunities in place, in all honesty, this cross curricular priority CCP has been one that has been approached and ‘dealt with poorly in our context’ (Assistant Principal Curriculum P-12, interview, May 13, 2018). Schools are a dynamic and complex hive of activity and being a P—12 school that prides itself in its “seamlessness”, it is interesting to note the snapshot below of who we are, and later see the disparity of this CCP not being so “seamlessly” integrated when problematic areas are discussed.

The Challenges

Whilst all of these positive movements are in the right direction, some staff hold fixed conceptions and assumptions about Indigenous perspectives and this adds to the complexity of this situation. Stanner, as cited in (Casey 2007, 27) stated that:

The exclusion of Indigenous people from Australian histories, rather than ‘inattention’ on a grand scale, was an active frame, a structural matter, a view from a window which has been carefully placed to exclude a whole quadrant of the landscape. What may well have begun as a simple forgetting of other possible views, turned under habit and over time into something like a cult of forgetfulness practised on a national scale?

These habits over time and inattention to the inclusion of these views and perspectives have led to a number of issues that have been embedded in Australian teachers’ ontological and epistemological values which in turn, have impacted their methodological approaches and constructions of being a teacher in our Australian context. As discussed with the AP Curriculum and ATSI Support Teacher, the following problems have surfaced in our school:

- *Staff attitude – when dealing with curriculum and encouraging them to embed the CCPs, some staff have very set bias and views at times. There is still a sense of apathy, refusal, racist and prejudice views and many who fall for the same stereotypes. It is clear that a number of teachers perceive the CCP as, ‘Oh not another thing I “have” to do’.*
- *Taking a tokenistic approach to teaching this area (perhaps unknowingly)—ticking it off the list.*
- *Confusion between **Aboriginal perspectives** and **Aboriginal knowledge** with both terms being used interchangeably to teach content within the syllabus **about** Aboriginal people. Harrison and Greenfield (2001, 65), examined this exact concern within 12, New South Wales, K-6 schools. These concepts need to be clarified for teachers and they need tools to teach “without recreating some of the stereotypical representations that are often an effect of current pedagogies.”*
- *Funding and budget to provide these tools.*
- *Fear—teacher concerns about being insensitive or ‘racist’ leading to teachers putting this area into ‘the too hard’ basket, thus, avoiding it altogether, to stay safe.*

Playwright, John Harding, (1997) said, “The biggest thing that stops reconciliation is fear.” This fear contributes to some of the problems highlighted above. This concept of “fear” will be explored within the discourse analysis below.

The life experiences and passions of teachers are a big factor to consider in overcoming such fears and complexities. When walking past the JY precinct a few weeks ago, I noticed Year 5 students dancing and choreographing outside. In a casual conversation with the teacher about dance ideas and resources, what was heard was the plea for help in how to include Indigenous perspectives and examples.

I had just finished units of work with both the Year 9 and Year 12 dance classes in this field, (where we invited our ATSI students to be part of the workshops and experiences in my classes), examining storytelling, songlines, indigenous perspectives and knowledges through dance. We had worked with a traditional custodian of the land to create a dance piece that both indigenous and non-indigenous dance students could present and perform based around our school’s totem animal/mascot *The Eagle*. I immediately sent my colleague all of this information and resource material, clips of recent rehearsal footage relating to what our school was currently engaging in, and even offered to have the MY and SY students come down to perform for the Year 5’s, this term. The emailed reply, although expressed with great thanks, was overwhelmingly underpinned by the notion of “we’re going to incorporate this into next year’s planning”; “If only you had come before the term we could have used it for this year!”. The Year 5 unit was only half way through its delivery. In my view there was still time to be flexible, adapt the learning and teaching to include these perspectives towards the end of the unit and make them relevant, authentic and current to what our students were doing in our school. Perhaps the fear of ‘deviating from the set plan’, the ‘overwhelming amount of resources and information that came through’, ‘the unfamiliar language and discourse related to dance terminology and content’ layered into such CCPs, were all factors that may have contributed to the hesitancy of embedding this material. I wondered whether there is a genuine interest to embed this CCP meaningfully and make such learning deep, rich, authentic and relative to the students. There is an urgent need for such experiences to be shared amongst staff and students to encourage a sense of flexibility so that teachers can develop their pedagogical approaches.

When presented with the opportunity to explore this priority, I was attracted to this field, as I had been recently exploring it in the dance classroom. As a non-indigenous Dance and Drama teacher, I must acknowledge that I am no expert in Indigenous culture, yet there is a deep, innate sense of respect, appreciation and willingness to learn and find ways to share Indigenous knowledge and perspectives, through my passion of the arts. Indigenous and non-indigenous students and teachers all have something to discover through dance, drama and the arts about Australia and its First Nations People. My own personal methodological and pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning stem from the kinaesthetic: an embodied approach, one

of actively listening and storytelling; one of movement and ‘doing’; enquiry-based learning, of empathy and appreciation and understanding of the aesthetic. As Robinson (2010) states, the most effective and meaningful learning happens when the senses are fully engaged.

Story telling in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander life is the means by which cultural systems, values and identity are preserved and transferred. Telling stories through song, music and dance, in order to connect people to land, and teach them about their culture and the traditions of their ancestors is the way knowledge is passed from generation to generation. Knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island totemic systems, the histories of peoples, clans and tribal associations, language, land and concepts and connections of kinship, are maintained through stories.

(Annual Report, Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia, 2013, 2)

It is tapping into this arts-rich pedagogy and methodology, and finding correlations, like storytelling, that allow us to make natural connections and parallels to how Indigenous knowledge and perspectives can be shared in a classroom.

Discourses around Cultural reform

ACARA is working towards addressing two distinct needs in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education that have been identified in their framework. In order for these needs to be addressed, it is important to understand such discourses that have shaped these policy documents, guidelines and syllabi that underpin our work.

The turn towards cultural reform has been a long and arduous task in breaking down preconceived assumptions and constructions of Aboriginality. Young (1971), & Giroux (1983) highlighted the notion that:

Schools are said to control not only people and meaning but also to confer cultural legitimacy on the knowledge of specific groups... Because of the important relationship between cultural knowledge and power, any serious engagement with reform in education in the twenty-first century must include a focus on culture. In particular, cultural inquiry needs to be engaged as a means of destabilizing taken-for-granted categories, representations, and truths in educational discourses and practices.

(As cited in Kanu 2006, 5)

Though there are many educators and practitioners undertaking authentic, meaningful and engaging work with the ATSI CCP, this “destabilising” as mentioned above, needs to occur within our traditional teaching practices and pedagogies through various cultural inquiry frameworks.

Indigenous perspectives represented in art and literature have always been framed by the constructions of Aboriginality that have been engrained in us through our perhaps ‘colonial’

understanding of history, the media and our own experiences. It is these conflicting intellectual paradigms and dominant discourses that inhibit movement on a larger scale and still influence our assumptions and constructions of what is considered culturally acceptable to teach. These constructions need to be transformed and re-shaped. We see these constructions too, reflected in education policies and current practise. Harrison & Greenfield (2011, 70), clarify the significance that at this stage of our developing educational reform “Aboriginal perspectives are rarely *Aboriginal* perspectives in Australian schools, given that most of the teaching is done by non-Aboriginal people. Students are not learning *Aboriginal* views or perspectives, rather they are learning about their *non-Aboriginal* teachers’ perspectives on Aboriginal Australia”. It is the teacher’s meta-language and meta-narrative that Casey describes above, and what Harrison & Greenfield allude to, *about* Aboriginal people that is being passed on and taught. Finding ways to engage teachers, and re-culture, re-educate and re-form their own approaches to teaching and learning practices of the CCP, is vital. Interestingly, striving to cultivate curriculum change during my time at this school, has become interwoven with my passion to create cultural change, utilising the arts as the way to do so.

Mediatised discourses

In a modern society where technology and media influence us on a daily basis, this discourse is an important one to acknowledge. Casey (2007, 27), highlights the fact that “[m]ost non-Indigenous Australians have not had social contact with Indigenous Australians. Therefore, they rely on mediated images from television, newspapers and books to provide the foundation for their images and representations”. Such constructions and representations of Aboriginality have been examined in many debates and form the basis of certain prejudices and racial discriminations that were highlighted earlier as a concern within my own context. Television and media figure Ernie Dingo stated:

Racism stems from what you see on TV. Not seeing an Aboriginal family in these productions is part of that. It’s alright to have a black American family in there, that’s fine, but not a black Australian. But you can’t paint a black picture if you only use white paint.

(Coolwell, 1994).

Casey (2007), continues to note that many Indigenous Australians relate to such perspectives. Prejudice and racist views expressed (either knowingly or unknowingly) make it difficult for teachers to tread such ground—again that sense of fear too, being exposed. And so, many teachers find it challenging to embed Indigenous perspectives through text choices in the curriculum and units that have been planned. Artist, Lucashenko, (cited in Casey 2007, 29) describes the situation:

Now, us blackfellas still live all over Australia, yeah, Tasmania too. Murris in Queensland. Kooris in New South Wales and Victoria. [Nyoongahs in South Western Australia, Nungas

in South Australia.] Other words in other places. Some of us still dark, still black looking. Some of us with fair skin and blonde hair, only inside we could be real black. Some of us got our traditional languages. A lot of us mostly talk English, or else Kriol. All of us living in some sort of house, most of us watching TV and going to schools and working in Woolworths and having opinions about Telstra and Kylie Minogue and the Broncos. Cos we modern people now.

The artist in me—the one that fosters creative, divergent and perhaps unconventional and out of the box methods; seeks to squash such discourses and present alternative/marginalised discourse that Lucashenko presents in her work above. Hence, the inclusion of engaging with Indigenous guest speakers to connect with my students, to follow Murri protocols with an open-mindedness, sense of respect to build a welcoming relationship, drawing on works from Indigenous writers, like that of Lucashenko, is vital.

Professional learning possibilities

In order to assist in the re-envisioning of curricular and teaching practices of this CCP, a Community of Practice Model seems to be emerging, and a model that is working towards being transformative within this context. It only seems fitting that this school focuses on building “Relationships and Respect” as a foundation of success for our *Reconciliation Affirmation Plan*, our acknowledgment and commitment as a school to recognise our First Nation People; that we engage our community to understand this further and work within this model. Wenger, as cited in Kennedy (2014) clarifies that whilst “we are all members of various communities of practice, learning within these communities involves three essential processes”. To consider evolving forms of mutual engagement, knowing your enterprise/your school/community and developing your repertoire, discourses and styles of teaching and learning. Central to Wenger’s thesis (as cited in Kennedy 2014, 345), is a social theory of learning, recognising that learning within a community of practice happens as a result of that community and its interactions, and not merely as a result of planned learning episodes such as courses.

What we aim to do with our Vision, in collaboration with passionate staff, is to share stories, knowledges, perspectives and understandings in this field, which is so valuable and will be a “powerful site for the creation of new knowledge” (Kennedy 2014, 345). How I personally contribute to this creation of new knowledge will be fostered by my arts-based pedagogical practices. One that recognises and explores these perspectives through storytelling, and the active listening of others who present authentic and personal views. Maybe through members of our indigenous community or non-indigenous members who present valid, real and relatable perspectives; of examining art works that challenge their views; of ‘stepping into another’s shoes’ and roleplaying through drama and process drama activities; through live/recorded performance analysis; and exploration of movements that are out of their normal everyday experience—embodied learning, that encourages critical and cultural

enquiry. Fortunately, we do have staff and leadership that recognise that although there are “two distinctly different knowledge systems” in play, they are, however, “complementary knowledge systems” and it is a necessary transition—albeit one that will take time—which will increase the capacity for professional autonomy and move to a more transformative approach to teaching and learning practices (Battise and Henderson 2009). The art of negotiation and seeing this as a joint endeavour, one that is mutually beneficial and accountable for all involved, is the approach to take. Utilising the knowledge and experiences of the collective will enhance this journey and its process.

Battise’s & Henderson’s (2009) conclusions to approaching change and fostering practices that encourage an engagement with ATSI community members, resonate with Drama Australia’s ATSI guidelines (Casey and Syron 2007, 11):

Observing appropriate protocols when working with Indigenous people and their communities is critical to establishing positive and respectful relationships. Consultation with Indigenous communities should always be seen as a two-way process, with both parties learning together and from each other. Students, schools and communities all benefit from encouraging Indigenous people to share their knowledge and life stories.

By endeavouring to understand and pursue the appropriate protocols in my own practices, I had to ask questions and seek advice from those with knowledge, and that was through our ATSI Support teacher. When engaging our guest speaker to conduct and run a number of dance workshops, I didn’t know what to expect, yet, knew that I needed to embrace the importance of listening to their stories, their backgrounds and history of the topics I had asked to be explored within the lessons. Having that patience and respect, made our indigenous guest speakers feel welcomed and valued, and in turn, the students gained a deeper understanding about the symbolic nature of totemic systems, the power and meaning behind certain animal movements, and implicit links to songlines, country and place. Seeking permission to use and perform such work and dances, created with traditional custodians of the land (but with a contemporary adaptation), was another layer of understanding and communication that was successfully engaging. You just have to talk to them and ask—see what is considered appropriate and acceptable and learn not to fear the unknown. It is through using the symbolic and understanding that there is a deeper knowledge and knowing, where arts pedagogy and methodology prevail.

The symbolic has become an extremely important indicator of the school’s desire to be involved in the community. Art works in the school grounds (totem poles, murals, and paintings), dedicated learning spaces and flags make the school and its grounds into a welcoming place for Aboriginal parents [and guests of the school]. The symbolic also appears to reduce the divide in the minds of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children in these schools. (Harrison and Greenfield 2011, 72).

I have argued that the arts are one means of connecting such perspectives and knowledge with meaning and authenticity based on my personal experiences, but there are many other ways. The emphasis that I'm wanting to highlight however, should be as Eisner (2004, 10), suggests that education can learn from the arts, is:

The creation of a new culture of schooling that has as much to do with the cultivation of dispositions as with the acquisition of skills[...] in which more importance is placed on exploration than on discovery, more value is assigned to surprise than to control, more attention is devoted to what is distinctive than to what is standard, more interest is related to what is metaphorical than to what is literal[...] that has a greater focus on becoming than on being, places more value on the imaginative than on the factual, assigns greater priority to valuing than to measuring, and regards the quality of the journey...

Eisner's vision of what education might become involves a re-culturing of societal perspectives, through cultural/curriculum reform, enquiry-based learning, and the breaking down of the problematic concerns that have been discussed. Change happens slowly but the practices shared and reflected on in this case study, if enacted with purpose, a sense of collegiality and collaboration, can be successful in developing a deeper and more meaningful approach to educating students and providing enriching and authentic experiences, perspectives and knowledge for both indigenous and non-indigenous students. This movement is beginning at my school, with particular thanks to the efforts of passionate teachers like that of our ATSI Support Teacher, driving this change toward equality for all.

Summary

By conducting this project, I have learnt a number of things that have improved my own practice and confidence in exploring unfamiliar territory.

1. Take the time to engage in meaningful and authentic conversations with experienced staff and guest speakers, to seek the knowledge and advice from them; listen to their stories. We get so busy and bogged down with the daily grind of the school day, with time, or more so 'not enough time', that we sometimes forget to go deeper and connect with people and their stories. Remind yourself to be patient.
2. The art of listening is so empowering and humbling—when listening to guest teachers or elders or other staff share their stories, understandings, and perspectives with others. Modelling active listening with students and helping them to understand and value this concept can perhaps overcome some resistance or sense of apathy. Take risks and ask questions with any guest teachers/ traditional custodians of the land, about Indigenous perspectives and knowledges that you are unaware of or wanting to know more about; but do so in a respectful, yet, curious manner. Don't be scared to 'say the wrong thing' or

‘offend’ because most of the time, if you ask with a sense of honesty and respectfulness, they’ll give you a straight and honest response.

To go about creating change, as we know, takes time, but these simple steps are what I have found invaluable; to start the conversation and process. Making experiences authentic and in the present moment for not only our students but ourselves, is what makes our teaching and learning engaging and re-inspiring.

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A description and explanation of a character development system for young actors

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20/09/18

Dear Drama Australia Members,

I write to support the accompanying submission by Sarah Legg, a Year 10 student at John Curtin College of The Arts. Sarah is a student in the Gifted and Talented program at the College and a scholarship winner for her work on an innovative system of support for young actors that she worked on in Year 9. In 2018 I have been mentoring Sarah as she develops her ideas further for sharing. She has looked at writing academically (a new field for her) as well as clarifying her thoughts and concepts.

It is encouraging to see young people, sharpening and articulating their ideas and sharing them with a wider audience. Sarah has thought deeply about the issues facing younger actors and applied her knowledge in order to help other students. She ran workshops for students in the system she developed and is generous in sharing.

Sincerely,



Robin Pascoe

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A Character Development System for Actors has been developed by a student in a specialist secondary drama program. The System aims to help young actors gain control over multiple aspects of their characterisation by using all parts of the body. As both an actor and a student, student actors can learn to express their creative portrayals of characters through controlled actions. This Character Development System is based on theoretical approaches similar to that developed by Stanislavski; this approach explores the idea of using movement and gesture to express a character's motivations and personal emotional actions simultaneously.

What is distinctive about this approach is the ability for an actor to effectively portray reality in our western culture. There are external influencers: expectations, pressures, competitions or social norms that influence what a character may do. However, there can be another layer- what a character truly feels but cannot show to a society. A methodical approach can be helpful for young actors to realise and explore this concept.

Keywords: Acting, gesture, characterisation, development, Dimensions, Motives, a Bilateral Approach

Introduction

In early 2017 the Gifted and Talented drama program at John Curtin introduced me to the works of Grotowski and the idea that, “memories are always physical reactions. It is our skin that has not forgotten” (Grotowski 1976.) He, like many other practitioners (including Stanislavski and Delsarte) believed in specialised movement used in order to create dramatic meaning. This introduction triggered a series of observations about how actors present their characters in the acting space.

While rehearsing, I observed that young actors my age were limited by their movements throughout a scene. No matter where the actor was on stage every gesture seemed to only use one side of the body. When a climax was approaching, the actor would know the moment needed to be bigger but did not know how to properly convey it. The actors I observed would still only gesture on one side of their body but would make that gesture bigger. To an audience this looked overacted and unrealistic. This problem encouraged me to create a system that can remind young actors that both sides of the body can be used to help them easily add depth and structure to their character and performance.

A series of student workshops were used for young actors to try this system, as well as to, “(divert an) actor’s attention away from feelings and the psychological, and (direct) them towards the fulfilment of ‘purely physical’ actions, (which) helped (an actor) to gain access to their feelings in an organic, natural manner as they performed them” (Toporkov 2001). Actors involved with these workshops reported feeling more comfortable and confident in controlling tension and portraying their character in an improvisation situation.

This Character Development System is specifically designed for Theatre of Realism but can also be practiced in presentational forms of theatre. Specific techniques in this paper aims to evenly distribute an actor’s behavioral and expressive gestures across both sides of the body and thus create a realistic character that is pleasing to the eyes of the audience. This system on a whole hopes to encourage young actors to realise and create their character more efficiently. In describing this system, I begin by framing the discussion.

Framing the system

The specialist drama program at John Curtin College of the Arts builds on the Western Australian Pre-primary to Year 10 Arts Syllabus (SCSA, 2015), adapted from the Australian Curriculum: The Arts (ACARA, 2014). In describing Drama, there is focus on "... the expression and exploration of personal, emotional, social and cultural worlds, through role and situation, that engages, entertains and challenges." The Australian National Curriculum defines Dramatic meaning as, "A signified, intended purpose or effect interpreted from the communication of expressive dramatic action." (ACARA)

Drama can be defined as, "(A way that we) ... explore the way human beings think, feel and communicate" (Burton 2001). *The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought* further defines the term 'communication' as "(tracing) the consequence for social groups of their dependence upon such meanings and their capacity to create them." In this paper these definitions provide a basis for the meaning of acting. Characters live and interact with each other as a result of the influences around them and provide an art form that portrays the human experience in its most raw form. A systematic approach can be helpful in acting for its efficiency and ability to deliberately portray these ideas and raw emotions consistently to an audience; thus, motivating this Character Development System.

A Description of a Character Development System

An actor begins by receiving an allocated role and developing a characterisation that the actor can understand and feel inspired by. Every character in a text can be interpreted, enhanced or developed to build a characterisation that is strong, meaningful and insightful for the audience. Whether the character has been improvised in the moment or studied for hundreds of years, it can be developed to show psychological, emotional and physical attributes. Creating these attributes are the first necessary steps to adding depth to a portrayed character. When entering the acting space, an actor should also know their situation and surroundings during a performance. Techniques to enhance an actor's understanding of the space include Anne Bogart's Spatial Viewpoints: Architecture, Topography and Spatial Relationship. Mary Overlie describes this process. "... actors make observations such as 'I am three feet, ten inches from X,' 'I can see X from where I stand,' 'I look like this in relationship to X,' ... There are thousands of bits of spatial information actors can discover once they begin to recognize space as a separate language." (Bartow 2008) Through questioning the space an actor can realise their character's beliefs, values and opinions which support their attitudes in a scene; this adds to the depth and understanding.

Motives

Part of the actor's process is understanding a character's Long-Term Motive. A character's Long-Term Motive is similar to Stanislavski's Scene Objective, in that they are both based on what a character desires at a certain time, but what differentiates the two is that Long-Term Motives can be influenced by shifting Short-Term Motives. Short-Term Motives can be reflexes, instincts, or a sudden urge to do something that wasn't originally planned. The combinations of these motives can distinguish which events are most important in a moment or performance. By understanding a character's motives or needs, the actor gains structure of the performance, enabling decisions about where the major climax will most likely appear. They can appropriately control the amount of tension throughout a scene to ensure specific moments in a performance are emphasised.

As an actor identifies this information, they must also learn how to effectively apply it to their performance to show the audience the nature of their character in each moment. In this system, the concept of Dimensions applies to a concrete and visible understanding of Motives through the use of gesture.

Dimensions

Four Dimensions create movement in the space and the dramatic effect that is caused. Each Dimension creates a different level of dramatic effect. Below are six images to show the practical use of different Dimensions.

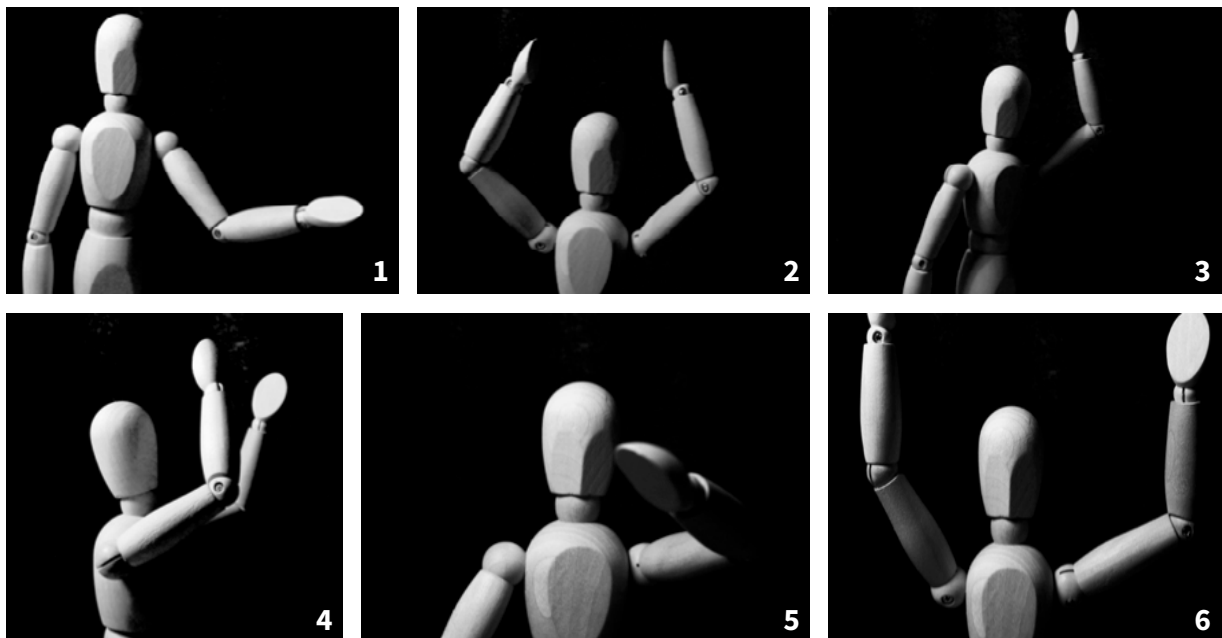
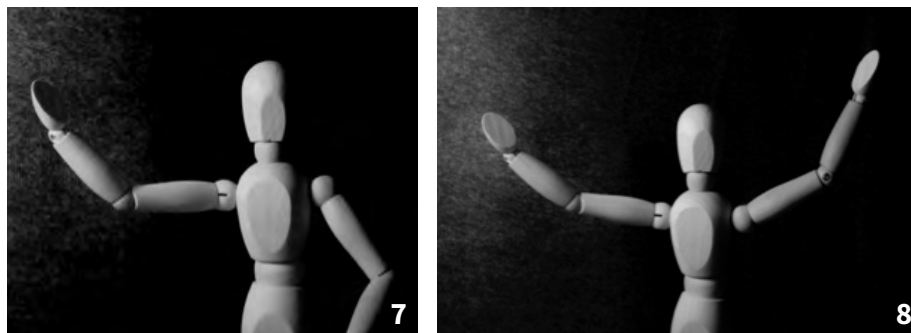


Photo 4 (above) uses a Second Dimension, while moving in the space. (A Third Dimension.)

Photo 5 (above) uses a First Dimension while breaking the fourth wall. (A Fourth Dimension.)

The First Dimension uses only one side of the body for gesture. This is recommended for every day, casual realism moments that a character does not usually care about. The Second Dimension uses both sides of the body for a deliberately heightened gesture, which can be recommended for a more climatic moment in a scene or performance. The Second Dimension shows that a character has more involvement in the moment. The Third Dimension involves additional movement around the space. A director will usually give you a Third Dimension (in the form of a blocking choice) that the actor can work with by either using a First, Second or Fourth Dimension. The actor can walk to a specific part of the set while either gesturing with one or two sides of the body to create different levels of tension in the moment. The Fourth Dimension breaks the fourth wall and makes deliberate contact with the audience. These moments are important in presentational theatre to bluntly tell a character's emotions, the current setting or part of the plot to an audience. Dimensions helps an actor to create moments in the play and effectively create a rising action and climax that both an actor and character are invested in. "His first task, undoubtedly, was to find the dramatic center of a flawed script." (Toporkov 2001) Regardless of a script's potential, Dimensions can be used to express the 'dramatic center.' An example of this can be shown through a comparison of photos 7 and 8.



*Photo 7 shows person A at the beginning of an argument.
Photo 8 shows person A three minutes later in the argument.*

Imagine an argument between two people. The two photos capture person A in the argument, three minutes apart. The first photo (7) uses one Dimension, with one side of the body and photo two (8) uses two Dimensions, with both arms raised. Upon first glance, it is obvious that person A has become more frustrated in the second photo. This is an appropriate use of Dimensions to approach a climax. If an actor were to begin the argument with the second Dimension, and then keep using the Second Dimension throughout the performance, there will not be a natural progression of movement and therefore a full climax will not be reached. This would be considered overacting. The two figures below show the relationship between tension and a flow of movement using Dimensions.

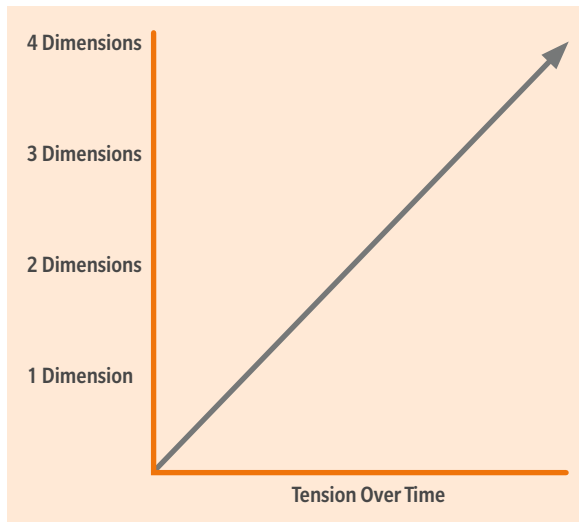


Figure 9 (above) shows a rise in tension as each new Dimension is used. As the actor creates variety through movement, there is added interest, which rises the tension in a scene.

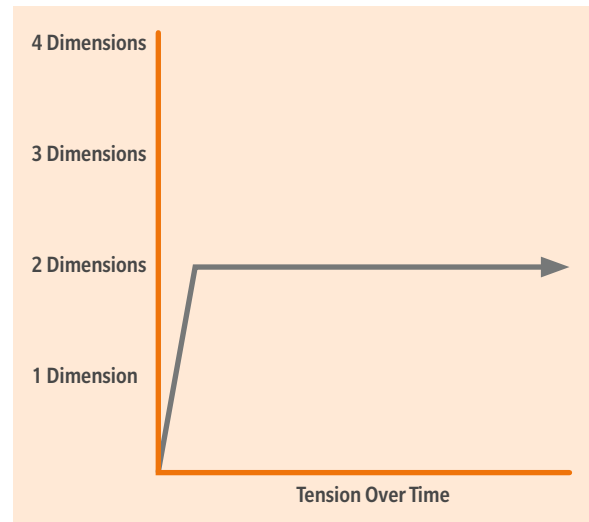


Figure 10 (above) shows no rise in tension because no Dimension is added. As the actor does not create variety through movement, there is no added interest. There is no rise of tension in the scene.

An actor can control the amount of tension to present an elaborate story that an audience can believe and realistically understand.

A Bilateral Approach

I have called this work a Bilateral Approach. A problem many young actors face when performing is the difference between acting on stage and off stage, as Arthur Bartow describes. "... In the imaginary world of the stage, the subconscious knows it is not encountering reality, and therefore cannot perform its customary function. Onstage the subconscious loses its ability to serve as an automatic pilot." (Bartow 2008) The approach aims to ensure an actor can always convey the subconscious aspects of their character onstage or in the rehearsal process. The Bilateral Approach theoretically 'splits' the body into two sides; the motive side and the subconscious side. These sides act as ways to present both subconscious and motivational aspects of a character. An example of this is one side of the actor showing an audience what the character desires. The other side shows what is holding the character back, whether it be the character's fear, guilt or oppression. An audience can understand and relate to a complex emotion of a character, as it is the human condition. The dominant side changes depending on where an actor is on the stage. The motive side is the side that would not block the audience if one were to gesture. The subconscious side is opposite. Similar to Anne Bogart's Spatial Viewpoints, the Bilateral Approach pays close attention to where the actor is in the space in relation to other actors, props or audience members. Although the Bilateral Approach separates sides of the body, both sides can be used to heighten a character's emotions. For example,

when reaching a climax in a scene, both arms on either side of the body can be raised (second Dimension) to show the heightened frustration of a character. Dimensions and the Bilateral Approach work hand-in-hand in order to display both the structured and psychological (in-depth) aspects of a character.

A vital step in confirming an actor’s movement in rehearsals is ensuring a ‘flow’ between deliberate movements. “Now you have learned to perform a sequence of physical actions. Put them together in an unbroken line and you have mastered thirty percent of the role already…” (Toporkov 2001) It is important that an actor only uses techniques such as Dimensions and the Bilateral Approach when a moment asks for it. A flow is necessary during a performance to keep the illusion of performance and consistently intrigue an audience.

Depth and Structure in a Character Development System

Depth and structure work hand in hand and act as a delicate balance to create an efficient performance the audience can understand through detailed characters that naturally ‘flow’ with a clear storyline. Burton states that “human feelings are signaled by small, natural movements.” These ‘movements’ can be expressed through the Bilateral Approach to create an insightful character. The diagram below (figure 11) depicts an example of an actor’s journey in finding and creating a character- through structure and depth-for performance.

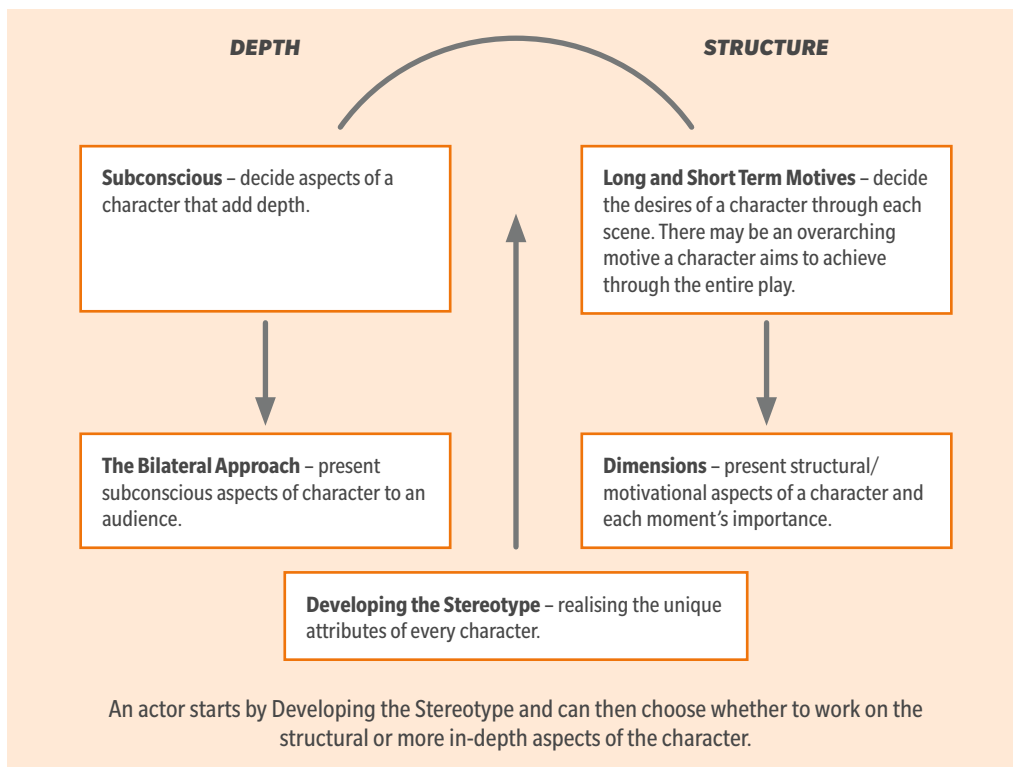


Figure 11 (above) depicts an actor’s suggested rehearsal process using this system to develop their character.

Although acting is an art form, it is also a craft that requires time and patience in order to carefully construct a desired character. The two components of this diagram include theoretic and practical stages which help an actor to find the appropriate structure and depth for a character. Thus, building a newfound understanding of a character and the creative process taken to create that character. The diagram depicts an order (through the use of arrows) which could be used when workshopping this system, however there is no necessary order. It is recommended that actors explore these techniques individually and use a process they are comfortable with. However, each stage deliberately leads into the next. An actor can take the information they have already gathered in order to understand the concepts of each new theoretic or practical stage if the process is followed via the arrows.

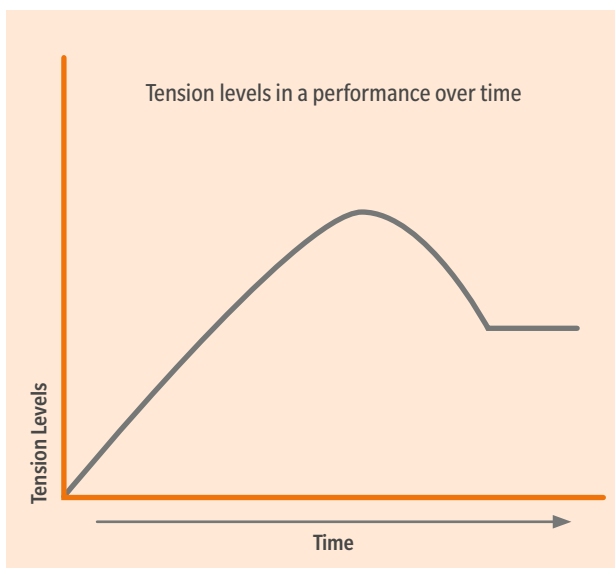


Figure 12 (above) shows the ideal amount of tension over time for an entertaining performance.

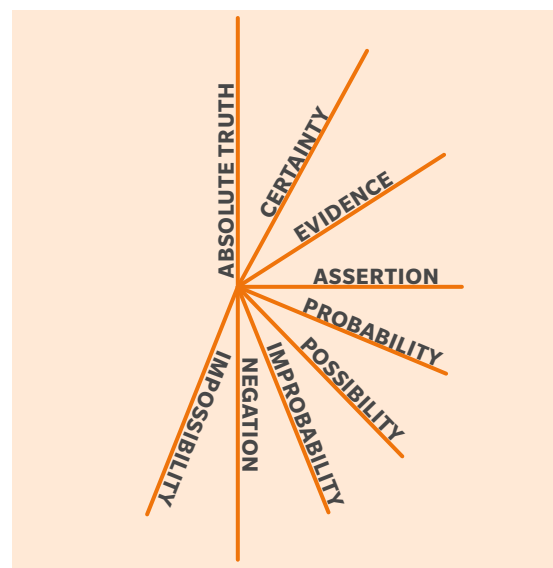


Figure 13 (above) shows the relationship between height of gesture and the intensity of emotion generated “The more positive you are of the truth of your assertion, the higher the arm is carried” (Adams 1891).

Structure in this system

In each performance an actor can move around the space and work with the space in order to create meanings for an audience. In order to ‘work’ with the space, an actor must be aware of the different effects their movements have and the impact it will have on the set, props, audience members or fellow actors. Figure 13 depicts how height can create different intensities of emotion. The highest line is described as ‘absolute’ meaning that one can go no higher in their emotion. Figure 12 shows a theoretical visual graph of tension, including the rising action, climax and resolution. The tension graph below shows the control of any type of dramatic tension over time and allows an actor to know what degrees of movement are needed to willingly carry an audience to a climax that has built from the growing levels of tension beforehand. An actor must be able to slowly add more tension until a final climax but must not lose all tension once that climax has been reached. This is an important aspect

of acting that makes a performance memorable. By applying Delsarte's method of Absolute Gesture to the graph of tension, we could assume that the most effective way to use an Absolute Gesture would be at a climatic point in performance where tension is at its highest. If it were to be used at a lower level, an actor would find it difficult to increase the tension for a climax that goes above absolute gesture. This would commonly be seen as overacting. The use of these intensities of movement sparingly are what help the play to progress and successfully hold audience interest. Structure allows an actor to knowingly emphasise certain moments to create deliberate levels of tension during a performance.

Depth in this system

Lee Strasberg, an American theatre practitioner, quotes "I don't teach you to act; I teach you to live." Without depth in a character, an actor will struggle to 'live' as that character. This paper defines depth as an actor's creation of links and ideas that all interconnect to gain insight into a character that is realistic and believable. Structural movement choices intend to support a plot instead of a character. Gestures are used quite frequently to point, direct or emphasise a moment in a play, but it does very little to express how a character instinctively feels in that situation. "There is a fierce debate between reason and feeling. Distinguish between the two... Let them speak to each other" (Toporkov 2001). Depth in a character not only adds to the humane aspect of the character or understanding of the character but helps the audience to realise how the character fits in with the plot. Francois Delsarte (1811-1871) initiated movement that was based on human interaction. He realised that movement is essentially "... founded on the great principle of the law of correspondence; that is, every expression of the face, every gesture, every posture of the body corresponds to, or is but the outward expression of, an inner emotion or condition of the mind..." (Warman 1892). This finding is a key aspect of performance that an actor must show in order to be seen as a humane character. Thus, the Bilateral Approach reminds an actor that a human being would naturally express their inner emotions. By applying this approach an actor can ensure they are acting out both the story and the character to an audience.

Feedback and Observations

The idea of a Character Development System was tested with a series of workshops involving year 9 gifted and talented drama students in 2017. Actors were given an improvisation using a one-word stereotypical character (such as doctor or chef) and their performance before and after the workshop, applying the theory and practical exercises to the performance, were recorded. After the workshop, I found that actors were more confident in exploring their character's movement through the improvisation. Some were able to create moments where their own creative interpretations of the character shine through. One actor was given the character of 'teacher' and had to persuade another person in the improvisation to return

something that belonged them. During the first video the actor jumped straight to demands and threats and continued to threaten for two minutes. By the second video, the actor focused on structure and started off by politely asking person A to return an object. The actor in the role of the teacher, becoming worried he/she might not get it back, tried joking, bribing and offering to pay. When this tactic did not work, the teacher took out an enormous ruler and started threatening person A. This was a brilliant use of Dimensions and Absolute Gesture. After the workshop, I asked the actors to write what they thought about this system. Ebony Tero and Ella Gibson, commented that “(the workshop) allowed me to see my past acting in a new light and realize that I had been over acting quite a bit” (Ebony Tero) And that, “thinking about a scene in terms of stages helped for it to flow more and allowed me to avoid making jerky movements” (Ella Gibson.)

The final observation was that, “(their) reactions in the improvisation were organic... (and they) could consider the natural arc of how a scene went.” (Ella Gibson)

After the workshops the actors learned that adding depth was deemed as more difficult. It may require more focus training for an actor to act a subconscious gesture consciously. Many students also relied on Stanislavsky’s Objectives in order to understand Motives.

Conclusion

This Character Development System for Actors has been developed to support young actors gain increasing control over multiple aspects of their character by using specific parts of their body in any given moment. This structuring allows an actor to control the amount of tension during a performance and add depth to create a dynamic, interesting character for an audience. By utilising both the practical and theoretical aspects of this paper, an actor can efficiently construct an intricate character and complex performance that an audience can believe and understand. With future research, this system may be able to better suit the rehearsal process as well as how this system can help actors in presentational theatre or a film setting. This research could also be taken into group performance to research how the variety and repetition influences levels of tension in a performance.

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