Capital, Cooperation and Creating Performance: BloodWater Theatre Develops Ownership in Collaborative Theatre Practice

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Joanna Josephine Ronan, declare that this thesis is composed by me and that all the work herein is my own, unless explicitly attributed to others. I understand the school's definition of plagiarism and declare that all sources drawn on have been fully acknowledged. This work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

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Abstract

This thesis is developed from an experiment undertaken between 2011 and 2014. It interrogates Marx's theory of capital, with a particular focus on cooperation. The purpose of the experiment was to develop a model for non-hierarchical collaborative theatre premised on collective ownership. My personal experience of collaborations and the literature in this field pointed to an erosion of the political roots of the theatre collectives formed in the 1950s and 1960s. Since then collaboration has come to reflect capitalist modes of production, characterised by hierarchy and utility, distancing it from its earlier intentions to promote equality in the making of theatre. By interrogating Marx's theory of capital through practice, I suggest possibilities for reclaiming shared ownership in collaborative theatre-making. While the argument for ownership originates from capital and cooperation, it is developed through a theoretical and practical engagement with Engels' three laws of the dialectic. I identify capital and cooperation to be the primary dialectic of capitalist economy and transpose this to the product/process dialectic in theatre-making. By applying the laws of the dialectic to the process/product dialectic, I discover a theoretical route to developing ownership in collaborative theatre. I test and refine this in practice with BloodWater Theatre, a collective of artists I formed for the purpose. I name my theory and our practice Dialectical Collaborative Theatre.

The findings of this research materialise from BloodWater Theatre's practice of Dialectical Collaborative Theatre over the three years when we created *Whose Story Is It Anyway?* and *Leave Your Shoes at the* Door, performed at the Tron Theatre and the Centre for Contemporary Arts in Glasgow, respectively. Through observations, video diary reflections, focus group/audience feedback and dialectical analysis, I suggest how we came to own the processes and products of our labour. It is not my intention to replace capitalist modes of theatre production. These have their place. Dialectical Collaborative Theatre works within the capitalist cultural economy but it challenges its systems of production and proposes an alternative way of making theatre, working with and against normative cultural production. I hope this practice as research thesis opens up conversations and new practice which interrupt prevalent hegemonic utility-led collaborative theatre practice.

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Preface

> I'm exasperated by 'left-thinking' productions that are produced in conditions of total imbrication with the system

<div align="right">Mnouchkine in Williams 1999: 19</div>

Ariane Mnouchkine, founding member of Théâtre du Soleil (TdS), expressed her frustration about pseudo left wing productions when she was interviewed in 1970 by Emile Copfermann, a French theatre publisher. My work as associate director with The Necessary Stage (TNS) (Singapore) 1987-1995 and 7: 84 (Scotland) 2004-2008 led me to question the meaning of "left thinking productions" and reflect on my complicity with capitalism. As a 'left thinking' theatre maker committed to equality, my experiences/observations to date has been that principles of equality are frequently evident in the content of a political theatre performance but seldom evident in the process of its production. Like other theatre-makers guilty of Mnouchkine's accusation, I had accepted the conditions of capitalism for the processes used to create political theatre. In accepting these conditions, political theatre was inadvertently defined in terms of content and not process. Is it possible to make theatre within capitalism but develop a system of theatre production that challenges capitalist modes of production? My reflections on how I worked within the structures of TNS and 7: 84 (Scotland) and the comparison of this with the operations of TdS, form the ontological basis of this research.

Following the interview with Copfermann, Mnouchkine, interviewed in 1971 by Irving Wardle, theatre critic for The Times, qualified that the "imbrication with the system" resulted in "leftist plays produced in total collaboration with the commercial system" (Mnouchkine in Williams 1999: 26). Kiernander (2008, 70-135) documents TdS's financial upheavals, the struggle for survival and the periods of unemployment. While it is true that the company never accepted commercial sponsorship, individual/institutional patronage and interventions from Mnouchkine's family and friends ensured the survival of the company when state funding ceased or was curtailed. Miller (2007) (32 - 33)) refers to the patronage which TdS was privileged to have and describes its work in two phases, the first from its inception in 1964 to 1980 as overtly politicised, with the "expressed goal of turning theatre-making into a communal paradise", and the second from the 1980s onwards when the work became more allegorical, a growing distance developed between the audience and the actor and Mnouchkine was less preoccupied with "stirring up her public". While resistant to

commercial sponsorship throughout, it's clear that what constitutes political theatre for TdS has changed over time.

Both TNS and 7: 84, committed to the transformative power of theatre and the production of "left-thinking plays", have also gone through phases in defining the political nature of their work and their relationship to the state, or the commercial system, but without TdS-like patronage. I was a part of a group of graduates from the National University of Singapore who founded TNS in 1987 with the aim of decolonising theatre in Singapore and developing indigenous voices in performance. Of this group, only the artistic director, Alvin Tan remains. I directed the final two productions for 7:84 Scotland , *The Algebra of Freedom* by Raman Mundair (2007) and *Eclipse* by Haresh Sharma (2008) before the company closed down in December 2008 because its funding from the state had ceased. When 7:84 was formed in 1971 it operated on the basis of a "collective/democratic" structure but by the late seventies it had moved towards a "more bureaucratic structure of administration" because of the "pressures of funding stipulations" (DiCenzo 1996: 83). When TNS was formed in 1987 there were no full time members. By 1990, Sharma was appointed as its first full time employee and shortly after this, the structure evolved with Tan as artistic director and Sharma as resident playwright. The appointment of other full time employees followed. Today the company has ten employees who have either artistic or administrative roles (TNS 2013). The survival of TNS can be attributed to its "collaboration with the commercial system". The company acknowledges this collaboration, "The Necessary Stage relies heavily on corporate sponsorship for our survival. Without corporate sponsorship, we would not be able to create new work, nor fulfill many of our programmes" (TNS 2013). On the other hand it was probably the "precariousness of trying to operate as a political theatre company while depending on government subsidy to survive" which led to the demise of 7: 84 Scotland in 2008 (DiCenzo 1996: 83).

By the end of the twentieth century it was clear that Marx's and Engel's 1848 prediction that capitalism would become global had materialised (Sachs 1999: 90). TdS (1964 - present), 7: 84 Scotland (1971 - 2008) and TNS (1987 - present) were all formed during the latter half of the twentieth century, necessitating an engagement with global capitalism in defining their politics, what and how they produced. TdS continues to resist commercial sponsorship but

receives substantial state funding to tour its productions internationally. TNS and 7: 84 develop/developed different strategies for funding but both subscribe/subscribed to specialist roles and hierarchies in keeping with capitalist modes of production, enabling cost effective production. TNS complements its state funding with corporate funding and has developed an international touring and partnership dimension to its work. 7: 84, with its resistance to commercial sponsorship and its focus on Scottish regional touring, was no longer viable within a capitalist system.

TdS, TNS and 7: 84 have inspired this research. They have given me good practice to build on and been instrumental in developing my thinking on the ownership of processes and products of theatre. They all have collaborative approaches to theatre-making, with TdS going one step further with its policy of equal pay for members of its collective. Mnouchkine and Tan take artistic responsibility for their respective companies' productions and determine overall artistic vision. They both have been the leaders of their companies since their inception. 7: 84 have had a number of directors but similar to TdS and TNS, artistic vision lay with the director at the time. As non-profit companies with charitable status, in receipt of state funding, both TNS and 7: 84 have/had to be accountable to a board of directors. TdS functions as a cooperative with each member having an equal stake in the collective. On the face of it, it appears that TNS and 7:84 are/were tied into a capitalist system of production with hierarchical and specialists roles. TNS accepts corporate sponsorship as a condition of survival while TdS resists this through its collective approaches, state funding and patronage. Mnouchkine's frustration with left wing companies producing work in accordance with capitalism implies that she sets TdS apart from this practice. However in doing so, she does not address the issue of collective ownership of artistic vision and her complicity with hierarchy and role allocation in her capacity as director. My complicity with perpetuating hierarchical collaborative practices while I worked with TNS and 7:84 Scotland, prompted me to design an experiment which tested principles of equality in theatre-making processes, by developing a model of collaboration premised on the collective ownership of artistic vision, thereby challenging capitalist modes of production and perhaps paving the way for renewed definitions of political theatre.

Abbreviations (in order of first appearance)

TdS - Théâtre du Soleil

TNS – The Necessary Stage

BWT – BloodWater Theatre

UWS – The University of the West of Scotland

PaR – Practice as Research

DCT – Dialectical Collaborative Theatre

GW – Gavin Wright

PC – Paul Chaal

AN – Anna Nierobisz

SM – Suzanne Morrison

MS – Martin Smith

Jamie Walker – JW

David Sneddon – DS

RCSSD – The Royal Central School of Speech & Drama

WSA – Whose Story Is It Anyway?

LYSD – Leave Your Shoes at the Door

CCA – Centre for Contemporary Arts

BE – Berliner Ensemble

NT – National Theatre

RSC – Royal Shakespeare Company

PAP – People's Action Party

MAT – Moscow Art Theatre

TO – Theatre of the Oppressed

TBC - Teatro Brasileiro de Commedia

ACGB - Arts Council of Great Britain

SAC – Scottish Arts Council

RSAMD – Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama

Glasgow Unity Theatre – GUT

The People Show – TPS

People's Action Party – PAP

The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil - (CSBBO)

Scottish Trades Union Congress – STUC

National Theatre of Scotland – NTS

Scottish National Party – SNP

The Algebra of Freedom - (AF)

Global City for the Arts - (GCA)

The Third Stage - TTS

National University of Singapore – NUS

Those Who Can't Teach - (TWCT)
This Chord and Others – (TCAO)
NACL - North American Cultural Laboratory

TEAM - Theatre of the Emerging American Moment

SoG – Song of the Goat

SCV - Sarawak Cultural Village

ISAs – Ideological State Apparatuses

SCUDD - Standing Conference of University Drama Departments

KB – Kirsty Bagan

AHRC – Arts and Humanities Research Council

Barkley Rosser Jr - Rosser Jr

Introduction

This thesis is the product of an experiment undertaken from 2011-2014 where a collective, BloodWater Theatre (BWT), was formed to test if it were possible to put ownership at the centre of collaborative theatre practice, and to assess the effects this would have on ways of making theatre. It is grounded in Marx's (1990)/ [1867] theory of capital with a particular focus on the concept of cooperation and its relationship to Engels' (1940) formulation of the dialectic. It challenges the assumption of the inevitability of hierarchical roles within collaborative theatre-making approaches in a predominantly capitalist economy, by interrogating principles of equality when creating performance. Definitions of equality are developed by deconstructing leadership and specialist roles undertaken during rehearsal and performance. While the fees for my doctoral research were paid by my employer, the University of the West of Scotland (UWS), the experiment began with no funds for the work of BWT. The absence of monetary capital, my work with TNS and 7:84 Scotland, and a review of ensemble and devised practices, paved the way for a revised thinking on what constitutes ownership of processes and products of theatre. This led to the naming of artistic vision as the most significant currency of capital and the key determiner of ownership in the context of the work developed by BWT.

The Experiment

The working practices of BWT are the means by which the central question of the experiment is addressed and it is proposed that the findings of the experiment can open up new possibilities for artists working collaboratively. It is difficult for the thesis to be separated from the practice yet the thesis is more than the practice and vice-versa. While the research was premised on me taking on an equal role to the other artists who formed BWT, my role as researcher required me to take on additional research related responsibilities. I led on the formation of BWT by inviting artists to test principles of ownership in theatre-making. I developed a theoretical basis for the research to help us overcome challenges of equality and ownership within our processes. I documented and assessed the findings arising from our practice. I sit both inside and outside the practice. It is impossible for me to be fully aware of all the discoveries made by other BWT members and the impact these had on them as artists because of the particular lens of ownership through which I observed the practice,

further problematized by my equal involvement in the practice. As such, these discoveries, unknown to me, do not make their way into the thesis but this does not invalidate the knowledge gained from them for the others in BWT. Also, the embodied knowledge gained from practice may have materialised in each of our consciousness at different times making full analysis of practice at the time of writing the thesis impossible. Thus while the practice and thesis is inextricably linked, it is also possible to view them as two entities in their own right, with one being greater than the other, at different points in time.

The issue of knowledge for its own sake is an important one as the experiment was conducted with no remuneration for the artists. As such the value to the participants of the experiment was defined in terms of knowledge gained from practice, interest in the ideas of the experiment and support for me as a fellow artist, whereas my participation from the start was tied into the production of the thesis and the possibility of a doctoral award. The ethics of this was considered from the outset. As soon as BWT was formed, I raised the issue of the ownership of the thesis and discussions led to distinctions being made between the thesis and the performance. While the practice is embedded in the thesis, the artists involved in the experiment saw no reason why they could not collectively own the processes and products of BWT without laying claim to the ownership of the thesis, which they felt belonged to me. The thesis is my teleological argument for equality in theatre production but the argument would not have been possible without BWT. BWT members practice equality through their ownership of creative processes and not the production of the thesis. The dialectical relationship between the thesis and the practice identified at the early stages of the research signalled the possibilities of using dialectics to advance theoretical understanding of ownership in theatre-making and innovate on rehearsal methodology in developing the production model.

In designing and conducting the experiment, four non-linear interrelated processes were employed

- The examination of the field (lavender)
- The intellectual engagement with concept (lilac)
- The formation and development of a collective (violet)

- The praxis (purple)

Colours instead of numbers or alphabets are used to name the processes to avoid chronological interpretations of the processes of the experiment. The choice of colour is based on personal preference. However, the use of shades of a single colour reflects the interdependency of the four processes with purple, the boldest colour, representing praxis – a synthesis of the lilac and violet processes. The research design was premised on Engels' three laws of the dialectic and influenced by Kemmis and McTaggart's "spiral of action research" (1988: 53), Smith and Dean's (2011) practice-led research/research-led practice model and Kershaw's (2011a/b) framing of practice as research in terms of paradoxes (107-122); (65-67). The design of the experiment and the research methodology were guided by Engels' theorisation of the dialectic in terms of quality/quantity, contradiction and negation, alongside Kemmis and McTaggart's continuous cycle of planning, acting, observing and reflecting, coupled with the iterative model of Smith and Dean and Kershaw's minimum constituents of practice as research (PaR). The distinction between the experiment and the research methodology is an important one because the experiment was inclusive of all of the four processes. The research methodology, while informed by the field, was based on the primary concept identified as the capital/cooperation dialectic and its relationship to the collective in developing BWT's praxis for the duration of the experiment.

Nelson (2013) argues for the inclusion of a research context in doctoral theses, identifying the traditional route to this as establishing "what is already known and what opportunity new research might have to make an additional contribution" and the practice as research route as locating "the intellectual and practical context" arising from philosophical debate or similar practice to which the research has been undertaken (99). He defines praxis as "an iterative dialogic engagement of doing-thinking" (19). In establishing the research context, I adopted both the traditional and practice as research approaches as I argue for how the work of BWT can make an "additional contribution" to performance research but I also discuss how BWT's practice can be used to further ideological debates on theatre production. As such the distinction between the experiment and the research methodology is necessary to reflect my use of both the traditional research context and the practice as research one. My definition of praxis is consistent with Nelson's as I intellectually engage with the concept of the capital/cooperation dialectic using this knowledge to unearth the product/process dialectic

which BWT experiments with practically to develop collective ownership of collaborative theatre.

The experiment began with an understanding of the field and this field grew and informed the work of BWT throughout. The symbiotic relationship between the concept of the capital/cooperation dialectic and the practice of BWT resulted in original theatre praxis which I have named, Dialectical Collaborative Theatre (DCT). Cycles and iteration are integral to DCT. While non-linear, interrelated and concurrent would be the most appropriate way to describe the timeline for the four processes of the experiment, there were occasions when it was necessary for one process to precede the other so that the experiment could progress. As the protagonist of the research, l initiated the inquiry, defining ownership as central to it, developed the research context, led on the research methodology and analysed the findings of the experiment. However, as an equal member of BWT I ensured that research intentions were negotiated ethically in relation to the rehearsal methodology developed collectively by BWT artists. The use of the forward 'slash' originating from the Latin word "cum" to mean "combined with", "also used as" and "along with being" is necessary in determining ethical ownership within the BWT collective (Penn, online). In developing the praxis, I initiated the "imbrication of theory" in our practice because of my ongoing intellectual engagement with capital, cooperation and the dialectic, but the practical interrogation of collaborative processes would not have been possible without the collective (Nelson 2013: 48-70). Thus the use of the "/" in I/we, my/our and I/BWT is carefully considered throughout the thesis to reflect as accurately as possible the complex processes of BWT in determining ethical ownership, crucial to our constructions of equality within our collective.

The four non-linear processes of the experiment were necessary to assess the possibilities of non-hierarchical theatre production and collective ownership of artistic vision in present day capitalist economy.

The lavender process of the examination of the field was undertaken to determine the importance of ownership in theatre-making to date. A study of how collaboration is practiced by political companies, in addition to TNS and 7: 84, was required to determine if definitions

for political performance where political content was privileged over political processes, was evidenced in the larger field. The engagement with the field was useful in advancing the argument for equality within collaborative practice and establishing the timely need for the experiment.

The lilac process of engaging intellectually with concept was vital in framing the experiment as theatre pedagogy, fundamental for ethical, practical collaboration. Through engaging with this process I was able to propose to BWT a radicalisation of cooperation through a dialectical approach to specialist and generic labour processes. I problematized collaboration using Marx's theories of capital and cooperation, identifying capital and cooperation as the primary dialectic that needed to be interrogated through the product/process dialectic of BWT's practice. I used Marx's definitions of commodity and labour power to explore the value of labour in the creation and ownership of *WSA* and *LYSD*. This lilac process was also useful in assessing whether the product/process dialectic was successfully used in developing ownership in collaborative theatre practice for the duration of the experiment.

The violet process of forming and developing the collective was necessary because it enabled BWT to become the vehicle by which ownership could be tested and in doing so, not only were my research questions addressed, but individual/collective artistic competencies developed and multiplied. While other members of BWT may not have had the same investment as me in theoretical study, they were committed to developing a non-hierarchical model of collaboration by challenging their own artistic practice throughout the experiment.

The purple process of praxis was integral because, irrespective of whether the other BWT artists had an intellectual engagement with concept, they all had an emotional investment in non-hierarchical collaboration, and as such our intellectual/emotional selves were constantly in dialogue with why and how we made our performance. Praxis was the cerebral/transcendental/embodied space where we practically explored ideas and ways of working which would allow us to have a collective stake in the performances we created collaboratively. As the researcher, I was able to create this space because of my intellectual engagement with the concept of the dialectical nature of capital and cooperation. As an artist

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I was able to practically explore this space together with fellow BWT artists. DCT is synonymous with the purple process, bringing together practice and research.

The four processes of the experiment form the basis of this practice as research thesis from which DCT materialised. By making the dialectic central to doing and thinking, DCT became the praxis of BWT, synonymous with how we made and performed our work. The degree of success of the experiment was assessed through the lens of the capital/cooperation dialectic, synonymous with the research methodology employed for this inquiry.

BloodWater Theatre (BWT)

BWT was formed in February 2011 "to find new definitions of ownership for collaborative theatre practice" and serve as the vehicle for this inquiry (BWT 2017).[1] Apart from me, the group comprises of Gavin Wright (GW), Paul Chaal (PC), Anna Nierobisz (AN), Suzanne Morrison (SM), Martin Smith (MS) Jamie Walker (JW) and David Sneddon (February 2011–April 2012)[2]. BWT includes four of my former acting/performance students, an actor I had directed in the past, a stage manager/designer I had worked with previously and a UWS colleague. Apart from GW and PC who make a living from being jobbing actors, the rest of us are in part time/fulltime work, related/unrelated to arts employment, in addition to being involved with artistic projects out with this employment. GW and PC had also worked with me in 2009 on a research project on actor training pedagogy as part of the Masters programme I had undertaken at the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama (RCSSD). BWT members were not remunerated and participated in rehearsals voluntarily, meeting from February 2011 – January 2014, as regularly as our paid employment schedules allowed.

The company developed a work-in-progress, *Whose Story Is It Anyway* (*WSA*) about five fictional artists from different parts of the world who come together for five days to test the possibilities of aesthetic ownership of theatre processes (Appendix 1). BWT staged two performances of *WSA* to an invited audience at the Tron Theatre in Glasgow on the 15th of

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[1] Information about BWT's principles of practice is available on http://www.bloodwatertheatre.co.uk/PoP
[2] Biographies of BWT are included in Appendix 1 and 2

October 2011 (The video of the performance is appended and the full script can be found on http://www.bloodwatertheatre.co.uk/SampleScript). Following this I tried to secure funding for the second stage of the work but was unsuccessful. However, the collective continued to develop the work without remuneration resulting in two ticketed performances of *Leave Your Shoes at the Door* (*LYSD*) about the same fictional artists who return to Glasgow fifteen months later to produce a play in five days without a director (Appendix 2). *LYSD* was staged at the Centre for Contemporary Arts (CCA) in Glasgow on the 31st of January 2014 with the audience having the choice of paying £0, £2, £5, £8 or £10 for their ticket. (The video of the performance is appended and the full script can be found on http://www.bloodwatertheatre.co.uk/lysatdscript)

When inviting participants for the experiment, from which the BWT collective was born, I described the key themes of the experiment, outlining that the first stage would be unfunded and that I would seek funds for the second stage. Their decision to participate was based on their willingness to explore collective ownership of processes and products of theatre, aware that I was using Marxist concepts to develop the research framework, and that I had not as yet secured any funds for the experiment. As my original intention was to secure funding for the production of the follow-on work, I invited a cross-section of the *WSA* audience to join a focus group formed to give BWT feedback on *WSA* and offer suggestions for our future work, possibly making the project more appealing to potential funders. However, once the focus group was formed, its function evolved as members of the group volunteered feedback on possibilities for collective ownership and non-hierarchical production in addition to making comments about the quality of the work. Thirteen people who had attended either the 2.30pm or 8.00pm performance of *WSA* were invited to become part of a focus group. They were asked because of their different professions and varying ages. Eleven accepted - an arts manager, a train conductor, a community artist, a GP, a visual artist, a retired classical musician, an academic, an actor, a singing/acting coach, a documentary maker and a scriptwriter/actor/director. Their ages ranged from twenty-five to seventy. All of them attended a focus group meeting on the 8th of May 2012 or the 12th of May 2012. I invited a colleague to act as moderator to ensure that I did not influence the outcomes of the discussions. As some time had passed between the focus group seeing *WSA* and this meeting, an edited video of it was shown to the group before the discussion. Five members of this group and the moderator met again on the 23rd of November 2013 to see and offer feedback

on the follow-on work, *LYSD* so that revisions could be discussed and implemented before the two public performances which took place on the 31st of January 2014. Focus group members attended the public performance of *LYSD* and a final discussion took place on the 15th of February 2014 with members not able to attend, offering written feedback. Representatives from BWT were present at all the focus group sessions. Consent has been obtained from BWT artists and focus group members for the use of their reflections/feedback in the thesis with no requirement for anonymity.

Politicised Collaboration

Paige McGinley (2010) analyses the practices of contemporary New York based ensembles and asserts that "today's companies are more likely to embrace models of collective collaboration out of utility, rather than out of an explicitly stated political commitment or a determined rejection of authoritarian models" (13). The experiment was designed to test the possibilities of collaboration in facilitating the ownership of the processes and products of BWT's labour rather than to ensure efficiencies in production or attract funds, thereby deviating from present day "utility" goals and seeking to reassess the "political commitment" demonstrated by left wing theatre companies of the sixties and seventies. According to Wainscott and Fletcher (2012: 22) in *Theatre Collaborative Acts* "every theatrical performance is a collaboration, furnishing a place for past, present and future to merge". In chapter six of the same publication artistic leadership is discussed in the context of collaboration with writers, designers, actors, stage managers etc. The authors identify collaboration as a rich site for cultural intersections and analyse the different roles and hierarchical functions necessary for the creation of performance. In defining all performance as collaborative practice, collaboration is defined in denotative terms i.e. working together as opposed to working in isolation with the political connotations of hierarchy removed.

The definitions for collaboration offered by Oxford Dictionary and Merriam-Webster Dictionary are explicit in their political dimension, "traitorous cooperation with an enemy" (Oxford) and "to cooperate with or willingly assist an enemy of one's country and especially an occupying force" (Merriam-Webster). Nazi collaborators are known to have committed the worst crimes against humanity and "traitorous cooperation", motivated either by gain or

necessity, formed the basis of such relationships between non-citizens of Nazi Germany and perpetrators of this regime. The above definitions of collaboration may seem irrelevant to theatre-making but the etymology of collaboration and the lexicon of collaborative practice should be considered by all theatre-makers so that unintended outcomes of advantage, marginalisation, betrayal and dehumanisation can be averted and the ethics of working together can be addressed in developing models for collaborative theatre practice.

Both dictionaries offer additional definitions. Oxford's other definition of collaboration - "the action of working with someone to produce something" is devoid of any political connotations but Merriam-Webster's, "to work jointly with others or together especially in an intellectual endeavour", allows for political connotation as equality is implied by "jointly" and "together". Oxford's definition supports the apolitical stance of Wainscott and Fletcher's who claim every performance is collaborative; Merriam-Webster's definition suggests the indivisibility of politics and collaboration. While acknowledging the myriad of collaborative theatre models, this thesis argues for politicised collaboration and the possibility of non-hierarchical theatre production in utility driven capitalist economy in order to challenge hegemonic cultural production. Wilkinson and Pickett (2010) refer to the struggle for liberty, equality and fraternity, as demonstrated by the French Revolution (45) and the American Declaration of Independence, where the right of equality and liberty to co-exist (263), are acknowledged as examples of the historical demand for equality. Michael Gove, the Conservative Education Secretary (2007-2014) for the UK coalition government states,

> We live in a profoundly unequal society. More than almost any developed nation ours is a country in which your parentage dictates your progress…For those of us who believe in social justice this stratification and segregation are morally indefensible

> Gove in Craig 2012: 62

The examples from history and the modern day example from Gove, not of the left, affirm equality as a virtue, to be striven for, across the political spectrum. Wilkinson and Pickett attribute the fracturing of society to inequality and suggest that "the best way of responding to the harm done by high levels of inequality would be to reduce inequality itself" (33). The 2014 independence referendum in Scotland was fought by Yes campaigners primarily on the tenet of a more equal society in an increasingly unequal Scotland. While the

campaign lost with 55.3% for No and 44.7 for Yes with an unprecedented voter turnout of 84.6% (The Guardian 2014), the result demonstrates an appetite for a more equal society amongst many Scottish voters. Hierarchical divisions of labour in theatre production where directors take responsibility for the overall artistic vision of a performance and actors, designers and crew work within this vision, can limit the collective ownership of the production process. BWT artists, mostly based in Scotland, experiment with ways to reduce levels of inequality within the production process by redefining our functions as artists within the production process. Theatre production steeped in hierarchy can potentially breed cultural dispossession and to address this, BWT explored ways of working to facilitate collective ownership of the processes and products of our labour power. A politicised definition of collaboration premised on equality became integral to this.

Capital and Cooperation

I shared with BWT my interpretations of *Capital Volume 1*(1990) as I read it, and our processes were developed using Marx's theories as a starting point in order to find alternatives to conventional theatre-making, usually tied in with capitalist modes of production.

> ...the economic structure of society is the real foundation on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness…the mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life

Marx 1990: 175

Marx attributed the functioning of every aspect of society to the "mode of production" i.e. the labour process. David Harvey (2010) in lecture 2, of his online series of video lectures on *Capital Volume 1*, offers his position on the reductive argument,

> It's an inspired idea but like most reductionist arguments ultimately it fails but by taking that reductionist position you start to see all kinds of things you would not otherwise see and without that reductionist impulse, Marx would have never understood all manner of things.

Harvey goes on to add that reductionist premises led to discoveries in the fields of the biological sciences and microphysics. For BWT an engagement with utopian ideals necessitated a "reductionist impulse". We were able to discover new ways of making theatre

by my initial subscription to the "reductionist position" of attributing inequality in the rehearsal room to "the economic structure of society". My application of this thinking allowed us to subvert hierarchical production relations premised on director and writer at the helm, enabling us to have a larger stake in the performance we made collaboratively.

Capital Volume 1 (1990) is a series of dialectical tensions that set themselves up against each other with a view to exploring human beings' relationship to the economy. The labour power of humans is characterised as the foundation of capitalist economy. As the experiment could only begin and progress with the labour power of BWT members, it was useful to develop an understanding of Marx's labour theory of value and its relationship to commodity in developing ethical labour relations within BWT.

> The commodity first of all is an external object, a thing which through its qualities satisfies human needs of whatever kind. The nature of these needs, whether they arise, for example, from the stomach, or the imagination, makes no difference. Nor does it matter here how the thing satisfies man's need, whether directly as a means of subsistence, i.e. an object of consumption, or indirectly as a means of production

> Marx 1990: 125

Marx makes no distinction between needs that are manifested physically or cerebrally. BWT wanted to engage with both the direct and indirect faces of commodity, in the making and sharing of performance, developed within the economy here in Scotland, where we live. I suggested and BWT agreed that our first production, *WSA* need not necessarily enter into the cultural market as a commodity but that this performance could be used to test the potential of developing it into something that an audience would pay to see in the future. At the outset of the formation of BWT, I let the artists know that there would be no remuneration for their labour in developing the initial performance but I would seek funds for the production of the follow-on work. I was not able to secure funding for the follow-on work and suggested that we end the experiment as I did not think it would be fair for the artists to continue to give up their time to make the performance in the absence of remuneration. However, most of the artists wanted to continue with their involvement in BWT and find ways of producing the follow-on work without getting paid for it. Discussions took place on whether the quality of the subsequent performance produced in our leisure time (as we all had to continue with our remunerated employment out with BWT for our subsistence) would be worthy enough to be

staged as a ticketed performance at a professional venue. We agreed that we had to follow through with our initial intention of engaging with the two faces of commodity, ensuring that the follow- on work entered the cultural market of Scotland in some way, with audiences paying for their tickets. Our follow-on production, *LYSD* was the "object of consumption" satisfying "directly" the needs of an audience who had chosen to attend the performance and accordingly paid for a ticket. However, the challenge for BWT was whether it was possible for the production i.e. the commodity to satisfy our needs "indirectly as a means of production". Our labour manifested itself during the rehearsals and performances of the productions. We had to reflect on whether capital was a pre-requisite for our production and whether the process of production was sufficient in itself to satisfy our needs in the absence of remuneration.

According to Marx (1990) the value of a commodity is arrived at by the coming together of use value and exchange value. Use value refers to the usefulness of a thing; the physical body of the commodity itself. It forms the basis of the material knowledge required for an understanding of commercial products or commodity; it is realised in consumption and constitutes the material content of wealth (126). Exchange value is a quantitative relation where use values of one kind are exchanged for use values of another kind. It is in constant motion. In seeking the single common denominator in the world of commodities, money emerges as the universal equivalent and determines exchange value. Thus commodity is converted into money and money becomes the purchasing power for more commodities expressed in the formula C-M-C. Capital arises when money becomes the purchasing power for commodities which in turn generates more money i.e. M-C-M. Thus the commodity satisfies a human need and in determining the value of a commodity, use value and exchange value pave the way for money to become the universal equivalent form of exchange and for capital to be defined as the process of accumulating money via the incessant exchange of commodities (126-162).

However, while commodity is first of all "an external object", it is also "indirectly a means of production" (125). This means that labour power can appear on the market as a commodity. Marx discusses the sale and purchase of labour-power and challenges classical economists by

pointing out that their assumption of perfect markets where demand and supply intersected in equilibrium was incorrect and their failure to suffix labour with power resulted in the omission of the value dimension of labour (270-280). He defined labour power as "the aggregate of those mental and physical capabilities existing in the physical form, the living personality, of a human being, capabilities which he sets in motion whenever he produces a use value of any kind" (270). Here Marx embeds use value within labour power. He asserts that labour power must take on the form of commodity if it's to enter the market. "…labour-power can appear on the market as a commodity only if, and in so far as, its possessor, the individual whose labour power it is, offers it for sale or sells it as a commodity" (271). Thus commodity value can be synonymous with labour value if the labourer choses to sell his property, labour power.

Labour has two forms, the concrete form, and the abstract form. Commodity and labour are inextricably linked. Concrete labour is useful labour that produces use value. Abstract labour is the expenditure of human labour power in determining commodity value at the point of exchange (137).

> As use values, commodities differ above all in quality, while as exchange-values they can only differ in quantity, and therefore do not contain an atom of use value. If we then disregard the use value of commodities, only one property remains, that of being products of human labour
>
> Marx 1990: 128

As labour is the only constant, value can only be determined via labour. Marx determines value in terms of socially necessary labour time. He defines socially necessary labour time as "the labour time required to produce any use-value under the conditions of production normal for a given society and with the average degree of skill and intensity of labour prevalent in that society" (129). As mentioned earlier, capital is created when money becomes the purchasing power for commodities, which in turn generates more money (M-C-M) but this is not an end in itself but a continuous movement. The bearer of this movement becomes the capitalist. Capital is both money and commodity (253- 255). Capitalists must not only produce commodities but must ensure that they produce surplus value. The worker as a commodity (means of production) produces not for himself and what is required for his subsistence and replenishment but produces for capital by generating surplus value through his labour power (644). Money can valorise its value but labour power cannot valorise its

value because money can grow but labour is a finite, fixed resource. Capital can transform money into commodity which in turn can create a changed order of money resulting in a surplus value of the original sum, but the labour power of one individual cannot be multiplied to create a new order of surplus value (Marx 2015). The worker owns property i.e. the aggregate sum of his capabilities which he can sell as a commodity in the sphere of circulation but his property can never be capital because it can never be valorised (268).

BWT entered the process of creation with property i.e. our talents which could be converted into commodity via entry into the sphere of circulation but in the absence of money our process began with no economic capital and on the face of it no possibility for profit. However, capital is both money and commodity and by developing commodity without money, we paved the way for the ownership of our product further down the line and in doing so became the collective owners of capital as expressed through our product, *LYSD* which could be sold to an audience. Our labour power appears on the market as a different type of commodity i.e. we cannot sell our labour power while creating *LYSD* because at this point no one with capital is prepared to buy it, but once created, it can enter the sphere of circulation. Our socially necessary labour time manifests itself in concrete labour in the first instance, ensuring that our product's value to us as creators is limited to use value, i.e. gratification from creation itself as we are not remunerated. However, our labour is manifested in its abstract form at the point where the performance is shared with an audience at a theatre, giving it exchange value as the audience pays for our performance which has appeared as a commodity in the cultural market.

BWT had to exploit social capital[3] to meet production costs inclusive of venue hire in the absence of economic capital. Our subsistence was taken care of through the remunerated employment we undertook out with BWT, allowing for the unremunerated labour power of BWT to result in a product which could be sold. Definitions of socially necessary labour time became important in developing dialectical relationships between professional/amateur production; leisure/work time. BWT did not incur any production costs and as a result, a

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[3] An assessment of BWT's use of social capital, examined through Pierre Bourdieu's suggestion that such capital further perpetuated inequality in society, was undertaken at appropriate times during the development of our work and discussed in chapters 2 and 4 of the thesis

small profit arising from the surplus value of our labour power, in the form of revenue from ticket sales, materialised. Rethinking Marx's assumption that all power is rooted in the ownership of economic capital, we refused to deem ourselves powerless in the absence of it and explored ways by which ownership of artistic vision, the nerve centre of the creative process, could empower each of us and become the alternative capital for BWT. We strove to develop aesthetics premised on a collective ownership of artistic vision while developing a performance that could appeal to an audience.

Cooperation is the central form of the capitalist mode of production (Marx1990: 454). It is a form of labour which materialises "when numerous workers work together side by side in accordance with a plan, whether in the same process, or in a different but connected processes" (443). This system of cooperation increases the productivity of labour as it enables the object of labour to pass through the phases of the production process more quickly than before (444). The word "planned" in qualifying cooperation is important because it suggests the absence of spontaneity or impulse in the creation, which in turn strips the worker of his individuality, and develops "the capabilities of his species" instead (447). Someone needs to orchestrate this process to ensure its harmony,

> The work of directing, superintending and adjusting becomes one of the functions of capital, from the moment that the labour under capital's control becomes co-operative

Marx 1990: 449

Marx refers to the need to direct a cooperative as "despotic" because of its dual function of leading the labour process to create a product and at the same time ensuring its function for the valorisation of capital. Along with cooperation comes the division of labour and the need for specialisation.

In manufacturing the division of labour originates in two ways. Firstly, when a capitalist employs workers who share different processes of production as the product makes its way through them for completion; secondly, when a capitalist employs a number of workers who all do the same work. Workers become the organs for manufacture, irrespective of which way it originated (455-457), and "labour power becomes transformed into the life-long organ

of this partial function" (458). Specialisation allows for more to be produced in less time where the productivity of labour is determined on the capitalist's terms - "the direct mutual interdependence of the different pieces of work, and therefore of the workers, compels each one of them to spend on his work no more than the necessary time" (464-465). A hierarchy of labour power develops depending on the degree of skill (or lack) in determining wages (469-470). Divisions in labour exist in society based on a "purely physiological foundation", leading to divisions of labour in manufacture, necessary for the successful valorisation of capital (471-473). The specialised worker does not wholly make or own any product, he "produces no commodity, it's only the common product of all the specialised workers that becomes a commodity" (475).

While the site in question is the theatre and not manufacturing, it's clear from McGinley's prefix of 'utility' to define collaborations of twenty-first century New York based theatre ensembles, that present day collaborative processes of theatre-making are premised on similar principles of cooperation. Specialist hierarchical roles enable efficiencies in production and are accordingly remunerated with artistic directors/chief executives at the helm, planning and directing the production process. There are two main professional theatre production models: commercial theatre (where the valorisation of capital is necessary to ensure profits which allow for investment in future productions bringing about further profit, perpetuating the cycle of valorisation) and state funded theatre (where capital is provided by the government and the making of profit not necessarily required). The growing pervasiveness of neoliberalism necessitates that even state funds are complemented by commercial sponsorships, trusts' donations or patronage to ensure survival. BWT's practice of DCT allowed us to step away from these models, empowering us to work with the primary capital/cooperation dialectic in developing our performances, using the process/product dialectic stemming from this primary dialectic to collectively own *WSA* and *LYSD* and their processes of creation. In doing so, we were able to use specialisation and division of labour to enhance themes of ownership and performance quality rather than use these for efficiencies in production and profit maximisation.

In the course of developing our performance, we took on both specialist and generic roles, rejecting the need for any one individual to undertake "the work of directing, superintending and adjusting", but instead took on these functions collectively. We developed a production model based on the dialectic of individual and collective ownership, allowing for individuality during creation but enabling "the capabilities of his species" at the same time. Through our working processes we challenged Marx's assumption that only money and not labour power can valorise its value by developing the concept of socially necessary labour time. We constantly reviewed the labour time required to produce use value and only produced use value which had meaning for us, divorcing use value from exchange value when we felt it was appropriate to do so. Through these means we discovered ways in which our labour could bourgeon. Challenging Marx's theory, we were able to valorise our labour power and create *LYSD*, a ticketed performance staged in a professional theatre venue.

Theatre, Performance and Community

The use of theatre and performance in the title needs to be qualified. Schechner refers to theatre as being one node in a continuum (Schechner 2003: xvi-xvii), "Performing on stage, performing in special social situations…and performing in everyday life are a continuum" (Schechner 2006: 170). Kershaw compares the definitive possibilities of live theatre that resides in buildings with the infinite possibilities of performance which is "attached to almost every human activity". Performance can "indicate cultural presentations that have recognisable theatrical components...that alert the audience, spectators or participants to the reflexive structure of what is staged" (Kershaw 1999: 15). Schechner limits theatre to being one node in a continuum of performance and Kershaw highlights the infinite possibilities of performance out with buildings as opposed to the definitive possibilities of performance produced in theatre venues.

BWT discussed these distinctions between theatre and performance in the context of our production being a commodity. We had agreed early on that our follow-on work had to enter the cultural market in some way and my personal goal was that this research could in some small way challenge modes of theatre production within a predominantly capitalist system. By making theatre out with theatre buildings, i.e. community centres, schools, street or site

specific performance, the choice of opting out of systems of cultural production, is available. BWT wanted to make work in dialogue with the system by making theatre that resides in buildings but at the same time we did not want our performance to be limited by conventions of traditional venue-based theatre.

Some of us in the collective were invested in the objectives of applied theatre in using "drama to improve the lives of individuals and create better societies" and were keen to bring practices from this field into the conventional theatre space (Nicholson 2005: 3). Others were more reserved about doing this but all of us were committed to develop practice that did not polarise theatre and performance, in keeping with Kershaw's more recent writing on practice as research where he identifies "theatre and performance as operating in a continuum with natural phenomena" and equates cultural processes with ecological ones (Kershaw 2011a: 107). While all in BWT agreed that our way of working was more akin to the intentions of applied theatre as defined by Nicholson, there was concern that by making these intentions clear in our performance it would somehow undermine our status as professional artists. The debates on applied theatre practices making its way into professional theatre, and the aim of applying principles of equality to venue-based cultural production, necessitated an engagement with community theatre practice and therefore the notion of community became important to our practice.

Heddon and Milling chart the history of community theatre from the 50s to the 70s, where the emphasis on "neighbourliness and locality" vacillated with the idea of community as part of the larger class struggle; to the 80s and early 90s, where community theatre companies were explicit in their claim to radical action, resulting in many of them losing arts council funding; to the 21st century, reflecting a mixture of theatre in education and applied theatre companies specialising in theatre-making for and with selected disadvantaged communities, alongside mainstream theatre companies which receive funding for community projects in addition to funding received for their professional portfolio (Heddon and Milling 2006: 130-156). Joseph (2002: viii) develops the idea of community as locality versus community as egalitarian society in *Against the Romance of Community* where she challenges the perception that "community is almost always invoked

as an unequivocal good" arguing that "capitalism and, more generally, modernity depend on and generate the discourse of community to legitimate social hierarchies".

I took cognisance of Heddon and Milling's identification of the different epochs of community theatre, aware that we didn't fit into any of the identified periods. We developed BWT as a community of artists mindful of Joseph's caution that community is not always an "unequivocal good" ensuring that solidarity and survival of the community wasn't at the expense of equality, developing clear distinctions between conceding and collaborating.

Brecht's theatre was driven by his quest for active, critical audience engagement and Boal's theatre was premised on his belief that theatre can be the rehearsal for the revolution where the spectator gains confidence to change real life situations. Both were dealing with communities beyond theatre-makers. The principles of Brecht and Boal inspired us to develop community beyond BWT, prompting us to experiment with ways we could build community with audiences who come into theatre buildings, defying the definitive possibilities of conventional theatre spaces. The blurring of ontological distinctions between theatre and performance enabled us to develop the idea of the site of venue based theatre as a dialectical space, dismantling rather than perpetuating hierarchy, with the possibility of attracting diverse audiences not bound by a singular context and not limited to any one class. This process of developing theatre as a dialectic space was governed by Badiou's premise (2005) that "the general difficulty of theatre" is "its relation to the state" and his suggestion of rethinking theatre as a "salaried profession" (76). The failure to secure funds was a blessing in disguise because BWT did not have to be accountable to funders. This led us to explore ways of making performance without a salary and without support from the state. This allowed us to take risks with breaking down the conventions of venue-based theatre and experiment with the potential of theatre to be a dialectical space - an uncommon site for enabling transformation and change.

The Chapters

While the processes of the experiment defy chronology, the write-up of it requires an order to facilitate an understanding of how the argument for ownership in collaborative practice

develops. Thus the sequence of the chapters follows the sequential stating of the lavender, lilac, violet and purple processes undertaken to develop and conclude the experiment. Chapter one, the lavender process, discusses the research context. Chapter two, the lilac process, lays the ground for the practice as research paradigm. Chapter three, the violet process and chapter four, the purple process, assess the praxis of BWT through the lens of the cooperation/capital dialectic in determining ownership in collaborative theatre practice. These two chapters reflect the indivisibility of the violet and purple processes. The titles, the structure and the content of chapters two, three and four reflect a continuous dialogue between theory and practice, mirroring ongoing iterations of praxis.

The thesis is accompanied by appendices which authenticate the data cited in it and include unedited/edited video footage of rehearsals/performances, reflections documented through diary entries, excerpts from transcripts of focus group discussions, selected material on funding/marketing/publicity/invoices/interviews and other supporting documentation which illustrate discussions undertaken in the thesis. The appendices are numbered and cross referencing is clearly signposted if supporting information is required by the reader. BWT has a dedicated website http://www.bloodwatertheatre.co.uk/ which functions as a one stop site for the public to get a sense of the research, the rehearsals and the performances of BWT.

In Chapter one I set the context of the practical BTW experiment. I analyse the history of political theatre-making from the early twentieth century, focussing particularly on companies which have attempted, with varying degrees of success, to embed collaboration into their practice. I begin by clarifying some of the contested terms used. I then discuss the characteristics and scope of political theatre, with reference to the BWT experiment. This chapter identifies the limits of collaborative practice undertaken to date. It draws on my research into the history of political theatre and my own personal experience of working with 7: 84 in Scotland and TNS in Singapore. The analysis sets the context for the BTW experiment, which is designed to test whether the theoretical and practical barriers to genuine collaboration can be overcome in practice.

Section 1 of this chapter provides a chronological overview of the development of political theatre from Piscator to the 1970s, with particular reference to collaboration as an element in the political identity of companies operating during this period. This section includes an analysis of theatre in Singapore, following the transition from colonialism to self-determination, during the first 'nation-building' phase of the PAP state's cultural policy. Section 2 charts the development of 7:84's practice from the 1970s to 2008 and my role in the later history of the company. Section 3 analyses the development of political theatre in Singapore from the mid- 1980s to the present, outlining the changing tensions between the theatre sector and the PAP state during its second and third phases of cultural policy development. It describes the punishment by the state of radical practices and the compromises adopted by TNS to ensure its survival. The formative influence of forum theatre in my own practice during the early days of TNS is described. Section 4 analyses contemporary examples of different forms of collaborative practice and the place of devising within this.

As a whole the chapter outlines the theoretical, background to the formation of my own politics and practice. My personal experience in TNS and 7:84, my reading of the background field, my analysis of the debates surrounding collaborative and devised political theatre, raised questions for me as to what extent collective ownership, genuine collaboration and democratised leadership are capable of being delivered in practice. The answer to this question could only be provided through a practice as research method, hence the establishment of the BWT experiment.

The title of Chapter two reflects my engagement with dialectics in creating DCT which led to BWT practising DCT and continuously refining it, making DCT synonymous with the praxis of BWT. Alongside the function of dialectics to develop DCT as rehearsal methodology, it also points to its use as an analytical tool to determine the degree of BWT's success in developing ownership in collaborative theatre practice. In this chapter I justify my use of dialectics and Kershaw's five minimum constituents of PaR in developing the research paradigm, referring to related research methodologies like action research and iterative processes where appropriate (2011b). I recap the four processes of the experiment, making clear that while this chapter focuses on the lilac process, it also points ahead to the

violet/purple processes stressing that these three processes form the basis of DCT, because of labour's function, both as commodity and the means of production, in defining the integral human resource dimension of capital. I critique Engels three laws of the dialectic and apply them to the process/product dialect stemming from the primary dialectic of capital and cooperation in developing the research methodology. The naming of other dialectical formulations which arise from the process/product dialectic is undertaken to signal how the argument for DCT will be developed in chapters three and four. The pedagogical premises of DCT are discussed in terms of Badiou's (2005) construction of truth and its relationship to the development of equality and ownership of artistic vision within BWT. I represent DCT via a triangular pyramid having three faces (DCT as Commodity, DCT as a Means of Production and DCT as Pedagogy) which is supported by its base (The Three Laws of the Dialectic). Finally, documenting and data gathering techniques used to arrive at findings discussed in chapters three and four, are identified in this chapter.

Chapters three and four interrogate Marx's theory on capital and its related concept of cooperation in developing ownership in collaborative theatre by my/BWT's applications of dialectical thinking and our practice of DCT. As stated earlier, I identify the relationship between capital and cooperation as a dialectical one with the status of primary dialectic of commodity production from which stem all other dialectic formulations. Accordingly commodity becomes central to constructions of ownership. Marx's theory of capital outlines the case for labour power being both a commodity and a means of production. This dual function of labour power informs the structure and content of chapters three and four. Ideally it would have made sense for these chapters to merge together in a single chapter in keeping with the principles of the dialectic. However, I decided against this as it became confusing maintaining discussions and analysis through the simultaneous dual lens of labour as commodity and means of production. Thus to aid coherence, in chapter three I analyse ownership from the perspective of BWT's labour power as a means of production, where use value and concrete labour are dominant. In chapter four I analyse ownership from the perspective of BWT's labour power as a commodity, where exchange value and abstract labour is dominant. When convergences occur I signal this at the appropriate time in the appropriate chapter. In developing the research paradigm, I apply my understanding of the primary dialectic of capital and cooperation, and the duality of labour power as a commodity and a means of production, to hypothesise on the process/product dialect in the performance-

making context. Accordingly Chapter three focuses on BWT's labour processes and chapter four focuses on BWT's labour as commodity and the products of our labour power.

The length of Chapter three reflects accurately the space which process occupied within the process/product dialect of BWT's work. This is in keeping with the principles of dialectical materialism, where the evolution of the mode of production occurs because of tensions in the material world between what is made and how it is made. It is a lengthy chapter because the exploration of labour processes in determining ownership not only outweighed but was at times in conflict with choices as to what to produce and whether remuneration was a condition for this production. Thus Chapter three is far longer than chapter four because it interrogates the numerous tensions in the production process which in turn informed discussions on the type of product and the commodity aspect of our labour power addressed in chapter four, requiring less explanation as it follows on from Chapter three.

In Chapter three I chronologically chart the processes employed by BWT to develop ownership within collaborative practice.   I adopt an inductive approach where specific observations, strategies and thinking are analysed to assess the effectiveness of DCT in growing the collective stake and the place of dialectic theory within this. The chronological approach guards against bias because processes are analysed in their natural evolution without theoretical assumptions clouding what is seen, experienced and thought. The experiment was intended to last approximately three years because the possibilities for ownership needed to be tested over time, validating the decision to analyse processes sequentially with a view to identifying patterns of ownership. In this chapter through a discussion of patterns of ownership, I argue for BWT's practice of DCT in empowering each artist and the collective while we developed our collaborative theatre practice. An analysis of DCT in the context of BWT's labour processes in the creation of *WSA* and *LYSD* is undertaken, making a case for artistic vision becoming the key determiner of ownership in the rehearsal room. Through the lens of labour as a means of production, the argument for ownership is advanced by analysing secondary dialectic formulations inclusive of idealism/materialism, aesthetics/ethics, amateur/professional, work time/leisure time, public/private, text-based/devised and many others arising from the primary dialectic of capital/cooperation; product/process. Periods of starting off, text development and lulls are

repeated in the discussions within this chapter characterising the cyclical and iterative nature of BWT's processes.

In Chapter four, I use a thematic approach to develop the case for the effectiveness of DCT in enabling BWT artists to own and direct our labour power in the creation of *WSA* and *LYSD*. Through an interrogation of the process/product dialectic of BWT's creative outputs, I justify our collective ownership of the scripts and performances of *WSA* and *LYSD*. I analyse the role of economic and social capital in developing *WSA*, a performance pitch to attract funders, and *LYSD*, and a commodity for audiences to consume. I make a case for the dialectical functioning of economic/social capital in enabling BWT to develop a commodity with the benefits accruing from social capital in spite of the absence/loss of economic capital. The use of BWT's labour power as commodity, the failure to secure funding, constructions of socially necessary labour time and the decision for *LYSD* to enter into the exchange relationships of capitalism form the key themes developed in this chapter. I identify and discuss the resources of social capital expressed through formal bridging networks and informal bonding networks. The ethics of unremunerated labour and the ethics of privileged access to networks are considered in the context of BWT's dialectical relationship with economic and social capital. I analyse the aesthetics of the product/process dialectic in developing commodity through the artistic choices made and the feedback from the focus group/audience on these choices, with a view to assessing BWT's stake in *LYSD*. The argument for ownership is concluded when I establish that BWT's ownership of *LYSD* as a product is only possible because of our investment in and our ownership of the processes used to create it.

To conclude, I summarise the experiment and assess the outcomes of the research in relation to its intentions. I outline the success of the experiment in developing a model of collaborative theatre where the collective ownership of the processes and products of BWT's labour materialised. I also acknowledge the challenges of achieving ownership within collaborative practice. I reflect on the discovery and development of DCT which enabled BWT to put ownership at the centre of our collaborative practice. I sum up BWT's practice of DCT so that other artists might use it and develop it further. To this end, I open up the three faces of triangular pyramid and its base to synthesise the philosophy and practice of

DCT. I highlight the interconnectedness of the three faces, supported by its base in resolving the contradictions of the primary capital/cooperation; process/product dialectic. Finally, I identify the impact of DCT for BWT artists, the academy and the wider context of theatre.

Chapter 1: The Field

This chapter discusses meanings for political theatre from a variety of sources which inform my own definition of political theatre. It analyses left-wing theatre practitioners and companies in the twentieth century before the founding of 7:84 in 1971. It discusses the practice of two theatre companies I worked with, 7:84 (Scotland) and TNS. Practice as research methodology lends itself to the making of performance and thinking about it in the "perpetual present" (Freeman 2003: x). This makes it difficult to write about the field of collaborative theatre practice in a single chapter as the field informed my practice as research thesis throughout. This chapter was written before and during the practice of BWT and was further revised once the practice had been completed. The revisions help with the coherence of the thesis as a whole and allow for the work of BWT to be clearly located in the lineage of left-wing political theatre, articulating more concisely the need for the development of DCT.

Key Terms and Debates

In the introduction to my thesis, in response to McGinley's assertion that artists in the twenty-first century collaborate out of utility rather than to reject authority, I defined politicised collaboration as the practice of equality (McGinley 2010: 13). I used Marx's concept of cooperation to make a case for rejecting divisions of labour so as to enable artists to own the entirety of artistic processes. I defined 'ownership' as the opportunities made available for all artists to influence the artistic vision of the collaborative theatre projects they are involved in, should they choose to do so.

In the early stages of the research, a preliminary scoping exercise was undertaken to gauge how often academics/artists chose to use the terms 'collaboration' and 'ownership' inclusive of its verbal and adjectival forms in their abstracts. This was to verify whether McGinley's (2010) contention that collaboration in the twenty-first century is driven more by utility than ownership of artistic processes (referred to in the introduction), was shared by other academics. Abstracts in twenty leading journals in the broad fields of drama, theatre and

performance[4] were studied in order to determine how writers chose to frame their research. This preliminary study offered a snapshot of how often collaboration was used alongside ownership as opposed to each being used on its own. Ownership appeared eighteen times, collaboration one hundred and forty-two times while there were only five instances of collaboration which appeared alongside ownership within a single abstract. This supports McGinley's view that collaboration in the twenty-first century is primarily utility-driven. A study of left-wing theatre companies in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries was undertaken to examine the tensions between equality and utility in their respective collaborative practices and to identify recurring trends across these companies.

In the introduction I discussed Marx's concept of cooperation (processes of creation) and his theory of capital (performances/products of creation). Marx refers to cooperation as the central form of the capitalist mode of production requiring "the work of directing" to enable a cooperative to achieve its dual function of leading the labour process to create products and at the same time to ensure the valorisation of capital (Marx1990: 449, 454). I analysed Marx's construction of capital in terms of this valorisation process, developed through use and exchange value where capital is both money and commodity. The concept of capital was also developed through the concepts of concrete and abstract labour where labour is both, commodity, and a means of production. The relationship between the practice of cooperation and the exploitation of the labourer in securing profit for the capitalist (the owner of the means of production) was established, as was the prohibition of the labourer from owning the processes and products of her labour.

While artistic collaboration is not identical to cooperation within manufacturing, the terms 'cooperate' and 'collaborate' often get conflated. I address this by drawing parallels between the two terms and suggest that the reason for this conflation could be that the epistemological roots of artistic collaboration lie in cooperative modes of production in manufacturing. I use this observation to develop my argument for ownership within collaborative theatre. The following chapters develop theoretical and practical means to reclaim ownership within

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[4] Appendix 3 details the list of publications and the number of times 'ownership' and 'collaboration' appear in abstracts utilising the key words in abstracts facility

collaborative theatre, exploring the dialectical relationship between capital and cooperation as the basis of ownership.

<u>Clarifying terms</u>

Before I analyse left-wing theatre in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in the context of ownership, it is necessary to discuss debates on the term 'political theatre' and clarify my use of key terms arising from the Marxist research paradigm I have developed. As the conceptual framework of my research is grounded in Marxism, it is important to qualify the use of vocabulary that comes along with this to avoid confusion over terms like 'left-wing', 'Marxism', 'socialism' and 'communism' which are often contested and sometimes conflated. The term 'capitalism' also needs to be qualified.

In chapter two, I discuss Marx's theory of capital and develop Engels' three laws of the dialectic. In doing so I set up a Marxist research paradigm based on the premise that the functioning of every aspect of society can be attributed to the "mode of production" i.e. the labour process, which in a capitalist economy, alienates the labourer who does not own the means of production (Marx 1990: 175). My use of the term 'Marxism' stems from the Marxist theory I employ to understand opposing capitalist and communist modes of production. Under capitalism, the free market, private ownership and profit-making enterprises dominate the economy whereas under communism a stateless, classless and moneyless society prevails. Ideological frameworks are invariably bound to modes of production and in this context I employ Marxist theory to analyse ideology associated with socialism and left-wing politics. My understanding of socialism is derived from the premise that the means of production and distribution should be collectively owned by all citizens. My use of the term left-wing refers to a commitment to equality. These distinctions, overlaps, intersections and qualifications in political/economic terminology are necessary in developing definitions of political theatre within specific systems of production, thereby enabling the political nature of BWT's work to be assessed. Despite various attempts to put communism into practice, it has yet to materialise as a system of production in the moneyless, classless and stateless sense. Most economies in the world are mixed in nature with varying degrees of capitalism and socialism operative. In most countries there is a

balance between free-market economic policies and profit-driven enterprises with either more or less progressive means of redistributing wealth by means of taxation, subsidy and welfare. Theatre processes and productions, irrespective of whether they are professional or amateur, both arise from, and can challenge, the system of production within which they operate.

Characteristics of Political Theatre

Further to the two models of professional theatre I mentioned in the introduction, John McGrath founding member of 7:84 Theatre (Scotland and England), identifies three sectors of British theatre – the profit-driven commercial/West End, the orthodox state subsidised theatres like the National Theatre (NT), the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) and the main repertories, and fringe theatre (McGrath 2002: 110). He suggests that political theatre is usually associated with the fringe (McGrath 2002: 112).

McGrath identifies five characteristics of fringe theatre. Firstly it is "created by an act of will or initiative" and when this original impulse fades, the company folds. Secondly, subsidy from the state or affiliated regional organisations is necessary for its survival. Thirdly, "most groups are small enough to see themselves as organised on a co-operative or democratic basis". Fourthly, it is aimed at audiences other than those who regularly attend performances at the NT or the RSC. Finally, fringe theatre demands "an application of their members' talents and a degree of involvement different from that of the other sectors of theatre" (McGrath 2002: 112).

McGrath (1996: 82) states that, in determining the political drive of artistic projects (which are often oppositional to the objectives of mainstream theatre and takes place on the fringe) the three questions of content, audience relationship and the internal organisation of the company need to be addressed holistically. He identifies three central challenges for political theatre. Firstly, he refers to the political work of Edward Bond, David Hare, Margaretta D'Arcy, Bertolt Brecht and Sean O'Casey saying that "good as these may be, the process is not contributing to the creation of a new, genuinely oppositional theatre". He adds that this type of work becomes "product and the process remains the same…in constant danger of

being appropriated in production by the very ideology they set out to oppose". Secondly, polemical or openly political theatre can be co-opted by party politics or particular narrow political programmes. Finally he raises the issue of individual members within a collective being in conflict because of egos, political positions and aesthetic choices (McGrath 2002: 110-115). The points raised by McGrath provide an understanding of the economic and social conditions that theatre production is bound by which in turn points to meanings, functions and challenges for political theatre.

The Scope of Political Theatre

McGrath identifies the fringe as the site of political theatre where oppositional ideology in conflict with the state, can thrive. Kritzer and DiCenzo, prefer the term 'alternative' to 'fringe' in developing meanings for political theatre. Kritzer (2008) sees the message of the performance as important to the definition of political theatre (5). She considers theatre to be political "if it presents or constructs a political issue or comments on what is already perceived as a political issue… [but also if it initiates] a dialogue with the audience about politics within a national or cultural system shared by both the creators of the theatre production and the audience" (10). She factors in interventionist aesthetics to the definition, referring to experimental techniques and the performance site not being limited to theatre buildings but including "community centres, pubs, schools, village halls" (5). She discusses power in the context of different types of theatre bounded by a particular time and space. The relationship between the site of the performance, and the type of power the audience can exercise, is an important one.

> The traditional audience has entered into a contract, accepting the constraints of selective admission, space and convention in return for the right to experience the performance. The audience for street theatre finds itself unexpectedly caught up in the event, whether they wish to be or not, but may exercise their freedom to disrupt the performance or walk away from it with no loss of money or breaking of an implicit contract.
>
> Kritzer 2008: 13

She discusses Augusto Boal's applied theatre and concludes that while it offers much scope for understanding power and feeling empowered "through the formation of conscious, though transient, communities engaged in a political process", its impact is limited, because its workshop-led pedagogy allows only for a very small audience. On the other hand traditional

political theatre, driven by political content and performed in established theatre buildings, can reach much bigger audiences (Kritzer 2008: 19).

DiCenzo (1996) argues for the necessity of the term 'alternative' in favour of earlier terms like 'fringe' or 'underground' because it suggests "an oppositional alternative to the mainstream theatre, not just something peripheral to it". She refers to its "widespread scale" and its defining features which could include anything from "the politics informing or expressed in the work, organisation, creative process, target audiences, or performance venues" (24-25). DiCenzo discusses McGrath's belief in a classless society and the important role socialist theatre has to play in the "development or empowerment of the working class" (136-137). She points out how McGrath distinguishes himself from Brecht in that his socialist theatre is developed from the working class and he chooses his performance sites accordingly, whereas Brecht's epic theatre, while oppositional, is located "within the bourgeois theatre of Berlin" (138). She is critical of McGrath's use of labels,

> He uses 'working class' and 'middle class' or 'bourgeois' as labels for homogenous groups/audiences – all categories that have become increasingly complicated by changing social and economic structures.
>
> DiCenzo 1996: 149

In my preface I referred to Mnouchkine's frustration about left-wing plays being produced "in total collaboration with the commercial system" prompting me to revisit my own left-wing politics and how this impacted on my time as associate director with TNS and 7:84 (Scotland) (Mnouchkine in Williams 1999: 26). This in turn led me to question definitions for political theatre and reflect on my own complicity with hierarchical collaborative theatre practice, provoking me to define political theatre in terms of the processes of creation rather than the content of production.

In their definitions of political theatre, Kritzer, DiCenzo and McGrath all engage with the tensions between politicised processes of creation and political content. McGrath critiques plays by Bond, Hare, D'Arcy, Brecht and O'Casey (- all staged in conventional sites) as being work which Mnouchkine describes as "left-thinking" but produced "in conditions of

total imbrication with the system (Mnouchkine in Williams 1999: 19). In determining meanings for political theatre, Mnouchkine, McGrath, DiCenzo and Krtitzer foreground the interaction between content and processes of creation (collaborative or not) with artists/audience/systems and the site of performance. Dollimore and Sinfield capture this interplay of forces with their definition of cultural materialism,

> Culture is not simply a reflection of the economic and political system, but nor can it be independent of it. Cultural materialism therefore sees texts as inseparable from the conditions of their production and reception in history, and as involved, necessarily in the making of cultural meanings which are always, finally, political meanings.

> Dollimore and Sinfield 1988: ix

David Edgar observed that oppositional theatre in the late sixties and seventies privileged political content over whether the artists involved in making it were empowered by the creative process. He believed that theatre companies committed to a revolutionary avant-garde position rather than a more traditional Marxist class-struggle position. The work of left-wing theatre companies stemmed from a belief that radical politics was "much less about the organization of the working class at the point of production, and much more about the disruption of bourgeois ideology at the point of consumption" (Edgar 1979: 26). In this model, the empowerment of the artists involved in the creative processes is secondary to the effect of the finished work on its consumers, thereby undermining collaborative practice. McGrath points out that political theatre can only be political if it is "democratic", "an act of will" and more than a job, demanding of artists "a degree of involvement different from the other sectors of theatre". However at the same time he asserts that his plays are for working class audiences and are designed to disrupt bourgeois ideology, suggesting his work prioritises the effect of the end product on the consumer over the processes involved in its creation.

The Scope of the Experiment

Achieving equality in the process of creating political theatre is difficult not only because of the challenges arising from the economic and political contexts in which it is made, but also because of how theatre artists' egos, personal politics, political party affiliations and artistic preferences relate to and manifest themselves within the processes of theatre-making. The issue of the distribution of power between artists in collaborative processes is a critical one in

defining political theatre, irrespective of whether at the point of consumption, the work is perceived as political or not. Joe Kelleher develops his position on political theatre from Stefan Collini's article, 'On Variousness; and on Persuasion' (2004) saying that the distribution of power is at the heart of political theatre as it is often unequal "across social relations, among different groups or classes or interests that make up, however momentarily, a social body." (Kelleher 2009: 2-3).

BWT as a 'social body', formed for my experiment, is a collective of artists who work together, are committed to facilitating equal ownership of the collaborative processes and the products of collective labour, who practice equality in the distribution of power during the creative process, and who discern the place of political content within this. My experiment is concerned with how personal politics, political party affiliations and special qualities beyond that of jobbing artists are relevant for politicised collaboration. It also questions whether state funding is a condition for politicised collaborative theatre production in the context of Scotland's mixed economy with a devolved parliament and within the United Kingdom. Finally, this experiment is concerned with who is the audience for this type of theatre, what is the preferred site, and is there a particular aesthetic or language for political theatre of this sort.

The Sections

As mentioned in the preface, I co-founded TNS (Singapore) and was its associate director from 1987-1995. I was also associate director with 7:84 (Scotland) from 2004-2008. My access to TNS's and 7:84's methods of working during these periods puts me in the unique position of being able to analyse left-wing theatre practice through the lens of both these companies. Therefore my study of the field focusses on twentieth century left-wing theatre before the formation of 7:84 in 1971. I go on to discuss 7:84 till it closed in 2008. I also discuss 'progressive theatre' in Singapore, inclusive of TNS and my experiences there till *Eclipse* (2008), the last play I directed for the company. Finally, I identify what new knowledge can be gained by BWT's practice.

I develop the discussion in four sections. I begin by assessing key left-wing theatre-makers of the twentieth century in Europe and introduce Augusto Boal's work since my own pedagogy is developed from Boal's praxis. I discuss the early years of political theatre in Singapore. This first section concludes roughly in 1971before 7:84 was formed. The second

section discusses the works and practices of 7:84 (Scotland) in the seventies, eighties, nineties and the twenty-first century. The third section discusses the works and practice of Kuo Pao Kun, The Third Stage and TNS. The final section assesses devising as the preferred means to create agency and discusses relevant twenty-first century companies whose practice is relevant to the work of BWT. Meanings for political theatre are discussed throughout.

Section 1: Twentieth Century up till 1970

This section begins with a discussion of the key left wing theatre-makers in the early twentieth century, Erwin Piscator and Bertolt Brecht. It briefly examines Russian political theatre in the context of Stanislavski's system and the growing prominence of the Moscow Art Theatre. It introduces the early work of Boal. It identifies important political and social factors which influenced the cultural landscape of British theatre during this time. I discuss key British political theatre companies which pre-date the formation of 7:84 (Scotland and England) in 1971. I also discuss the early years of politicised Singaporean theatre and the work Kuo Pao Kun (Kuo), a major influence on left-wing theatre in Singapore. I conclude this section by identifying themes and issues and reflect on their significance to the work of BWT.

Piscator and Brecht

While critical of aspects of Brecht's and Piscator's theatre, McGrath refers to their work as the best examples of political theatre in the 1920s (McGrath 1996: 62). Piscator founded the Proletarische Theatre in 1920 and documents his political theatre journey in *Erwin Piscator-The Political Theatre* (1929/1980). Hugh Rorrison in his introduction to this publication refers to the Proletarische Theatre as an agitprop group "with the sole aim of developing class consciousness and proletarian solidarity for the struggle ahead" (37). Piscator (49-50; 1980) believed that middle class actors could be dispensed with apart from a few professionals who shared his political convictions. He refers to his fellow artists in the Proletarische Theatre as collaborators who believed in the solidarity of the working classes. They often worked with no pay, were not motivated by personal ambition and "were not even mentioned on the programe". The company did not rely on any external funding. This model of production was unsustainable and the company folded in April 1921.

However, Piscator continued to believe in the power of agitprop as the means to spread left-wing ideology (1980: 100). He was interested in exploring the contradiction between

working class people not having the means to create agitprop theatre but at the same time having the aspiration to do so (1980: 173). Between 1921 and 1926 Piscator directed a number of productions for theatres like Theatre Central and Volksbuhne, before establishing his own theatre, Piscator-Buhne. The first Piscator-Buhne opened in September 1927 and was bankrupt by the following June (Willet 1978: 74).

A year earlier, a benefactor had given Piscator funds to set up a studio theatre on the condition that it was independent of Piscator-Buhne and did not have any association with the terms 'proletariat' or 'revolutionary'. It was to be a training ground for actors who collaborated with writers, musicians and technical staff. A distinguishing feature of the studio was that instead of the prevalent practice in German theatre of having one or two dramaturgs, a "dramaturgical collective" led on the creative processes (Willet 1978: 67, 71). Ironically, it was the studio theatre that saved Piscator-Buhne from liquidation and ensured its survival until 1931 (Willet 1978: 74).

According to Innes (1972: 63-64), Piscator's use of the term 'political theatre' is often ambiguous and changed over time as did his theatre aesthetics. While never a "card carrying member" of the Communist Party, his productions were clearly aligned with the communist programme and propagated the idea of class-warfare.

With the opening of the Piscator-Buhne in 1927, he became more objective. He described his new techniques as Marxist but it was evident that his theatre was becoming more about the intersection between art, the personal and the political. He clarified that the term 'experimental' did not mean "unfinished for [him], but the search for the basic artistic, philosophical, social and political principles for human thought and action in [his] age" (Piscator in Innes 1972: 70).   It is clear that Piscator had to mediate his complex theatre aesthetics with state politics where Marx's historical materialism "had become linked with the Russian tradition of materialist philosophy" and the intrinsic value of art questioned and justified only by the "productivity of its contents" (Innes 1972: 51-54),

> We look on the theatre as nothing more than an instrument to disseminate a specific idea. The idea that we represent is a political one.

> Piscator in Innes 1972: 55

Piscator's theatre aesthetic is defined by three terms which are conflated at times and at other times, used distinctly. Innes explains the confusion,

> Documentary, Epic or Total Theatre – the confusion can be explained by the provisional nature of Piscator's experiments … he never thought of his productions as ends in themselves but as a means of encouraging authors to write plays in a new style by demonstrating the effectiveness of modern media.

<div align="right">Innes 1972: 152</div>

In a way Piscator was the radical pioneer in politicising theatre consumption by advocating that productions were not "ends in themselves". He politicised the term, 'experimental' by removing its connotations to 'unfinished' and advocated its use to provoke thinking and action beyond the world of the play. In this sense epic theatre includes documentary and total theatre as part of the epic aesthetic. Piscator was the originator of epic theatre. In his publication he equates political theatre to epic theatre (Piscator 1980: vi-vii). He says that the techniques of epic theatre were no longer disputed after he had introduced it but there was confusion over what should be expressed by these means. He clarified that "the functional character of these epic techniques … [was] their inseparability from a specific content" adding that the "specific content, the specific message determines the means and not vice-versa". Innes (1972: 103) describes how the purpose of a character was to function as an object rather than a subject on stage. The character/object was located within social and economic events with no place for personal motives or the effects these had on individuals.

Piscator's work is described as total theatre because he used the technology of his time to pioneer multimedia aesthetics. He created a stage ahead of his time with visible machinery, audio recordings, film clips, newsreels, and texts projections. Such techniques enabled him to meet the state's requirement for theatre to be used for Communist propaganda but at the same time, they gave him the opportunity to move away from the didactic messages of the agitprop genre via the live action (Innes 1972: 61). In defining Piscator's documentary drama, Innes points out that it relied on "epic techniques to handle and interpret the factual material. This was challenging for him in that "fact [did] not mix easily with fiction" (Inness 1992: 131, 125). The tensions arising from the interplay of epic theatre techniques and documentary/total theatre aesthetics are evident in the opening production of the first Piscator-Buhne, *Hoppla* directed by Piscator, written by Ernest Toller and based on an event

in his life. The reviews assessed the production as being too personal to make any political impact. This was despite film footage being used in the production to overshadow the personal sufferings of the protagonist through textual alterations, intended to typify the hero's characteristics to make explicit the political content of the play (Innes 1992: 130).

At this point it is useful to discuss Bertolt Brecht's, Berliner Ensemble (BE) and his epic theatre so as to be able to compare the work and challenges of Piscator and Brecht, contemporaries in the same German context.

Brecht, who co-founded the BE with his wife Helene Weigel in 1949, identified himself as a Marxist. He spent fifteen years during the Nazi period in exile in the USA where he developed his ideas for a new theatre ensemble he would create in Berlin on his return. Barnett (2013: 134) highlights key points about BE's context, principles and pedagogy. BE was founded in the same year as The German Democratic Republic (formerly East Germany) and was premised on the socialist principle of public ownership, receiving generous state subsidy. Brecht was the artistic director and Weigel was the intendant (general manager) and "leading actress". Brecht questioned the hierarchical nature of the rehearsal process and the director as the one who determines this process. He believed the director's role should be an inductive one and that what was learnt was more important that the lesson itself. The Fable[5] of the play decided everything. Brecht was influenced by Marx's ideas, particularly that of the dialectic. He believed the state apparatus turned theatre into a consumable product and that the individualism of capitalism needed to be challenged via the collectivism of socialism.

Bertolt Brecht: Chaos according to Plan (Fuegi 1987) is the "only book solely devoted to Brecht's practices as a director, but he actively de-politicizes them" (Barnett 2015a: 3). Barnett refutes Fuegi's position and defends Brecht's status as an instrumental political theatre figure of the twentieth century. He argues against Fuegi's depoliticisation of Brecht's practices stating that "Brecht's theories and practices continually grapple with questions of representing the political on stage". He asserts that Brechtian methods can only have proper meaning if they are understood as "enabling a radical insight into the way society and its citizens work with a view to changing both of them" (Barnett 2015b: 3). He draws attention

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[5] The Fable is an interpreted version of the plot…there was usually an overarching interpretation of the play as a whole which was then complemented by minute versions which detailed the interpreted action of scenes themselves (Barnett 2013: 137)

to Brecht's commitment to theorising his practice because it allowed him to "imagine new goals for the theatre" and in doing so it performed a "utopian function" making new "intentions and methods" possible (Barnett 2015b: 14).

Brecht developed Piscator's epic theatre, influenced by Marx and Engels' theory of dialectical materialism, challenging bourgeois production and consumption of theatre. He was of the view that representations in theatre "cannot work out satisfactorily without knowledge of dialectics – and without making dialectics known" (Brecht in Willett 1992: 279). Walter Benjamin (2003) discusses key features of Brecht's epic theatre and it is clear from his discussion that the contradictory nature of man, the tensions within the political/social environment and the opposition to tradition are at the heart of making 'dialectics known'. The purpose of epic theatre is not to reproduce the conditions of society but to reveal them through processes being interrupted (Benjamin 2003: 4-5). Echoing this Olga Taxidou describes epic theatre as "critical towards its audience, and interventionist in its relationship with hegemonic cultures" (Taxidou 1996: 164). Epic is in opposition to dramatic theatre because it is non-Aristotlelian, favouring critical spectatorship over emotional responses derived from catharsis (Benjamin 2003: 18, 38). Rationality, the corner stone of epic, is developed through the aesthetics of total or documentary theatre, paving the way for the discovery of alienating theatre devices, interrupting prevailing stage aesthetics. Actors represent characters who are able to bring out the key issues in the play. Both Brecht and Piscator divorced their work from conventional theatre so that the rational could replace the emotional and the intellect was privileged over the senses (Innes 1972: 194-195).

Brecht's epic theatre has to be "read in the light or shadow of [the] threat of fascism" (Taxidou 1996: 164). His opera collaboration with Weill, *Mahogany* in 1930 was disrupted by Hitler's brownshirts because they claimed that "it brought the contamination of black and Jewish musical influences into the German opera house" (Ravenhill in The Guardian: 2008). When Brecht returned from the USA in 1949, the dialectic nature of epic theatre offered him the means to negotiate his role as a political artist, in the newly formed German Democratic Republic.

Brecht is recognised as the leader, playwright and director of BE so it is important to analyse what is meant by 'ensemble' and the function of these hierarchical roles within collaborative theatre-making. Bonczek and Storch (2013: 7) refer to the Latin origins of the word

ensemble, meaning at the 'same time'. They suggest that the term means much more than "collection, group or team with something in common, but to include a sense of deep connection between the members that enables them to think and act 'at the same time". They believe ensembles need leaders, reinforcing the capitalist mode, where managers are responsible for the production process and are superior to the operatives. They do not address what makes this thinking and acting at the same time occur, shying away from political implications of "deep connection". Britton (2013: 4-7) defines ensemble in terms of organisational structure, extended periods of working with the same group, shared training and a shared purpose, qualifying that the term lacks definition because of its multiple qualities and its usage both as a noun and an adjective.

BE shares many of the characteristics of ensemble discussed by Britton and Bonczek and Storch. Barnett (2015a) defends Brecht's leadership of BE's collaborative practice highlighting that his definition of ensemble was developed from his relationship with actors. He was highly critical of directors who came into the rehearsal room with a "completely thought-through vision of the production which would then be transmitted to the actors" (9). He opposed this and proposed that directors and actors "work inductively on the dramatic material" where the interpretation of the play, discovery and problem-solving were collectively undertaken (10). In keeping with the dialectic, Brecht believed that the contradiction between "the collective desire to stage a play and the individual actor's desire to represent his or her position" is a "productive" one (10). Tensions arising from this contradiction deepened political meanings for the play as they had to be addressed during the course of the rehearsals. However, Barnett points out that Brecht did rely on stars. He cites the example of Brecht regularly postponing his staging of *The Life of Galileo* because his preferred actors were not available. Nevertheless he defends Brecht against Fuegi's disparaging remarks on his over-reliance on 'stars', emphasising his definition, "ensemble doesn't mean that everyone has the same ability, only that every role has the correct actor and that they are all in balance with each other" (11). He adds that Brecht put talented actors in minor roles to give less experienced actors more opportunities (11).

However, Barnett (2015a: 26) does acknowledge that hierarchies were "weakened rather than eliminated" as Brecht was the "ultimate arbiter in meetings". He cites set designer, Hainer Hill's observation that "Brecht listened to all opinions during dramaturgical conferences and then reached a decision based on how useful the proposals were for the issue at hand". He

suggests that Brecht's views could be "challenged and modified" and that his decision-making role should not detract from his creation of an environment where "contribution from everyone was essential". He reminds that Brecht promoted his assistants so that they had opportunities to direct productions early on in their careers, to put into practice what they had learned from him and take it further on their own.

Finally, Brecht chose collaborators who were like-minded, meaning that they dedicated their lives to exploring the "social possibilities of theatre". He believed that being an artist in BE was not a job but a way of life, demanding "100% commitment and enthusiasm" which he expected of himself too (Barnett 2015a: 18, 23).

Innes refers to Piscator as having "already mapped out the terrain" for Brecht (Innes 1972: 190). He says that both Piscator and Brecht, through the techniques of epic theatre, especially the aesthetics of alienation, divorced their work from the conventional theatre of naturalism which prevailed during their time. They intended to replace the emotional impetus with the rational one in how theatre was made and received. The effect of this was that the sensual was replaced by the pedagogic. Piscator believed that the terms 'political' and 'epic' were interchangeable as he viewed all social and public events as political (Innes 1972: 194). Both Brecht and Piscator subscribed to the belief that theatre had the potential to alter the world, not merely interpret it, but how they went about trying to achieve this with audiences, differed. Brecht's alienating techniques were designed to deliberately distance audiences so as to facilitate objectivity in identifying and solving problems. On the other hand, Piscator attempted to involve the audience "while still appealing to rational objectivity" (Innes 1972: 195).

DiCenzo (1996: 40) does not make the distinction that Innes does about audience involvement (or the lack thereof). She contends that both Piscator and Brecht saw the audience as located outside the action but nevertheless active participants in the production of meaning. She says they both shared similar views on the limits of naturalism in achieving a socialist theatre with Brecht adding that it was cheaper to produce non-realist plays.

McGrath (1996: 37-38) highlights that both Piscator and Brecht observed that there was a "lack of any great imaginative writing" which could highlight the "complexity, dividedness and incompleteness" of their time. However, their solution to this problem differed. Brecht

wrote his own plays, developed from the epic style while Piscator's approach was to "smash the bourgeois dramaturgy and set up a "dramaturgical collective", capable of producing epic theatre. When McGrath was interviewed by Taxidou for her publication he said that he was more "excited" by Piscator than Brecht because he was "breaking down theatre conventions" whereas Brecht was attempting to "build a new set of conventions of his own". He was "much more interested in the openness of Piscator and the way he used new media to present stories of the issues" (McGrath in Taxidou 1996: 150). McGrath is highly critical of the site of Piscator's and Brecht's performances as he believed that the theatre institutions they worked in, undermined their commitment to societal transformation,

> The point is both worked within a hierarchical and commercial theatre structure, and they did so by choice. There were many smaller groups of theatre at work in Germany through the 20s and early 30s, with direct contact to small working class audiences: both Brecht and Piscator , in spite of professions to the contrary and occasional unsuccessful attempts to change things, were committed to working within the Berlin smart bourgeois theatre, albeit as 'oppositional' forces.

> McGrath 1996: 42-43

His opinion was that BE was born out of "artistic privilege" and that it was "an institution of power rather than a creation of power". He believed that empowerment was not possible for artists within BE or audiences of BE because it operated within a highly institutionalised German bourgeois theatre structure (McGrath 1996: 43).

Russian Realism and Constructivism

Konstantin Stanislavsky was born in 1863 and lived through "realism's overturn of nineteenth-century histrionics, modernism's rejection of realism, and Russia's political move from monarchy to communism" (Carnicke 2007: 11). He founded the Moscow Art Theatre (MAT) in 1898 together with Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko. In the same year he directed Anton Chekhov's, *The Seagull* and a lasting partnership between the two was formed with Stanislavsky directing, henceforth, all of Chekhov's plays at the MAT. Carnicke (2007: 12) identifies this as the period when acting became professionalised. She refers to the time when *The Seagull* was produced two years earlier at the Imperial Aleksandrinsky Theatre and that it did not receive critical or popular acclaim. She attributes the success of MAT's production of *The Seagull* to actors putting in eight hours of work at each of the thirty-three rehearsals. She goes on to discuss the tensions evident in Russian theatre in the early

twentieth century. As soon as MAT had established itself as the "leader in realism", symbolism grew in prominence. Symbolist artists rejected realist theatre, claiming its "illusions of reality" did not allow for "expressions of transcendental and spiritual", better achieved through abstraction. Stanislavsky embraced these new forms of representation and produced symbolist plays in 1907 and 1908 but MAT had come to be recognised as a "bastion of realism" and his experimentations with symbolism were curtailed. He had to feed the realism agenda of MAT and it is not surprising that he went on to develop the System, built on the foundations of naturalism.

As acting became more professional, there were a group of artists within MAT who saw the need to challenge mainstream theatre and institutionalised modes of production. The idea of the studio and laboratory to create performance may seem common now but Sulerzhitsky (Stanislavski's contemporary) and Vakhtangov (their student) were ahead of their time when they formed studiinost. They were professionals at MAT, gaining ample recognition for their work so their motivation for setting up studiinost did not stem from a need for popularity or success. Perhaps it was a response to the growing entrenchment of realism in MAT's programming and its hierarchical modes of production. Perhaps the MAT structure could not provide them with opportunities to develop their art critically in society. Brown (2013: 51 - 53) describes the two concepts central to studiinost: kruzhok (circle) and obshchina (commune). He explains that kruzhok has a long history and has been "equated to secret societies, private clubs and focussed study groups". While the term simply means circle, its application to studiinost manifested itself in a structure that provided the space for a small group to invent alternatives to institutionalised theatre premised on "deep ethical bonds" and pedagogies of silence and laughter. In describing obshchina he refers to its promotion of a "consensus-based form of decision making" and the valorisation of work itself (54). He cites a letter from Sulerzhitsky in 1915 where Sulerzhitsky identifies "common labour", "equal participation in profits", "a space where it's possible to rest in freedom on the soil which is sowed and cultivated by us" and the necessity for all of us to work together to create the "common hearth" as instrumental in his model for the studio laboratory (54).

Carnicke (2007: 13-14) summarises the role of the Russian state in determining Stanislavsky's artistic direction. After the Bolshevik revolution in 1917, the Soviet economy crashed resulting in a civil war which lasted till 1921. Stanislavsky and his family were

impoverished, losing their factories, property and wealth to the Soviets. During this time the MAT struggled to keep afloat with no state subsidy and dwindling profits from ticket sales. To a deal with this crisis, Stanislavsky toured MAT productions with his best actors to America and Europe while Danchenko held the fort in Moscow. While on tour Stanislavsky turned to writing to boost his personal income, securing international royalties. This led to the System being recognised in America, Europe and different parts of the world. When the tours came to an end in the mid-twenties, Stanislavski returned to Moscow only to find that there "was growing Soviet control over the arts" (14).

> The state deemed realism superior to any type of formal or abstract art, and the physical, material world superior to anything spiritual or transcendental.
>
> Carnicke 2007: 14

By 1934 socialist realism was seen as the only legitimate art form sanctioned by the Soviet state and Stanislavsky was co-opted into the state's political cause. Stanislavsky's social realism became integral to promoting Soviet ideology and accordingly "a Soviet commission censored and edited his books to bring them into agreement with Marxist materialism" (14).

In his publication, Piscator (1929/1980: 30-36) highlights the tensions between realism, naturalism and symbolism and documents his concerns about socialist realism dominating the Russian theatre landscape. He questions the content of Russian socialist realist plays and whether they were intended for bourgeois or proletariat audiences. His view was that in the genre of social realism, truth was stated rather than explored. In 1936, Piscator and Brecht authored "some joint theoretical statements to set against the spread of the Stanislavsky method" (Willet 1978: 186).

Before concluding this section on Russian social realism and its negative reception by Piscator and Brecht, it is important to briefly discuss another Russian movement, constructivism, which influenced Piscator and Brecht's practice. Taxidou (1996: 171-173) discusses the utopian aspirations of constructivism and her own definition of it as "basically an abstract aesthetic rendition of Taylorism". She says that the Russian constructivists of the 1920s and 1930s not only used 'labour' as a theme for their artistic projects but also used it to curate and shape these projects. The organisation of labour processes and how it was

structured led to a new "theatrical language" for constructivists. In Brecht's and Piscator's theatre this translated into the language of epic and the development of alienating devices. She identifies Vsevolod Meyerhold as foreshadowing Brecht's practice "through his complex system of bio-mechanics, bodily movements [which] are broken down, fragmented and repeated in imitation of Taylorist work processes". Meyerhold performed in MAT's plays under the direction of Stanislavsky but he moved away from MAT because he was not committed to realism and was more aligned with the symbolist movement and to developing non-realist theatre vocabulary. However, Taxidou points out that for all of Meyerhold's professed radicalism and "his commitment to dialectical analysis of theatrical conventions and processes", he was in fact complicit in capitalist modes of production. She reminds that Taylorism, which Meyerhold applied in his practice, was the precursor to Fordism, where fragmented labour processes were further developed, augmenting the Marxist concept of alienation,

> Like Lenin before him, Meyerhold nevertheless saw in Taylorism a capitalist process that he thought could be adapted, appropriated with a radical project.

<div align="right">Taxidou 1996: 171-172</div>

Taxidou was of the view that constructivists "in their uncritical glorification of labour" believed that technology was the emancipatory force "that would finally free people from labour, bridge the gap between manual and intellectual". This analysis of constructivism by Taxidou is valuable in determining to what extent Brecht's and Piscator's use of technology, their development of alienating theatre devices as part of dialectical epic theatre, and their general resistance to realist theatre, empowered the artist during the production process and in performance.

Mnouchkine and Théâtre du Soleil (TdS)

In the preface, I mention that 7: 84, TNS and TdS have inspired this research. While my involvement in 7:84 (Scotland) and TNS makes it clear why I have included them in the list, it is less clear why TdS is included when there are many other inspirational left-wing theatre companies to consider. Perhaps I was/am drawn to the courage and radical practice of Ariane Mnouchkine, founding member of TdS, an outspoken woman, unafraid to voice her artistic views on political theatre in the sixties and seventies, at a time when men dominated theatre leadership. She led on a policy of equal pay for all TdS artists at a time when Fordism was

making way for post-Fordism and hierarchical divisions of power widely accepted as necessary for production and subsistence. In the present decade, where neoliberalism and free market competition reign, at TdS "salaries are still more or less equal across the company, and far from generous: €1,400 a month for new arrivals, €1,800 for long-term members, including Mnouchkine herself" (Dickson in The Guardian: 2012). In the preface I refer to Miller's (2007) analysis of TdS'work as more overtly political from 1964-1980 and more allegorical from the 1980s onwards. In this section I focus on TdS's beginnings in the 1960s.

Miller (2007: 2-8) discusses the early years of Mnouchkine and TdS. Mnouchkine's father, Alexandre Mnouchkine, fled from Russia to France with his family in 1925 and became a renowned film producer in post-war France. She was close to her father and learnt much about cinema aesthetics and innovation from him. However, as she grew older and began to find her own voice as an artist, she became critical of the compromises that were necessary for a film to be made. In 1957, she studied at Oxford University, and worked with Ken Loach and John McGrath on several theatre productions. They "convinced her that a life in the theatre could provide the focus for her bourgeoning desire to define creativity as a collective effort and to use this creativity to affect some kind of change in the world" (5). In 1964 she founded TdS together with nine other like-minded artists. Similar to many other artistic collectives that emerged in France in the sixties, it was formed to challenge the over-commodification of art.

TdS was formed on the basis of a cooperative with each of the ten founding members contributing nine hundred francs to get the company started and each receiving the same salary. Their first production (1964-65) was Gorki's *The Petty* Bourgeoisie, very much in keeping with the definition of political theatre as primarily driven by content. In 1966, with a view to "championing a collective approach to creating texts" TdS improvised scenes from Gautier's novel, *Captain Fracasse* with Mnouchkine and Philippe Léotard, subsequently writing up the improvisations. The French government was very supportive of the arts in the sixties and funded TdS's productions in 1967. Support was also given by "seasoned theatre men" like Jean-Louis Barrault and Jean Vilar who believed in TdS's vision and helped out with rehearsal space, advice and moral support (7).

Throughout the 1960s the French youth perceived French society to be "autocratic, hierarchical, and tradition-bound". The student population had nearly trebled from the previous decade and the youth believed that Charles de Gaulle led "a quasi-benign political dictatorship". Disaffection and anger over consumerism and the class-bound nature of French society culminated in the widespread protests and strikes of May 1968 (Encyclopedia Britannica).

Miller (2007: 9-10) discusses the actions of TdS during this time. The company closed down its performances of Shakespeare and instead performed Arnold Wesker's, *The Kitchen* in the factories which were on strike, drawing in huge audiences. TdS helped workers to maintain their strike action through their meticulously choreographed movements in the play analogous with the exploitative assembly line work in the factories. In addition to entertaining, the company also listened to the concerns of the workers. The May 1968 uprising had a significant effect on the work of TdS. Firstly, it led to the company's explorations of the artist's role in society via individual creativity, improvisations and "satirical collage" resulting in *Le Clown* (1969). Secondly, the value of improvising before an audience was discovered.

At a time when many left-leaning artists were citing Brecht as a major source of influence in their work, Mnouchkine distinguishes TdS from Brecht's practice,

> At the beginning we were "leftish," we knew we were, but we were not Brechtian nor communist. We were just looking for progress, freedom and justice. We didn't have an ideology as such. But we were idealists. … We never obeyed any dogma

> Delgado and Heritage 1996: 184

Appealing as this is to those who make art in search of "progress, freedom and justice" out with dogma, Mnouchkine's political theatre must be considered alongside the inherent contradictions of TdS, evident even in its early days. Kiernander observers that as a company which explicitly expresses its political intent, TdS's performance are "opulent" and cannot be thought of as 'rough' or 'poor' theatre. He adds that for a company led by a woman and openly feminist in its ideals, "there is surprisingly little obvious feminist practice". Finally he

observes that the company is publicised as having a collective organisational structure but to the public, the leadership of Mnouchkine is evident. He refers to TdS as a family where all the members are siblings but Mnouchkine is the parent. Nevertheless he points out that Mnouchkine is never perceived by the other members of the collective as their 'employer' with one member going as far as to say, "we do not work for Théâtre du Soleil, we are the Théâtre du Soleil (Kiernander 2008: 9, 16). Philippe Léotard, one of the ten founding members, defends Mnouchkine's leadership saying that she was recognised by the company as their director - they did not want to "direct collectively". He suggests that if they did, "[they] would still be in the process of thinking about [their] first production, and [they] would have never got round to performing (Kiernander 2008: 10).

Augusto Boal

As mentioned earlier, my own practice is developed from Boal's praxis. The reason for this becomes clear later in the chapter when I discuss my work with TNS. Here I discuss Boal's early life and practice which led to his ground breaking Theatre of the Oppressed (TO), techniques still being practised worldwide. The period discussed here covers key events in Boal's life up to his exile from Brazil in 1971. Talia Rodgers, Boal's publisher, encouraged him to write his biography even though he was initially reluctant to do so. She reminded him that in his previous publications "deed and doer are mixed up together" and convinced him that for his theatre to be better understood, it would be useful for him to unravel the "threads of [his] life" (Boal 2001: xiii). This resulted in the publication of *Hamlet and the Baker's Son, My Life in Theatre and Politics* (2001). This publication and his first publication, *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1974/1979), are the primary sources for my account and discussion of Boal's early life.

Boal was born in 1931 in Rio de Janeiro to Portuguese parents. His first thinking about oppression stemmed from his relationship with the domesticated animals in his family's backyard. He agonised about their slaughter, necessary for food on the table. While at school, Boal worked at his father's bakery, yet managed to get the grades to do industrial chemistry at college. It was expected of Boal and his siblings to do well at school, get college qualifications, and secure professional jobs. However, from a young age, Boal had a

passion for theatre and hoped that he would be able to nurture this passion and meet his parents' expectation for a secure, professional career. As a child he theatricalised his encounters with his pet goat and revelled in the tricks he taught it. At ten, he was fascinated by the acting and music of Brazil's first soap. As a teenager, he and his siblings dramatized for the rest of the family, the weekly instalments of romantic novels his mother received in the post. He suggests that this was perhaps the roots of the joker system in TO - the stage, his mum's sewing room, tickets in the form of bottle tops, each sibling playing multiple roles to accommodate the many characters,

> … the same character was represented by various siblings, as well as each playing several other characters. There was no private ownership of the characters by the actors, each scene was told by whoever was available, all the characters interpreted by whoever liked them most.

<div align="right">Boal 2001: 75</div>

After graduation he furthered his studies in Chemistry at Columbia University while at the same time he studied playwriting under the tutorship of New York theatre critic, John Gassner. He wrote his first plays in New York, got involved with a collective of playwrights called the Writers' Group and learnt writing and directing skills. Boal returned to Brazil after two years in New York and was the director of Arena Theatre in Sao Paulo from 1956-1971.

In 1971 Boal was kidnapped while he was walking home from the Arena. He was arrested, tortured, released after three months and exiled to Argentina. He later moved to Portugal and France, returning to Brazil in 1986, shortly after the military dictatorship ended.

Theatre of the Oppressed (1979) charts the trajectory of the Arena Theatre which led to TO. Boal divides the phases of Arena into four stages. When he began at the Arena in 1956, he promoted a realist stage, offering it as an alternative to Sao Paulo's Teatro Brasileiro de Commedia (TBC), "made by those who have money, to be seen also by those who have it" (159). Arena recognised the need for Brazilian voices and texts to be heard on stage but there "were no such works" and the few Brazilian authors around at the time were preoccupied with "Hellenic myths". Thus the only option open to the company was to "utilise modern realist texts, even though they were written by foreign authors" (160). The techniques of Stanislavsky prevailed and texts like O'Casey's, *Juno and the Paycock* and Steinbeck's, *Of*

Mice and Men were produced during this first stage. The set and staging were simple with "theatrical mechanisms bared, without disguise" (161). Surprisingly the circular, small stage of the Arena, not usually associated with realism, suited it as the audience got a chance to experience the drama close-up. However, the problem of Brazilian actors representing the stories of other cultures, rather than performing their own stories, persisted. To enable the creation of Brazilian characters, the Seminar of Dramaturgy was founded and twelve people with little or no experience of writing got together to write plays (160-161).

The second stage commenced in 1958 and lasted till 1964. During this period Arena "closed its doors to European playwrights, regardless of their high quality" and chose instead to welcome "anyone who wished to talk about Brazil to a Brazilian audience",

> The plays dealt with anything that was Brazilian: bribery in provincial soccer games, strikes against capitalists, adultery in a small village, subhuman living conditions of railway employees, bandits…

Boal 1979: 162

It was a time of political nationalism where industry thrived and the foundations of Brasilia and New Cinema took root. The style of theatre during this time "bore some resemblance to photography" with the "peculiarities of life" and the rhythms of everyday living being central to the content. This brought about the problem of audiences realising that they did not need to buy a ticket to see these types of plays. Arena became the platform for national authors. Many invested in the craft of playwriting and the unique identity of Arena's Brazilian theatre grew. While the practice of the Stanislavsky's system continued, it became more dialectical. The stress was no longer about "feeling emotions". Instead "emotions became dialectical processes" and the "conflict of opposing wills was developed qualitatively and quantitatively within an "interdependent conflictive structure" (162-163).

Boal called the third stage, "the nationalisation of the classics". This phase moved the Arena programme on from singularity and over-specificity to universality and the breadth of the lived experience. The texts of Molière, Lope or Machiavelli were staged, sometimes with a lot of alteration and at other times with no alteration at all. The guiding principle was that the performance of these classics had to resonate in some way with a Brazilian audience. Some audiences believed the alterations to be a corruption of the classics but many "felt fascinated

by the adventure of understanding that a classic is universal only insofar as it is Brazilian". During this stage, from the audience's perspective "the social interpretation came to the forefront" and from the actor's perspective the relationship between the actor and the character was developed. The actor no longer denied the self in explorations of character but also freed himself from his "daily conditioning" in these explorations, "extending the limits of his perception and expression". This stage paved the way for the fourth critical stage where a synthesis of singularities and universalities could take place (163-165).

The fourth stage of the Arena was called "musicals" and coincided with the first military coup in 1964. For the safety of the Arena staff and their families, the theatre had to be temporarily abandoned. On their return, texts such as Kafka's *The Trial* and Molière's *Tartuffe*, what Boal called truth theatre, were produced. During this period Boal experimented with the genre of the musical. He did not want actors to sing to an audience but to sing to each other in dialogue in the style of truth drama. This resulted in the creation of *Opinião* (Boal 2001: 232-236). Boal refers to the success of the opening night where the audience joined in the songs and the actors responded to the shouts of the audience,

> *Opinião* was us and our audience. *Opinião* was the first coherent and collective protest theatre against the inhumane dictatorship which assassinated and tortured so many, which so impoverished the people…

<div align="right">Boal 2001: 238</div>

While *Opinião* was successful in terms of audience reception, Boal was concerned that the audience involvement was superficial i.e. "the audience joined in the choruses but did not interfere with the plot". He believed that at a time of political repression, audiences had to be more active in theatres. This led to the creation of *Zumbi* where the script and lyrics of songs were developed from newspaper reports, where "no character would be the private property of any one actor" and where the idea of the joker as a kind of facilitator was born. Every actor had the chance to interpret a character. Consistency across different actors playing the same character was maintained by committing to the notion of a "social mask". It was in effect a Brechtian, alienating strategy where "collective interpretation allowed the separation of the essential from the circumstantial". The joker was like a master of ceremonies who could interrupt the performance as director, stage manager or explainer of hidden meanings.

Unlike the other roles, the joker was only ever played by one actor and she represented the Arena (Boal 2001: 241 243). Boal confirms,

> This was the beginning of the dialogue with the audience, which I would later develop fully with the Theatre of the Oppressed

Boal 2001: 242

Boal affirms that *Zumbi* challenged middle class theatre conventions but he also acknowledges that it destroyed empathy,

> Not being able to identify itself at any time with any character, the audience often took the position of a cold spectator of consummated events. And empathy must be reconquered – but within a new system that will incorporate it and make it perform a compatible function.

Boal 1979: 166

Thus through *Zumbi* the stage was set for Boal's radical TO which had the potential to empower actors and spectators in unprecedented ways.

The British Context

The British political/cultural contexts and left-wing theatre companies in the mid twentieth century, before the formation of 7:84, mirrored some aspects of the European contexts discussed earlier but were also distinct from them in some ways. Theatre censorship has been around since Tudor times. However it wasn't till 1737 when prime minister, Robert Walpole "put the job of censoring plays on the statute book, empowering the Lord Chamberlain – a minor official of the royal household – to veto any new works considered likely to corrupt or deprave", that the censorship of art was legalised (Smurthwaite in The Stage: 2018). In the following century the powers of the Lord Chamberlain were extended through the Theatres Act of 1843 where the censor could make judgements on the impact of art works on public decorum and peace (Smurthwaite 2018). Michael Billington (2007), in his discussion of British oppositional theatre from 1964-70, identifies the repeal of the 1843 Theatres Act and the endorsement of the Theatres Act of 1968, as a critical point in British theatre history. In 1964 a Labour government was elected under the leadership of Harold Wilson, winning the election narrowly by a majority of four. It was the first time in thirteen years that Labour was in power. Another election was called in 1966 and Labour's overall majority was increased to ninety-seven. However, in June 1970 the Conservatives regained power. Nevertheless,

Billington refers to the six years when Labour was in power as the "golden age" of theatre, when a "more liberal, tolerant and equitable Britain" was created (2007: 162). He credits the labour government of the time with the growth of oppositional theatre where artists were supported in their political critique of society. He commends Wilson's government's support for the Theatres Act of 1968 which brought to an end to "over 230 years of stifling state power" on British theatre (163).

During the Second World War, the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts was set up in 1940 to promote British culture. Smith (1998) discusses the cultural governing bodies that originated from this first Council for the Arts. During the post war reconstruction of Britain, public subsidy for the arts grew and the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB) was formed in 1946 primarily to dispense funds (258). In post war Britain the tensions of Scottish "dual cultural identity" i.e. Scottish/English had to be delicately negotiated between, local, native and international agendas (255). Thus a Scottish committee was set up within ACGB when it was formed. Smith cites the work of Scottish playwright Robert McLellan as being committed to developing the Scots language and Scottish theatre forms "as a direct challenge to what he saw as the Anglicisation of Scottish theatre and native drama" (256). Between 1950 and 1970 over twenty commercial theatres in Scotland closed down, putting more responsibility on ACGB to select which companies should benefit from grants and subsidies (260). In 1967, the Scottish committee within ACGB became the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) with devolved powers but under the remit of ACGB.

A key part of the British context in the early and mid-twentieth century was the growing provision for actor training within formal education and the unionisation of artists through Equity. In 1904 Herbert Beerbohm Tree founded the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art and in 1906 Elsie Fogerty founded the Central School of Speech Training and Dramatic Art, with others being founded shortly after this. In Scotland the National Academy of Music was founded in 1847 and within this Academy, a drama school was formed in 1951 and the Academy was renamed the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (RSAMD). Before formal actor training became established, British theatre relied on theatre apprenticeships for artists to learn their craft. In Scotland, before the foundation of the RSAMD, the "Community Drama Association was the training ground for professional and amateur talent"

(Smith 1998: 254). The development of formal theatre training established a clear distinction between amateur and professional practitioners, thereby enabling the further commodification of theatre. Elizabeth MacLennan, co-founder of 7:84, was critical of actor training during this period, saying that with the exception of Rose Bruford College, artists were not trained for political theatre or how to critique society. She refers to the over-emphasis of training for classical repertory theatre and the insistence on "posh accents" pointing out that "other skills", "other forms of commitment" and training were required MacLennan 1990: 195). Finally, the professionalization of theatre performers was further cemented via the development of the Actors Union, Equity. British Actors' Equity was founded in 1930 and gained prominence in protecting artists' rights when it amalgamated with the Variety Artists' Federation in 1967. After this it became the major union representing the interests of theatre performers and later directors (Itzin 1980: 216).

The British Companies

Theatre Workshop was founded by Joan Littlewood in 1945 and Glasgow Unity Theatre formed in 1941. According to Kenneth Tynan, Theatre Workshop's "immediate aim was to be a Leftish living newspaper, presenting instant dramatizations of contemporary history". He adds that it was run on a "completely egalitarian basis" with directors, designers, actors and stage staff getting "an equal share of the takings (Tynan in McGrath 1996: 45). In a recurring theme of husband and wife partnerships, Littlewood was married to Ewan MacColl who wrote many of the scripts and they led the company together. It is interesting to note Littlewood's views on collaboration,

> I do not believe in the supremacy of the director, designer, actor, or even the writer. It's through collaboration that this knockabout theatre survives and kicks

Littelwood in Govan et al 2007: 48

However, Govan (et al) suggest in their discussion of Theatre Workshop, that although the "funds were shared equally among the company, and it was intended that the policy decisions would be made collectively, Littlewood and MacColl held all the power until MacColl's departure in 1953" (48). Nevertheless the authors recognise Littlewood's contribution to developing the role of director as facilitator rather than instructor (49).

Like Meyerhold, Littlewood rejected agitprop forms (Innes 1972: 61). She was critically acclaimed for her production of *Oh! What a Lovely War* with Billington referring to it as a "pioneering musical" for its time in 1963. He said this play about the First World War not only "changed attitudes towards the conflict" but it "remade British Theatre" (Billington in The Guardian: 2014). Tynan reviewing the show in 1963 said of Littlewood, "Others write plays, direct them or act in them: Miss Littlewood alone 'makes theatre'" (Tynan in The Observer: 1963). McGrath (2002: 30) refers to the success of Littlewood's company from the mid-fifties to the early sixties, praising her for making theatre "with an astonishing variety, with tremendous popular appeal, and ultimately with such great commercial success that it destroyed itself". Touring productions were costly. Littlewood thought it might help to have a permanent home at Theatre Royal Stratford East, but it was expensive to maintain the building and fund the ensemble, resulting in its demise at the end of sixties.

Glasgow Unity Theatre (GUT) was formed in 1940. With its focus on working class issues and political theatre, it has been identified by both David Hutchison (1998) and Paul Maloney (2011) as precursor to 7:84. Maloney (2011: 62) says that GUT was born out of the amalgamation of five amateur theatre companies – the Glasgow Workers' Theatre Group, the Clarion Players, the Jewish Institute Players, the Glasgow Players and The Glasgow Transport Players. He adds that they were all "broadly socialist or left-leaning" but they had "different stylistic approaches". When brought together they unified these diverse styles through their commitment to social realism. GUT produced plays on "an amateur basis" during the war. After the war, it formed a professional company in 1945 while "retaining a parallel amateur company".

> There were two Unity companies, one amateur, whose productions were mainly directed by Donald McBean, formerly of the Transport Players, and one professional, under the directorship of Robert Mitchell of the Glasgow Players.
>
> Hutchison 1998: 246

At the time the perception was that the "tougher working class drama and performances [were] to be seen at Glasgow Unity Theatre" while middle class plays were performed at the Perth Theatre and Glasgow's Citizens Theatre (McLeod in Hutchison 1998: 250). GUT produced many hard-hitting plays in the forties where working class Glaswegian voices were

heard on stage for the first time. Both Hutchison and Maloney refer to GUT's production of *The Gorbals Story* (1946-48) by Robert McLeish and *Men Should Weep* (1947) by Ena Lamont Stewart, as leaving a lasting legacy of working class theatre in Scotland, because of the directness and brutal honesty of how poverty was portrayed. Hutchison identifies GUT's production of Benedick Scott's, *In the Lambs of God* as the first homosexual character presented in Scottish drama. Hutchins (1998: 250) concludes that "it would be foolish to pretend that Unity's contribution was a great one but it was an important one". In his summary, Maloney refers to GUT's "democratic working methods" (though these are not included in his account) and its "social realist style, where vernacular speech was an essential part of the convincing depiction of working people's experience of life" (2011: 66). Hutchins (1988: 250-51) concludes that GUT's potential to deliver an alternative theatre model was not realised because of "lack of money" (insufficient funding from the Scottish Committee of the ACGB), "financial mismanagement" and "the absence of a permanent home". The company closed in 1951.

During the 1960s, The People Show, Agit Prop Players and Welfare State, were among many left-wing theatre companies formed during the 1964-1970 period of Labour Governments. I focus my discussion on these and the growing prominence of the theatre-in-education (TIE) movement during this time.

The People Show (TPS) was founded in 1966 when Jeff Nuttall, a poet/painter/sculptor invited Mark Long, John Darling and Sid Palmer to perform in a one-off happening in London. They formalised the group after this, inviting Laura Gilbert to join and produced a series of shows called *People Show #1*, *#2* and so on, performing every three weeks in a basement space in London (Behrndt 2010: 31-32). Long, believed that the verbal dominated the visual in theatre and he wanted to redress this through the work of TPS (Long in Heddon and Milling 2006: 63). The emphasis on the visual eroded the supremacy of the playwright and opened up new ways of "authoring a text" (Heddon and Milling 2006: 64). Littlewood invited TPS to perform *People Show #9 Mother* at Stratford East and after this they became known as the "innovative and unorthodox company whose diverse practice ranged from events in night clubs to studio theatre shows" (Behrndt 2010: 32).

This unorthodoxy not only reflected content and site but was also about how TPS made performance and how the company was organised. Heddon and Milling (2006: 76-79) point out that while Nuttall may have initially written scripts for productions, TPS were in fact pioneers of devising, dispensing with the role of a designated playwright and allowing their knowledge and experience of happenings to influence the collaborative development of the performance text. *People Show #23 Tennis* is thought to be the last show written mostly by Nuttall, who actively encouraged collective creation and recognised that in doing so he was doing himself out of a job as writer and director, the two primary roles he had in the company until his departure in 1968. Thereafter, TPS "began to devise their work collaboratively from scratch, using the skills and particular interests of whoever was involved in creating the show" (77). TPS considered the role of artistic director to be in conflict with their commitment to collective creative processes and their belief that all artists were creative beings (78). At the same time they saw artists as having the ability to work with individual ideas and collective resources. The uniqueness of each artist is respected as verified by Long who says that "there has never been a group idea of a show, there has never been a common denominator" (Long in Heddon and Milling 2006: 79). This was a highly progressive way of working at a time when the director had come to occupy the "apex of the theatrical hierarchy". By the 1950s the playwright too had received elevated "professional recognition" (Heddon and Milling 2006: 103). TPS commitment to "democratic and non-autocratic processes" reflected in their non-hierarchical artist-led organisational structure sets it apart from other companies experimenting with egalitarian ways of working (Behrndt 2010: 33).

In 1968 Welfare State and Agitprop Street Players were formed. Like the creative partnerships/personal relationships of Brecht–Weigel, Littlewood–MacColl, John Fox and Sue Gill were in a personal relationship when they co-founded Welfare State, together with Roger Coleman and other freelance artists. The name of the company originated from the artists belief that art had to be accessible to all, just like health and education. Like TPS pioneered devising, Welfare State pioneered site specific performance events, informed by their knowledge and experience of the happenings movement. Itzin (1980: 68-69) describes their performances as "spectacle" rather than "conventional theatre", although not in the Debord's sense of meaningless spectacle for passive consumption. They performed "epic

poems" with minimal text rather than conventional plays. Like TPS, Fox and Gill preferred the "visual and aural" but took this even further by making work "virtually without words". According to Itzin, they looked for artistic projects which provided them with the opportunity to work with "grassroots" groups and enabled them to do follow-up activities with these groups. It seems as if collaboration in this context was more about facilitating the artistic involvement of grassroots groups and working together with them.

Like TPS and Welfare State, the Agitprop Street Players was founded by a collective of eight artists including Maggie Lane, John Hoyland and Chris Rawlence. They had limited theatre experience but were drawn to agitprop theatre because of domestic and international political events in 1968. They operated as a collective and produced four plays from 1968-1969, with only their first play, *The Little Artist* presented for the Trafalgar Square Festival, written by Joy Hoyland. The others were all devised by the collective (Red Ladder in Unfinished Histories). The group created sketches/plays in response to specific problems in society or specific requests from groups. For example they devised a play about strike action at the "request for help from a Tenants Action Committee who were striking against imposed rent increases" (Heddon and Milling 2006: 98). In short Agitprop Street Players responded to the struggles of workers and their changing circumstances, devising theatre collaboratively to reflect and challenge the living and working conditions of the poor.

Finally, the 1960s was an important time as it was when theatre became recognised as a valuable tool of education for children and young people. In 1965, the post-war Belgrade Theatre, built as part of Coventry city's reconstruction, convened an independent team of artists, to work with young people. The team were attached to the main theatre and facilitated a theatre programme on its theatre premises and in schools (Itzin 1980: xii). TIE "seeks to harness the techniques and imaginative potency of theatre in the service of education". A subject or issue is chosen and is critically explored through drama in "an absorbing, challenging, even provocative" way either in schools or out with schools (Jackson 2006: 1). While 1965 is usually seen as the beginnings of TIE, forms of TIE were operational prior to this and the drama-in-education movement (DIE) predates it. There are interesting distinctions and intersections between TIE and DIE. Shepherd (2009: 214) discusses Caryl Jenner's intention to give children opportunities for imaginative play at the Unicorn Theatre

Club in 1948 to combat passive television consumption. He refers to John English's and Peter Slade's work with young people on "cultural heritage" and Slade's development of theatre as a therapeutic tool. He identifies the beginnings of DIE as the time when Brian Way established the Theatre Centre in 1953 to support teachers in developing drama as part of the school curriculum. He distinguishes DIE from TIE in that "the child here is more often learner than maker". However, Dorothy Heathcote, inventor of 'mantle of the expert' disrupted this binary through her unique theatre pedagogy. At theatre school Heathcote was encouraged to do teacher training rather than become an actor because her tutors felt that acting jobs would not be given to her because of her overall look and size. Initially she was resistant to this career path but later wholeheartedly embraced it. From the outset in the sixties when she began her teaching, her methods were considered unorthodox,

> …it was anathema to drama specialists, both the traditionalists who saw her work as rejecting real theatre and the progressives who thought she broke all the rules on which Child Drama was founded

<div align="right">Bolton 2003: 37</div>

Bolton (2003: 106) discusses a significant change in Heathcote's pedagogy by the end of the 1960s. She moved away from making up plays with her students "to being a creator of pictures in which she became a fellow reader along with the class". This approach seems more aligned to Freire's dialogic pedagogy, more akin to applied theatre but born out of a sophisticated intersection between TIE and DIE. This collaborative approach seems to be premised on equality between teacher and pupil and led the way for the development of the 'mantle of the expert' techniques.

The Singapore Context and the PAP's 1st Phase

The Singaporean context is very different from the British one. Following the end of colonial rule by Britain, Singapore achieved self-determination by joining the Federation of Malaya in 1963. It became a fully independent republic following its expulsion from the Federation in 1965. The turbulent politics surrounding the nation's emergence still resonates and provokes contested narratives of the state's origins and founding myths to this day. The indigenous population in Singapore are Malays who are in the minority, alongside the Indians who were encouraged to migrate to Singapore by the British. The Chinese are also an immigrant community but have always been the majority ethnic group in the country. The Eurasians,

originating from mixed Asian and European heritage predating Britain's establishment of the colony in 1845, are the smallest ethic community.

Since 1965 Singapore has been governed exclusively by the People's Action Party (PAP), established by Lee Kwan Yew in 1954. Having overcome an early challenge from the left wing Barisan Socialist Party, successive PAP governments have determined that fiscally and socially conservative policies are required to firstly, secure the survival of the fledgling state with limited resources, and secondly to deliver economic development. The PAP has succeeded in establishing an almost unshakeable hegemony by means of both consent and coercion in both overt and covert forms,

> …the PAP state's dominance in public discourse, the exertion of its apparatuses to manage civic life, and its use of legal procedures to silence or curtail critics have been said to result in a sterile and noncritical public sphere

> Chong 2011: 5

Alongside delivering a generally high standard of living for most citizens (foreign domestic helps and construction workers excluded) the government retains an armoury of legislative measures to deter dissent, including detention without trial, the use of defamation suits against critics, strict regulations on public assembly, censorship of all forms of artistic activity and a government monopoly on the printed press.

Chong (2011) in his analysis of the relationship between theatre and the state in Singapore, based on Bourdieu's conceptual framework of 'the field', identifies three phases of the PAP's state ideological engagement with theatre. The first phase (1965-1985), 'nation-building', was the state's way of creating "civilized" and "cultured" citizens in the newly developing society where "multi-racial fantasies" could be played out (14). During this phase of nation building it was imperative that racial harmony as defined by the state was realised, particularly in the light of the race riots in 1964,

> In a budding nation the arts were unsurprisingly not seen as an economic imperative but rather as ideological imperatives where *doxa* and the orthodoxies of the ruling elite could be propagated and perpetuated

> Chong 2011: 14

Thus the responsible Singaporean artist citizen pragmatically subjugated her "creative ethos to dominant (or higher) interest as defined by the ruling elite". Her morality was defined as the dedication of her "craft to the support and edification of existing institutions and political structures" (Chong 2011: 32-33). The other two phases of PAP's arts policies are discussed in the course of this chapter.

The political context for left-wing theatre in Singapore is therefore one in which political activism, dissent and protest is an unusual and potentially dangerous activity. The term 'left wing' in the Singaporean context does not have the same connotations as in the UK. Radical theatre in the UK might be explicitly aligned to the concerns of the Labour Party (when in opposition), the Trades Union movement (e.g. during the miners' strike of 1984-85), small far-left parties, or sustained attempts to rally support for environmental, feminist, anti-racist and anti-nuclear issues. UK governments tend to take no direct action against theatre companies or individuals who produce such material, which can be highly and overtly critical of government policies and actively solicit political change. The bodies which distribute state subsidies to theatre companies retain a greater degree of independence from the government (and its security forces) than is the case in Singapore.

Fifty-three years of PAP dominance has denuded Singaporean politics of the spectrum of opinion denoted by the terms 'left-wing' and 'right-wing'. I will therefore use the term 'progressive' to describe theatre making activity which attempts to engage with the concerns of marginalised communities and awaken critical thinking by countering the relentlessly monologic narratives and ideology broadcast by the PAP state's official media. From the UK perspective this may seem to be a politically more modest ambition but from the Singaporean perspective, perhaps a more necessary one.

Beginnings of Theatre in Singapore

English language theatre began in the early nineteenth century and, as part of colonial practice, was restricted to white expatriates. The transplantation and exclusivity of

this cultural activity, and explicit racism embedded within the colonial - native relationship, was part of the regimes and practices of the colonial city …

Chong 2011: 4

There were a number of amateur theatre groups like the Changi Theatre Club and the Tanglin Players who according to Chong "saw to the entertainment of expatriates and provided a pastime for the white leisured class". This tradition continued into the twentieth century with The Stage Club founded in 1945, continuing to deliver a stream of amateur dramatic society type British classics. Reacting against this Lim Chor Pee (Lim) formed the Experimental Theatre Club in 1961 and was its artistic director till 1967. According to archivist, Adlina Maloud, "Lim attempted to set the group apart from other theatre companies, such as the expatriate-owned The Stage Club, by pushing for experimental theatre instead of drawing-room drama" as he found the colonial influence of drama patronising. He wrote two plays, including *Mimi's Fan* which resonated with a local English-speaking audience before he gave up theatre for a legal career (Maloud in Singapore Infopedia). However initial approaches to playwriting, using a mixture of Standard English and Singlish (influenced by the dialects of the different ethnic groups) proved problematic. Early local playwrights like Lim and Goh Poh Seng were "criticized for speaking with an equally unmistakeable British register, part of the larger 'Commonwealth Literature' phenomenon" (Chong 2011: 4)

The origins of left theatre in Singapore can perhaps be traced more accurately to the Chinese language theatre scene of the 1950s and particularly the work Kuo Pao Kun (Kuo). Georgina Wong, curator of the exhibition, 'Script & Stage: Theatre In Singapore From The 50s To The 80s' (October 2016-March 2017, National Library of Singapore) provides insightful commentary on Chinese post-war theatre in Singapore. She saw the need for an exhibition like this because of the lack of documentation of the complex landscape of Singaporean theatre before the 90s. She outlines how Chinese theatre was viewed as a necessary platform to highlight the socio-political issues and cultural conflicts of the time. The Chinese community in the 1950s believed theatre to have the power to incite action and bring about change. They were angered by the British colonial government's policies such as the National Service Ordinance (1954), the white paper on bilingual education in Chinese-medium schools (1953) and the deregistration of the Singapore Chinese Middle Schools

Students' Union (1956). They were convinced that these policies were designed to erode Chinese culture and education. Violent street protests and riots ensued.

Most of the practitioners of progressive theatre in Singapore today have been influenced by the work of Kuo (1939-2002). Having spent his childhood in China and Australia, Kuo adopted a multi-cultural and multi-linguistic approach to theatre making. Like Brecht, Littlewood and so on, he founded the Practice Performing Arts School with his wife, a ballerina and choreographer, Goh Lay Kwan (Goh) in 1965.

> I started doing theatre in the 50s, in my teens. And if you were studying Chinese language and literature then you would naturally have been drawn into the ideology, knowingly or unknowingly, subsequent to the May 4th Movement, which I think of as the first Chinese cultural revolution in the 20th century. And there was a kind of missionary zeal and sense of responsibility about doing art, whether it was writing or doing drama: that you were a member of a movement that was dedicated to the betterment of your fellow man
>
> Kuo in Krishnan and Tan 1997: 127

Kuo and Goh were influenced by the Chinese writer and critic Lu Xun (1881- 1936) founder of the Shanghai League of Left-Wing Writers. In parallel with the contemporaneous work of McColl and Littlewood at Theatre Workshop, Kuo and Goh advocated engaging with and drawing material from the everyday working lives of the masses. The work of Kuo over four decades is premised on the notion that "artists should be engaged not just in society but in life itself — in the diverse ways in which history unfolds and life is lived by people". During the 50s up until the 70s, "this idea was encapsulated in the Chinese term tiyan shenghuo" (literally, "to enter into Life"), which also carried progressive and communitarian connotations (Kwok 2003: 197). Reflecting on this time, Kuo recalls,

> I remember at the time when we had new plays performed, written by us. Sometimes collectively, sometimes individually, you would have busloads of students and workers coming to see the play… And people from my school, other groups and theatre companies fanned out into the working masses - the factories, the construction sites … to speak, experience life and bring their experiences from what they found back for creative production … It was a very different time from today.
>
> Kuo in Sasitharan 1997: 68-69

In 1966 Kuo staged a Mandarin version of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, the first performance of a Brecht play in Singapore. Kuo's first original, full length Chinese play, *Hey, Wake Up!* was performed in 1967. His work in the 1960s and 70s, based on the agitprop Chinese language theatre of the 1950s, was of a social-realistic style with satirical and communitarian themes. Kuo identifies the 50s as the start of his "social political criticism through theatre", referring to that time as politics being "bipolar". He mentions, not by name "two very energetic parties going at each other" which was reflected in the theatre. He was probably referring to pro and anti-communist members of newly formed parties, committed to an independent Singapore. He acknowledges the strong student theatre voice in this political context (Kuo in Sasitharan 1997: 67-68). The work of Kuo had a huge impact on English, Chinese and multi-lingual theatre in Singapore. His work from the seventies onwards will be discussed briefly in the following section and the influence he had on TNS and other theatre companies formed in the eighties and beyond will become clear.

Reflecting on Politics and Pedagogy

From Piscator, Brecht, Mnouchkine, Boal, Littlewood to Kuo and the other companies discussed, the political theatre of twentieth century (before the formation of 7:84) was rich in its ambition to create alternatives to mainstream theatre. The political theatre artists of this time did not always agree on the aesthetics, sites, working methods or what the practice of left-wing theatre ideology meant, but they were united in their opposition to mainstream theatre, where the objective of entertaining paying audiences, overrode all other objectives. They believed that observations, commentaries and expressions of society were vital to their role as artistic agents of change.

As mentioned earlier the social body of my/BWT's experiment is concerned with the equal distribution of power between artists in collaborative processes and what factors affect this. The discussion in this chapter thus far has pointed to the relationship between ideology and aesthetics in determining the empowerment of both artists and audiences.

Piscator believed that his Marxist driven epic techniques were necessary to provoke reasoning in an audience who were becoming increasingly caught up in the catharsis of social

realism. However, he was conflicted about the state's demands for didactic messages via epic theatre and the role of empathy within this, as evidenced by his production of *Hoppla*. He subscribed to the designated roles of director/writer/actor but was also committed to a "dramaturgical collective" at Piscator-Buhne. He saw the aesthetic of the experimental as a means to encourage audiences to reflect on societal issues beyond the world of the play.

Boal too grappled with the place of empathy in his work while determined to awaken criticality in audiences. He experimented with artistic forms ranging from social realism to musicals, discovering the device of joker as the means to develop a dialectical relationship between emotion and reason. His ideology stemmed from his socialist position of collective ownership of resources and in his theatre this meant a rejection of the private ownership of characters by any one actor.

Brecht committed to Marx's and Engels' dialectical materialism. His development of Piscator's epic theatre was born out of this. He didn't seem to grapple with empathy the way Piscator and Boal did and was fully committed to developing alienating devices in the theatre as the means of stamping out emotion's interference with the reasoning capabilities of an audience. He was more concerned with "representing the political on stage" and exposing the dialectical relationship of man with his environment as the means of challenging audiences to change society. He believed in an inductive approach to directing where the artists in BE would have a say in the shaping of the work. However it appears as if he very much led on the artistic processes of the company in his role as playwright and director at BE.

Mnouchkine and Littlewood were clearly of the left but they expressed this quite differently from their male predecessors and contemporaries. Both were committed to a non-hierarchical organisational structure and oversaw an equal pay policy in their respective companies, but both were also perceived as leaders of their companies by the public. Mnouchkine disassociates her practice from Brecht's in that she believed in the ideals of freedom, justice and progress and not the "dogma" of communism or socialism as the means to realise these ideals. In these early years, like TPS, TdS experimented with collage as a way of offering each artist the opportunity to influence the direction of the work without the need for a singular authorial voice. TdS artists took risks in improvising spontaneously

before an audience, affording little room for a director or writer to influence the outcomes of their relationship with the audience.

On the other hand, Littlewood's Theatre Workshop was very much script driven with MacColl writing the scripts. Following Brecht, Littlewood adopted an inductive approach to directing, functioning as facilitator encouraging input from the other artists in the ensemble. Littlewood's theatre was anti-bourgeois and deeply political in its content but despite this, her plays like Brecht's retained commercial appeal. Unlike Brecht, she did not subscribe to agitprop and believed it was not appropriate for the audiences of her time.

Kuo, like Brecht, Littlewood and Fox, founded an oppositional company with his wife. They were communists who had to negotiate their ideology and artistic practice within the state apparatus much like Brecht and Piscator. Kuo refers to the individual and collective creation of radical plays performed for factory/construction workers, disenfranchised students and the general working classes across the ethnic groups who were fighting for their stake in the nation building phase of Singapore. His theatre aesthetic was developed from his belief that the experiences of everyday life inform the vital cultural make-up of a person, and without acknowledging this, an artist's engagement with society was pointless.

Building from these precedents, my BWT experiment is concerned with what ideology means to each of us at BWT and how we can develop a dialectical relationship between our meanings for ideology and the aesthetics we choose in developing a collaborative theatre practice premised on equality. Brecht's definition of ensemble where "not everyone has the same ability, only that every role has the correct actor and that they are balance with each other" needs to be explored. A dialectical relationship between individual/collective ownership needs to be discovered. A dialectical relationship between directing/facilitating, emotion/reason, and actor/spectator needs to be developed.

As well as identifying and intending to work with the dialectical tensions mentioned above, the field also highlighted other issues to be explored by the experiment:

- What should be the site of BWT's performances given the issues around access and inclusion in commodified theatre spaces?

- If the site chosen is a commodified space, is it possible to explore the intersections between DIE, TIE and Applied Theatre in developing collaborative theatre for this space

- How are participants for the experiment selected – do personal qualities, personal politics or pre-existing personal relationships come into play?

- Is funding a necessary condition for developing BWT's performances?

- Is censorship or self-censorship applicable in any way to each of us at BWT?

- Is there a relationship between political content and politicised processes?

- What is the relationship between the "doer and the deed" in the performances which BWT develops?

- How does each BWT artist negotiate her training/education/experience in her professional and amateur status within the experiment?

- How can the idea of the "valorisation of work" assist BWT in our collaborative theatre practice

Section 2: 7: 84 (Scotland) 70s to the 21st Century

In this second section I discuss the key stages and characteristics of 7: 84 since the 1970s. I conclude the section by identifying what further lessons for developing the experiment can be learnt from my involvement with 7: 84.

The name 7: 84 is derived from a statistic published in *The Economist* (1966) which stated that 7% of the population in the UK owned 84% of the nation's wealth in that year. . Even though the statistic has changed over the years, the company retained the name during its four decades of its operation, because of the persistent unequal distribution of wealth globally, and in the UK. 7: 84 was founded by John McGrath, his wife Elizabeth MacLennan and her brother, David MacLennan in 1971. It was a UK wide theatre company but in 1973 it split into 7:84 (Scotland) and 7: 84 (England) with McGrath remaining as the artistic director of both. 7:84 (England) closed down much earlier in 1985 but 7:84 (Scotland) continued until it closed in 2008. I will use 7: 84 when I am referring to 7:84 Scotland and 7: 84 (England) when I am referring to the English company.

Intellectual Property

McGrath (2002: 76) refers to the core group of 7: 84 artists as "mostly socialist" and interested in exploring "socialist alternatives" to the private ownership of land and the commercial extraction of North Sea oil, (- the subject of 7:84's first production), *The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil* (*CSBBO*) (1973). *CSBBO* "remains the stuff of legend both in Scotland and for popular, political theatre history in general" because of its highly charged political content, the appeal of the ceilidh format and its performances at village halls which local communities could easily access (Mackenney 2014: 352). While McGrath's socialist intent is evident in the content of the play, his attitude towards collaborative processes of creation is problematic,

> Obviously I, as a writer, had a very clear idea of exactly how I wanted the show to be … But I also wanted everybody in the company to be intimately involved in the actual process of creating it. I had always fought shy of group-writing before, and still do. This wasn't to be a free-for-all, utopian fantasy.

> (McGrath 1981: viii-ix)

He adds that in this model there were no hierarchies and each skill was given equal weight and merit. I interviewed Alex Norton and David MacLennan (McGrath's brother in-law) to verify McGrath's version

> For McGrath to claim (as he did in The New Edinburgh Review, much to our jaw dropping surprise) that 'the company had very little to do with the actual writing of the show' is completely erroneous and disappointingly mean spirited for such an extraordinary man. I can assure you that we contributed a whole hellova lot to the writing of the Cheviot. To set the record straight, without John McGrath there would have been no 'Cheviot'. He was the driving force and inspirational genius behind the entire enterprise…[6]

> (Norton 2009)

> … Over the first fortnight it took the form of us debating, talking, cracking jokes, playing bits of fiddle tunes, singing snatches of Gaelic songs and then John would go off at night and write and in that process ideas came from all the contributors… but John very much held the pen…[7]

> (MacLennan 2009)

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[6] A fuller extract from an e-mail interview with Alex Norton, company member of *The Cheviot, The Stag and The Black, Black Oil* (Appendix 4 is) included with his consent. Norton's biography which includes his views on the production was published in 2015

[7] A fuller extract from the transcript of interview with David MacLennan, company member of *The Cheviot, The Stag and The Black, Black Oil* (Appendix 5) included with his consent before his passing

Contests over intellectual property have been recorded since Elizabethan times. Marino (2011) in his publication, *Owning William Shakespeare: The King's Men and their Intellectual Property*, offers an account of a period when intellectual property rights were evolving and ownership of theatre texts began to be contested. He points to 1709 when parliament debated the ownership of texts by publishers and 1710 when the Act for the Encouragement of Learning was passed decreeing that publishers could no longer own writers' intellectual property. However, this did not solve the problem of ownership as it assumed singular authorship in what in practice was probably a collective endeavour. While Shakespeare has been designated as the author of the plays attributed to him, in practice he collaborated with the Lord Chamberlain's Men who claimed their stake in the plays (Marino 2011: 20-22). Knutson (2012) critiques Marino's analysis in her review of his publication by pointing out that on the one hand he "lays down a hypothesis of ownership by the Chamberlain/King's Men" but on the other hand he champions them as guardians of Shakespeare's reputation and canon referring to them creating the work but according Shakespeare premier status as writer (Knutson 2012: 237).

Contests for the ownership of performance texts seldom feature in the public domain. The Lord Chamberlain's Men claimed ownership to the texts but they also emphasise Shakespeare's leading role in the creation of the plays. Similarly, Norton acknowledges that *CSBBO* would not have materialised without McGrath but at the same time challenges McGrath's claim to singular authorship. MacLennan acknowledges the contribution of the ensemble to the writing but distinguishes between this and McGrath's ownership of and responsibility for the performance text. Unlike Norton (but similar to Hainer Hill of BE and Philippe Léotard of TdS), Elizabeth MacLennan, actor and wife of McGrath, saw it as a privilege for 7: 84 artists to work with McGrath as writer, director and leader of their collective "all of whom they have a strong artistic and political sympathy" (MacLennan 1990: 56). Norton and MacLennan do not agree on whether McGrath should own the text of *CSBBO* and the royalties that flow from it.

Rethinking Agitprop

While Littlewood was averse to agitprop, the practice of it continued into the early 70s mainly because the Conservative Government had regained power under Edward Heath (1970-1974). Class warfare was rife with the miners' strikes and opposition to the

Industrial Relations Act. In the 1974 election, Labour made gains but did not win an overall majority. Heath was unable to form a coalition resulting in a hung parliament and Labour's Harold Wilson became the Prime Minister. The complexity of the political landscape marked a shift away from agitprop. David Edgar associated agitprop with being a crude form of theatre not appropriate for a political context which was "getting more complicated". He says artists had to make a choice between making theatre for the "politically conscious sector of the working class" or targeting a broader working class audience who were more interested in a "good night out". He committed to the latter which resulted in the development of "popular socialist theatre" (Edgar in DiCenzo 1996: 47-48). Similarly McGrath and 7:84 put enjoyment at the heart of the socialist plays they produced from 1974 onwards. Plays like *The Game's a Bogey*, a parody and *My Pal and Me*, a rock comedy, reflected this new emphasis of the company. During this period the Agitprop Street Players changed their name to Red Ladder to signal a move away from the agitprop form.

1970s Companies and Contexts

It is useful to discuss other left-wing theatre companies and artists in the seventies as I assess the left-wing theatre practice of 7: 84 during this time. DiCenzo cautions against homogenising left-wing theatre of the 60s and 70s in the UK. She discusses Hammond's (1973), *Potted History of the Fringe*, highlighting differences and similarities. He unites 7: 84 and Red Ladder (albeit in different ways) in their commitment to use "theatre as an instrument of political and social change". He distinguishes Welfare State in that their focus was a "spiritual and imaginative liberation based on such a change". He analyses The People's Show's (TPS's) political objectives to be developed from "radical explorations of [their] aesthetic perceptions and ideas about culture" (Hammond in DiCenzo 1996: 18). Red Ladder and 7: 84 were also alike in that they produced plays which appealed to a labour voting audience but differed in that 7: 84 artists were mostly professionally trained whereas Red Ladder's "group included students and people with full-time jobs – some with formal training and others with none at all" (DiCenzo 1996: 23).

The "redefinition of the relationship between the action on stage and the audience" became increasingly integral to definitions of political theatre at this time. 7: 84 "sought not only more involvement, but different (more positive) forms of interaction with their audiences

than Brecht did" (DiCenzo 1996: 41). From *CSBBO* in 1973, direct address, a celebratory ceilidh and some sort of interaction with the audience, formed part of 7: 84's aesthetic. By the end of the seventies direct address became quite personalised, almost an attack on the audience with McGrath's, *Joe's Drum* (1979) written in response to the failure to secure the mandate for Scottish devolution. In his attempt to politicise the audience, he blames students, unions and political groups for their "uncharacteristic passivity", and their sense of fatalism about nationhood in failing to vote, or to encourage others to vote for devolution (DiCenzo 1996: 209). Boal, on the other hand explored relationships with audiences in quite a different way. His joker system includes empathy and reason; the "play and analysis" are one and the same thing and "theatre as an art form" is used as a "language" by audiences "to address their own needs" (Babbage 2004: 60). He pioneered these techniques at the Arena Theatre and developed them in Peru on the Alfin project in 1973. This was the beginning of Boal's forum theatre, an integral part of his theatre of the oppressed. The notion of audience is deconstructed through the concept of spec-actor where audiences become active participants through their interventions in the world of the play. While Boal was addressing nationhood through an investment in literacy, McGrath was doing this through engagement with electoral processes. Influenced by Freire, in Boal's forum theatre, knowledge is negotiated with an audience, while in McGrath's theatre knowledge is transmitted, via the message of the play.

Hull Truck was founded in 1971 by Mike Bradwell who was also its director but in a very different way from McGrath. The plays they performed were the product of a devising process where Bradwell "worked with each actor in isolation, discussing the kind of character he wanted", improvising and discovering details about this character, after which he brought the characters/actors together for further improvisations so that a "dramatic line began to evolve". Each scene was meticulously rehearsed but "nothing was ever written down" (Itzin 1980: 132). While improvisations and input from all artists were integral to 7: 84's methodology, the creative process was initiated by McGrath's ideas, not characters invented by other 7:84 artists. Like D MacLennan said, "John very much held the pen", wrote the scripts developed from the improvisations, made the final decisions on it and directed the artists based on the scripts he wrote (Appendix 5).

Shepherd (2009: 72-74) identifies Joint Stock, founded in 1973 by Max Stafford-Clark, David Aukin and David Hare as the legacy of Littlewood's, Theatre Workshop. It is important to discuss Joint Stock because as a socialist company Hare, Stafford-Clark and Aukin felt it was necessary, after 1968, to review their leadership of the ensemble at a time when there was "an increased interest in socialist ideas, women's politics, gay politics and a desire to work and live in non-hierarchical structures" (73). The move from ensemble to collective was proposed after the production of Hare's *Fanshen* (1974). The source of the play was William H. Hinton's research into the responses of village peasants to the Chinese Civil War (1945-1948). Hinton's work was the stimulus to a workshopping process, with all the artists involved in interpreting the source material and adapting the narrative, with Hare writing up the improvisations. Initially the artists were sceptical about this way of working but the production was successful and resulted in the workshop becoming an intrinsic part of the company's rehearsal methodology. It also prompted a more democratic way of working. In 1976 Joint Stock began the shift from an ensemble to a collective and by 1979 equal pay was in place for all artists. The three directors were conflicted about the issue of equal leadership on the artistic vision of the work, and the wisdom of collaborating with all the actors, as the work developed. They believed this would compromise the coherence and aesthetics of the plays. Simon Callow refers to Joint Stock as a 'directocracy' where although the actors were in the majority "they stood for the tastes of its directors" much like Littlewood's collective (73). At a time when the "authority" of the director "[was] no longer a given", the directors gained authority through the consent of the actors and in doing so redefined 'collective' to mean equal pay but not an equal share in the artistic vision of the work.

7: 84's practice of collectivism, while similar to Joint Stock in terms of equal pay and being director-led, was quite different in terms of authority. My interview with Norton (Appendix 5) and DiCenzo's analysis suggests that perhaps McGrath's authority was not secured through consent,

> Measures were taken to work in a less hierarchical way, but there was perhaps a different degree of collective participation in administrative affairs than in artistic ones. As much as McGrath was willing to 'open up' the creative process, clearly he was in control of the final product … his name appeared on the published versions of the plays … The fact that McGrath also directed the plays … reinforced the degree of control he seemed to have over the company's work"
>
> DiCenzo 1996: 95-96

The gender politics of 7: 84 during this time are also problematic in defining the type of political theatre it developed. In the mid- seventies the feminist and gay rights movements were growing in strength and confining theatre to class-based issues was insufficient in defining political theatre. Many artists were dissatisfied with the "structures and attitudes of existing socialist companies" and they began to "regroup around issues concerning sexual politics" (DiCenzo 1996: 48). At the same time Ed Berman's Inter-Action, formed in 1968 to bring artistic activities closer to the community, was becoming known for broadening meanings of political performance. In his retort to the class-based socialist theatre of the time, Berman said, "I believe that structure and personal action are more important than what you say" (Berman in Itzin 1980: 51). Berman brought different artists and communities together with a view to diversifying arts programming in London. He produced lunch time work-in-progress shows where he facilitated the ambitions of under-represented artists whose stories were seldom heard because of their gender or sexuality. The Women's Theatre Group (formed in 1973), and Gay Sweatshop (formed in 1975), materialised because of Berman's lunch time shows (Itzin 1996: 230, 234). Monstrous Regiment was formed in 1975 to promote women artists.

In this context, 7: 84's programming in the seventies weighted in favour of male protagonists and stories, is perplexing. *CSBBO* with its aesthetic of each actor, female or male, playing multiple characters and telling multiple stories, was progressive in terms of gender equality. However, the programming of plays, like *The Games a Bogey*, (intended audience – working men's club), *Boom* (male protagonist), *Joe's Drum* (male protagonist) etc. ignored the gender politics of the time. Elizabeth MacLennan was highly critical of Billy Connolly's "triumphant machismo" and the stereotypes of the "anti-granny, anti-mammy, anti-wifey" in *The Great Northern Welly Boot Show* (1972), yet she overlooked her own complicity in patriarchy. She relates how it was very difficult travelling with and looking after the children during the 7:84 tours. The long hours took a toll, the reason she offers for her perseverance,

> It has a lot to do with being associated with a very, very, fine writer, John. And some of the best actors around. Against incredible odds getting these plays on. John was, and is, 7: 84 to that extent

<div align="right">MacLennan 1990: 38</div>

While she acknowledges the value of the other actors, she singles out McGrath's unique talent in scriptwriting, associates the name of 7: 84 solely with McGrath, discusses hers but not McGrath's care responsibilities for their children and does not acknowledge her own contribution to the foundation and operation of the company.

By July 1977, tensions were high in 7: 84. Exhaustion from touring and differences in opinion on the artistic direction of the company resulted in the formation of the splinter company, Wildcat in 1978. Bill Patterson, one of the core artists with 7: 84 suggests that after the *CSBBO* and *The Game's a Bogey* tours, the company was "becoming like a band on tour with a bit of acting at the front of it". He said that the company members, who wanted to foreground the music even more, went on to form Wildcat (Patterson in Bradby and Capon 2005: 181-183). D MacLennan's view that "the main people involved should be free to develop their ideas for this 'band theatre', supports Patterson's analysis. MacLennan, David Anderson (musician/writer/actor) and a few others "wanted music to lead the story" as part of 7: 84's overall aesthetic (MacLennan in DiCenzo 1996: 101-102). Finlay Welsh believed the reasons for the split was not only artistic but political as well. He suggests that MacLennan and Anderson "had more to say that 7: 84 weren't going to say for them" (DiCenzo 1996: 102)

Funding Challenges from the Outset

From the outset the difficulty of making 7: 84 financially viable within the cultural economy, was a strain, and McGrath was at the forefront of many battles with the SAC. Perhaps this was why E MacLennan associates 7: 84 solely with McGrath. Before 7:84 split into the Scottish and English companies, it produced *The Ballygombeen Bequest* (1972), a play critical of the conduct of the British Army in Northern Ireland. The British Commander in Chief, and those who supported the army, condemned it, but those who were against the status quo, believed it to be a necessary and enjoyable piece of theatre. E MacLennan (1990: 38-48) asserts that even though the SAC claimed it was not in the business of censorship and subscribed to the arms- length principle of arts governance, the funding status of 7: 84 changed as a result of *The Ballygombeen Bequest*. The SAC funded the *CSBBO* (1973) tour only after McGrath's lengthy justification of the merits of the work, which addressed the SAC's five objections including how the Highland clearances would be presented to the audience, the subsistence of the artists and the cost of hiring the village

halls. Even then the funding was limited to "£2000 guarantee against loss" and no "capital grant towards the van" (47). From another perspective, Itzin suggests that by 1972 oppositional theatre was growing rapidly and the "Arts Council simply wasn't finding enough cash to meet the growing demands of fringe theatre (1980: 136). Whatever the case, the *CSBBO* example signalled the beginning of 7: 84's battle with state funders during its four decades of operation.

Funding Crisis

7: 84's funding battles with the SAC escalated in the eighties. Conservative and Labour administrations alternated in power during the seventies so while 7: 84 clashed with the SAC for some of this decade, left-wing theatre continued to be funded under Labour. However, following the Conservative's election in 1979, under Margaret Thatcher, politics shifted dramatically to the right.

Thatcher's series of populist/authoritarian governments brought about shifts in Arts Council policies. DiCenzo (1996: 63-72) discusses these changes and the effect they had on oppositional theatre. The priority in the eighties was to keep state funded arts buildings going and support for "new work" and "new audiences" was seen as being given "lip service" (63). To determine which companies would be funded, a controversial means of assessing excellence was developed by the Arts Council. There were clear biases "against alternative work and in favour of traditional arts" with the Secretary-General Roy Shaw stating that it is difficult to work with artists who "bite the hand that feeds them" echoing the views of Lord Goodman, Chairman of the Arts Council who questioned the wisdom of the state subsidising arts organisations who were committed to overthrowing it (64). During Thatcher's second term in office (1983-1987), there were significant budget cuts to the Arts. The Arts Council became more of a corporation and encouraged arts organisations to raise corporate sponsorship and develop business models for their operations. Decentralisation of power and non-hierarchical theatre production could not be accommodated within this business model.

In 1985, shortly after touring *The Garden of England* during the Miners' Strike of 1984-5, the Arts Council cut 7: 84 (England)'s funding and the company ceased operation.

For the next three years McGrath worked tirelessly to ensure the survival of 7: 84 "endlessly submitting artistic plans to a Scottish Arts Council who were becoming increasingly hostile" (Mackenney 2014: 353). To articulate the work of 7: 84 more clearly to the SAC, he expressed it in three strands. Firstly, low budget political shows like *The Cheviot*, secondly the big scale shows that were born out of the successful Clyde-built Season of 1982 and finally the Highland shows which included *There is a Happy Land* (1985) and *Mhairi Mhor* (1986). The SAC assessors were highly critical of all three strands giving the work poor ratings (Mackenney 2014: 353, 355). The Council also advocated a move away from the collective structure to a bureaucratic one, insisting that those with financial and administrative responsibilities had to be paid more than the artists (Mackenney 1996: 71). The company was to be governed by a board of directors who had business and financial acumen. The SAC cut 7: 84's funding in 1988 on the basis that it had not met the terms of the funding and they were dissatisfied with the composition of the board. The grant was reinstated after McGrath stepped down as artistic director in July 1988 and the company agreed to abandon its Highland shows, cease its policy of equal pay and appoint a general manager at market price (McGrath 2002: 160, 163).

On 25 January 1989 David Hayman took over as artistic director with Gerard Kelly and Joe Beddoe as associate directors. They acted on SAC's criticism about the anti-naturalism of 7: 84's work, complied with all the terms of funding and negotiated political content in ways more acceptable to the SAC. The SAC supported the new artistic direction of 7: 84 (MacLennan 1990: 172-173). The triumvirate of directors were to oversee the transition period between McGrath's departure and the appointment of a new permanent artistic director.

Border Warfare

I single out McGrath's *Border Warfare* (1989) because of the participatory aspects of its staging. Mackenney (2014: 356-360) describes the production, praising the imaginative staging and McGrath's poetic writing, conveying that he wrote the play shortly after his resignation from 7: 84. However, McGrath still offered it to company but the new directors turned it down. David MacLennan at Wildcat produced it as a promenade piece, staged at

Glasgow's Tramway Theatre (February 1989). The play theatricalised "the entire history of Scotland and its relationship with England, from primordial times to the late 1980s" (356).

> At the end of Act Two, which closed with the passing of the Act of Union in 1707, the audience who sat around the acting area as if they were in parliament, were asked to leave by one of two doors, according to whether they would have voted Yes or No on the subject of the union.
>
> <div align="right">Mackenney 2014: 357</div>

Most voted 'no' with only a few exiting through the 'yes' door. Donald Dewar who was to become the inaugural First Minister of the devolved Scottish Parliament in 1999, a firm supporter of Scottish devolution, and then a Shadow Cabinet Minister, was present at the Performance. He sat uncomfortably, not wanting to exit through either door. The cast astutely observed his dilemma and chatted with him throughout the interval so that he could abstain without attention being drawn to it.

The Changing Politics

During the nineties a more complex political landscape emerged. John Major led the Conservative majority government until 1996 when the majority was lost due to by-election defeats. Under the leadership of Tony Blair, following a shift to the political centre, Labour returned to government with a majority in 1997. The Scottish devolution referendum of 1997 resulted in the establishment of the Scottish Parliament in 1999 with devolved powers from Westminster for certain areas of administration.

There had been challenges with the composition of the 7: 84 board of management in the latter half of the eighties. The SAC appointed an accountant to chair 7: 84's board of management. Linda Mackenney resigned from the board in disagreement with Hayman's artistic direction and his compliance with SAC's terms of funding. E. MacLennan, who was also a board member, was dismayed at SAC's reluctance to subsidise touring theatre, and raised her concerns about "the enterprise culture that is pumped into us intravenously everyday". She believed that oppositional theatre needed a strong opposition and they both needed each other (MacLennan 1990: 199). A period of stability on the board began with the resignation of the accountant and the appointment of Bill Spiers, who at the time was

the Assistant Secretary of the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) (DiCenzo 1996: 120-131).

In 1992 7: 84 entered a new era in its development with Spiers as chair of the board, new board members and the appointment of Iain Reekie as its artistic director. Reekie graduated from the RSAMD in 1989 and was only twenty-five at the time. He set out to build on the work of McGrath and Hayman but also to "broaden the remit to include issues of personal politics" and to be able to "find a way back into the changed communities of the 1990s". New writing and a "consistent outreach policy" characterised this period (Smith 1998: 302).

New Writing

> Iain Reekie had inherited a mantle of a very political-with-a-big-P company. But he was a young director interested in new writing, and at times it felt that they required a different approach to politics at that point.
>
> <div align="right">Greig in Nichols 2013: 47</div>

This 'different approach' was reflected in the programming and the writers Reekie commissioned. He produced the new writing of Noel Greig, Jackie Kay and Stephen Greenhorn, among others, bringing personal issues of sexuality, race and grief with the 'small p' politics in the foreground and the larger politics of the state in the background. When he addressed the bigger political questions of Scottish identity and nationhood in the lead up to Scottish devolution, he commissioned Greenhorn, Peter Arnott and David Greig whose approaches to playwriting sat well with his own anchoring of the personal within the political. While he commissioned all three writers, he was only able to direct Greig's *Caledonia Dreaming* (1997) and Greenhorn's *Dissent* (1998). *Caledonia Dreaming* is an optimistic look at self-determination and the possibilities for Scotland as a nation. *Dissent* is a much bleaker exploration of personal ethics in the quest for political power. Nichol argues that *Caledonia Dreaming* "is nothing like as polemical as" the *CSBBO* suggesting that even in the "most political pointed" speech in the play (about the 1997 referendum), the focus is on "a rumination on the word 'Yes' rather than a call to political action" (Nichols 2013: 46-47).   *Dissent* references the tensions between Old and New Labour but Nichols suggests that it was an over-simplification of the political landscape citing responses from critics, Joyce McMillan and Mark Fisher to support her analysis. She raises the issue of the move away from political action by referring to Greenhorn's view that the function of the

political playwright was to "engender debate" (53). In McGrath's time, the polemic was the means to political action but by the nineties the polemic had become an end in itself.

Outreach

A fundamental change took place at 7: 84 in the nineties which mirrored the growing practice in the UK for professional theatre companies to have some kind of outreach programme in place to meet the criteria for state funding. As a result, a clear demarcation emerged between the work professional artists produced for ticketed audiences, and the work they produced for or with communities, where performance as a commodity was challenged or negotiated. In the autumn of 1992, Reekie appointed John Heraghty as an "outreach worker". Reekie had faced growing criticism about the relevance of 7: 84 as an exclusively political theatre company when politics was tackled in many other companies' productions. This led Reekie to define the politics of the company in terms of its unique outreach work. This was a departure from the integration of outreach and professional theatre as evidenced by earlier works like the *CSBBO*,

> While producing high quality professional theatre was still a central part of the Company's work, it seemed to me that we had to find a way of taking the theatre-making experience directly to people to give them a voice to speak for themselves.

Reekie 1997: 34

Reekie directed all the professional productions and oversaw the outreach work of the company while Heraghty led on the delivery of this work. The outreach arm of the company grew quickly with Heraghty's role elevated to 'outreach director' when he successfully led on ten productions and was about to coordinate a programme for STUC's 100 year celebrations. Reekie asserts that working with different kinds of communities on different aspects of performance production is the kind of process that "leads to the strongest form of political theatre". He adds that he is committed to raising the profile of this work and securing funds for it, highlighting the value of partnership working with the local Councils (Reekie 1997: 35). Reekie's last production for 7: 84 was *24 hours* (2000) co-written by six writers. He left later that year to lead the Acting programme at Rosebruford College.

The Wider Context

In the nineties the postmodernist movement was gaining momentum with companies like Forced Entertainment, The Wooster Group, Goat Island, Elevator Repair Service, among others, becoming popular with audiences. While still very much director-led, their creation of texts reflected a more collaborative approach. However, 7: 84 continued with the oligarchical writer-director model. During this time the meaning for 'actor' was contested and theatre was developed from both the performer/performance text paradigm, as well as the actor/play one. Vocational actor training at conservatoires was not the only type of training/education on offer. Universities were gaining recognition for theatre programmes which included performance, directing, applied theatre and theatre studies. There was a "theatrical energy" for alternative theatre spaces and "the designers of new theatres invariably incorporated studios into their plans" (Fisher 1996: 51). Fisher discusses the flexible spaces at the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh and the Tramway Theatre in Glasgow, making a case for an imaginative alternative theatre for Scotland but concludes that "it is the established stock of buildings that hold the most dominant position in day-to-day theatrical life (1996: 49-50).

By the end of the eighties Monstrous Regiment and the Women's Theatre Group, who renamed themselves, Sphinx Theatre, had rejected the collective organisational structure in favour of a management team and a board of directors much like 7: 84 had done (Heddon and Milling 2006: 120). However, both retained their feminist theatre credentials in spite of the move away from collectivism. With 7: 84 the leadership and organisational structure remained dominated by men throughout the nineties.

The Twenty-First Century

The first decade was characterised by warning signs of impending recession, protests against the Iraq War in 2003 and a resurgence of the far right. In Scotland, Labour dominated politics until the May 2007 Scottish elections when the centre-left, pro-independence, Scottish National Party (SNP) achieved an overall majority. The National Theatre of Scotland (NTS) was founded in 2006 as a "a theatre without walls" meaning it is not building based but works "in partnership with theatre-makers, companies, venues and

participants across the globe" (NTS 2018). In 2010 the SAC was replaced by Creative Scotland, a body formed to bring together the functions of the SAC and Scottish Screen.

In the context of so much change (inclusive of Brexit), it is difficult to ignore the impact of neoliberalism on theatre production. Harvey (2005: 2) defines neoliberalism as a "theory of political economic practices" which proposes that the best way to progress the well-being of everyone is by "liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework". The assumption is that collective well-being can only be advanced through individual enterprise within market-driven institutions. In the 1980s E. MacLennan had expressed her concerns about "enterprise culture" which did not sit well with the socialist principles of 7: 84. In the twenty-first century neoliberalism has become the ideological, political tool used to promote the idea that the human species can only advance by prioritising an individual's ambition and acumen for developing products which are cheap to produce and can be sold at a profit.

> While personal and individual freedom in the market place is guaranteed, each individual is held responsible and accountable for his or her own actions and well-being.
>
> Harvey 2005: 3

Personal accountability in the creation of art that challenges this market-driven ideology makes artists reconsider the content of their work, their own status within their companies, and their ability to secure state and corporate funds. As "global markets drive all decision-making", everything requires a commodity value including labour and the environment. If there are disagreements on how labour is treated, the neoliberal state "will tend to side with a good business climate" and not the "collective rights" of workers" (Harvey 2005: 66, 70). The relationship between capitalism, neoliberalism and the arts is best described as "the individualism of capitalism as proliferated by neoliberalism, as colonising every aspect of human experience" Angelaki (2017: 5). 7: 84, founded on the basis of oppositional theatre, challenging the status quo and labelling itself as an exclusively political theatre company, had no chance of survival in this context.

The Writing is on the Wall

In 2000, a recent graduate from the RSAMD, Gordon Laird was appointed as artistic director of 7:84. Reekie had brought stability to the troubled company, and it seemed odd that Laird, with limited experience in directing or management, was appointed at a time when the company's stability needed to be cemented. His leadership marked the beginning of the time when critics consistently rated 7: 84's productions poorly. His 7: 84 directing debut, *A Little Rain* by Peter Arnott, commissioned by Reekie as part of a series of state of the nation plays (referred to earlier), was not received well by the critics. Tom Dibdin did not see it as a worthy conclusion to the trilogy on identity and nationhood and Joyce McMillan thought the play was "mis-sold" to her and that it bore little relationship to the politics of Scotland (Diddin and McMillan in Nichols 2013: 58). With subsequent productions like, *The News at When*, devised collaboratively by the cast and directed by Laird, the criticisms became even more scathing. Eaton (2002) said the satire lacked sophistication and looked "like a relic from the past". He concludes the review by saying that watching the TV at home would have been a better option on a winter's night. 7: 84 was in a no win situation. The politics could not be too explicit because the company would be accused of old fashioned agitprop but experimentations with allegory, subtlety and metaphors were seen as a dilution of the political status of the company. After directing *Cave Dwellers* by Nicola McCartney in March 2002, Laird took a leave of absence and then resigned from the company.

From 2002-2003, 7: 84 had no artistic director. Spiers had been replaced by Chris Bartter as chair. Like Spiers he worked for a union. He was the communications officer for the public service union, Unison. It is not clear how the programme developed during this time but visiting directors including Andy Arnold, Guy Hollands Zinnie Harris and Stuart Davids directed the company's productions, a mixture of new writing and older plays like Dario Fo's *Can't Pay? Won't Pay!*

Lorenzo Mele was appointed as artistic director in September 2003. He had worked in the company, prior to this appointment, in the role of outreach director from 1999-2001. Mele and I were classmates at the RSAMD and we had worked together on projects in the past. He was familiar with my work both in Scotland and Singapore and involved me in some of his outreach projects then. We worked together again at 7: 84 when Mele became artistic director.

Mele, (2018) in response to my question about the funding status of the company he inherited, confirms that the company was on a four year SAC funding cycle when he started. However, before starting, he was aware of a "leaked memo stating that SAC's lead officer for 7: 84 was recommending not continuing it in the next round". Mele nevertheless followed through with his commitment to work for the company, programmed for the current cycle, managed to secure funding for an additional year, wrote a business plan for a future four year cycle, after which he resigned from the company in May 2008. Glasgow City Council consistently delivered on an annual award for the company but Mele was aware of the lack of support from the SAC lead officer from the outset. He says this "destabilised the company and led to risk-averse decision making". Once Mele left, administrators Wendy Niblock and Phyllis Steele were appointed by the board to oversee 7: 84's programme obligations and undertake a feasibility study on the long term viability of the company. It came as no surprise when 7: 84 ceased trading in December 2008.

I asked Mele what artistic direction he took when he was appointed,

> I wanted to engage more directly with contemporary political issues that could tap into a repoliticised society due to the Iraq war, 9/11, climate change, the Good Friday agreement - changes in Northern Ireland and the frustrations around New Labour   so I developed and commissioned work such as *Private Agenda*, *Borderland*, *Boiling a Frog*, *Tipping Point* amongst others. It was also the time of the Scottish parliament getting into its stride, with the 2003 election bringing in 6 SSP MSPs and 7 Greens, so there was a new range of radical voices being heard.
>
> <div align="right">Mele 2018</div>

The plays reflecting the political climate of the time that Mele refers to, received mixed reviews. Fisher (2009-10) while positive about *Private Agenda*'s (a verbatim piece developed by Mele) ability to rouse audiences with "righteous political anger of being sold down the water", describes, *Boiling a Frog* (Christopher Deans' adaptation of Christopher Brookmyer's novel directed by Mele) as not doing justice to the novel and "an unexceptional piece of theatre". The critics were more favourable to *Borderland* written by Andrew Doyle and directed by Mele, but even these came with caveats. Cooper (2005) praises the humour born out of the tensions of the Irish conflict and the imaginative use of video footage but proposes that *Borderland* could have been set free if Doyle had "concentrated fully on the cracking comedy… rather than fulfilling an agenda". Dawson Scott (2005) also commends the video footage and says that it was a good but "not perfect play". He discusses quality

issues with 7: 84 productions since the departure of Reekie and would only go so far as to say that under Mele's leadership, the company were "beginning to turn out some half decent shows". In a similar vein, Brown (2005) refers to the play as "a very welcome development" in the context of audiences' disappointment with 7: 84's bias towards an "overly-polemical brand of documentary theatre". It was clear that the work of 7: 84 could never be critiqued in its own right, out-with its origins and a justification for its existence as an exclusively 'political' theatre company in the twenty-first century. Ideologically driven politics seemed unfashionable in contemporary theatre where the politics and aesthetics of postmodern micro narratives reigned.

Mele (2018) recognised that 7: 84 was not sustainable as a touring company as this role had been taken over by the newly formed NTS. Touring to economically and geographically rural or isolated communities had become "totally mainstream", and was no longer perceived to be radical. Perhaps regional touring is one of the most lasting legacies of 7: 84's pioneering, ideologically-led, approaches from the 1970s. SAC were not going to fund touring companies whose functions had been taken over by the NTS. To survive, Mele was of the view that "7:84 needed to find where the radical reason for its existence sat". He believed this to be in applied theatre but the 7: 84 board and staff wanted to continue as a touring theatre company which produced professional theatre.

Working with 7: 84

From 2004 – 2008, I worked as an associate director for 7: 84, directing professional productions and facilitating applied theatre projects. Like Mele, I thought that the future of 7: 84 lay in applied theatre. Together with Mele, I developed the TIE *Threads of Tartan* project for primary school pupils, focussing on diversity and inclusion. We also designed TIE workshops to complement the 7: 84 professional touring productions. However, it was the applied theatre project which Mele and I developed together with male Asian youths in the Pollokshields area of Glasgow, which I found to be the most political. My work with TNS in the eighties and nineties helped me recognise that in the twenty-first century, radical artistic interventions in society, lay in applied theatre's potential to deliberately and creatively disrupt the binary of use value and exchange value Hughes (2011: 190).

We worked in partnership with the Taleem Trust who provided a staffed drop in centre for the youth living in this predominantly Asian area. The staff advised us on why these young

men were angry, disaffected and felt they were on the fringes of society. 'Fringe', 'alternative', 'oppositional', "applied" – whatever the name, facilitating image theatre and creating forum theatre together with these participants, was when I felt 7: 84 made the most difference in the community. As an artist working for a political theatre company, I believed that my role was to facilitate theatre which was relevant to these young men's daily living and made them feel valued. Mele recorded quantifiable outcomes and the wider impact of the Pollokshields' project. For me, the impact was most evident from the participants' initial distrust of me, as an Asian woman trying to 'lead' them, in what appeared to be meaningless theatre exercises, to their respect for me as an equal, an artist and a theatre 'facilitator' committed to making their voices heard.

While at 7: 84, I co-directed *Re:Union* (2007) with Mele, directed *The Algebra of Fredom* (*AF*) (2007) and *Eclipse* (2008). *Re: Union*, a quartet of plays by Nicola McCartney**,** Selma Dimitrijevic, Haresh Sharma and Linda McLean, was commissioned by Mele to mark the 300th anniversary of the Act of Union to stimulate debate on a second Scottish independence referendum. As expected, with a few exceptions, the reviews for *Re: Union* were harsh, with the reviewers once again highlighting the company's failure (either through metaphorical or direct, literal approaches) to explore events of political significance. More than this, some of them made it explicit that the time for 7: 84 had passed,

"Given that most companies were making bedfellows of the personal and the political a decade ago …" (Cooper on *Re: Union* 2007)

"It may come as an even bigger surprise to learn that 7: 84 … is still going in Scotland, given the English version of it was closed down 23 years ago" (Dawson Scott on *Re: Union* 2007)

"I just made one mistake… I actually went to see the show instead of simply reading the programme notes" (McMillan on *Re: Union* 2007)

AF by Raman Mundair was based on the police shooting of an innocent civilian, Jean Charles de Menezes at London's Stockwell underground station, because of mistaken identity. With *AF*, while continuing to point out 7: 84's failings, some critics, for the first time in a long while, legitimised the company's position within the Scottish political theatre landscape. We noted that the critics no longer felt compelled to lobby for the company's closure. Since it was already on the brink of closure, it was now safe to affirm the company in some way,

"Considering the political credentials it continues to claim, the company 7: 84 has hit on this surprisingly late in the day, in a production that wisely steers well clear of any associated moral high ground" (Cooper on *AF* 2007)

"It is inspiring though, to see 7: 84 Scotland… throwing itself into such a raw, bold and interesting exploration of one of the most important subjects in contemporary politics" (McMillan on *AF* 2007)

While many of the critics did not approve of *Re: Union* as a whole, they were unanimous in singling out *Eclipse* from the quartet of plays as "sensitively realised" (Cooper), "beautifully performed (McMillan) and "the strongest element" (Dawson Scott). Sharma, the author of *Eclipse*, one of the plays within this quartet, developed it into a full length play which I directed in Singapore as part of the M1 festival curated by TNS in January 2008. It was also 7: 84's final production, touring schools in Scotland from September-November 2008. *Eclipse* is about a young Singaporean man retracing the footsteps of his father and grandfather from the partition of India in 1947 to the time of his father's death. When the full length version was staged in Singapore, the critics there too were unanimous in their praise of the play, performance and production.

Mele did not need any convincing when I suggested we develop an *Eclipse* TIE project and organise a Scottish schools tour,

> Scottish Pakistanis make up the largest ethnic minority in Scotland. Here was a gem of a play which could stimulate discussion on the partition of India amongst teenagers of all races in Scottish schools, with the potential to provoke debate on interculturalism and reflections on diaspora and nationhood.
>
> Ronan in Sharma 2014: 10

Shortly before leaving 7: 84 Mele secured the funds for an *Eclipse* TIE schools' tour. I led on the artistic requirements for this final 7: 84 project, with the administrators Niblock and Steele, overseeing the financial and logistical arrangements. It was a fitting end for the company – no critics, no worry about finances, just an excitement about the work itself – theatre as politics, rather than political theatre, focussing on the dialogic engagement between pupils, teachers and artists about ancestry and our daily living in Scotland.

Lessons from 7: 84

My analysis of political theatre before 7: 84 outlined recurring questions, concerning the relationship between ideology and aesthetics; empathy and reason; professional and amateur; spectator and actor. These tensions alongside issues relating to funding, censorship and applied theatre informed the conceptual dialectical framework I was developing. The discussion of 7: 84's antecedents and evolution confirmed for me the need to explore these questions and issues further. The establishment of BWT as a consciously and overtly collaborative project is designed to test whether these issues can be resolved in practice.

The discussion of 7: 84, through its four decades of existence, highlight its complex challenges with funding, where the relationship between ideology, aesthetics and the means of production are accentuated. Throughout its existence, the didactic, left content of the plays and its agitprop aesthetics put 7: 84's funding from the SAC in jeopardy. It became increasingly clear that its funding was dependant on whether a Labour or Conservative government was in power. Ironically in the seventies, it was McGrath and not the funder who insisted that the company be a director/writer-led led company. He believed that equal pay and collectivism in a general sense, could sit comfortably with his singular artistic vision, within the collaborative practice he promoted, where artists could feed into his overarching vision. There were others at the time who took a different approach. Bradwell of Hull Truck functioned as a different type of director, facilitating collective authorship of the performance texts through improvisatory explorations, where nothing was ever written down. Stafford-Clark, Aukin and Hare of Joint Stock felt it was necessary as a socialist theatre company to change the mode of production from ensemble to collective, introducing not only equal pay, but workshopping a source text as the means of facilitating collective ownership of artistic vision. Hare and other writers including Caryl Churchill took responsibility for writing the scripts developed from the workshopping processes of Joint Stock.

These models of collaborative practice confirmed for me that the BWT experiment should begin without a director and if a director were to be introduced at a later stage, it had to be with the consent of the BWT artists and should not compromise the collective ownership of the artistic vision for the performance we created. The dialectical framework I was developing would help us discover the appropriate aesthetics and rehearsal methodology which could facilitate the collective ownership of artistic vision.

In the eighties, state funding requirements forced theatre companies to become organised like private companies with bureaucratic hierarchies overseen by boards of management. 7: 84 and others including Monstrous Regiment, Sphinx Theatre, Joint Stock, Welfare State and Red Ladder, abandoned their collective work practices, adopted these structures and abided by the terms of funding as stipulated by the state funder. The only exception to this was TPS who continued to operate as a collective. In the nineties Reekie personalised the politics of identity, nationhood and poverty, adopting an approach to programming which was more amenable to the SAC. Simultaneously Arts policy in Britain included widening access and social inclusion agendas which funded companies were expected to accommodate in their planning. 7: 84 responded by polarising its professional and community work, with the professional work driven by the aesthetics of performance as a commodity and the community work driven by the aesthetics of TIE and applied theatre. In the twenty first century 7: 84 folded under the weight of neoliberalism's ethos of enterprise and utility-driven collaboration. It was not able to combat the broadsheet newspaper critics' interrogations of its purpose or the SAC's bureaucrats who persisted with the subjective and sustained criticisms of the company. The loss of funding was ineveitable.

The question of whether funding is necessary for the BWT experiment or a condition for the production of its performances, needed to be explored in terms of the impact of funding (or lack thereof) on our organisational structure, our methods and what we created. Can BWT secure funding when there is evidence to suggest that "the established stock of buildings" will always take priority over any experimental theatre work? If we secured funding, would we self-censor or become risk- averse to the content we developed? If funding would enable us to develop a professional production, would we then be able to politicise collaboration for purposes of collective ownership of artistic processes or would our collaboration inevitably be utility-driven? Would we be willing to subject ourselves to funders' and critics' scrutiny as a condition of receiving funding? What would be the status of BWT artists who are professionally trained but participate in the experiment with no remuneration in the first instance? What could BWT learn from TPS who survive outside, but also rely on these market-driven structures? How would my experiment take into account inclusion and access to BWT's performances when they take place in ticketed arts venues? Dialectical thinking on

approaches to finance, capital, collaboration, professional production and access became necessary in tackling these questions.

E MacLennan' status as a founder of 7: 84, along with the positions of Mnouchkine and Littlewood, made me aware that I had perhaps ignored gender politics in my own practice in the past. E MacLennan's achievements seem to have been largely overshadowed by McGrath's. Her promotion and protection of him in the literature did not sit comfortably with me. At the same time, there is no doubt that Littlewood and Mnouchkine while promoting the collective, never negated themselves. Their achievements are widely recognised and credited. In designing the experiment, I reflected on the work of all three women and also the work of Sphinx and Monstrous Regiment. While recognising that I could do a lot more to develop feminist practice and perspectives, I also became clear that the partisan all women-led theatre approach adopted by Sphinx and Monstrous Regiment, was not the way I wanted to proceed. In developing a practice-based project for my MA in Actor Training and Coaching, I sourced two male actors I had worked with in the past, without even considering whether I wanted to explore the implications of gender in my practice. Thus with the BWT experiment, I thought it was necessary to recruit strong women as well as men so that equality and ownership could be explored in this mixed gender context.

Similarly, the partnerships of Brecht/ Weigel, Littlewood/MacColl, Fox/Gill, McGrath/MacLennan and Kuo/Goh made me consider how their pre-existing relationships, out-with the rehearsal room, had influenced their companies' collaborative processes and whether the other artists raised this question during discussions on collectivism. In selecting participants for my experiment, I would need to acknowledge that I had a pre-existing relationship with each of them and accordingly discuss and develop pedagogical strategies to ensure that equality within the collective was not undermined because of this.

In designing the experiment, I conceived that the possibilities for politicised collaboration should be tested in the context of performance created for professional theatre venues. My study of the field in general, and 7: 84 in particular, suggested a range of rehearsal strategies that BWT could consider in developing our collective ownership of the artistic vision for our

performances. However from the evidence of the literature and interview sources I have discussed, it seems that, despite having explicitly left-wing agendas, the companies I refer to, were not always able to achieve an amicable resolution, to the question of who owns (and potentially profits from) the intellectual property, produced through their collaborative processes. This implied that, should BWT produce a marketable product, which might deliver royalties, or if we made a profit from the performances we staged, as a company we would need to agree collectively on an ethical approach to ownership and profit sharing.

Finally, while I designed the experiment in the context of professional theatre, hoping that this might make it more attractive to potential participants, I was aware of my intention to bring some form of participation into the professional theatre space. The debates around the definitions of political theatre (with a big 'P' or a small one), the relationship between the personal and the political in making theatre, 7: 84's affiliation with the labour movement and the unions, reaffirmed my view that political theatre should be defined primarily in terms of its processes of creation rather than its content, and also made me consider politicised audience participation. In McGrath's, *Joe's Drum*, some audiences were offended by the personalised direct address involved. However, in *Border Warfare*, each audience member was given an opportunity to participate, not in a tokenistic way, by making a decision on which door they would like to exit from, as a metaphor for casting a vote for or against the Union. When a member of the audience was uncomfortable, there was a solution on hand to deal with this compassionately. Boal's forum theatre is a highly politicised approach to subverting conventional relationships between the actor and spectator. On this basis I believed that in developing BWT as a collaborative political theatre company, new ways of politicising audiences needed to be discovered and tested. However, these agendas had to be discussed and negotiated with the other BWT artists.

Section 3: Progressive Singaporean Theatre 80s to the 21st Century

This third section opens with a discussion on the second, of the three phases of the PAP's state ideological engagement with theatre following on from the first phase of nation building, discussed in section one. From the discussion of Kuo's work in the sixties and early seventies in section one it discusses Kuo's later contribution to the development of

progressive Singaporean theatre. It analyses the practice of The Third Stage (one of the most radical Singaporean English Language theatre companies) and TNS, identifying their relationship to the state. It concludes by identifying any further considerations for BWT arising from my analysis of progressive theatre in Singapore. The work of Kuo and TNS span all three phases of Singapore's development of state ideological apparatuses whereby theatre was used for socio-political and economic purposes. However the Third Stage's productions took place mostly during the first nation building phase. Thus I will briefly describe the remaining two phases before I discuss the practice of Kuo's, the Third Stage's and TNS's, sign-posting dates clearly so as to contextual references to the PAP's state ideological interventions in theatre making.

<u>The PAP's Second Phase</u>

The first nation building phase began in 1965 and ended in 1985. Following the recession of 1985, the PAP state conceived theatre as part of an economic diversification strategy, whereby a cultural and entertainment sector was identified as a generator of economic growth and promoted with state subsidies, thereby enabling theatre to be consumed by the newly emerging middle class, in order to contribute to economic development. Similar to state funding of the arts in the UK, the process of subsidy distribution followed an economic development model, whereby the National Arts Council attempted to 'pick winners' and leverage subsidy by allocating it to the most commercially successful companies.   As a result, an internal competitive market in the theatre sector developed, with the most commercially minded companies attracting more subsidy than those with a riskier, more alternative product. This approach was developed in the *Global City for the Arts* (*GCA*) strategy of 1992, designed to rebrand Singapore externally, "to shake off its international image as 'Disneyland with the death penalty'" and to provide products for discretionary spending by the educated, middle class, post-independence generation (Chong 2011: 40). It was an attempt to grow "arts related business" and tourism to boost the national economy and arrest the trend of highly skilled Singaporeans leaving the state:

> [The *GCA* project was] a revamp of the Singapore cultural landscape to attract global capital and highly skilled professionals, a strategy to nurture a market-relevant creativity that could be translated into the manufacturing of higher-value products and a move to dissuade skilled Singaporeans from leaving the city state for good.

With 7: 84 and other left-wing companies in the UK, since the Theatres Act of 1968 had resolved state censorship of the Arts, self-censorship was driven by the fear of losing state funding. The origins of self-censorship in Singapore are quite different.

1992, the year of the launch of the *GCA* strategy, also saw changes to the censorship regime. Previously plays had to be approved by Public Entertainment Licensing Unit officers. These civil servants, linked to the police force, had the ability edit texts or refuse permission for plays to be shown. Routinely this was done very shortly before a run giving the company no time to rewrite plays so as to accommodate the censors changes "leaving theatre practitioners little choice but to stage a disjointed script" (Chong 2011: 159). The potential losses involved in cancelling a professional standard production required playwrights to second guess the censors' decision, inevitably leading them to err on the side of caution.

The 1992 Censorship review Committee report outsourced the censors' function to the theatre community itself, with scripts now being reviewed by the Drama Review Committee, made up of theatre practitioners and academics, under the remit of the newly formed National Arts Council. This committee was an effective way of ensuring that the National Arts Council and the government did not have to make "unpopular censorship decisions which may have cast doubts over its expressed aim to turn the city into a cultural vibrant global city for the arts" (Chong 2011: 39). This tactic effectively institutionalised and internalised the practice of self-censorship across the sector as a whole "invisibilising' its intended symbolic violence" (Chong 2011: 136).

The construction in the late 1990s of The Esplanande, a gigantic complex of performance spaces designed to attract international touring productions, further evidences the PAP state's conception of the theatre sector as a factor in its global economic status.

The PAP's Third Phase

Since the *Renaissance City* report of 2000, the PAP State policy has been designed to enable Singapore to compete culturally against first division global centres such as London, New York and Tokyo, and second division centres such as Edinburgh, Sydney and Hong Kong. Against the background of a perceived realignment of global economic power to India, China and Southeast Asia, the *Renaissance City* project is designed to stimulate, via increase state subsidy to the creative industries, a cultural sector which confirms the PAP state's view of itself and reflects the 'tourist gaze'. In the same way that pubs in Ireland have adopted the trappings of Irish theme pubs in distant corners of the world, so as not to disappoint the tourists, cultural products, such as the film *Crazy Rich Asians,* are designed to confirm tourists' pre-conceptions of what they think Singapore should be like.

Cherian George identifies the political passivity endemic in society as a challenge for Singapore's future development. He says that while Singapore is not alone in offering its citizens an extraordinarily high standard of living, the manner in which the state "blends comfort and control" sets it apart from others and is a cause for concern,

> We should be grateful that we have less reason to protest than countries where life is much more difficult. But we should be concerned about a political system with such strong disincentives to dissent. This produces a culture that automatically leaves public affairs to politicians and paid officials while the rest of us focus on our families, work, leisure and lifestyle

George 2017: 112

George (2000: 144-145) discusses the cynicism of Alfian Sa'at, a poet and playwright, who points out that the *Renaissance City* strategy, ostensibly intended to encourage artists to renew and refresh their practice, should instead be called "Reconnaissance City". He defends this term by suggesting that artists in Singapore "work with increasing cynicism and disillusionment under the steady unflinching eye of the State".

Kuo Pao Kun

In May 1976 Kuo and his wife, Goh were among fifty people detained for alleged involvement in a communist plot. Labelled as 'The Red Ballerina' Goh was released later in 1976 but Kuo was imprisoned, without charge or trial, for four and half years. Goh continued the work of the Practice Performing Arts School during Kuo's detention. He joined her in the running of the school when he was released in 1980.

Kuo trained a new generation of theatre practitioners. The Practice Performing Arts School became a key institution in the development of progressive theatre in Singapore in the 1980s. Kwok (2003: 195) refers to it as the base from which Kuo "created new dramatic works and new institutions". Examples of this include, Tan who went on to co-found TNS and become artistic director; Ang Gey Pin who was an artist at Grotowski's and Richards' WorkCenter and later founded Theatre Ox; Ong Ken Sen who took over as artistic director of Theatreworks in 1988, three years after it was founded; Kok Heng Luan who was an associate with TNS and then went on to start Drama Box; Ivan Heng of Theatreworks who later founded Wild Rice; and the late William Teo artistic director of Asia in Theatre Research Centre.

Following his release from detention in 1980 Kuo began writing in English as well as Mandarin,

> In the 80s I started doing English Theatre…I would say my playwriting days actually started in the 1980s…I think this phase is probably more on the side of reflecting and criticising life through drama and theatre, rather than using theatre as part of a social-political movement. My concern now is how to nurture the critical sensitivity of the playwright, and for that matter, theatre and literature and all the other arts…Without a critical sensibility nothing can be done in the arts

> Kuo in Sasitharan 1997: 70

The Coffin is Too Big for the Hole (1984*)* and *No Parking on Odd Days* (1986)*,* influenced by Kafka and Beckett, explore the tragi-comic effects on ordinary citizens of Singapore's rigid bureaucracy, social conformity and stifling homogeneity. One of the more overlooked progressive aspects of these plays is Kuo's use of genuine Singlish, the first time the multi-

lingual patios of the Singaporean working class had been respectfully and creatively voiced on stage.

In *Descendants of the Eunuch Admiral (*1995) loosely based on the voyages of the 15th century Chinese explorer Zheng He, Kuo adopts a more impressionistic postmodern form. It is an episodic text, written in prose and verse, open to multiple interpretations for staging. Scene 15 of the play describes the pleasure a boy derives from his nanny's prolonged massage of his testicles even though it "begins to damage the inside of the organ". The sustained massage increases his threshold for pain and he is able "to perceive the massage as not only benign but also pleasurable" (Kuo 2003). The allegory of consent to castration, and the process whereby it seems to be achieved painlessly, expresses an oblique critique of the government's propagation of consent to political passivity, the social contract between the state and citizens, whereby the freedom to engage in political activity is tacitly sacrificed for comfort.

Even though Kuo claims that in the eighties and nineties he is more concerned with "the critical sensitivity of the playwright" and less interested in "using theatre as part of a social-political movement" Janadas Devan, former Straits Times journalist and current Chief of Government Communications, thinks otherwise. The difference between Kuo's pre and post-detention output may be less significant than he suggests,

> He is most realistic when he is allegorical; he is most political when he is seemingly apolitical. And by political, I do not mean what has passed for the political in recent Singapore theatre – digs against the ISD [Internal Security Department], satires on local life – but something deeper: an examination of the cultural hinterland of politics, a cultural self-fashioning that is also a political self-fashioning.

<div align="right">Devan in The Straits Times 2002</div>

The Third Stage (TTS)

TTS was founded by Wong Souk Yee (Wong) and a group of friends who had been involved in student drama at the National University of Singapore (NUS) in the 1970s. Wong had also attended workshops led by Kuo at the Practice Performing Arts School. The title of the company could be seen to refer to Marx's stages of societal evolution from Feudalism to

Communism.   However, TTS describes the name as referring to three stages of English language theatre in Singapore; firstly, the colonial period, secondly the post-colonial period of standard -English theatre and then the Third Stage "'which marked the growing importance of the search for cultural identity and the telling of stories grounded in the Singaporean imaginings" (Wong in S/PORES 2010).

Wong (2012) refers to the period from 1983 to 1986 as the most productive, with the company staging eight original plays developed from policies and issues which TTS artists believed to be discriminatory. These included, the graduate mothers' scheme (a typical example of PAP crude social engineering whereby tax allowances were offered to educated women to encourage them to breed), "early streaming of school children" and the "marginalisation of the lower-income and foreign domestic workers". The plays were critical of the paternalistic state where the government through social and political engineering decided everything from "what language you should speak, who your neighbours are, whom you should marry and how many children you should have". The 'marginalised' in society were drawn to TTS's performances. Like Kuo's post-detention work the plays were characterised by the use of Singlish as an organic medium and not simply for comic effect. The decentring of language and the disruption of 'master' narratives inevitably drew the attention of internal security department officials,

> Literary critics might consider the plays counter-discourse to Singapore's nation building. Because of the group's predilection for creating plays that depict human frailties and destabilising official narratives …., it was considered a security threat in the insecure minds of the government.
>
> Wong in S/PORES 2010

Lisa Li (2012) singles out the play *Esperanza* by Wong and Tay Hong Seng, performed at the Drama Centre as part of the 1986 Arts Festival Fringe as having caused the most controversy. It was an uncompromising social realist play about a domestic helper from the Philippines who was abused by her Singaporean employer. The press and the public were very positive about the play, causing further governmental concern. To this day foreign maids in Singapore are not protected by the country's employment laws.

In May 1986, before the public performance at the Fringe, TTS previewed a performance of *Esperanza* for thirty domestic helpers at the Catholic Welfare Centre, to get their feedback and improve the play. In May 1987 four members of the company (Wong, Chang Suan Tze, William Yap, and Tay Hong Seng) were among sixteen young Catholic social activists detained under the Internal Security Act. The government alleged that the detainees had used their activities in the Catholic Welfare Centre as a front to foment revolution and of "acting in a manner prejudicial to the security of Singapore by being involved in a Marxist conspiracy to subvert the existing social and political system in Singapore, using Communist united front tactics, with a view to establishing a Marxist state" (Teo 2011: 16). The 'Marxist Conspiracy' was alleged to have been be led by former NUS Student Union President Tan Wah Piow (Tan), living at the time as a political refugee in the UK. Wong admitted that she had briefly met Tan while on holiday in the UK in 1986 but denied the allegation that he had instructed her to re-write *Esperanza* to incite class conflict. As a playwright she felt insulted at the suggestion that she "was being told what to write" and that she was "doing the bidding of someone else!" (Wong in Li 2012)

Wong and the other detainees were released after four months, having agreed to make televised confessions. However, six months later, (April 1988) Wong and eight other detainees published a statement retracting their 'confessions' denying the existence of any 'Marxist Conspiracy' and alleging that they were assaulted in prison, threatened with indefinite detention if they did not recant, and that their televised 'confessions' had been grossly distorted by editing. This resulted in their re-arrest and Wong was imprisoned again, without charge or trial for a year. After her release The Third Stage produced only two more plays, *Kevin's Birthday Party* (1991) and *Uhh!?!* (1991)) and was deregistered in 2005. When Wong was interviewed by Li for *That We May Dream Again, Remembering, the 1987 Marxist Conspiracy*, a website dedicated to raising awareness on the Internal Security Act and unjustified arrests in Singapore, she reflected on her arrest,

> Why was I arrested? I think the government made a mistake! ... They over-estimated us, they were paranoid, maybe they thought Third Stage might be impactful because of our connections – but we were just a network of like-minded friends … Yes, Third Stage had a social orientation, and we were often critical of government policies, but no one is above criticism.

The Necessary Stage (TNS)

Like TTS, TNS was founded in 1987 by a group of like-minded friends who had been involved in student drama at the NUS in the mid-1980s. These included Alvin Tan, Valerie Lim, Steven Ang, Elvira Holmberg, Andrew Tan and me. Tan and Lim had worked together on a student production at the NUS and saw the need, much like Boal, 7: 84 and Kuo, to represent indigenous voices on stage and provide an alternative to the still predominantly Western, postcolonial theatre produced in Singapore. Tan later invited Sharma, whom he knew, to join the collective. At the time besides Kuo's and Guo's arts school, there was no performance-training offered at universities or colleges in Singapore. Tan and Sharma, identify the period when Singaporean theatre was becoming professionalised with the support of the state,

> Singapore theatre started professionalising in the late 1980s and 1990s. It escalated when the National Arts Council emerged from what was the Ministry of Community Development. There were schemes that helped start up and sustain a proliferation of theatre companies and independent practitioners hungry for our voices in the theatre. Soon enough practitioners were seeking training at home and abroad. The growth was healthy, fast and furious.

> Sharma 2014: 4

Since then, and in actualising the *GCA* and the *Renaissance City* strategies, Singapore has become an international cultural hub with an abundance of professional arts events on offer. As part of the development of the creative arts economy, theatre studies and performance training programmes have been developed at NUS and the La Salle College of the Arts.

The main productions I was involved in when I worked at TNS, when I was a student again at the RSAMD[8], and when I worked at 7: 84 were *Those Who Can't, Teach* (1990-actor), *This Chord and Others* (1991-director), *Still Building* (1992-4 – co-director), *Trishaw* (1993-4 – actor) and *Eclipse* (2008 – director). All these plays were written by Sharma except for

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[8] I had been an English teacher while I worked with TNS from 1987-1992. In 1992 I won a British Council Scholarship to study at the RSAMD (the scholarship was the result of the Strathclyde-Singapore Memorandum signed a few years earlier). I continued to work with TNS, when possible, while I was at the RSAMD and 7: 84

Trishaw written by Scottish playwright, Robin Wilson. I was also the joker, alongside Tan for TNS's forum theatre productions, *Mixed Blessings* and *MCP*. Unlike, the harsh criticism 7: 84 endured from SAC and theatre critics, all these productions were critically acclaimed and successful in different ways. The forum theatre plays stand out for specific reasons. The context and reasons for this will be discussed more fully later in this section.

It is useful to discuss the ambitions and limitations of TNS's collaborative practice in determining the political nature of the company's work. Sharma summarises the collaborative approach,

> The company works in a very collaborative way. We decide together how many plays I write…. Frequently we collaborate towards devising a piece with a group of actors, meaning that there is no script before we meet our actors.

> Sharma in Sasitharan 1997: 65

Audrey Wong discusses how Tan's collaborative approach has been influenced by the work of Joint Stock Theatre. She suggests the "social bent" of the company's productions and its name, where it posits itself as a necessary theatre, "reflects the inspiration taken by the group from Brecht and more recently, Caryl Churchill" (Wong 1997: 195).

Sharma and Tan break down the process into four stages:

(1) a 'pre-writing phase' where directors and Sharma as playwright workshop with actors and solicit material from them.

(2) a 'writing phase', where the playwright, typically Sharma, uses the material from the first phase, plus and other resources, writes a draft

(3) next is the 'reading and re-writing phase' where the director, playwright and cast workshop the draft; and finally

(4) the 'rehearsal phase' where director and cast fine-tune the play.

> Sharma and Tan in Lee 1997: 221-222

Lee (1997) notes that in stage one the "actors often provide considerable material for the playwright" suggesting that the company is "deliberately" reliant on the contribution of the

actors, concluding that it is the "collective of playwright, director and theatre company which assumes authorship of the play" (220). However Sharma, like McGrath, in the real world of publishing and copyright, out with the rehearsal room, is credited with authorship.

Lee identifies a theoretical impasse which sets a limit on the extent of democratisation achievable within the TNS model of collaboration. This is partly to do with the content and storytelling focus of the plays. He says the plays are about social issues but that TNS "does not tell their own story – middle-class, English educated Singaporean dramatists – but their work is *about* 'others'". TNS's collaborative method is insufficient in itself to bridge the gap between representor and represented:

> It is responsible, indeed necessary, to research your subjects, but it is an altogether different thing to believe your interviewees are then collaborating with you in your representation of them…So, despite all of their intentions to develop a theatre of collaboration, the fundamental issues TNS still has to work through concern the politics of representation. That is, they must fully confront what it means to represent others, what it means to represent oneself, what it means to do a play about a community.

<div align="right">Lee 1997: 223</div>

Sharma and Tan's description of TNS's collaborative processes and Wong's and Lee's critique of it ring true in my own experience of working with the company. The first TNS production I directed, *The Gargler* by Steven Ang in 1990 was very much a director/playwright/designer driven process with the actors having no input to the text of the play. As an actor in *Those Who Can't Teach* (*TWCT*), I felt empowered by the opportunity to work collaboratively to develop the script and did not feel I had to be credited with writing it in any way. However, I have since reflected on ownership agendas at TNS.

Benefitting from the Singapore government's investment in the Arts in the eighties Kuo persuaded the National Art Council to fund the rehabilitation of a derelict power station in Armenia Street as an arts venue. In what would now be described as an edgy, de-furbished, post-industrial, multi-media space The Substation opened in 1990 with Kuo as its first director. In any other context this space would be described as an 'alternative' arts centre, however as Sasitharan points out "the Substation is alternative by default" because mainstream theatre had not been fully developed yet (Sasitharan in Lee 1997: 218). The Substation officially opened in September 1990 with Kuo programming *TWCT*. During the

1990s a symbiosis between TNS and The Substation emerged around the development of local (as opposed to alternative) theatre and art.

My research and experience of collaborative practice in Scotland have made me retrospectively question TNS's practice of attributing singular authorship to Sharma for texts developed from collectively devised processes, though at the time, I thought this was correct. I still believe with *TWCT* Sharma should be credited with singular authorship. I was an actor in a collaborative process with Tan (director) and Sharma (playwright) leading this process, with my creativity feeding into the development of the text, within an overall predetermined structure, which was already in place. However, with *Still Building* and *This Chord and Others* (*TCAO*) singular authorship is not necessarily reflective of the type of collaboration practised.

Interestingly, as well as writing, Sharma acted in both *TCAO* and *Still Building*, which both had a cast of three. In the introduction to an anthology of Sharma's plays, Tan makes reference to the time "when Haresh [Sharma] and director Josephine Peter [Ronan] devised *This Chord and Others*. Much like the TNS's collaborative processes outlined earlier, Tan said the "process entailed weeks of improvisations, followed by a writing period and then rehearsals" (Tan in Sharma 1999: ix). It was a dynamic creative process between Sharma as writer and me as director, and an equally dynamic one with me and the actors, including Sharma. I had an overview of what was being created and experimented with ways of tapping into the creativity of all the artists involved in the improvisations. Tan and I co-directed *Still Building*, a successful play staged in Singapore (1992 and 1993), at the Cairo International Festival for Experimental Theatre (1992), at Mayfest Glasgow International Festival (1994) and the Albany Theatre in London (1994). I summarise the collaborative process of *Still Building* in my notes to another anthology of Sharma's plays,

> How many directors have the luxury of having a playwright for a member of the cast; an actor who is inspired enough by improvisations to want to write a play and a cast committed and versatile enough to push improvisations to the limit? The play began with the directors largely responsible for shaping and streamlining the various aspects of the process which evolved into one where the control of the process was shared with Haresh [Sharma], being pivotal in the writing.

> Peter [Ronan] in Sharma 1994: 43-44

TNS's approach to collaboration has varied between projects and over time. Perhaps it is necessary to assess the nature of the collaboration and accordingly credit all those involved in developing the overall artistic vision of the production, and in determining meanings for artistic vision.

TNS also produces plays conventionally in keeping with utility-driven collaborative practice, where the conventional roles of artists are clearly defined and adhered to. In addition to *The Gargler* (1990) - director, *Trishaw* (1993-4) - actor, and *Eclipse* (2008) - director, were plays I was involved in which were produced this way. Collaboration in this context is about financial partnerships which enable the work to be produced in multiple contexts. *Trishaw* was produced by TNS with financial support from the funders of my scholarship including the Strathclyde Council, the British Council and the Singapore Arts Council. *Trishaw* was staged in both Singapore and Glasgow. *Eclipse* was co-produced by TNS and 7: 84 with both companies contributing to production costs from their own reserves and the performances staged in Singapore and around Scotland.

A further dimension to TNS's collaborative practice, similar to the theatre outreach programmes developed here in the UK, is community based theatre. According to Wong (1997) in this context collaboration is no longer about how writer, director and actors work together. It is about "working with an entire community, with no tradition of theatre-going and which [functions] in various different languages". TNS artists worked with an "audience of residents, with grassroots organisations" to co-create through improvisations performances which were relevant to all (197). The applied theatre programme at TNS was developed from questions about who can be defined as being part of a theatre community:

> TNS's form of community theatre brings the theatre into the lives of the community and the people who makeup that community into the theatre, even onto the stage…. Thus, the theatre is no longer only a spectacle, presenting a work for the audience's consumption – the theatrical space is given back to the audience as a 'living space'.
>
> Wong 1997: 199

TNS's collaborative practice developed further after Sharma and Tan attended workshops led by Augusto Boal on the Theatre of the Oppressed in New York in April 1993. Following this, I was involved in the two productions TNS devised and performed in1993, *MCP (Male*

Chauvinist Pig) and *Mixed Blessings,* using Boal's forum theatre method. *MCP* depicted a wife's attempts to cope with her abusive husband, ending with her suicide. *Mixed Blessings* dealt with inter-racial tensions arising from a love affair between a Chinese woman and an Indian man. Under pressure from their hostile families the lovers end their relationship. In both cases the plays were performed firstly as a conventionally staged play. However after a brief discussion, they were performed again, but as Krishan (1997), who attended the performances, describes:

> This time the audience is allowed to intervene; anyone who is unhappy with any aspect of the play can stop the performance. He or she then enters the works of the play, having -in the case of MCP for instance – 'become' the abused wife…. As people who had paid for their right to be passive consumers this invitation to participate was quite unexpected; they were being made to work for their entertainment.

> Krishnan 1997: 201

The role of the Joker, which I performed together with Tan, was to ensure that this process of radical and unpredictable collaboration with the audience doesn't result in chaos. The first version of each play was written by Sharma. But both were deliberately flawed in their structure and resolution, leaving the completion of the play up to the spect-actors. This requires a relinquishing of authorship, of the creative process, and of the ownership of the finished 'product' which will be different with every performance. Despite this, the plays (on the production history section of TNS's website and publications) are billed as "written by Harsh Sharma, devised with cast". However, there is in fact no definitive version in existence and no-one with a valid ownership claim. Both text and ownership are dispersed. The plays which emerged from the forum process are economically ephemeral and can't be packaged and resold for profit:

> If we reflect on it for a moment we will recognise how much this kind of participation undoes artistic conventions about the integrity and inviolability of the artwork. When you surrender your authorship of an unfinished novel or an incomplete poem to someone else, you expose yourself to un-anticipatable possibilities. What does 'authorship' mean here, who's work will it be when its 'done'?

> Krishnan 1997: 204

On a practical level the performers, who were a mix of trained actors and experienced amateurs, have to be ready to cede their role and presence on the stage to an audience member. Krishnan (1997: 202) recalls the interventions from the spect-actors and says that he had "never seen a group of people so engaged by a literary work or so excited by a theatrical experience in Singapore". The vocabulary of language and gestures brought to the stage by the spect-actors, refreshingly free of any professional theatre training, produced some startlingly moving and ambiguous results. The videos of parts of the production on TNS's website show the level of engagement generated (TNS 2018). On one night we had to persuade the audience to leave because it was time to close the theatre.

The progressive aspect of these performances lay not in the 'issues' being explored, whether the content is 'left -wing' or whether the spec-actors' interventions result in outcomes which challenged aspects of PAP state policy. What counts here is the transformative possibilities opened up by the process itself. Forum theatre brought about "an extraordinary transformation both of the theatrical space and of the audience". It enabled the "bearing down collectively on a problem" by audiences/spect-actors who may not have had anything "to gain from personally" from their interventions into the theatrical space but in doing so they "unconsciously produced a vision of community" (Krishnan 1997: 205-206). Within the bubble of the performance space, a model of active community building emerges where citizens briefly experience a level of responsible social autonomy unavailable to them outside the theatre. For audiences who attended these performances, they were encouraged to "actively engage in problem solving" opening up their "imagination for alternatives and enabled them to test out proposed solutions" – a highly politicised collaboration with audiences which "in turn empowered them to find new ways to deal with their own frustrations in life" (Tan C K 2001: 307). Without using socialist realist preaching or agit-prop techniques we provided an opportunity for participants to experience, however briefly, and in all its unpredictable difficulties, conflicts and contradictions, what life in Singapore without an authoritarian and paternalistic government might feel like.

In January 1994 an unrelated incident precipitated a de facto ban on forum theatre. A controversial piece by performance art group 5th Passage (during which a performer was reputed to have shaved his pubic hair) provoked complaints to the Straits Times. On January

21 1994 the Ministry of Home Affairs and of the Ministry of Information and the Arts issued a joint statement,

> [The Government] is concerned that new art forms such as "performance art" and "forum theatre" which have no script and encourage spontaneous audience participation pose dangers to public order, security and decency, and much greater difficulty to the licensing authority…The performances may be exploited to agitate the audience on volatile social issues, or to propagate the beliefs and messages of deviant social or religious groups, or as a means of subversion…The following action will be taken….The National Arts Council will not support "performance art" or "forum theatre" staged by other groups, but their other projects will be considered.

> The Straits Times 1994

In addition, the NAC required theatre companies to lodge large deposits before proposing a forum theatre production. These deposits would not be returned if the play was banned.

> The real culprit in the Forum Theatre 'controversy' was the potential the form had for demonstrating that alternative outcomes were possible. In a state that seeks to dictate single outcomes for each social situation the notion that individuals have the power to change a particular social situation is quite dangerous.

> Peterson 2001: 47

On February 5th 1994 The Straits Times published a more alarming 'dog whistle' article entitled "Two pioneers of forum theatre trained at Marxist workshops" by editor, Felix Soh. The article noted that the workshops Tan and Sharma had attended in New York had been hosted by the Brecht Forum which it described as "a Marxist cultural and public education organisation whose founder Augusto Boal has declared that all theatre is necessarily political and that it is a 'very efficient weapon for liberation'".

> Editor Felix Soh's motivation for writing this "investigative" piece in a state-directed newspaper remains unclear. A few letters appeared in the newspaper's forum page describing the article as biased.

> Tan K P 2013: 200

Tan and Sharma wrote to the Strait Times stating:

> The workshops we attended in New York were two of numerous other workshops we have attended in order to improve our professional skills as theatre practitioners ... We have absolutely no political motivation. Thus, we are greatly saddened and disheartened by Mr Soh's article and the slant he has taken

> Tan and Sharma in The Straits Times 1994

At the time the circle of progressive artists and activists in Singapore was very small. Many of the 1987 detainees were (are) my personal friends, and everyone involved in TNS was well aware of the possible consequences of being labelled Marxist. This event demonstrated that the state had "limitless power" and it was clear that TNS "had no choice but to change tack" (Tan C K 2001: 308). In order to ensure the survival of TNS, Tan "had no choice" but to compromise with the state,

> negotiation' means accepting the terms we may not agree with – in order to continue to co-exist…The consequences of these experiences were that I firstly became more interested in surviving the long haul; not to be closed down and eventually ceasing my practice

> Tan, A. in Tan, C K. 2001: 308

Tan C K labels this as "coerced co-option" referring to it as "the moment that one accepts terms that are against one's principles in order to survive the "long haul". A new chapter began for TNS where "artistic autonomy" had to be negotiated within "co-option" (Tan C K 2001: 308). Following the debacle, I continued with my studies at the RSAMD and settled permanently in Scotland in 1995. Sharma and Tan both completed their Masters Courses in Birmingham and returned to Singapore. Their return to Singapore in 1995 marked a new phase in the development of TNS. In the twenty-first century TNS has become Singapore's most successful 'off-Broadway' companies and continues to test the changing boundaries where theatre and politics meet. Tan was awarded the Cultural Medallion in 2014 and Sharma in 2015.

The ban on forum theatre has been lifted in Singapore but only on the condition that interventions from spect-actors have to be presented/represented by the actors that perform in the play. Thus the audience can offer suggestions but not replace the protagonist. The demarcation between the actor and spectator is once again very clear. Tan K P refers to the "birth, death and rebirth" of forum theatre as a reflection of the state's depoliticization of the artist,

> That forum theatre re-emerged as a legitimate part of the global city's state-led and economically motivated artistic and cultural renaissance – a decade after its

proscription of the state in 1994 – calls into question the extent of its radicalism today, when the authoritarian-capitalist state continues to appropriate the arts in order to mobilize subjects for a depoliticized creative economy.

<div align="right">Tan K P 2013: 189-190</div>

Theatre as Politics

The analysis of TNS reframes themes discussed earlier from a different socio-political context. TNS's practice and relationship to the state are more comparable to that of Piscator, Brecht and Boal than that of the British theatre companies. The power of the state to detain an artist without trial, if the artist is perceived to be making theatre that may disrupt the status quo or the PAP state's agendas, informs the meanings I develop for political theatre. Forum theatre was and is the most political form of theatre that I have practiced in the past and continue to practice. In designing this experiment I wanted to discover if it were possible to politicise the commodified theatre space through some of the techniques I had learnt from Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed. My experience of forum theatre at the Substation in Singapore raised the possibility of this for me. At the same time I was acutely aware that my experiment was premised on equality between artistic collaborators. Thus just like TTS and TNS, I had to source like-minded artists for this experiment. However, I had to appreciate and put into practice that 'like-minded' did not mean a requirement for everyone in the collective to subscribe to a singular ideology. The question of equality within ideology is discussed further in the following chapter. Identifying that my practice is more aligned with Piscator, Brecht and Boal enabled me to articulate ownership in terms of theatre-as-politics (where the ethics and aesthetics of the processes of creation are more important than the final product) rather than political theatre. Workshopping as practised by Joint Stock was an effective way for each of us in the BWT collective to share our practice and have an equal stake in the performance that we developed out with ideology.

Section 4: Moving on from 7: 84 and The Necessary Stage (TNS)

The first three sections (twentieth century political theatre before 1971, 7: 84 from 1971 to its demise, and progressive Singaporean theatre from the 80s onwards) raised important questions for my experiment and highlighted considerations in politicising collaborative practices. This final section points to the way ahead for BWT by analysing the purpose and

outcomes of devising. It discusses a few relevant twenty first century companies who could influence BWT's practice of devising. Finally it suggests ways of dealing with representation in the theatre.

Debates on Devising

Oddey (1994) describes her attraction to devising as stemming from "the collaborative, sharing experience of making theatre with others (xii). She identifies the 1970s as the period where devising companies valued democracy over hierarchy in the making of theatre and notes that this has changed over the following twenty years and that devising in the nineties had "less radical implications" (9). Lamden (2000) addresses ideals in collaboration and Bicât and Baldwin (2002) juxtapose collaborative with devised in the title of their publication. Heddon and Milling critique both these publications as being director-focussed in their analysis of the processes of collaboration but notes that at the same time they challenge non-hierarchical implications of devising. In the twenty-first century they pose the question, "…is it necessarily the case that devising companies should be non-hierarchical? Were they ever?" (2006: 5-6). Govan, Nicholson and Normington (2007) address similar issues of the role of the director within the collaborative by examining the structures and practice in Theatre Workshop and observe that although the "funds were shared equally among the company, and it was intended that the policy decisions would be made collectively, Littlewood and MacColl held all the power until MacColl's departure in 1953" (48).

Both Heddon and Milling and Govan *et. al.* provide comprehensive accounts of a wide range of devising companies in the twentieth and the first decade of the twenty-first century but arrive at conclusions which privilege different aspects of this way of working. Heddon and Milling (2006: 223) conclude that devising is not necessarily a more democratic way of making work compared to other processes as it is the ethos of each company that determines the nature of collaboration, adding that "while political companies might ostensibly have been seen to be operating democratically, with all participants given equal opportunity to contribute fully, the structure in itself does not guarantee the delivery of equality". Govan's *et. al.* (2007: 193) conclusion focuses on the place of devising within cultural production, a

place that "hovers precariously between the packaged commodification of commercial theatre (even in its most avant-garde or experimental forms) and the radicalism and chaos of politicised performance". Unlike Heddon and Milling, who no longer posit the congruency of devising with equality, Govan *et. al.* (2007: 194-195) contend that devising "matters" because of its agency for expressions of self, community and interventions in society and because of its dialogic processes.

Radosavljević (2013a: 62, 82) advises that "a departure from the term devising in contemporary theatre and performance discourse may well be wise" as the proliferation of the term in the UK has led to misconceptions. She acknowledges Heddon and Milling's inclusion of pre-determined texts as one of the nodes in the kaleidoscope of the brands of devising. However, she identifies this as the first source of misconception because devising's "implied binary opposition to text-based theatre" persists. This causes confusion in continental Europe because "many European mainstream theatres customarily involve a collective and an improvisational approach in the process of rehearsal". Like Oddey, Radosavljević acknowledges that collective creation throughout the twentieth century arose more often than not from political motivations. There was a need to question power relations and hierarchies within society and artists around the world "particularly in the 1960s, resorted to alternative forms of authorship…Tadeusz Kantor, Ariane Mnouchkine, Living Theatre, Welfare State International, as well as the training practices of Jerzy Grotowski and Jacques Lecoq". However, she states that "it's also possible to view their practices in strictly artistic-methodological terms, beyond their political contexts". She refers to theatre directors like LeCompte of the Wooster Group, Tim Etchells of Forced Entertainment, Lin Hixon of Goat Island and Simon McBurney of Théâtre de Complicité as directors who work as facilitators, refusing to take sole credit for the work. She identifies the second misconception as arising from the fusion of the terms 'ensemble' and 'devising' because many ensembles work with pre-determined scripts and writers. She sees the distinction between devising and text-based work in the twenty-first century as unnecessary. She points out that while many of the British collectives did not survive the funding cuts of the 1980s the term devising did.

Radosavljević's argument for rejecting the term devising is the futility of distinctions between text work and non- text based work and the error of associating ensemble with these

distinctions. While this is valid to an extent (because of the variety and complexity of devising processes which includes predetermined texts), by rejecting the term, she distances her analysis from the radical origins of devising. In making a case for the facilitator/director model of the twenty-first century she references the model of left-wing companies like Theatre Workshop and TdS but in doing so she fails to address the issue of centralised power associated with such models in both the twentieth and twenty first century. Her suggestion that the practices of political theatre companies like Welfare State, Théâtre du Soleil etc. should be viewed "in strictly artistic-methodological terms, beyond their political contexts" reflects the current ethos where collaboration is divorced from politics and collaborative practices are used primarily to negotiate or enhance funding opportunities (Radosavljević 2013: 82).

This debate suggests that, while there are challenges with the centralisation of power in director/writer- led models of devising, companies like Joint Stock and Hull Truck were able to negotiate a decentralisation of power through devising models of creation. The practice of TPS demonstrates that a collective approach to devising is possible in the absence of a director. A dialectical approach to devised/text-based work, individual/collective skills could be developed by BWT. Devising's unique place between commodification and radicalism, and its value in facilitating interventions in society and promoting dialogical processes, made it the preferred approach for BWT, providing the opportunity for all of us to have a say in developing the artistic vision for the performances we created.

The People Show (TPS)

The discussion of the field concludes that only one, company, The People Show (TPS), operates without a director or someone who claims overall artistic vision. Behrndt (2010: 30-31) documents the "non-autocratic process [as] central to their ethos and practice…the process is not led by one person's vision; rather it's open to everybody's agendas, contribution and ideas". There is a core group of seven artists who make the work together but they also work out with the group. The company has a fluid structure where the function of the artistic director is served by a "steering group" who consults with a "wide network of TPS associate artists on future projects and planning" (Behrndt 2010: 34). All the company's

work is devised and members take on multiple roles in the production process. The company is a registered charity and its current website evidences an organisational structure which includes a board of management but no artistic director or chief executive only an "administrator", "core artists" and associate artists. Its website does not acknowledge any form of state subsidy. According to 'Unfinished Histories', an online record of the history of alternative theatre, while the company have received state subsidy in the past, they are not reliant on it for their survival. Instead "funding has come from work commissioned for European arts centres, theatres and festivals". Most of the company members maintain "independent careers" out- with the company to complement the income they receive from TPS.

> Our non-hierarchical approach to creating live performance and new theatrical work has always gone against the grain and resisted form. Unanchored by traditional theatrical structure, each of our shows becomes an expression of whatever and whoever arrives at the rehearsal room on day one of the making process.

<div align="right">TPS 2018</div>

For TPS artists, the devising process starts from and grows with the ideas or the particular skills of the group. TPS has been going for over fifty years and it is remarkable that it still functions as a collective today despite the dominant forces of neoliberalism. TPS demonstrates a resistance to the culture of the director's monopoly on artistic vision.

North American Cultural Laboratory (NACL)

Brad Krumholz (2013) identifies distinguishing features of North American Cultural Laboratory (NACL). NACL qualify the term theatre company by including laboratory in their name to highlight their objective of working against mainstream theatre production. BWT decided that while laboratory dimensions were integral to the company's practice, the work had to be shared with an audience in ways that intersected with economy but which resisted absolute commodification. BWT's work was not to be limited to laboratory conditions but had to be tested in the real world. NACL do not have a permanent group of actors but do have long term collaborators who create the work which might materialise on stage with just one performer. The thinking behind this is that collaboration can be manifested offstage but a single performer will still be able to express the offstage collaboration through her onstage performance. While discussing the work of NACL, our

understanding and applications of equality were developed. We found the idea of a single performer manifesting off stage collaborations very useful. Equality did not mean equal time on stage or doing similar roles but more a reconfiguration of difference in developing definitions for equality in determining the rights of ownership.

Theatre of the Emerging American Moment (TEAM)

Hilfinger-Pardo's (2013: 229, 223) three year observation of the TEAM led to her identification of the collective intelligence of the group and the resilience of its members to continue creation in spite of the threat of disbandment. The members begin with a theme (for example, e, g, in *Mission Drift*, the history of American Capitalism) and approach funders and producers with it. The theme informs the orientation of the work in the rehearsal room. Hilfinger-Pardo recognises the magic of the group not as the moment of genius but the "magic of a group of people plodding through a painful process of crossed desires, miscommunications and compromise until one or two extraordinary moments finally arise. At the end of the day, the thing to celebrate about this rehearsal is that catastrophe was avoided". The idea of utopia permeates the work but is never realised in the ideals of collaboration or in the performance of *Mission Drift* as only one of the original five members remained for the performance. Much in the vein of NACL, where manifestations of collaboration need not include physical presence in all aspects of production, the four that left continue to be involved in other projects. At present the TEAM has thirteen members and a growing number of associate artists "all deeply committed to the company's collaborative process of devising performance". The devising process is led by the artistic director. While the processes of the TEAM's creation were relevant to BWT's practice, it became clear that the overt political themes and its dependence on funders to develop the work distinguished it from BWT. The BWT experiment was premised on utopian ideals of collaborative processes, unlike utopia as the subject of performance, as developed by TEAM.

Emerging Companies in New York

McGinley (2010) discusses emerging (a term she challenges) companies in New York who may not necessarily be composed of young artists but are increasingly gaining recognition for their work. She asserts that they represent "a new generation in ensemble-devised

performance" (McGinley 2010: 12). The bringing together of 'ensemble' and 'devised' in one entity challenges Radosavljević's resistance to ensemble's association with devising as being unnecessary in the twenty-first century. Unlike Radosavljević, McGinley sees the future of contemporary performance in ensemble-devised work. She discusses the companies, (Banana Bag & Bodice, Ex.Pgirl, Hotel Savant, Knife Inc., New Paradise Laboratories, Temporary Distortion and Witness Relocation) identifying that they "share similar approaches to storytelling and employ dramaturgical structures that hinge on networked spatiality, rather than on linear teleology". McGinley's analysis suggests that their motivations for collaboration stem from "utility" rather than any expressed intention to make theatre in non-hierarchical ways. This reflects Radosavljević's position on devising, which she sees as having been important in questioning the hierarchical relations of production in the sixties and seventies but is less so today. For my experiment and BWT's practice, it was important to explore whether devising methods which used the contemporary aesthetics of "networked spatiality" could be developed via processes which are non-hierarchical collaborations rather than utility-driven ones.

Song of the Goat (SoG)

Ian Morgan, of Song of the Goat (SoG offers) an insight into how the company's practice is developed in his interview with Radosavljević (Radosavljević 2013b:116-125). There is mention of a director but the ownership of individual and collective devising processes appears to be embedded in the practice. There is ongoing training and research. There is a workshop programme and teaching on accredited courses which are as important as the work the company makes for an audience. There is solidarity between members. The company's website reveals a highly politicised methodology for creation but with no mention of politics (Song of the Goat 2015). SoG was established in Poland in 1996 by Grzegorz Bral and Anna Zubrzycki. The integration of movement, voice, song and text is vital to the development of the company's work which is premised on its search for a connection with humanity within the individual, the ensemble and with an audience. Perhaps it is this deeper meaning of connection that Bonczek and Storch shy away from in their definition of ensemble. Bral is credited with being the director of many of its productions but is not named as the artistic director of the company. He appears on the company's website as part of the team described as actors and teachers with some actors taking on the role of teacher and vice versa. By centralising pedagogy instead of power

each artist at SoG is given the opportunity to take on the role of teacher and learner at different times in developing their performances. Following on from the workshop practice of Joint Stock, SoG suggests another model for BWT's development of dialogic rehearsal processes. The processes of SoG appear to be collective despite there being a named director credited for all its productions. Bral in his interview with the BBC on 11 August 2014 shared, "I believe every culture is equal, every person is equal to another person and art and culture is a perfect way to manifest and to show it". AN, of Polish origin herself, had the opportunity to participate in SoG's theatre workshops and discussed with the rest of us at BWT the sophisticated processes used by the company to ensure that equality is at the centre of difference.

Representation

Both with 7: 84 and TNS academics have raised the issue of artists representing characters removed from their own class or ethnicity. This is a fundamental challenge for political theatre but not so much for theatre as politics. The BWT experiment was designed not only to test egalitarian collaborative processes of theatre-making but also to explore to what extent commodified theatre spaces could be decommodified. To do this the intersection between political theatre and theatre as politics needed to be found. Surprisingly the source of BWT's guidance for negotiating representations of identity came from a study of a tourist village attraction in Sarawak, one which I visited in 1997.

Latrell's (2008: 45, 49) article describes aspects of production and performance in three cultural villages in East Malaysia, the Sarawak Cultural Village (SCV), Monsopiad Cultural Village and Bavanggazo Longhouse. The shows are primarily for tourists. There are about fifty employees at the SCV who live on the site on a fulltime basis and come from seven ethnic groups. The daily activities of cooking, weaving and bamboo carving can be witnessed by the visitors/audience before the theatre event which takes place in a comfortable theatre with modern technology, performed by the villagers/employees. "SCVs performers are in fact who they portray themselves to be: Ibans pursuing supposedly Iban activities and so on". The complexity arises when audiences have expectations of what a traditional native is, and to fulfil such expectations under the 'tourist gaze', the role of the traditional native is "partially invented: the workers are actors in costumes performing the roles of the native they happen to be in order to render contact between

tourist and native more predictable and delimited". The off stage identities which are performed do not reflect the urban life of the modern natives but the actors are comfortable about representing them as authentic as it reflects their heritage. The artists/workers are not precious about who performs the cultural dances of the different tribes i.e. dancers from one tribe often perform dances from other tribes. The company members do not see "cultural ownership as a serious concern…the equanimity with which the issue of cultural ownership is regarded at SCV points out just how contested the concept itself is: in this case at least, ownership is most usefully examined not as a resource to be owned and defended but as contextual and multiple".

SCV's practice of cultural ownership as "contextual and multiple" and working with notions of identity which are "increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions" offered BWT the means by which hierarchies of the past could be broken, facilitating a reconfiguration of difference and equality in the rehearsal room (Hall 1996: 4). BWT recognised that we could use SCV's practice of including off stage identities as part of the performance and develop it both as an aesthetic tool and also as a means of dealing with the ethics of representation. It was perhaps because of BWT's wariness of the ethics of representation and our constant dialogue with the field that we were able to enter into the culture of others to develop our creative processes, which in turn suggested solutions to the challenges of achieving equality in the rehearsal room.

Summary

This chapter outlined the theoretical, historical and political background to the formation of my own politics and practice. My personal experience in TNS and 7:84, my reading of the background field, my analysis of the debates surrounding collaborative and devised political theatre, raised questions for me as to what extent collective ownership, genuine collaboration and democratised leadership are capable of being delivered in practice. I developed my definition of political theatre and clarified my use of key terms. I discussed critical debates in the field of left-wing theatre, examining the relationship of theatre to the state, modes of production, content and aesthetics. Once the terms of the discussion were set up, I developed my analysis of the field in four sections. I analysed the development of political theatre in the UK from the 1970s to the present, with particular reference to 7:84, and compared this with

the development of political theatre in Singapore and the different challenges faced by practitioners there.

In Section 1 discussed among others, the practices of Piscator, Brecht, Boal, Littlewood, Mnouchkine, Welfare State, and Unity Theatre and the extent of, and limitations on, their collaborative practices. Section 2 outlined the development of 7:84's practice from the 1970s to its closure in 2008. Section 3 outlined the development of political theatre in Singapore from the mid- 1980s to the present, analysing the changing tensions between the theatre sector and the PAP state during its second and third phases of cultural policy development. . It's important to note some key differences between the UK and Singaporean contexts; for example, in the UK it's not unusual for the state to withdraw subsidies from companies which challenge the status quo, however it's unheard of for the practitioners themselves to be detained without trail. In this context I discussed the strategies of self-censorship and compromise adopted by Singaporean practitioners to ensure their survival. In the final section, I analysed debates around and examples of different forms of contemporary collaborative practice. A discussion of devising and a brief analysis of representation were undertaken.

Chapter 2: Dialectics and Dialectical Collaborative Theatre (DCT)

This chapter develops meanings for the dialectic and the place of equality within dialectics in determining ownership. It argues for the use of dialectics in developing the research paradigm and discusses the pedagogy of the practice as research model developed. It theorises ideology with a view to articulating the ideological basis of the work of BWT and the role of dialectics within this. It develops the primary capital/cooperation dialectic in the context of the product/process dialectic which BWT experiments with in order to develop ownership in the making and showcasing of our performances. It defends the use of dialectics as a rehearsal/performance methodology (Dialectical Collaborative Theatre -DCT) and points to its function as the analytical tool employed in chapter three and four to assess how successful BWT has been in developing ownership in collaborative theatre practice.

In its most reductive form, capitalism is characterised by systems of production based on those who own capital who accordingly have the power to determine production processes and those who do not, and accordingly have no power to determine the means of production, but must nevertheless sell their labour power on capitalist terms for their subsistence. While modern capitalism often takes more complex forms, for example mixed economy models (where the state takes responsibility for the production of some goods and services and provides the conditions for a competitive market driven economy as discussed in the previous chapter) private and corporate ownership of capital necessitating production models which generate profit continue to dominate.   This experiment was designed to investigate whether capitalist profit driven ideology (with its key themes of productivity, surplus value and divisions of labour) could be challenged in the sphere of collaborative theatre, developed within the capitalist-led economy where BWT artists live and work. Dialectical thinking and doing enabled me/us to question and offer an alternative to the dominant ideology of collaborative theatre production premised on hierarchy and utility. Jameson distinguishes Marxism from "purely philosophical systems" and other "idelogical movements" because of its attempt to unite theory and practice. He proposes that,

> we can also seek to dispel ideology by way of praxis, by action and
> and by the attempt to change the objective situations and circumstances
> that have brought those ideologies into being and made them necessary
> in the first place

<p style="text-align: right;">Jameson 2010: 321</p>

DCT is BWT's rehearsal methodology and production model developed from thinking about and practically engaging with the primary dialectic, so that BWT could make collaborative theatre based on utopian ideals of equality, enabling us to own the processes and products of our labour power. As the researcher my theoretical understanding of dialectics facilitated my assessment of how successful BWT's praxis had been in developing ownership in collaborative theatre practice.

Ollman (2003: 158) suggests that dialectics is the "only sensible way to study a world composed of mutually dependent processes in constant evolution". Similarly, the experiment involved four processes, dependent on each other in advancing the practice of collective theatre collaboration, enabling the evolution of the mode of theatre production. The experiment was inclusive of the lavender process of examining the field, the lilac process of intellectual engagement with concept and the violet/purple processes of the formation/development/praxis of BWT. DCT, while informed by the field, was primarily characterised by an iterative dialogue between Marx's theory and BWT's practice in developing praxis. Both Nelson (2013: 57) and Bolt (2012: 30) refer to Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1966) in developing their case for practice as research paradigms. Bolt suggests that it's only through our "handling of materials and processes" that we come to understand the world. Nelson goes further by acknowledging that the "interrelationship between physical and conceptual approaches" cannot escape the "realist-idealist tension". He suggests that "our concepts might shape the world as much as the physical world shapes our knowledge of it" and in engaging with concept and practice simultaneously, our understanding of "embodied knowledge" can be refined. DCT is pedagogy developed from philosophical ideas on the dialectic accompanied by practice as research methodology which includes inquiry cycles and iterative processes. In short, DCT is synonymous with BWT's praxis.

Ideology: The Precursor to Dialectics

The operation of the dialectic in the work of BWT was made possible firstly, through my investment in theorising ideology, our discussions on ideology and our willingness to engage with utopian ideals; secondly, through the strategy I developed to name existing, potential, future and retrospective dialectical contradictions and finally through the pedagogical approaches BWT experimented with. While discussions on ideology were ongoing

throughout the experiment, the practical operation of the dialectic began only after initial discussions on the ideological basis of BWT's work took place. As such it is important to discuss my theoretical understanding of ideology which influenced the BWT collective in investing practically in utopian ideals before developing definitions for the dialectic and BWT's practice of DCT.

Althusser (1970) interprets Marx's meaning of ideology as "the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or a social group". Following on from Marx's theory of base and superstructure, Althusser concurs that the "ultimate condition of production is therefore the reproduction of the conditions of production" and social formations arise from this condition. He proposes the concept of Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) to refer to systems pertaining to religion, education, politics, law, family, trade unions, media and culture describing them as capitalism's exploitative organs of the relations of production. He says that ISAs function primarily through ideology and secondarily through repression and singles out education as the dominant ISA. Referring to Marx's and Engels, *The German Ideology* (1946)/[1932], he both accepts and rejects its two key tenets, that of ideology being illusionary, existing only in the imagination, and that of ideology not having a history of its own. In doing so, he challenges Marx's assumption that reality is external to ideology, offering complex theory on the interpellation of individuals as subjects evidencing the operation of ideology in real life situations. While accepting what he labels as the negative proposition that "ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" he argues for a positive proposition that "ideology has a material existence" and "always exists in an apparatus, and its practice, or practices".

Jameson (2010: 321, 359) distinguishes Marxism from other ideological movements because its roots are in praxis and its purpose is to discredit ideology because of its lack of materiality in changing situations. At the same time he acknowledges that "something indeed of Marxism is lost when the word 'ideology' disappears". His position affirms Marxism's materialist praxis roots but it also challenges the Marxist assumption that non-material ideology corrupts praxis. Althusser's dialectical approach offers a way of retaining non-material ideology within praxis by arguing that it's ever present in the material state apparatuses and by doing so he reclaims ideology in terms of ethics rather than relations of production. Žižek refers to Frank Ruda's paradoxical formulation that "the only way to be a

true materialist today is to push idealism to its limit", asserting that new materialism resists the "matter/life and life/thought" divide (Žižek 2014: 31, 9). Althusser's dialectical engagement with ideology, Jameson's argument for ideology's place within Marxism and Žižek's resistance to the matter thought divide informed BWT's discussions on ideology.

> A Marxist politics is a Utopian project or programme for transforming the world, and replacing a capitalist mode of production with a radically different one

> Jameson 2010: 416

Ownership of collaborative processes is the focus of this research, suggesting that an identification and practice of utopian principles were paramount to challenging the capitalist status quo of theatre production premised on hierarchy and utility. This may appear radical as it goes against the current norms of theatre production. However, the intention of the research was to work within as well as against capitalism, to find a space for alternative ways of producing theatre within capitalist-led systems without seeking to replace existing modes of production altogether. Practically this meant an investment in developing non-hierarchical possibilities for collaborative theatre production, allowing for interruptions to hegemonic utility driven collaborative theatre practices of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It was important for me to share with BWT that utopia for me was not about "transforming the world" or rejecting existing hierarchical production altogether. Instead it is a commitment to finding another way of making performance by putting ownership at the heart of the collaborative theatre we produced, where each of us would feel confident enough to co-lead on the artistic direction of our work and believe the performance we created together belonged to us. Collective ownership of artistic vision had to be fundamental to our ownership of our collaboratively produced theatre. I had to make BWT artists aware that while "Marxist politics" underpinned the experiment, I had no intention to replace a capitalist mode of production, only a commitment to Marxist theory in order to ignite the utopian impulse with a view to challenging key themes of productivity, surplus value and divisions of labour within our collaborative practice. In building consensus on our collective understanding of utopia, it was imperative to determine how utopia could operate within BWT's practice. In posing the conundrum of utopia being both a place and a method Jameson argues that utopia "is not a representation but an operation calculated to disclose the limits of our own imagination of the future, the lines beyond which we do not seem able to go

in imagining changes in our society and world" (Jameson 2010: 410-413). The persistence of hierarchical collaborative theatre practice premised on divisions of labour implies the impossibility of equality and collective ownership within collaboration. Utopian ideals of equality and common good became integral to BWT's construction of ideology informed by my understanding of Althusser's dialectical ideology where it can exist both in the imagination and materially. Through the act of investing in the utopian ideals of equality and collective ownership we were able to discover the limits of our imagination in unearthing alternative ways of collaborating which would not have been possible without a prior engagement with utopia. Our imagination enabled material alternatives, which in turn pushed our imagination even further until we succumbed to exhaustion, the signifier of the limits to our imaginings and the result of our sustained labour power in pursuing alternatives.

Defining the Dialectic

> Thought need not rest content in its logical regularity; it's capable of thinking against itself, without abolishing itself altogether; indeed, were definitions of the dialectic possible, that one might be worth proposing
>
> Adorno 1973: 141

In developing DCT via a practical dialectical exploration of Marx's concepts of capital and cooperation, Adorno's definition of the dialectic was advanced through the study of definitions formulated by Jameson, Ollman, Barkley Rosser Jr (Rosser Jr) and Žižek, all of whom perceived the dialectic as fundamental in enabling renewed ways of looking at, living and working in society. Jameson in *Valences of the Dialectic* (2010: 279) says that positivism and not abstraction is appealing to most and as such the dialectic will always be seen as "an adjunct or supplementary kind of thinking, a method or mode of interpretation, which is only intermittently appealed to" and as such "not many people are capable of thinking dialectically all the time". He reinforces this in *Representing Capital, A Reading of Volume One* (2011: 137, 135) where he asserts that "dialectical thinking can never become common sense thinking" as it is "second degree thinking" which requires theorising and abstraction. At the same time he cautions against the dialectic becoming a "Utopian lingua franca" suggesting that discourse around the dialectic must be in constant motion, never fixed or lasting. Ollman (1993: 11) in *Dialectical Investigations*, affirms Jameson's position that the dialectical approach is not a common sense one and argues for Marx's abstractions being processes and not things (33). Developed through processes, and deviating from common sense thinking, the research methodology was premised on the dialectic being central to

thinking and doing. This enabled the nurturing of dialectical beings so that BWT artists could develop "second degree thinking" as a matter of course and not simply as "adjunct or supplementary".

In developing meanings for the dialectic, Jameson begins with dialectical materialism which he defines in terms of Engels' three laws of the dialectic,

> The law of the transformation of quantity into quality and *vice versa*;
> the law of the interpenetration of opposites;
> the law of the negation of the negation.

<p align="center">Engels 1940: 26</p>

Following on, the methodology for this research was developed through an understanding and application of these three laws born out of the larger concept of dialectical materialism, which influenced my thinking about ownership of theatre processes. The intention to radicalise thinking about theatre production and at the same time attempt to revolutionise the means of theatre production in the material world, arose from Marx's dialectic materialism and in response to Hegel's idealism and Althusser's belief that ideology can have both material and non-material existence. Both Hegel and Marx developed their philosophy from science, nature and the evolution of the species, acknowledging a changing world and conflicting positions within the evolution of systems. However, Hegel found the conflict was "between ideas" but "Marx found the conflict in the world itself, [with] the ideas [springing] from this conflict instead of causing it", supporting his historical materialist analysis of society (Taylor in Marx and Engels 1980: 8-9). The field discussed in chapter one evidenced the predominance of a hierarchical theatre production culture with limited opportunities for the collective ownership of artistic processes and overall artistic vision. In Marxist analysis, the material conditions of capitalism create inequality in society and it is the conflict arising from this which generates new ideas but for Hegel new ideas are bred in the metaphysical realm where thoughts and beliefs are contested. The praxis of BWT was governed by the operation of the dialectic both in the material world of theatre production and in the realm of my/BWT's idealism where faith and intuition played a part. We had to believe in and challenge ourselves intellectually and emotionally about the possibilities of non-hierarchical production in the face of the pervasiveness of hierarchical collaborative theatre production in the material world. Jameson (2010; 13-14) points out "a kind of general applicability of Hegelianism to the economic sphere", highlighting the relationship of the three laws to the

"science of Engels' time" and in doing so draws attention to nature as being the source from which they are derived. He brings to the fore Hegel's *Phenomenology* suggesting that laws are predicated on a "notion of inner and outer worlds" where the objective and the subjective can collide. Jameson's contextualisation of the laws is important as it validates the decision to explore the operation of the dialectic both in the material world of theatre production and in the philosophical world of my/BWT's ideals, in the hope that intersections between idealism and materialism; objectivity and subjectivity could materialise.

Rosser Jr (2000: 314) analyses the relationship between the three laws, describing the third law of the dialectic as a union of the first and second laws which results in a "dynamic formulation". His definitions of the three laws are used as a starting point to develop an understanding of them. In describing the first law of the dialectic, Rosser Jr (2000: 312) refers to Marx's and Engels' historical materialist perspective, where the evolution of one mode of production to another is in keeping with "history unfolding in qualitatively distinct stages such as ancient history, feudalism and capitalism". He adds that Engels borrowed from scientific theory and equated the changes from one mode of production to another with the "boiling or freezing of water at specific temperatures, qualitative (discontinuous) leaps arising from quantitative (continuous) changes". Engels sees the dialectic of qualitative and quantitative as the difference between discontinuous and continuous changes. Ollman refines this distinction by suggesting that difference must be seen in the context of a relation. He refers to quality/quantity as a "relation between two temporally differentiated moments within the same process" (1993: 15). Jameson (2011:111) develops the quality/quantity dialectic in terms of use and exchange value and concrete and abstract labour. In furthering an understanding of the quality/quantity relation, he argues for a premise based on the dialectic rather than one based on difference. In doing so he suggests a move away from the stereotypical assumption that "quality is to be more positively evaluated than quantity", where use value is perceived as more desirable than exchange value. He says the dialectical premise of quality/quantity can be developed more constructively if time is identified with quantity and space with quality. He suggests that the dialectical relationship between the quantity of labour power (manifested in the time required for developing commodity) and the quality of the working conditions (evidenced through the physical and the metaphysical space created for work) needs to be developed more fully in addressing reification. He discusses concrete and abstract labour in the context of "capitalist rationality", where labour power has to be reorganised to optimise productivity and he distinguishes between "older qualitative

craft activities and the new measurable and commodified empty time of labour power (Jameson 2010: 330). The theories of discontinuous/continuous, abstract/concrete and use/exchange in characterising the quality/quantity dialectic informed the praxis of BWT and are discussed after the explanation of all three laws.

Rosser Jr (2000: 313-314) identifies three concepts related to the second law, the interpenetration of opposites i.e. contradiction, the negation of the excluded middle and the related parts of a whole. Borrowing from the laws of thermodynamics, he defines the first concept of contradiction as "the conflict of contradicting opposites that are simultaneously united in their opposition". He refers to Marx's forces and relations of production as the fundamental "contradiction between use value and exchange value within the commodity itself [exemplifying the] union of conflicting opposites". He advances the idea of the unity of opposites by referring to the second concept, the negation of the excluded middle in logic, where both a proposition and its negation can be true. He uses Ockenden and Hodgkins' example of water and ice coexisting in slush to demonstrate the "penumbra of fuzziness", the blurring of the space between two opposites, a space for the "deeper contradiction between continuous human consciousness and discontinuous physical reality". He states that Engels confronted the contradiction between continuity and discontinuity by acknowledging the continuous evolution of the species but at the same time arguing that in human history, "the role of human consciousness and choice allows for the discontinuous transformation of quantity into quality" as modes of production evolve. Finally, Rosser Jr draws on Levins and Lewontin's ideas in the *Dialectical Biologist* (1985) in making a case for a holistic approach to dialectics. He suggests that wholes consists of related parts and it is possible to work from the whole to related parts and equally possible to work from the related parts to the whole, implying that contradictions must also be seen as interdependent processes in opposition, but all of which are necessary and devoid of hierarchy.

In developing his ideas on contradiction and the whole, Jameson (2011: 131-136) proposes that interventions in the objectification of the social relations of labour must be guided by dialectical readings of the totality of capitalism itself. He says that Marx's emphasis on the "destructive properties of capitalism is obvious enough" but he cautions against the denunciation of capitalism as a whole, as this is regressive and not reflective of "Marxism's commitment to the future and to historical development", adding that the "poles or concepts of negative and positive are themselves by no means so fixed" as initially thought. In short

the opposites expressed through contradiction no longer need to be "labelled as positive and negative, in as much as the dialectic means a perpetual changing of places between them and a perpetual transformation of one into the other". In his earlier writing (*Late Marxism: Adorno or the Persistence of the Dialectic*) Jameson (2007: 26) is more explicit about societal transformation and its relationship to the system of capitalism as a whole. Developing key themes from Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and *Negative Dialectics*, he suggests (like Hall, cited in chapter one) that identities are not fixed but in constant flux, resulting in identity and non-identity forming the basis of the contradiction and the concept. He equates concept with identity, non-identity and the totality of the system because subjects within historical movement dwell within the exchange relationship of capitalism. By developing concept holistically, the idea of working with and against concept in addressing reification is made possible. This can be achieved through "the fundamental operation whereby the concept can be retained and dereified all at once" and involves concept's "reinsertion into totality or system".

Jameson (2010: 353) develops the dialectical contradiction also in terms of notions of public and private. He advocates a rethinking of the split between the public space of work and the private life of home labelling this split an "ideological projection of capitalism" suggesting that the opposition between public and private can be constructed dialectically within the broader "category of daily life".

There are clear intersections between the first two laws of the dialectic particularly in relation to continuous/discontinuous movements and use/exchange value. Rosser Jr's framing of the first law (in the context of contradictions arising from the tensions of quantity and quality) and the second law (in the context of contradictions being "simultaneously united in their opposition" and able to dwell in a single shared space), points to the merits of using dialectical thinking to identify and solve problems. The research methodology is developed from this value, where capital and cooperation are identified to be at odds with each other and contradictions which arise from this principal tension are worked through to unite them in their opposition in solving problems. The additional aspect of the second law that of the whole and its related parts point to possibilities of working within and against the system as a whole by dismantling constituent parts of the system through practice which went against the system but complied with the system as well.

Finally, the third law of the dialectic, the negation of the negation is described by Rosser Jr (2000: 314) as the combination of the first and second law into a dynamic formulation with the "dialectical conflict of the contradictory opposites driving the dynamic to experience qualitative transformations". Žižek (2014: 148, 5) sums up this process as "the absolute recoil" where "the negative move (loss, withdrawal) itself generates what it negates" suggesting that what is found can only materialise in what is left behind. He refers to the Hegelian concept of absolute knowledge in identifying the fundamental dialectical paradox as "the negative relationship between being and knowing, of a being which depends on not-knowing". Jameson (2010: 51-56) describes negation as the problem itself becoming the solution, adding that the process of negation is always in motion and can never arrive at a synthesis.

Recognising Dialectical Operations and Naming Them

Constructing definitions for dialectics through studying the three laws of the dialectic was necessary as it allowed me to identify dialectical contradictions and share them with BWT artists so that we could use them to develop rehearsal pedagogy, solve problems, offer us hope in the face of adversity and assess the quality of our practice. As the researcher, I could use dialectic theory to evaluate the degree of ownership evidenced in our practice. While Marx did not name capital and cooperation as a dialectical contradiction, my knowledge of dialectics gave me confidence that there was sufficient evidence in his theory of capital for me to name this as the primary dialectic of working within capitalism. Thus the capital/cooperation dialectic became the key concept we worked with in developing ownership in our practice.   It enabled me as the researcher to develop the research paradigm premised on the dual function of labour power - labour as commodity and labour as the means of production, exemplified in the titles of chapters three and four. The basic principle of Marx's theory of capital is seen most clearly in the first law of the dialectic, that of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa, analogous with the dialectical transformation of capital into cooperation; product into process and vice versa. For Marx, capital equals resources used for the production of commodities. These commodities can be sold at a value surplus to their production costs provided cooperative practices (as defined by Marx) are used to ensure cost efficiencies in production, thereby guaranteeing profit, and the continuation of the cycle of production through further investment in capital, and further gains in profit. Thus the ability to produce a greater number of commodities cheaply, which

at the same time appeal to the consumer (who is prepared to pay more than the cost of production for the commodity), depends on the effectiveness of the divisions of labour, as defined by the cooperation systems in place. Influenced by Jameson's resistance to quality being more positively evaluated than quantity, the practice of BWT was developed on the dialectic of product and process rather than one being at the expense of the other. We viewed our performance and our artistic processes to create it in Ollman's terms of "differentiated moments within the same process", building on Engels' idea of continuous and discontinuous changes in the mode of production where "the role of human consciousness and choice" allows for interruptions to hegemonic cultural production.

By applying the first law (that of the continuous transformation of quantity into quality) alongside the second law (the interpenetration of opposites) in the specific theatre context of the product/process dialectic stemming from the generic economic context of the primary capital/cooperation dialectic, many other secondary dialectic formulations emerged, informing BWT's praxis. Jameson (2010: 455, 288) describes Brecht's definition of the dialectic as the uncovering of phenomena through finding the "ultimate contradictions behind them", insisting that the observation of the contradiction should be "everywhere and always". Ollman (1993: 19) also refers to Brecht's dialectics and labels it revolutionary because through dialectical analysis "we are made to question what kind of changes are already occurring and what kind of changes are possible…in a manner that makes effective action possible". The product/process dialectic and the tensions which come along with it was identified as the ultimate contradiction paving the way for secondary contradictions to materialise so that BWT could invest in the phenomenon of ownership in collaborative theatre-making with a view to effecting positive change in collaborative practice where possible. The naming of the ultimate contradiction enabled us to meticulously observe, identify and act on related contradictions "everywhere and always" as we developed *WSA* and *LYSD*. Jameson's development of the quantity/quality dialectic in terms of use/exchange value and concrete/abstract labour gave me ideas on how BWT could collaborate ethically to produce theatre while taking into account issues relating to subsistence, as we were not remunerated for our work at BWT. By applying dialectical thinking to the process/product contradiction and equating continuous changes to predictable outcomes and discontinuous changes to unpredictable ones, we were able to balance risk-taking and risk avoidance in developing the aesthetics of *LYSD* and promoting it as a commodity. I proposed that socially necessary labour time was constantly reviewed in determining the worth of our labour power

in the context of abstract/concrete labour and use/exchange value. In doing so, we guarded against the reification of our labour by continually assessing the quantity of our labour expressed through the time spent on creation, and the quality of our labour expressed in the conditions of our working environment, for the duration of the experiment.

Kuppers (2007: 3 – 6) describes community performance as a collaborative process for creativity and self-expression with an emphasis on process rather than product, where the politicisation of labour leads the way for political change. From the outset of this research I questioned the binary of professional theatre and community/applied theatre where the former is characterised as being product orientated and the latter process focussed as this implies that there is no space for process and product to coexist without hierarchy, whether performance is created in a community or professional context. This suggests that Ockenden and Hodgkins' "penumbra of fuzziness", a space where deeper contradictions exist, enabling deeper insights, is not possible. However through the processes BWT developed in unifying the tensions of the aesthetics of professional/community we were able to explore the space for these deeper contradictions. As we developed our performance for the Tron and CCA, experimenting with the process/product dialectic paved the way for deeper insights about theatre's relationship to society and allowed for objectives of participatory theatre to materialise in professional theatre contexts.

We developed *WSA* and *LYSD* without monetary capital but with social capital and innovative working methods premised on the valorisation of work. In doing so we challenged Marx's theory that only capital can be valorised as our property i.e. the talents born out of our labour enhanced in value through our working practices, were converted into commodity when *LYSD* was marketed as ticketed performance, with the audience having the choice to determine the value of their tickets. However, valorisation, in this context, was not for profit, unlike the valorisation for capital, where profit is the determinant of value. BWT's value was determined by our collective ownership of artistic vision and the gratification we received from the collective creative processes we invested in to develop our commodity. Basing our production model on the dialectic of use value and exchange value; concrete labour and abstract labour, we were able to use our unremunerated labour power to create a product that had both use and exchange value, defining our socially necessary time in both the concrete and the abstract. Up until the point when *LYSD* was performed to a ticketed audience, BWT's socially necessary labour time was defined in terms of concrete labour as

WSA and *LYSD'* s value to us was limited to use value i.e. gratification from creation itself as we were not remunerated. However, when an audience pays to see our work, our concrete labour is converted into abstract labour, as our commodity has exchange value beyond its use value and our commodity. Also, future performances of *LYSD*, out with the two undertaken as part of the experiment, allow for our product to be sold numerous times, with a limited additional investment of our labour time. Meanings of socially necessary time formed the basis of many of BWT's discussions and these pointed us in the direction of dialectical relationships between professional and amateur production, leisure and work time.

The primary dialectic of capital and cooperation developed largely from the first two laws of the dialectic paved the way for the operation of other dialectical contradictions (professional/community performance concrete/abstract labour, use/exchange value, professional/amateur production and leisure and work time) in defining DCT. The particular dialectical formulation of professional/amateur and leisure/work allowed us to explore Jameson's "category of daily life" instead of making us conform to capitalism's dictation of a split between public and private life, as we developed our commodity.

The discussions on Rosser Jr's first two concepts related to the second law of the dialectic (that of contradiction and the negation of the excluded middle) readily materialised in BWT's praxis. The third concept (that of the related parts of a whole) took more time to take root as we had to work out how capitalism as a whole affected our work and find constituent parts within it that we could challenge. As discussed in the previous chapter Brecht believed that the state turned theatre into a commodity and the individualism of capitalism needed to be challenged by the collectivism of socialism. Although Brecht transformed audiences through epic theatre, which challenged bourgeois consumption, his views on the polarity of capitalism and socialism needed to be challenged, particularly in the light of Jameson's caution against the unequivocal condemnation of capitalism and the unnecessary labelling of positive and negative in describing systems. BWT wanted to explore ways of working within and against capitalism, developing a production model based on the dialectic of individual and collective ownership where individual and collective creativity could coexist as interdependent processes in opposition but necessary for the creation of the whole. *WSA* and *LYSD* were performance texts created by BWT and we found ethical ways of mediating individual and collective ownership of these texts born out of our collaborative processes. Subscribing to Jameson's (2011) reading of Marx, where he contends "that socialism [is] more modern than

capitalism and more productive", the dialectic of socialism and capitalism was developed with a view to not only engaging with individual/collective ownership but materialist/idealist tensions as well. We did not deny the conditions of capitalism in which our work was created but at the same time our idealism gave us courage to experiment with principles of socialism in progressing alternative ways of making theatre where all of us in the collective had a say in what was made and how it was made, with no one individual having the power to overrule, and all of us invested in a commitment to achieving consensus. In doing so we developed our own type of democracy based on the dialectic of socialism and capitalism.

The second and third laws of the dialectic were instrumental in enabling artistic vision to become the capital in the rehearsal room allowing for the ownership of artistic processes to become central to our practice. Engels' negation of the negation and Jameson's contradiction of identity and non-identity became critical to developing ways of empowering each of us in the collective. My failure to secure funding for the development of *LYSD* could have resulted in the termination of the project if not for the collective faith in the work and our persistence with the dialectic. In keeping with Žižek's absolute recoil (where something new can be found in what is left behind) we developed tenacity in exploring ways of working not known to us, playing with the "the negative relationship between being and knowing, of a being which depends on not-knowing". In letting go of the central premise of funding for producing the second phase of the work, we found an unwavering commitment to developing artistic vision collectively much in the vein of Jameson's description of negation as the problem itself becoming the solution. Postulating from Jameson's construction of concept as identity and non-identity's relationship to the totality of the system, ownership of artistic vision was equated to concept and capitalism to the totality of the system. Developing the dialectic of identity and non-identity became crucial to how we came to own artistic vision and its constituent products and processes equitably within the capitalist economy our performances were made in. Experimenting with the notion that identities are in constant flux, I proposed a rehearsal methodology where we could create our performance in dual identities, moving away from the actor/character or self/autobiography binary of theatre-making in favour of dialectical theatre-making. Through constructing and deconstructing identity we found a way of navigating through further dialectical contradictions we identified, such as that of leader and participant; specialist role and generic role; text-based work and devised work. Finally, in allowing our identities as artist and worker to clash in producing *WSA* and *LYSD*, we were able to guard against the reification of our labour by reinserting our

labour power into the system on our terms, attesting to the possibility of concept being retained and dereified at the same time. In short, through the dialectic we found ways of working within and against capitalism in producing and owning *WSA* and *LYSD*.

Practice as Research (PaR): Pedagogical Premises and Methodology

Althusser's (1970) singling out of education as the dominant ISA, and his praise of teachers who defy the system they are trapped in by teaching against the prevailing ideology, confirmed my intuition that pedagogy had to be fundamental in enabling operations of the dialectic to bring about positive ethical changes in collaborative practice. A consideration of the pedagogical basis of our work and an investment in exploring pedagogical strategies were vital in developing DCT through the PaR strategies employed. The pedagogy of BWT was born out of our intention to put collective ownership at the heart of our practice. This necessitated an intellectual and practical engagement with ideology and aesthetics resulting in the identification of equality and artistic vision becoming central to definitions of ownership within BWT. Applications for equality were relative, depending on how much labour time each artist could put into developing artistic processes. Discussions of the collective ownership of *WSA* and *LYSD* based on unequal contributions to developing these, governed by our subsistence employment and personal circumstances, guided us in determining ethical ownership. Developing strategies which allowed us to influence the artistic vision for the creation of *WSA* and *LYSD* became central to BWT's pedagogy as it gave each of us the opportunity to have a personal and collective stake in the fruits of our labour power.

Kershaw (2011b: 64) acknowledges the debates on terminology relating to PaR methodologies but opts for a straightforward principle i.e. PaR is justified when it "indicates the uses of practical creative processes as research methods (and methodologies) in their own right". Nelson (2013: 9), reflecting on prospective PaR PhD students who approach him for supervision, stresses that he had to be convinced that practical knowledge needed to be evidenced in practice and as such should be communicated through practice. He defines this practical knowledge "as a matter of doing rather than abstractly conceived" and accordingly cannot be communicated by words alone. The possibility of collective ownership of collaborative theatre processes could only be tested validly through practice in the real world of cultural production, justifying my use of PaR methodology. DCT could not have materialised without the experimentation of creative processes and the results of these

necessitated communication via practice and theory to enable a holistic understanding of the intersections between concept and practice in developing DCT.

Freeman (2010: 81, 79) refers to performance research as being "messy" where "goals are often less well-defined and usually impossible to measure…unpredictable, maybe even at times uncontrollable". Yet he argues that "there is still a place in practice-based investigations for research which is systematic, informed and verifiable". In moving away from positivism and opting for interpretivist dialectic methodology, I allowed myself to enter into a world of chaos and unpredictability, taking along with me the other BWT artists. At the same time the central purpose of this research was to propose a workable alternative to hierarchical collaborative theatre practice. Thus within the larger messiness, the research still had to be "systematic, informed and verifiable". Kershaw (2011b: 64 - 65) acknowledges the dialectic as intrinsic to PaR, referring to the model as lending itself to "generating troublesome contradictions" which are valuable for the potential new knowledge these can bring, but which require a "tighter focus of analysis". He suggests "Starting Points, Aesthetics, Location, Transmission and Key Issues" as the five "minimal constituents" of PaR. The use of dialectics as research methodology sat well with Kershaw's "minimal constituents" giving structure and coherence to the articulations and analysis of pedagogy, which in turn enabled the argument for the collective ownership of collaborative theatre to develop. Kershaw's framework enabled us to consider applications of equality and develop opportunities to influence artistic vision systematically throughout the experiment.

Kershaw first constituent, "starting points", is necessary to the construction of PaR as they can be countless and unpredictable, but have to be mitigated within the requirements of the academy, where research questions and topics have to be framed with a certain degree of predictability. He sums up this contradiction as being "between the predictability-quotient of questions (even the most open ones imply a range of answers) and the unpredictable prompting of hunches". The experiment began with a hunch that my personal experience of the lack of collective ownership of collaborative theatre process at 7:84 and TNS was evidenced in the larger field. A hunch that if I equated ownership to Marx's formulation of capital, and collaboration to his definition of cooperation, I might together with fellow artists discover an alternative to present day collaborative practice. A hunch that process and product need not be at the expense of each other. There were many hunches that informed the phrasing of the research topic but in essence it was primarily framed by the question of

whether collective ownership was possible within collaboration. However, within this predictable framing, the unpredictable surfaced through dialectical thinking and doing.

There were many times during this research when I found it difficult to reconcile what I perceived to be the predictable norms of academia with the unpredictable impulse of the artist. Persisting with the dialectic enabled me to identify the fundamental pedagogical basis of this research – the search for truth both as an academic and an artist which could only materialise through practical constructions of equality and ownership of artistic vision. Hallward (2003: 114 - 117) in *Badiou a Subject to Truth,* describes Badiou's conception of truth as embedded within multiplicity, and manifested only in an event. He describes truth as axiomatic and in doing so implies that definitions for truth are problematic because of unquestioned assumptions of its worth. He suggests that by developing the concept of the multiple in relation to truth, our understanding of truth can be progressed. Borrowing from mathematical set theory, he synonymises truth with multiplicity but points out that there can be no definition for the multiple because of the infinity of mathematical set formulations and it is this inconsistency that is primary. As such he suggests that the embodiment of multiplicity within truth must be considered alongside 'event', which cannot be separated from truth. The event is unpredictable and has no interest in preserving status quo. It's evanescent, although what is done in its name may transcend time altogether. It must possess its own site before presentation. It is specified to but not by its site. It is resistant to formalisation and located at the limits of current formal resources. The event reveals the void, and the truth names this void. Badiou defines the subject as the protagonist of truth:

> A subject is nothing other than an active fidelity to the event of truth. This means that a subject is a militant of truth…The militant of a truth is not only the political militant working for the emancipation of humanity in its entirety. He or she is also the artist-creator, the scientist who opens up a new theoretical field, or the lover whose world is enchanted
>
> (Badiou 2005: xiii)

The DCT rehearsal methodology developed by me/BWT enabled events to materialise during the research spontaneously, without calculation, thereby exposing the void in my/BWT's praxis, allowing us the opportunity to name truths. As subjects we needed to discover and develop our "fidelity to the event of truth" not only within the domain of BWT but in all the other domains we inhabit. In doing so we disrupted notions of status quo within BWT and

for some of us these disruptions entered domains out with BWT as well. Participating in the event allowed us to realign unequal hierarchical relationships of the past as well as offered us opportunities to inform the artistic vision of the performances we developed.

Kershaw's second constituent, 'aesthetics', was pivotal in informing the pedagogical strategies developed through processes of iteration and cycles, introduced here and discussed more fully in subsequent chapters. He describes the dialectical tension within PaR as the academy's requirement for originality and innovation suggesting the value of artistic "freedom" in this but at the same time he draws attention to the fact that this freedom must be exercised within the "disciplinary order" of the academy (Kershaw 2011b: 66). For the thesis and the practice of BWT this translated into how we could create a performance that could have appeal in a professional theatre venue but at the same time be considered original research. Thus as BWT we had to create a performance that an audience would like to attend but as the researcher, I had to ensure that how and what we produce did not duplicate what we already know of theatre. Bourdieu, (1984: 3) discusses the distinctions that people make in choosing what they find aesthetically pleasing and what they would not want to own, see, wear, produce etc. because it's not according to their taste. He argues that power relations within society determine distinctions in taste and form the basis of what we like and what we don't, suggesting that snobbery is rife in the bourgeois world. He says that "the 'eye' is product of history reproduced by education", referring to the inescapability of class consciousness and a maintenance of this consciousness through education, which Althusser singles out as the dominant ISA. In this context, BWT reflected on the aesthetics of collaborative production without a designated director or writer, going against the cultural norms of what is generally produced in professional, venue-based theatre and the expectations of an audience drawn to particular aesthetics. Our belief in the aesthetics of truth, in keeping with Badiou's principle of truth surfacing in the event, was applied in creating events during rehearsals and performances of *LYSD*. This in turn signalled new aesthetics where the tensions of the academy's requirement for originality, innovation and "disciplinary order" were worked through to create *LYSD* which could have appeal for an audience, the academy and BWT. To be able to develop equality and contribute to the overall artistic vision of our performances, BWT had to reflect on truths which surfaced during the events we created and we had to consider how these would inform our aesthetic choices.

The application of processes of iteration and cycles helped us find ways of addressing audience expectations and our own ambitions for practice,

> To iterate a process is to repeat it several times (though probably with some variation) before proceeding, setting up a cycle: start-end-start. The creator must choose between the alternative results created by the iteration, focussing on some and leaving others behind (temporarily or permanently)

(Smith and Dean 2011: 19)

There were iterations of a similar but different product materialising in *WSA* at the Tron and *LYSD* at the CCA with possible further iterations following the completion of the research. These iterations were the results of iterative rehearsal processes, reflected upon through the recording of video diary entries at the end of each of BWT's rehearsals. BWT's analysis and the audience's feedback on *WSA* informed the creation of *LYSD*. A focus group was formed from a cross section of the audience who attended one of the two performances of *WSA*. Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005: 78, 89) justify the use of focus groups particularly when the researcher needs to discover the "perspectives and experience of people who have different social and cultural backgrounds from theirs. It was essential for BWT to get feedback on *WSA* and involve audience members in the construction of *LYSD* so that we could gauge whether the performance we were creating, without a designated director or writer, could have aesthetic appeal for audiences and whether the process/product dialect experimented with in *WSA* had worked for an audience. The focus group was longitudinal (2011-2014), offering feedback on *WSA*, suggestions for the follow on work, feedback on the development of *LYSD* and feedback on the performance of *LYSD*, all of which BWT engaged with fully. While discussing the role of the moderator in facilitating discussions in a focus group, Liamputtong and Ezzy describe the tasks as being carried out by a "leader". In the light of the non-hierarchical model we were exploring, I thought it best that I did not take on the role of moderator and invited one of my colleagues from UWS to perform this role. The audience feedback strategies and the inclusion of a longitudinal focus group were ways in which stake in BWT's performances could grow.

An interrogation of taste was not only undertaken in relation to an audience but developed as part of the rehearsal process of DCT. We each led workshops on the type of practice we

were interested in, discussing and reflecting on the aesthetics of these alongside the ownership agendas and the principles of equality we wanted to develop within our performances. Action research became important to this inquiry.

> Action research is a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices

<div align="right">Kemmis and McTaggart 1988: 5</div>

As artists, all of us at BWT had undertaken a range of artistic employment for our subsistence and all of us at one point or another had felt alienated by the production of the commodified art we were involved in. BWT's pedagogical premise of the artist in search of truth through developing equality and enhancing ownership of artistic vision provided each of us with the opportunity to explore the justice of our practice and perhaps through this exploration to influence collaborative theatre production in a small way. Kemmis and McTaggart's cycle of planning, acting, observing and reflecting, spiralling into re-planning and the continuation of the cycle, formed the basis of our pedagogical strategy. We planned our workshops/rehearsals, led/participated in them, made observations and evaluated the sessions. This in turn informed future planning and the continuation of the cycle. We recorded our reflections via video diary entries which we revisited frequently, particularly for clarification when heated debates on the aesthetics, quality and the purpose of our work took place. For the first stage of the work, where we developed *WSA*, I posed the video diary question at the end of each rehearsal, but during the second stage, when we created *LYSD*, we rotated who asked the question. The sharing of our explorations of truth through the workshops we led and our reflections and debates on these, disrupted prevailing hierarchical collaborative practice enabling each of us to inform the artistic vision for the creation of *WSA* and *LYSD*.

Kershaw identifies the third minimal constituent of PaR as "locations", pointing out that the site of performance is bound to the specificity of time and place yet the dialectical nature of performance lends itself to limitless possibilities (Kershaw 2011b: 66). As the researcher, I wanted to test the possibility of collective ownership when making performance for professional venue based theatre and invited collaborators who would be committed to exploring this with me. Thus our performance was confined to the designated venues of the Tron and the CCA. However our creation of fictional worlds through Heathcote's (1995)

process drama and role play techniques paved the way for the commodified theatre space to function as a dialectical one. According to Hughes (2011: 190), "the field of applied theatre deliberately and creatively disrupts the binary of use value and exchange value". Our choice of bringing in participatory theatre techniques to venue based theatre allowed us to experiment with ideas not usually associated with these venues. This in turn gave the audience the opportunity to reflect on their consumption of performance in such venues. By identifying early on that the staging of our performance in an arts building was key to our practice, we were able to work through the challenges of how truth could be shared with an audience through the aesthetics we developed which gave us agency as artists.

Kershaw names the fourth minimal constituent of PaR as "transmissions". He says the same, specific project requires "multi-modal" dissemination" (66). While the most valuable form of dissemination for the knowledge gained from our processes is the embodied live theatre experience, where knowledge is contextualised in the emotion of the live encounter, the breadth of this type of dissemination is minimal. Thus to broaden dissemination at a later stage, a multi-modal documentation strategy was adopted. Notes on the planning and evaluation of rehearsals were compiled. Critical rehearsals were recorded, photographs taken and video recordings made of the staging of *WSA* and *LYSD*. As it would have been unfair to expect the other BWT artists to invest their time documenting their reflections in writing, I suggested videoing our reflections at the end of each session. JW and I worked on developing the BWT website which captures the processes and performances through pictures, videos and scripts, so that the public can have access to our work. For most of us at BWT, processes of DCT impacted our outputs in our artistic endeavours out with BWT. It is anticipated that on completion of the thesis, I will be able to disseminate findings of this research through publishing in appropriate journals.

Finally, Kershaw refers to the fifth and final minimal constituent, "key issues" as the "joker in the PaR pack". He describes the key issue as "how to fall into contradiction without only contradicting itself". I interpreted this as the operation of the third law of the dialectic, that of the negation of the negation subsumed into the second law, that of the interpenetration of opposites. The joker in our PaR pack was that the unsuccessful application for funds brought about new ways of rehearsing and thinking about theatre. The unfunded *WSA* period was

premised on a funded period for developing *LYSD* but instead of allowing this contradiction to contradict itself, BWT worked with the dialects of amateur/professional; work time/leisure time; economic capital/social capital and were able to produce performance for a ticketed audience with no remuneration for BWT artists. This led to two key issues, firstly, the ethics of resorting to social capital to secure favours in kind and secondly, the ethics of unremunerated labour.

> Social capital is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.

> Bourdieu, in Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 119

Social inequality is perpetuated by social capital as well as economic capital, i.e. those who have access to institutionalised networks and relationships gain advantage over others. BWT put ownership at the centre of our practice yet we readily looked to social capital to help us produce the work. One of the longest running online debates on the Standing Conference of University Drama Departments (SCUDD) open access e-mail lists (November 2011 – April 2012) was on the subject of unpaid labour for artists. The debate was prompted by a post by Inter-Action, looking for artists to be involved in their mobile multi-arts centre productions without remuneration. Yet we continued with the production of *LYSD* when funds could not be secured. These two key issues are addressed in chapter four of the thesis. While working with no pay was challenging and the ethics of unremunerated labour needed to be tackled in BWT's practice, the failure to secure funding alerted us to the merits of naming artistic vision as the key determiner of ownership, allowing us to grow our stake in *WSA* and *LYSD* through our investment in the overall artistic vision for these performances.

Summary

A defence of this "praxis-led" inquiry was undertaken, through the intellectual engagement with the dialectic of capital/cooperation (Armstrong 2011: 192). This was identified as the key concept and primary dialectic in developing DCT, analogous to the product/process dialectic of theatre born out of this primary dialectic. Many dialectical formulations (including use/exchange value, amateur/professional, identity/non-identity, risk-taking/risk avoidance, professional/community, generic/specialist, leader/facilitator, idealist/materialist,

individual/collective, socialism/capitalism and economic/social capital arising from the process/product dialect) were named with a view to determining their purpose in advancing ownership within BWT's collaborative theatre practice. The pedagogical premise of BWT was articulated in terms of the artist in search of truth through constructions of equality and collective ownership of artistic vision in collaborative theatre practice. The three laws of the dialectic were analysed, justifying their application to developing the PaR model, based on Kershaw's five minimum constituents. The dual function of labour power (as a commodity and a means of production) was recognised as necessary to progress the argument for ownership and accordingly the argument will be developed through this dual lens in the following chapters. However, DCT functions at its optimum in cultivating ownership when the dual functions of labour power are united in their opposition made possible only by working with the primary capital/cooperation dialectic. Thus in the following chapters ownership will be analysed through the two different lenses but also through a single lens when the two clash.

Figure 1: The three faces of DCT
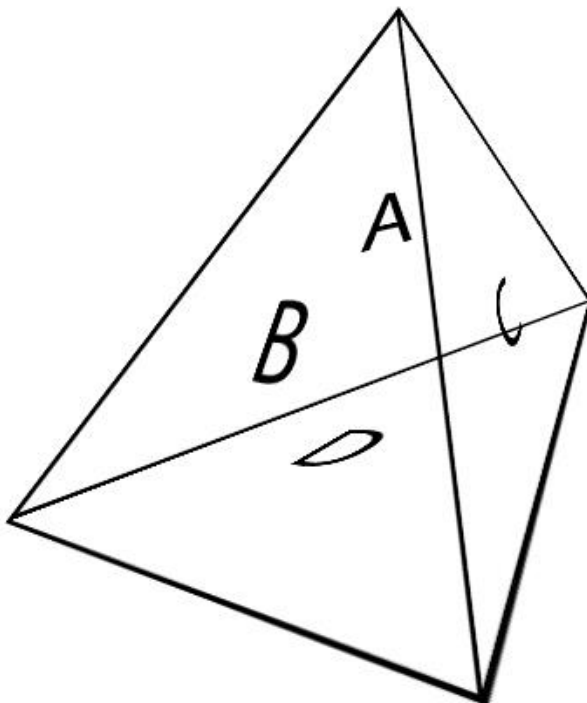
The analogy of a triangular pyramid helps sum up the principles and practice of DCT. There are three faces to DCT and a base from which these faces arise. The faces overlap and share common features:

Face A – DCT as Commodity:

By interrogating the contradictions that arise from BWT's labour as a commodity, we discover ways to own our labour power

Face B – DCT as Means of Production:

By interrogating the contradictions that arise from BWT's labour as a means of production, we discover ways to own the processes of our labour power

Face C – DCT as Pedagogy:

By framing DCT as pedagogy, we discover ways of fusing ideology with rehearsal methodology allowing for utopian ideals of equality, truth and collective ownership of aesthetics to permeate our creative processes.

The Base D – the three laws of the dialectic:

By originating from the same foundation of the three laws of the dialectic, the three faces of DCT cooperate in growing the collective ownership of BWT's processes and products enabled by their shared roots.

This chapter while focussing on the lilac process of the experiment, points to the violet/purple processes discussed in the two chapters ahead. In in doing so it unites the dual function of labour power as commodity and as a means of production and brings together the key features of DCT. By identifying capital and cooperation as the primary dialectic of economic production, we discover ways of working with the process/product dialectic in developing ownership in the collaborative theatre practice of BWT. The process/product dialectic is developed from the dual function of BWT's labour power. The Base functions at its optimum when the three faces work together to unite the tensions of the dual function of BWT's labour power. Thus while the three faces can operate on its own, it functions at its best in facilitating ownership when they work together in uniting the conflicts of the primary process/product dialectic.

Chapter 3: Cooperation, Labour Power and BloodWater Theatre

The capitalist economy is developed from the labour power of human beings. Negotiating labour power within BWT became integral to advancing the possibilities of ownership for the processes and products of BWT. This negotiation was facilitated through the practice of DCT. In advancing the argument for ownership within BWT, the primary dialectic of capital and cooperation (arising from labour as a means of production and labour as commodity) is developed from the perspective of the collaborative labour process of BWT. This chapter interrogates BWT's processes through the conceptual lens of cooperation where collaboration, use value and concrete labour are operative, as opposed to Chapter four, which interrogates BWT's products through the conceptual lens of commodity, where exchange value and abstract labour are operative.

This chapter describes and analyses the findings of BWT's processes. It examines the three faces of DCT (as commodity, as a means of production and as pedagogy) in politicising collaboration and promoting ownership within collaborative processes. All three faces of DCT fuelled by the laws of the dialectic were important to developing collective ownership of BWT's collaborative labour processes but at times one or two faces took precedence over the other. DCT was at its best when all the three faces, cooperated with each other in advancing the collective ownership of BWT's collaborative processes. Data from video diary entries, rehearsal documentation and reflective/creative writing is analysed through the lens of cooperation with a view to identifying and interrogating the ownership of processes developed by BWT. As the video diaries were essential for gathering data on each artist's response to DCT over time, and the passing of time was integral to how ownership strategies were developed through DCT, a chronological account is accompanied by concurrent thematic analysis of BWT's processes.

As discussed in 'The Chapters' section of the 'Introduction' to the thesis, this chapter is a very long one because of its detailed analysis of the numerous conflicts in the production process arising from the primary capital/cooperation; product/process dialectic which impacted on the type of performances we created, discussed in the following chapter. The

detailed concurrent account and analysis not only guard against unconscious bias in selecting what to include had I adopted a thematic approach, but also gives each BWT artist her recognition and place in this research. As this research explored the possibilities for the collective ownership of collaborative theatre processes, space is created in the thesis not only for the arguments developed for the practice of DCT but also for the story of BWT within this research. Without BWT the argument for DCT could not have been made and while BWT do not wish to have a stake in the thesis and I undertake all the academic aspects of the research, I believe it is necessary for the other BWT artists to be presented as co-protagonists of this research as we developed *WSA* and *LYSD* because most of them committed to an exploration of ownership within collaborative practice over the period of three years.

In keeping with the inductive approach, all observations were noted and an initial analysis undertaken with no requirement for patterns/themes to be identified at this stage. Accordingly the first draft of this chapter was written with only dates as subheadings. Further thematic subheadings were added and rewrites undertaken only after all observations were recorded and initial reflections documented in the chapter. The praxis-led model of research I developed led to a ruminative style of writing for this chapter where I ponder on the outcomes of each identified period of time and put forward a case for the use of a specific aspect of DCT. I bring together these specific aspects and summarise the key features of DCT at the end of this chapter. I also synthesise and analyse significant findings at the end of relevant sections in the course of the chapter.

The Beginning (February 2011- April 2011)

Following on from Kershaw's (2011b: 65) first minimum constituent of PaR (that of "starting points", where good research finds a way through "the predictability- quotient of questions" and the artist's impulse towards "unpredictable prompting of hunches") I began the experiment with clear questions as to whether it were possible to politicise theatre-making by enabling artists to collectively own what they collaboratively create. At the same time I was less clear about the employment of dialectics in developing the research paradigm. There was little precedence in using dialectical theory to test or develop ownership in artistic practice. The experiment began initially with a hunch and my belief that an engagement with

Marx's concept of capital and cooperation would somehow lead me and BWT to embody dialectical thinking in seeking answers to questions of ownership.

From October 2008 - September 2009 while teaching on the performance programme at UWS, I undertook an MA in Actor Training and Coaching at RCCSD. During the MA, I developed a project, *Error of Comedy*, deconstructing Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*, together with Gavin Wright (GW) and Paul Chaal (PC). The case study threw up the following questions which could not be fully addressed in the course of my MA studies.

    a) How can leadership be shared in the rehearsal room?

    b) Is there a place for pedagogy in the rehearsal room?

    c) Who owns the process?

    d) Who owns the product?

    e) Should process feature in the product?

The doctoral research began with the unanswered questions of the MA project which informed the larger questions of politicising collaboration and developing themes of ownership.

From the start, I was troubled by the question, 'if I recruited fellow collaborators would I inevitably be the leader and would the very act of sourcing them undermine the principles of ownership in collaborative practice'? Theoretically, yes it is a flawed starting point but while bringing artists together and working collectively, I cannot predict what aspects of equality (or lack thereof) I will uncover. I may have started the process but that does not necessarily make me the leader. Kershaw's (2011b: 66-67) fifth minimal constituent (that of "key issues" which he refers to as "the joker in the PaR pack") and Rosser Jr's (2000: 313-314) theorisation of the second law of the dialectic (where opposites can be united through the logic of the excluded middle) gave me confidence that it was possible for me to select the participants for this experiment without undermining the whole experiment itself. The proposition of me as leader and its negation were possible if the binary of leader/follower was developed dialectically in the group's practice. However, in designing and progressing DCT, I had to be mindful of "how to fall into contradiction without only contradicting itself" when deconstructing notions of leadership while we developed our practice

While the exploratory nature of the experiment made me cautious about not over defining research objectives to potential collaborators, it was still necessary to communicate to them decisions I had already made in the project design prior to inviting them. As discussed in the introduction, the artists were aware that I was working with Marxist concepts to develop ownership in collaborative theatre practice and that while stage one of the experiment was to be an unfunded performance pitch to potential funders which we would develop in our leisure time, I would be seeking funds for stage two of the work. The literature on director-led devising processes, director-led ensembles, the perception of Mnouchkine, Littlewood etc. as having overall artistic vision for their respective companies and the contrasting operational structure of TPS (where "the process is not led by one person's vision") confirmed for me that the practice should commence without a director (Behrndt 2010: 30). I outlined this as one of the key terms of the project design. I also told potential collaborators that I had met with the artistic director of the Tron Theatre who had offered me the studio space and technical support in kind from the 13th to the 15th of October 2011 with payment only for ushers when our proposed work-in-progress would be staged for an audience. Finally, I shared with them why I thought this project might be of interest to them and said that their expertise, their temperament and our friendship had prompted the invitation. In short I invited artist-friends who were keen to develop principles of equality in the rehearsal room and had the patience for this process.

Composition of the Collective

There was no doubt in my mind that GW and PC should continue this journey with me from the MA to the PhD and both accepted the invitation. The experiment, if it were limited to GW, PC and I, would only have one woman and be too small a group to test ideas of equality and ownership in collaborative practice. Inspired by the happenings movement in the late sixties and seventies, and Albert Hunt's (1976) collaboration with his students at Bradford Regional College of Art to produce radical performances, I was drawn to the idea of UWS graduates who I had taught in the past who would be excited by this research. The ethics of working with current students would be troubling as I would only be inviting a handful of students but Hunt's idea of radicalising hierarchical artists' relationships was worth pursuing. Routledge publishers (2014) when introducing their revised publication of Hunt's 1976 seminal text draw attention to Hunt's "evolution of new working relationships between teachers and students which in turn highlight an alternative way of viewing society". Working with graduates would afford me the opportunity to radicalise lecturer/graduate

relationships with a view to deconstructing notions of leadership in performance-making and perhaps even offer new ways of looking at and working with leadership in larger society. I reviewed the undergraduate dissertation research topics of the performance students I had supervised in the past and recruited Suzanne Morrison (SM) and AN (Anna Nierobisz) who graduated from UWS in 2009 and 2010 respectively. SM's dissertation argued against the value of formal higher education training for actors and AN's research explored the relationship between storytelling, humanity and creativity. At the time when I invited AN and SM to participate in the experiment both of them were jobbing actors represented by different actors' agencies but were becoming increasingly worried about employment prospects and the competitiveness of the creative industries. During my time at 7:84, I had worked with the Tron's stage manager, David Sneddon (DS), and believed that he would be sympathetic to the intentions of the research and be able to help us with setting up at the Tron. I discussed inviting him with the collaborators I had already recruited and all were in favour of including DS. DS accepted the invitation but was concerned about how much he could contribute to the experiment because of the long hours he worked at the Tron. The first meeting of the group took place on the 4th of February 2011 but the final two additions were made only after the initial group was up and running. As we began to discuss ideas it became clear to the group that there was a need for someone with camera expertise and we recruited my colleague, Martin Smith (MS) who worked in the information technology department at UWS. We believed MS had the temperament, artistic impulse and commitment required for this project and he came on board on the 10th of April 2011. As the date for the Tron work-in-progress performance drew close, there was much to be done on publicity and marketing but at the same time no one in the group had the expertise or time to take responsibility for this. I suggested that I approach another UWS performance graduate, Jamie Walker (JW), who had experience in this area and he started working on different tasks in July 2011 but only met everyone in the collective in September 2011. As JW got involved much later than the rest, he could only contribute minimally to the development of the performance for the Tron but became fully integrated with the group after the Tron performance.

The Early Operation of the Dialectic

While this chapter focuses on the analysis of the labour power of BWT in terms of collaborative processes, where use value in itself is sufficient gratification, it is necessary to

point out two key findings relating to capital/commodity/product which emerged even at this early stage when the project was being designed and collaborators recruited. Firstly, while I was able to proceed with the experiment without monetary capital, without my personal access to social capital, I would not have been able to secure the Tron venue in kind or the unremunerated labour of my collaborators. This pointed to the early operation of the dialectic of social and economic capital which I had already began to apply as a "relation between two temporally differentiated moments within the same process" (Ollman 1993: 15). The artistic director and my fellow collaborators trusted me and my practice and wanted to support my work. At this stage of the project design I was in fact using social capital as the means to secure economic capital in the future. Chapter four discusses and analyses the role of social/economic capital in the work of BWT in greater detail.

Secondly, I observed that while the invited artists were genuinely interested in the processes we could explore to develop ownership within our collective practice, the guarantee of a performance at the Tron (some sort of product that we could create together and share with an audience), was what in fact led them to accept the invitation and commit to the project, despite the knowledge that there would be no remuneration for stage one. The artists seemed motivated to contribute because I had secured a good deal with the Tron and a date for the performance had been confirmed. They welcomed this platform to showcase their talent at a reputable theatre. This made me reflect on my project design. The experiment required sustained investment from participants over a period of time. Perhaps I had worked hard to secure the Tron venue before I had approached potential collaborators so that I could 'sell' the value of the research because of its product dimension. Thus the primary dialect of capital and cooperation was operational even in this early stage because the collaborators might have accepted the invitation not only because they were excited by the processes we could explore to develop themes of ownership but also because there was the promise of a product. My intellectual understanding of the indivisibility of labour power as a means of production and as a commodity was beginning to take root in practice at this early stage. My fellow collaborators were already engaging with the "contradiction between use value and exchange value within the commodity itself" as expressed through their attraction to the process/product dialectic and my use of it to increase the appeal of the research (Rosser Jr 2000: 313).

The first meeting of PC, SM, GW, AM, DS and I took place on the 4th of February 2011. I recapped the project design which I had shared with them individually when inviting them to come on board and reiterated my intention to use Marx's theories on capital to help me test possibilities of ownership for processes and products of theatre. I qualified that this meant I was testing if we could collectively own what we were to create, if we could have an equal stake in the work without having to single out individuals for specific roles (both in the making of the work or for promotional/acknowledgement purposes) and if we could operate within a non-hierarchical structure. I shared with them the interviews I had conducted with Alex Norton and David MacLennan about the collaborative processes employed by 7: 84 in the production of *The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil* and the debates in the field of theatre practice on collective ownership. There were many questions about the content of the work and how we would go about making it in a non-hierarchical way. I shared my early thinking on DCT and some ideas on how we could work without a director but as the experiment was an exploratory one and the participants' input vital in determining what we made and how we made it, I made clear that it was important for me not to over-define the experiment. PC and GW were comfortable with the vagueness and uncertainty as they had trod this path with me before; DS and SM seemed cautious but nevertheless enthusiastic and AM said she welcomed any opportunity for artistic creativity. Three key findings on ownership arose from this first meeting and merit analysis.

Firstly, I raised my unease about my singular ownership of the thesis but the group believed this concern was misplaced and that it was right for me to own the thesis solely as it was my theoretical and practical exploration of ownership within theatre-making. They were unanimous in their view that, while they were keen to practically explore non-hierarchical ways of making theatre and develop ethical ways of owning the products of our labour, they had no wish to contribute to the argument of the thesis. The dialectic of doing and thinking was central to the praxis of BWT but the researching and writing up of this doing and thinking was solely undertaken by me (apart from the research required for professional practice, which all BWT artists undertook). As such BWT artists did not wish to own the thesis as they saw the thesis as separate from BWT's practice. This issue about the ownership of the thesis alerted me to the dialectical nature of the concept of ownership itself, i.e. inequality within

equality in facilitating ownership. The other BWT artists did not think it would be fair for them to own the thesis and as such advocated an unequal stake in the thesis, whereby they would be credited in the acknowledgements' page of the thesis but I would be credited with the authorship of the thesis. We all agreed this approach would be ethical and in keeping with the principles of equality. Equality and inequality could be united in their opposition in determining ownership in this context and showed us the way ahead in determining ownership for the processes and products of our labour power.

Secondly, albeit reservedly, the artists agreed to take the lead in sharing their practice in future rehearsals, even though they were not confident about leading workshops, and in doing so we laid the ground for collective aesthetics to shape our performance. I shared with the group that I had reflected on non-hierarchical production prior to this first meeting and thought it would be impossible to abandon the idea of leadership altogether but we could find ways of sharing leadership. I discussed with them studiinost's methodology of "the rotating position of day captain" so that we could develop a shared performance vocabulary by taking turns to lead on our practice through workshops where we could get an embodied experience of the aesthetics that was important to each of us (Brown 2013: 57). The group agreed this was a good way forward but everyone seemed reluctant to be the first one to lead and I thought that if I did it, I would start defining the practice of the group, as I had already initiated the formation of the group and set the agenda for the first session. The field suggests that leadership roles are limited to one or a few in the rehearsal room and accordingly many artists are not schooled in taking the lead so I persevered with the awkwardness of no one readily volunteering until AN stepped up and volunteered to lead the first workshop. I recognised from this that I had to commit to developing the idea of rotating leadership if we were to have any chance of collectively owning the artistic vision for the collaborative theatre we were to create. Paradoxically the only way of ensuring collective ownership was by facilitating the sharing of individual aesthetics through practice and creating the conditions for this.

Thirdly, it became clear that developing a dialectical relationship between failure and success would become important as we explored definitions for ownership. Unfortunately, the video diary recording for this session was mistakenly deleted but we all distinctly remembered PC's

response to my video diary question "Is it possible for us to collectively own what we will be creating?" His response clarified for us the risks we had to take in claiming ownership which had to be accompanied by responsibility as well. He said we should have the capacity to collectively own failure as well as success and both should characterise DCT. Tim Etchells of Forced Entertainment and Matthew Goulish of Goat Island, directors of the Institute of Failure, dedicate the Institute "to the documentation, study, and theorisation of failure as it occurs in all aspects of human endeavour"(Etchells and Goulish 2011). A recognition and analysis of failure and a practical navigation through it were integral in sustaining this "human endeavour" of collaborating ethically in defining ownership in the rehearsal room while creating performance over what could be a long period of time. The third law of the dialectic, the negation of the negation, gave me belief that failure could pave the way for qualitative transformations, which Žižek describes as the negative move which in itself generates what it negates (Žižek 2014: 148). The project lent itself to risks and uncertainty – Would we be able to discover a non-hierarchical way of working? Would we be able to find time to develop this work-in-progress while earning our subsistence somewhere else? Would we be able to produce something in time for the scheduled Tron performance? Would I be able to secure funding for stage two of DCT? Would the collaborators follow through with the project or drop out? So much could go wrong and PC's timely response about failure gave assurance that "sometimes getting things wrong helps the most" (Smith 2010: 110).

The early stages of the practice gave me confidence that Face A and Face B of DCT had already begun to operate in developing collective ownership in BWT's practice. The operation of the primary dialectic of capital and cooperation analogous with the process/product dialectic in performance (Face A and Face B) was evidenced in the collaborators' reasons to participate which related to both use value and exchange value. We wanted to determine ownership not only by "directing, superintending and adjusting" how we made our performance but for this ownership to have meaning for us we wanted it to enter into the exchange relations of capitalism in some small way (Marx: 1990: 449). As BWT reflected on the initial sessions, it became clear that all the three faces had become operational in facilitating of ownership evidenced in my/our thinking on how economic/social capital could be used to secure resources, how we engaged with principles of equality/inequality in determining our stake in the thesis and practice, how we agreed to lead on our practice/participate in the practice of each other in order to develop collective aesthetics and

finally how we identified that we had to take responsibility for both success and failure in our constructions of ownership. Both Face A and Face B were inextricably linked to each other and to Face C. All three faces are discussed in this and the following chapter.

Dialectical Collaborative Theatre as Pedagogy

The starting point for any creative process is difficult. Kershaw's first constituent of PaR guided me in narrowing down the larger question of ownership to the more focussed unanswered questions of the MA project which were used to begin a new process with my fellow collaborators. We watched the video of *The Error of Comedy* and I subsequently circulated a chapter in my MA dissertation to provide a context for the video we had seen, after which each artist shared feedback via email on themes they felt were relevant to the future work of our newly formed collective. Excerpts from AM's (20.3.11), GW's (22.3.11), SM's (23.3.11) and DS (1.4.11) email feedback are documented in Appendix 6 and discussed within the holistic analysis of our formation and our initial dialogue about the collective.

In these early stages of the experiment it became clear that framing DCT as pedagogy (Face C) related to Face A and Face B, was critical to developing ownership in the collaborative practice of BWT. Face C materialised initially in terms of how we articulated ideology and exercised equality, following this how we developed collective ownership for artistic vision and finally how we expressed and cultivated truth in our performances. These pedagogical stages were in a sense linear but in another sense, not. For example, establishing what value each of us ascribed to equality could be perceived as the first stage of BWT's pedagogy; how we came to own artistic vision and develop truth in our performances came later. However, it was only through innovative aesthetic strategies designed to combat hierarchical production processes that we were able to continuously redefine equality and facilitate the ownership of artistic vision throughout the experiment. These strategies included building our performance from each other's practice and experimenting with autobiography and Badiou's 'event' which enabled our explorations of truth. Thus just like the four processes of the experiment, there was some order to the pedagogical processes but describing them as concurrent is more accurate as these processes were iterated and BWT artists were in constant dialogue about the relationship of process to ownership.

My strategies for developing pedagogically driven rehearsals and assessing the impact of pedagogy were informed by Althusser's theory of ISAs (as discussed in chapter two) and by Paulo Freire's dialogic pedagogy. Freire's (1996: 163) dialogic theory is premised on "cultural synthesis" where he challenges the binary of invader/invaded leading him to believe that "it's possible to resolve the contradiction between the world view of the leaders and that of the people to the enrichment of both". His dialogic pedagogy highlights the potential of all human beings to be "actors who critically analyse reality (never separating this analysis from action) and intervene as Subjects in the historical process". My engagement with ISAs and dialogic pedagogy informed the planning for the first session. This was reflected in how I shared my findings of the ongoing lavender process and invited BWT artists to contribute to this process so that we could learn from the field and each other. In the second session the dialectical nature of ideology itself and its relationship to the pedagogical premises of DCT became clear. In this session I observed how each artist articulated expressions of ideology.

The design of the experiment reflected how I intended to use Marxist theory to resist the full acceptance of the conditions of capitalism to create performance. DS in his email feedback said that the "socialist" in him challenged his scepticism about whether such an experiment could work and hoped for the success of the experiment. For both DS and I, our ideological positions stemmed from an acknowledgement of hegemonic cultural production and our desire to believe in an alternative. However besides DS and me, no one else mentioned ideology, in the sense of resistance to cultural hegemony, as their reason for getting involved in this experiment. This lack of response on the subject of ideology suggested that for most of the group idealist-materialist tensions did not stem from hegemony but perhaps more from personal aspirations as artists. At the time I was aware that AN was considering a break from acting to pursue a postgraduate qualification in operational research; PC was considering changing his acting agent in order to seek more lucrative television and film work in London; SM had just been promoted to box office coordinator in her part time job and GW had many acting jobs lined up till the end of the year. DS and I were in fulltime employment. It was clear that all of us were trying to optimise our opportunities within the system and remain competitive in a capitalist driven market place yet all of us found this project appealing, in spite of the fact that it would take time away from opportunities which arose from within the system. For DS and me perhaps our socialist and Marxist ideology, driven by ideals of a "Utopian project or programme for transforming the world", explained our interest in the experiment (Jameson 2010: 416). However, for the rest, perhaps it was the dispelling of

"ideology by way of praxis" that attracted them to the experiment (Jameson 2010: 321). Their intervention as Freirean subjects in this non-hierarchical collaborative process did not necessitate a commitment to an ideological position, only a belief that it was possible to work together to create a performance that we could collectively own. They seemed to be interested in the praxis we could develop outside ideology but this did not undermine their idealism in having faith that this experiment could work, even though they had not experienced non-hierarchical production as professional artists in the past. They felt it was possible to increase the value of their labour power within capitalist driven economy while committing to this experiment.

This observation and analysis led to further refinements in the project design. Unlike Brecht who believed that the commodity value of theatre could only be challenged through socialism and a rejection of capitalism, the law of the negation of the negation was applied to the dialectic of socialism and capitalism in addressing ideology throughout the experiment. Ideology did not need to be the starting point of the collective, though it could be for some of us. Idealism need not be rooted in ideology, though it could be for some of us. Our praxis needed to be both imagined and materially expressed before idealist-materialist tensions could be addressed. Dialogic pedagogy would lead the way in resolving contradictions in world views, enabling the enrichment of the collective as a whole. Mindful of Jameson's caution of the unequivocal condemnation of capitalism, I began to see how this experiment, premised on unconventional ways of working against capitalism, could also support us in working within capitalism in established ways.

The findings from the second session and the subsequent email feedback on the *Error of Comedy* shed light on our views on equality. It did not matter whether these views stemmed from ideology or idealism. Only a commitment to developing pedagogy premised on equality was necessary to progress the experiment. For me as artist/researcher this commitment translated into taking on the role of facilitator of equality in BWT. In the email feedback, everyone referred to equality in some way. AN believed that it was the training "reinforced when working professionally" that made GW and PC reticent about making artistic decisions in developing *Error of Comedy*. However, she highlighted that even if the conditions for including actors in the decision making process in professional theatre were available, "actors might want to exclude themselves". GW added that training did not prepare us to take risks in the professional rehearsal room and with *Error of Comedy* risks

were taken in a "protected environment". DS thought it was difficult for actors to challenge the director even if they wanted to because it might jeopardise future employment and said that being able to voice artistic choices was more likely with "established friendships and working relationships already in place". SM believed it was her "studying at UWS" which gave her the confidence to believe "it is possible to create work for ourselves". For her, hierarchical distinctions arose because of the perception of the director as an "expert".

Initially I was reserved about adopting the role of facilitator because the lavender process led me to believe that companies such as BE, Theatre Workshop, TdS, SoG and TEAM advocated directors as facilitators for collaborative processes, but the directors still had the power to determine the overall artistic vision of the performance. If I were to become the facilitator promoting dialogic pedagogy, I had to remove any association of facilitator with director. This would enable me to facilitate pedagogical strategies to enhance the collective ownership of artistic vision without the need for any centralised power. SM's reference to me being able to give GW and PC the "push" they required "to believe in their abilities to create" *Error of Comedy* and AN's view that it was impossible to determine who made the decisions in this performance gave me confidence that I would be able to facilitate the group ethically without undermining the collective ownership intentions of the research. DS's reflection, "I still do not fully understand where this project is going, but it's making me think and question my own practice and the practice of others" validated the action research premise of my project design. The creation of the conditions for "collective self-reflective enquiry" had already begun and we were already beginning "to improve the rationality and justice" of our practice (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988: 5).

While I believed that I could facilitate pedagogical strategies to develop what GW describes as a "culture of empowerment" where theatre is "less produced and more created", DS's question, "Can you still be clear in your convictions and allow for creative equality?" suggesting that equality could only be achieved at the expense of conviction, troubled me. The debate on my ownership of the thesis showed us a way forward in applying inequality within equality in determining ethical ownership. My thinking of equality as a dialectical concept opened up possibilities for deconstructions of notions of leadership, and for equality to be defined not as sameness but equal rights of ownership within difference. I was confident that a future discussion on the collaborative processes of NACL, BE and good practice cited by others in the group would help us discover our own ways of working, where

the dialectic of sameness and difference could be employed in facilitating collective ownership of creative processes. While I was becoming clearer about the many ways in which equality could be facilitated in our processes, DS's question prompted me to consider the ethical dimensions of community as locality versus community as egalitarian society (Joseph (2002). I feared we would readily concede our positions rather than collaborate based on our convictions so as to facilitate community cohesion. In doing so we would undermine the ideals of collective ownership that we had committed to through our participation in this experiment. Failure to be equals in the rehearsal room might also reflect the impossibility of a more "egalitarian society". As DS lamented in his feedback,

> When working with 7:84 all the stage management team were on an even pay scale and shared the title of stage manager. A team ethic was very much promoted, the likes of which I have never known elsewhere

7: 84 no longer exists but the desire to live and work in a society premised on egalitarian principles persists. My fears about developing the pedagogical strategies required to develop consensus in our collaborative processes without an abandonment of conviction were allayed when I came across John Berger's interview with Nicholas Wroe's (The Guardian 2011) which I shared with the group:

> The only rule in collaboration is that one should never strike deals and never compromise. If you disagree on something you shouldn't yield and you shouldn't insist on winning. Instead you should just accept that the solution is not right and carry on until it is right. The temptation to say 'you have this one and I will have the next one' is fatal.

The group recognised that Berger's guidance would be time-consuming and challenging to apply but we were unanimous in our endorsement of it in developing our collaborative model.

The feedback on *The Error of Comedy* (used as a focus point to discuss the unanswered questions of the MA) paved the way for how I/we could develop the pedagogical basis of DCT to facilitate the ownership of collaborative processes (Face C). Deconstructions of notions of leadership and equality, ownership of failure, the dialectical nature of ideology, idealist/materialist tensions, facilitation of equality, removal of connotations of director within facilitator and critical community-building alongside conviction-driven consensus – all became essential to the development of Face B and C of DCT. The question of the

ownership of product was addressed at this early stage as DS prompted discussion on this through his anecdote of actors doing the job of directors and not getting any credit for it. An email discussion on this followed with the group being clear that ownership of the performance text should be collective for the moment (unless any one individual felt that this wasn't to be the case in future) and that more discussion would be required at a later stage. Through raising this early on in our processes we averted future conflicts about the ownership of the commodities we would produce together (Face A). The final unanswered question of the MA, "Should process feature in the product?" was not addressed by the other members of the group but I did share with them my interest in developing political theatre in terms of process and that I would like to experiment with the dialectic of product/process in achieving this. We agreed it was too early to be discussing the possible content of our work and that we should share our practice with each other first.

PC not being able to circulate his feedback or attend the early rehearsals because of family commitments was a timely reminder about the challenges of earning a wage, having family responsibilities and our reasons for committing to this experiment while we developed the three faces of DCT. I did not realise that when I had asked PC to be involved in the experiment, he and his wife who have two young children, recently had a new born. I was concerned about whether PC, a jobbing actor with a young family, would have the time to be involved in this project but he assured me that it would be possible. When I discussed my concerns with AN, GW and SM they advised that we had to be creative about each individual's involvement based on the time we had available to us to develop the work-in-progress for the Tron.

Collective Ownership of Aesthetics

The sharing of our individual practice early on paved the way for the collective ownership of aesthetics enabling each of us at BWT to function as agents instrumental in developing the artistic vision for our performance. Kershaw advises that in developing PaR, artistic freedom needs to be exercised in the context of the academy's requirement for originality and innovation (Kershaw 2011b: 64). The primary innovation in this research lay in 'how' we made the work rather than 'what' we made but the 'what' was nevertheless important because I also wanted to discover whether 'what' we made through the innovations of DCT would

appeal to an audience. Thus the artistic freedom in determining the content of our work was not in any way restricted by the academy's requirements but only by our aesthetic choices. The sharing of practice was necessary to communicate our personal performance aesthetics with a view to exploring a collective aesthetic which we could then collectively own.

Over the next few rehearsals, AN, GW, DS, SM and I led workshops[9] on our practice. We recorded video diaries[10] at the end of our rehearsals. I would pose a question and each of us would answer to camera. It was also during this time that MS joined the group, making clear that while he was delighted to be facilitating all the screen aspects of our work, he had no intention of being recorded. We accepted this, joking that we might be able to convince him to go on camera in the future. Understandably all the artists were anxious about leading workshops and asked me numerous questions beforehand. My response as the facilitator of equality was governed by use value, Bourdieu's (1984) writing on taste, judgement and power relations within society, and their own feedback on *Error of Comedy,* where they had highlighted the limitations of education, training and professional practice in habituating artists to take risks. I advised that while we had to perform a work-in-progress at the Tron later in the year, it was necessary for us to take risks, free ourselves from what we perceive audiences would be interested in, focus on exercises that we value as artists and human beings, and trust that our personal aesthetics would be discussed in a supportive environment without the harsh assessments of professional practice which we might have been subjected to in the past. PC was not able to lead a workshop and could not attend any of the rehearsals. He let us know that he would attend rehearsals again once the practice sharing stage was over. MS said he would be more comfortable supporting our practice rather than contributing to it at this stage.

AN kicked off the sharing of practice by leading the first workshop (appendix 7). Her practice is influenced by Grotowski and the workshop evidenced this. It was a sustained physical theatre workshop requiring a high level of discipline and concentration. The session was developed around the rhythms of the body and the interactions of these different rhythms. Sound not language was used to develop the collective performativity of the group

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[9] Appendix 7 - documentation of each artist's notes for the planning of their workshops
[10] Appendix 8 - edited video diary entries for BWT

where singing in Polish, a language the rest of the collective did not understand, connected each of us to the other and the emotional truth of the moment. Peripheral vision was sensed, not seen and leadership rotated amongst the group without any verbal communication but an attention to changing rhythms. It was interesting to note that before the leadership rotated, leadership had to be established first by the leader suggesting that perhaps it was necessary for me to have taken the lead at the first session on the 4 February 2011 before new leaders could emerge. All our video diary reflections referred to AN's creative navigation of leadership (Appendix 8, 25 March 2011).

The design of my workshop was influenced by Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi*, Deirdre Heddon's, *Autobiography and Performance* and Michael Chekhov's psychological gesture (Appendix 7). The first two exercises where I used farce and theatre of the absurd techniques to get us to reflect on body politics and develop unashamed stand-up comedy routines were the precursor to the main exercise, where I explored intersections between autobiographical performance and fiction. The main exercise was inspired by the death of my father the year before. Unsurprisingly the video diary entries (Appendix 8, 25 March 2011) focussed on this exercise.

GW's workshop was built around core aspects of professional practice – a rigorous physical and vocal warm up, ensemble building through group singing and hot-seating which helped us explore the given circumstances of a character we had performed in the past (Appendix 7). We used objects to explore the given circumstances of the character.

DS's workshop was developed from intersections between art and design (Appendix 7). We were given practical tasks to explore how actors could influence the performance space.

Image 1: Sharing of Practice

We used ribbons to design the performance space

SM was the last to lead on her practice where she facilitated three improvisation tasks which made us apply our creativity in different ways and for different purposes (Appendix 7). Through the five tableaux 'story of your life' exercise we shared about our lives in a fun, spontaneous and creative way. With the 'antiques road show' exercise we used our imagination to create believable propositions in our role as antique experts. In the final exercise, SM used old photographs and quotes from historical figures to help us create fictional narratives. It was only after the exercise was over that SM told us that the photographs were of her family. This was MS's first session and the group made him feel very welcome. He did not participate in the exercises but was wholly present via his observations through the lens of the camera. Throughout the recording of the video diaries, there was laughter and camaraderie (Appendix 8, 11 April 2011). Everyone commented on the creativity, fun and imagination brought about by this workshop. The gratification from this workshop was not only how much we enjoyed participating in it but more importantly SM's joy in leading it.

Image 2: Sharing of Practice

SM's family photographs used to stimulate the creation of new stories

This sharing of practice phase was critical in identifying and engaging with ethics and aesthetics, crucial to developing DCT in order to facilitate the collective ownership of artistic vision. It helped clarify the place of commodity within our processes at this early stage of our creation and how we could begin to develop our non-hierarchical model of production. As the researcher, it allowed me to observe whether my use of dialectic theory as research methodology would, from the outset, show promise in advancing ownership during artistic collaboration.

Our labour, used in the sharing of our practice, was expressed through use value exemplified by our processes but with the knowledge that these processes could be converted to product and exchange value, should funders be interested in purchasing our labour power, thereby allowing us to develop in the future the unfinished commodity promoted at the Tron. Thus at this very first stage of the group's work the dialectical nature of labour power, functioning both as a means of production and a commodity, was operative. The group was interested in both process and product but in my role as facilitator of equality, I encouraged the artists at this early stage to focus on the use value of their practice rather than its potential exchange value, suggesting they reserve this thinking for when we were nearer the time to the work-in-progress pitch to funders. Accordingly we designed our workshops based on what processes

excited us as artists rather than what would interest an audience or potential funders. Our defiance of commodity at this stage allowed us to work in a non-hierarchical way where there was no requirement for a director or playwright, where the thinking about artistic vision could develop from the collective aesthetics of our individual practice, and where ownership of processes was defined in terms of our contribution to developing shared aesthetics based on our different practice. In short, artistic vision expressed through our personal aesthetics became the currency of capital in the rehearsal room as we shared our practice with each other.

AN's workshop was designed to give us confidence to take the leadership when appropriate, to be able to pass on leadership, to be able to follow the leader – for all of us to believe we can be both leaders and followers. It was in this exciting space between leader and follower where our creativity was not limited by the need for a "finished product" that we emerged as a "tight knit" group through both discussion and "impulse" (Appendix 8, 25 March 2011). GW's simple yet effective exercise, where we developed our own distinctive style of club singing and then experimented with bringing the different styles together, showed us the possibility of individual aesthetics thriving within a collective aesthetic. His hot-seating exercise where we resurrected a character we had performed in the past highlighted an interesting space where the present collided with the past and memory was enacted through spontaneous responses. DS's workshop plan was very structured with what could be perceived as prescriptive instructions for participants but in effect this tightly constructed workshop plan gave us the confidence to create freely and our participation was enhanced because of this. With the limited resources of chairs and ribbons, our labour in participating in the workshop and DS's labour spent on meticulous preparation, we were able to create a space for infinite creative options.

SM's and my practice shared a common feature. In the workshops that we led the space between autobiography and fiction was blurred. SM's exercise where photographs from her family together with quotes from historical figures were used to intentionally distort autobiography and to encourage the group to create fictional narratives unaware that the photographs were part of her family's history. Everyone was comfortable with the way SM used autobiography to stimulate performance but this was not the case with my autobiographical stimulus. The exercise I led on was inspired by the private goodbye each of

my father's six children said to him in the days before he passed away. I shared with the group the personal stimulus for the improvisation, letting them know that my emotions around my father's death had settled and asked if anyone wanted to opt out of this exercise.

> An ethics of performance is an essential feature of any philosophy and practice of theatre. Without it a set of cultural practices which derive from a very specific arrangement of power relations between people are unhinged from responsibility to those people
>
> Read 1995: 6

I had thought carefully about the ethics of the exercise I led on. I was concerned about the impact this exercise could have on my fellow collaborators. I examined my reasons for doing it and how I would go about it. I was motivated by "the importance of agency in the act of autobiographical performance". I believed that exploring intersections between autobiography and fiction would allow us to navigate ethically through "connections between self and identity, identity and representation and representation and politics" (Heddon 2008: 4). I was creating a space where autobiography could be used to stimulate truths in performance, either through real life or through fictional experiences, and create the conditions for each artist to have agency in the creative process.   The essential features of the ethics and aesthetics of my practice were to make sure enough time had passed from the autobiographical event, articulating clearly the purpose and content of the exercise, ensuring that opting out was just as legitimate as participating and designing the exercise in such a way that the participants could use fiction, personal experiences or a mixture of both in their improvisations with me. Everyone participated.

In my journal I documented my experience and alongside these reflections the diary entries from 25 March 2011 inform my analysis of constructions of identity and truth through autobiography and fiction and the role of ethics within this (Appendix 8).

> When I was lying on the floor waiting for each of you to come in, I didn't know whether I was myself, my dad or an actor… I felt like Gavin's friend, mother and actor, all at the same time … I felt Suzanne's pain as Jo and as an actor. I wanted to take that pain away from her as both Jo and the actor… When Anna spoke in Polish, I felt overwhelming love as an actor in role until she kissed me on the forehead and suddenly I was both my dad and myself … I felt a distance with David … I know the distance wasn't a distance between me and my dad - it could have been a distance between actors, between actor and exercise, between the actor and the self…

The blurring of lines between actor, character and self; between what is real and what is imagined was experienced by all of us. SM was curious to discover how much of the self was present in performing character and whether self and character could merge. GW's reference to the "space between self and character" and AN's reference to a "new space in theatre" both pointed to the potential of autobiographical stimulus in engaging with truth in the making of our work. AN wanted the taking of risks to be an essential part of the group's practice. However, DS's caution on how it can be "dangerous to draw on personal experiences" echoed Heddon's recognition that autobiographical performance can have the "potential to also do harm and fail in its politically aspirational or transformational objectives" (Heddon 2008: 6). The group discussed my journal reflections and the video diary entries at the following rehearsal and agreed that the ethical framework I had set up for the exercise was sufficient to guide the group in developing our collective aesthetics and safeguarding us against harm.

The sharing of practice phase was vital in giving us agency to influence the artistic vision of the performance we were to make. We respected each other's practice and believed that the diversity and similarities of our respective practice would enhance rather than limit the overall quality of our performance. While we were focussing on use value at this early stage, we were also mindful that ultimately the performance we created had to be for an audience and quality needed to be factored in. In this early phase of our work, DCT (particularly Face B and Face C), made us aware of how the tensions of leader/participant, individual/collective artistic impulse, present/past, tight/loose workshop plans, autobiography/fiction and ethics/aesthetics could be nurtured to advance the collective ownership of our collaborative practice. The collective will to explore truth through our art characterised the breadth of our aesthetics.

Similar to earlier discussions on the ownership of the thesis and the practice, discussions took place about the different levels and types of contributions in developing the collective aesthetics of the group. In this context, we discussed whether MS's specialist camera role, his reserve about participating in the workshops and PC not being able to lead on his practice or participate in the workshops would undermine the collective aesthetic and ownership goals we were striving to achieve. AN, SM and GW reiterated points they had raised prior to MS

joining and when PC could not make rehearsals. They reminded that as we were not remunerated, we could only contribute to the development of the group's processes based on the time we had available to us and this could vary between individuals and over time. With MS's involvement it became clear to the whole group that it was the differences in our skills and abilities that would help us make good a performance together. We agreed that an entitlement to equal ownership did not necessarily mean an equal and identical contribution to the making of the work. At this stage, ownership was limited to the processes we were developing as we had not yet made any sort of product. Nevertheless, it was important to clarify early on that different levels and types of contribution to the process did not mean an unequal stake in the performance we would create or undermine collective ownership of this performance.

Through AN's, SM's and GW's timely reminder of previous discussions and their persistence in interrogating ethics in determining ownership I observed that the dialectical nature of ideology had already begun to operate at this early stage of DCT. Jameson's view that ideology could be retained within Marxism (Jameson 2010: 359), Althusser's (1970) dialectical approach to the materiality and non-materiality of ideology and Žižek's resistance to the "matter/life and life/thought" divide (Žižek 2014: 9) informed my analysis of these discussions. What AN, SM and GW were in fact doing was reclaiming ideology in terms of ethics, non-material in its nature rather than defining it via the material relations of production. In characterising our roles within the relations of production, we subscribed to our ideal of equality but this required us to practice inequality in the performance of our roles in accordance with what each individual felt able to materially contribute to at any given time in order to achieve our non-material ideal equality.

I also observed the operation of the dialectic through the lens of the second law of the dialectic where the "blurring of the space between two opposites" allowed for deconstructions of meanings for aesthetics and leadership (Rosser Jr 2000: 314). We did not reject the idea of leader and participant but incorporated the role of facilitator within this, breaking down the hierarchical functions of the leader. Before my role as facilitator of equality was discussed with BWT artists, I proposed the sharing of practice stage so that each of us would have the opportunity, should we choose to take it, to lead on our practice and for

others to learn from us. In a sense, I was already functioning as the facilitator of equality before it was discussed. When leading on our practice all of us functioned as facilitators keen to share with each other what was important to us about our artistic practice and in doing this we provided ourselves and others with the opportunity to shape the future artistic direction of our work. It was evident that for collective ownership of aesthetics to materialise, I had to invest fully in my role as facilitator for equality.

The remaining observations and analysis from the sharing of practice phase related to the perceived binaries of education/training, community/professional and being inside and outside the practice (Face B and Face C). Working with these tensions would allow us to enhance personal and collective agency. From the feedback for *Error of Comedy*, it was clear that both training and education were important to the collective. During this phase we were able to not only learn from and teach each other techniques but critique these techniques, discuss ethics and analyse the aesthetics of our practice. Thus perceived limitations of our education and training in the past were being addressed through the sharing of practice. DS in his video diary entry after SM's session said "it was nice to laugh with people who are friends rather than people who I am working on a project with" pointing out the value of community in making this work distinct perhaps from working relationships in our subsistence driven employment (Appendix 8, 11 April 2011). The teaching, the learning, and the fostering of community were beginning to feel like our practice was part of our daily lives outside our subsistence employment. However the security of this early phase, where our art was for its own sake, would need to be tested as we moved to the next phase, where some kind of product for the Tron performance was needed, signifying theatre's "dialectical relation to the quotidian" (Read 1995: 2).

Finally, SM's workshop gave me confidence that it was possible to sit inside and outside the research without compromising my role as researcher, co-creator of performance and equal member of our ensemble (Face A, B and C). Freeman (2003: ix - x) "questions the extent to which the documentation of practice can be effective when the documentation and the documented are practised at one and the same time". My PaR research paradigm was further compounded by the fact that not only was I the documenter and the documented, I was a member of a non-hierarchical collective with equal voice in the development of our creative processes. As such I not only had to observe, participate and analyse at the same time but I

also had to ensure that in these concurrent multiple roles, I did not short-change the collective by curtailing my artistic impulses in the making of the work by privileging my research agendas. SM's workshop allowed me to experience being in the moment as an artist, exploring creative territory but it also made me aware of my ability to assess how SM and I were both developing themes of ownership through the use of autobiography, while I was participating fully in the exercises she had designed. Perhaps carefully considered research aims and spontaneous artistic impulse can be united in their opposition. Repositioning "the temporal relationship between reflection, revision and practice" allowed me to contribute to the making of the work and the thinking about it in the "perpetual present" even though I write about it in the past and future tense (Freeman 2003: x).

Developing the First Performance Text (April 2011 - October 2011)

The developing of the performance text stage commenced after the sharing of practice stage and continued till we performed *WSA* at the Tron on 15 October 2011. This stage was characterised by the three faces of DCT where we began to address the commodity dimension of the primary process/product dialectic, where secondary dialectical formulations materialised and where pedagogy premised on ethical ownership underpinned our practice of primary and secondary dialectics.

The Dialogue with Commodity Begins

Once the sharing of practice stage was over, the issue of leadership and initiative surfaced again. It was clear that we had to start developing the performance text if it were to be ready in time for the sharing of the work-in-progress at the Tron. No one in the group felt able to lead us from the previous sharing of practice stage to this one. As the facilitator of equality, having invested in the lavender process and been involved in numerous devising processes in the past, I proposed that I lead a devising workshop at the next rehearsal on 28 April 2011, with a view to creating more tangible ways of sharing and rotating leadership. I requested that everyone bring in a stimulus of their choice which we could use to start the devising process. At the rehearsal I recapped key points about everyone's practice so that PC (who was joining us again) would be able to participate and evaluate this rehearsal in the context of the previous sharing of practice stage.

It was interesting that the stimulus each of us chose was personal. For GW, it was a critic's review of his performance in a popular play, for AN - her hairbrush, for me - a newspaper article on the shooting of Juliano Mer-Khamis, director of the Freedom Theatre in Palestine, and for DS - a 1930s piece of music. SM brought in an article about an unprovoked, fatal attack on a twenty year old outside a pub in East Kilbride in the West of Scotland. She asked that I read the article to the group after which she shared with us that the deceased was a close relative. Using the guidance on ethics that we had agreed on during the sharing of practice phase, we supported SM, affirming her courage in bringing this article to the rehearsal and discussed the ethical implications of using the article as a stimulus to improvisations. SM said she brought the article in more to share with us this important event in her life rather than for it to be used for improvisation but was concerned that it made us uncomfortable. We respected her wishes not to use this article for improvisations, reassuring her that even if we did feel uncomfortable, such feelings were a necessary part of our processes. A couple of us checked in with her after the session as we were aware that the legal proceedings around this case were ongoing.

We had a productive rehearsal improvising with the various stimuli, marrying fact with fiction and merging different stories followed by an honest discussion about what worked and what did not. My concern was that as were becoming clearer about what type of theatre we would like to make, we were no closer to how we would develop content. I suggested that if nobody had any objections we return to *The Comedy of Errors*, the stimulus for *Error of Comedy,* and use this text alongside some of the ideas from this rehearsal as the springboard for developing content. I proposed that at the next rehearsal I would lead a discussion on the different approaches to devising, GW and PC would lead on the plot of *The Comedy of Errors* and AN would lead an improvisation on a scene from the play. The question I posed for the video diary entry was, "What type/form/content of theatre would we like to make?" and through our reflections we became clearer about each other's aesthetics (Appendix 8, 28 April 2011). Following this rehearsal there were small group rehearsals and phone discussions so that we could support each other on all the different sections that we would be leading on before the big group met again on 12 May 2011.

This rehearsal confirmed for me that my recent thinking on exploring the aesthetic/ethics dialectic was correct in developing collective stake in our performance, that more had to be done with the equality/inequality dialectic in practising equitable leadership within the collective and that a way of presenting absence in our performance needed to be discovered. The diary entry reflections (Appendix 8, 28 April 2011) made us aware that AN was keen to create something "close to us" with a view to discovering what the barriers were to autobiographical performance as it would enable us to make work we cared about. SM wanted to make "something in there that is us" and DS concurred with her adding that whether the content was about "news or current affairs" was secondary, a view echoed by most of us in our own reflections. GW believed a strong narrative had to be "first and foremost" and I was keen to explore interaction with an audience on a "deeper level". Thus we were faced with the challenge of navigating through the aesthetics and ethics of creating a personal performance "from the core" as referred to by PC, with a narrative that an audience would find interesting and could get involved in. We had previously established that we wanted to make a performance that would appeal to an audience yet all of us, with the exception of GW, reflected that we wanted to make something that was deeply personal. This would require us as a collective to be in constant dialogue about the use value and the exchange value of the performance we intended to create. In keeping with Jameson's rethinking of notions of public and private in favour of the broader "category of daily life" (Jameson 2010: 353), SM had brought in a stimulus which she had no intention of using to develop our performance, yet she felt that it was important for the collective to be aware of her personal circumstances. This tension between GW's starting point in the creative process being that of commodity (exemplified by his preference for beginning with some sort of agreed narrative) and the rest of us starting from the personal was useful because it made me aware that the tensions of aesthetics/ethics, equality/inequality could help us in the development of the process/product dialect of the performance we were to create which could in turn facilitate the ownership of the processes and products of our collective labour (Face A, B and C).

In my diary entry I reflected that I was getting very worried about taking too much of a leadership role and hijacking our collaborative processes. GW said we had generated a lot of "source material" but the challenge was how to use it to develop content. The group did not feel able to take the initiative in leading this rehearsal and I volunteered to lead it. At the end

of the rehearsal I was again suggesting a way forward for the next rehearsal. As much as I had put in place a plan for the following rehearsal where each of us would need to take responsibility for leading a certain section, I was becoming anxious that I was beginning to monopolise artistic vision and undermine the intentions of my research. I was acutely aware that I had either directed or taught most of the individuals in the group in the past and that the culture of our former hierarchical relationships needed to be broken down. As the facilitator of equality I had to deepen my engagement with the dialectic so that I could discover innovations in practice that would enable me to put non-hierarchical production at the centre of our practice.

During this rehearsal it also became clear that the question of how much time we could give to the project in the light of the time required for our subsistence-related employment needed to be addressed. At this point, the employment undertaken by SM, AN, MS and I allowed us to make ourselves available for the performance at the Tron but this was not the case for GW and PC who were auditioning for roles. DS had already let us know that he would be stage managing the Tron main house theatre show at the same time as our performance and while he was still keen to be involved with the group, he would not be able to perform live on the day. DS also shared that he would not be able to make the next few rehearsals because of work commitments. I reflected in my video diary entry that I saw us dipping in and out over a period of three years with our input over this time integral to the development of our performance. Just like NACL, I believed it was possible for us to express offstage collaborations through those available to perform at the Tron (Krumholz 2013). As the facilitator of equality I welcomed the opportunity to work out ways where we could contribute to the work without being physically present on the day of the performance. We could work out aesthetic approaches where absence could be present in live performance in representing the collective stake we had in our performance. It was becoming clear that getting everyone together was becoming increasingly difficult so we began a system where small group rehearsals took place in preparation for the less frequent big group rehearsals. Thus off stage collaborations, the aesthetic strategies developed to present absence and the relationship between big and small group rehearsals became central to developing DCT and enhancing collective ownership (Face A, B and C).

BWT's initial dialogue with commodity alerted me to the challenges of creating a performance for an audience where we could have a collective stake when our initial improvisations reflected the tensions we were experiencing in creating a performance which had use value and exchange value; when not everyone could participate in the live performance at the Tron; when I seemed to be leading on the ways we could develop our performance; and when I observed that the other BWT artists, not experienced in taking responsibility for artistic vision, were looking to me to provide this. As the facilitator of equality I had to develop and refine DCT to address these challenges. When I recognised that these challenges fundamentally stemmed from the primary dialectic of process and product, I was able to see that solutions could materialise by developing a dialectical relationship between use value and exchange value. To develop a work in progress of quality which could potentially have exchange value, the concept of leader was necessary but the notion of the singularity of leadership could be rejected. Thus I suggested ways where other BWT artists could take the lead while I led on devising strategies which could promote dialogic pedagogy. Like Jameson (2011: 135) who suggested that the engagement with the dialectic should be in constant motion and not become "Utopian lingua franca", I recognised that it would take time for power relations to be realigned and devising strategies had to be constantly reviewed if we were to succeed in putting collective ownership of artistic vision at the centre of our practice. SM in bringing in a stimulus which she had no intention of using to help build our performance made us all aware of how use value would always be important to our creative processes as we developed performance as a commodity with potential exchange value. Use value was a key determiner of collective ownership and a reflection of the primary reason for our involvement in the experiment. At this stage, all the three Faces of DCT were guiding us in our creation of a unique space for the intersection between personal and professional daily living where there was scope for the aesthetics and ethics of each BWT artist's practice to be negotiated in the making of a performance for an audience.

Devising as Agency

At the next big group rehearsal on 12 May 2011 the discussion on devising companies allowed us to clarify what approach to devising we would pursue. I shared with the group more fully the field of devising I was researching as part of the lavender process and in particular Govan's (2012) arguments for distinguishing devising from hierarchical ways of

making performance because of its agency. We continued to commit to making the work without a single named director but agreed that direction was important to developing our work and that each of us should take on this role where appropriate. None of us felt confident as writers but agreed to support each other in developing the script collectively. GW and PC were knowledgeable on *The Comedy of Errors* and gave the group a good induction on the plot, themes and characters. AN's guidance on our improvisation for her chosen scene from the text convinced us that we should use the play in some way to develop our performance.

At the end of the session I chatted about my concerns about taking artistic leadership, which I saw as quite distinct from my role as facilitator of equality and the coordinator for the project (Face B and C). While this session had been very productive, with the leadership of the different exercises shared, I was worried that I was beginning to think about the artistic whole and coming up with tasks which would influence the artistic vision of the piece. I was also concerned about the time we had left to create the work-in-progress for the Tron. To help push my thinking on how I could move devising along from tried and tested models of this practice, I revisited Jameson's (2007) and Hall's (1996) writing on identity which in turn led me to Badiou's (2007) "event". I asked my fellow collaborators if they would be willing to try out an idea that I had begun thinking about which might address the concerns I had about inadvertently leading on the artistic vision for our performance. I suggested that we each come into the next rehearsal in a character of our choice and see if it were possible to make the work in this character. I shared that I was not entirely clear how this exercise could be developed but that I would reflect on the group's work to date and consider whether the dialectical methodology I had been using to design and develop the research could be applied to addressing issues of hierarchy and give us the push we needed to develop content.

The lavender process and the collective's feedback on *The Error of Comedy* had confirmed for me that any association of director with facilitator had to be killed off if collective artistic ownership were to be developed. Yet in a way at this point I was functioning both as facilitator of equality and director at the same time as I was taking responsibility for the artistic whole and simultaneously trying to think of ways where the other artists could also take the lead. I began to recognise that DCT was operational, manifesting itself in the

dialectical relationship between director and facilitator, that directors could indeed be facilitators and vice versa and that artistic ownership would not be undermined if each of us committed to taking on the director/facilitator role dialectically throughout the development of our performance. Thus at this stage in our creative development I could take on the artistic leadership because I was well versed in devising's "agency for expressions of self, community and interventions in society and its dialogic processes" and in doing so I could simultaneously function as the facilitator of equality (Govan et al 2007: 194-195). Through this character exercise that I proposed it would be possible for others in the collective to take on the dual function of director and facilitator in the way that they had done during the sharing of practice phase (Face B and C).

The video diary entries at the end of the session suggest that each of us within the group were beginning to assert ourselves and were open to taking risks and trying new things (Appendix 8, 12 May 2011). I shared that I would stop "beating myself up" about leading on the process at this stage. I appreciated that everyone in the group had different expertise and perhaps mine's was in devising and that I should take the lead at this time in the process as we developed content. I asked the group to be vocal about expressing their opinions about ideas I brought to the table and reject them if they did not work. PC highlighted that as a jobbing actor he was used to having a script and not used to "the pressures of devising" but was enjoying the process. He said, "Jo has got the ball rolling, we are going to come up with a character for next rehearsal but we do need this ball rolling, we need Jo to do this and she needs to stop stressing. This is helping to drive our rehearsals". GW supported the idea of making the work in a character and for these characters to have not met before. He believed that the content we were struggling to develop would come from the meeting of these characters likening this process to the process a playwright goes through in her head. His excitement and fear were evident when he said, "I'm just trying to work out if I can do a good enough accent". He seemed to already have a character in mind! Like GW, both SM and AN too liked this idea with SM reassuring me that "there [was] a lot of imagination and creativity in the room and that we [would] be able to develop content" in the time we had. AN shared that she thought that this strategy would help us to narrow down the numerous ideas we'd had in the previous rehearsals and would give us a good starting point.

This rehearsal was particularly important for a number of reasons. I felt able to lead when appropriate and contribute to the creative process without thinking I was hijacking it. I observed the others growing in confidence about taking responsibility for the creative process. I felt reassured that the others were strong enough to challenge me and each other when appropriate. I felt motivated by the group's enthusiasm for the idea I had, both in terms of empowering everyone with artistic agency and in developing the content for our performance (Face B and C).

Non-Hierarchical Production

The challenge for me at this stage in the creation of our performance was how I could develop/refine the director/facilitator, leader/participant, ethics/aesthetics, process/product and autobiographical/fictional dialectical paradigms evidenced in our practice/my praxis, so as to ensure collective ownership of the artistic direction of our work (Face B and C). The answer materialised in my growing confidence in applying Jameson's analysis of Adorno's definition of identity, and Badiou's concept of the multiple (introduced in chapter two and discussed more fully here) in terms of their relevance to progressing DCT. Both these concepts became integral to developing our work with artistic impulse and creativity while allowing me to continue pursuing my research aims of putting ownership at the centre of our collaborative practice.

Jameson credits Marx with naming the historical dialectic through his theories on use and exchange value, which he interprets as constituting "the primordial form by which identity emerges in human history" (Jameson 2007: 23). He credits Adorno with developing Marx's notions of identity beyond the economic system to include concept. Adorno sees system as the outer face of concept with identity being invariably bound to concept. By doing this, Adorno allows for identity to dwell simultaneously in the material world and the philosophical one. He characterises identity solely in terms of non-identity. The concept of identity is formulated on the basis of the closed self and the self in perpetual flux within totality. The self in a state of flux is open to new thought and radicalisation but is bound to a system that privileges persistent identity over time in order to enable identity to "perform system's work" (Jameson 2007: 27). Most of us in the collective embroiled in a system of

professional training and the commodification of our skills, resisted non-identity in favour of persistent identity in the devising process and were therefore unable to escape hierarchical production, or transcend our concerns over whether there would be a market for our performance. However, by defining capital (the system synonymous with the outer face of concept and liked to identity) in terms of the ownership of artistic vision instead of the ownership of commodity, we were able to engage more fully in the dialectic of identity and non-identity, where the self is in a "state of flux" and "open to new thought and radicalisation". Working with and against the ego became instrumental in this process as it is a vital constituent of artistic vision but at the same time has to be mediated in the context of collective ownership of artistic vision. "Ego is thus, in that larger sense of personal identity, a defence mechanism but also a weapon, an instrument of praxis and survival" (Jameson 2007: 17). As the facilitator of equality at this stage, I had to design ways to free our egos from operating defensively and operate instead as an "instrument of praxis" where identity could be explored dialectically to enhance creativity and "new thought".

Badiou's concept of 'the multiple' proved equally valuable in addressing the challenges of a non-hierarchical devising process and helped me think of ways I could facilitate truth during our rehearsals. Badiou rejects the polarised philosophical camps of 'one' and 'multiple', abandoning the philosophical premise of 'one' altogether. His ontology is frequently debated in philosophical circles because, while his theories could be perceived as post-theology with a rejection of the oneness of god, his sustained explorations of truth seem to point to an engagement with theology - an unresolved position on idealist/materialist tensions. It is not within the scope of this research to discuss Badiou's concept of 'one' and 'multiple' in terms of his belief or rejection of god but it is within the scope of this research to build on his rejection of the philosophical premise of 'one' and his development of the concept of 'multiple' in its favour as this is important to his construction of truth. He argues that, in sum, one exists only in operation and as such there is not a 'one' but only a 'count-as-one'. For example two only has meaning because one precedes it and three follows it. However, nothing precedes one so unlike two, one can never be one in its own right and in keeping with set theory one can only be valid as 'count as one'. "What will have been counted as one, on the basis of not having been one, turns out to be a multiple" (Badiou 2005: 24). Thus he rejects the concept of 'one' and proposes 'count as one' in its place which functions as a multiple. Hallward (2003: 114-117) highlights that Badiou uses the "count-as-one" to make

an important distinction between consistent and inconsistent multiplicity. Multiples are presented as being consistent as they stand together but prior to being counted as one, one operates as inconsistent multiplicity, because it cannot be presented consistently in terms of what went before. However hypothesising about what went before is possible, albeit not within the known logic of sum. He defines 'situation' as any presented multiplicity, pointing out that situations occur within events where truths materialise:

> To be faithful to an event is to move within the situation that this event has supplemented, by thinking (although all thought is a practice, a putting to the test) the situation according to the event…I shall call truth (a truth) the real process of a fidelity to an event: that which this fidelity produces in the situation

<div align="right">Badiou 2001: 41 – 42</div>

According to Badiou, the event is unpredictable and has no interest in preserving status quo. It reveals the void and the truth names this void (Hallward 2003: 114-117). He refers to the void as the "nothing from which everything proceeds" and as such the void is the not known that needs to be explored if truth is to materialise (Badiou 2007: 59).

I realised that using the concept of the inconsistent multiple at this stage of our practice, I might be able to design an event which might disrupt the current hierarchical situation arising from me having directed or tutored individuals within the ensemble in the past, and me having initiated the project because of my research. From the pre count-as-one inconsistent multiplicity phase, we may be able to move to the count-as-one consistent multiplicity phase where our presentation might have meaning for an audience, just like count-as-one in sum presentation. The truth we were all so keen to evidence within our practice could materialise in situations within this event which I had designed. Both the situation and us as artists could serve as subjects, able to configure a "generic procedure by which truth is sustained", thereby allowing us to take risks in the devising process and explore what we would not have known without the event (Badiou in Hallward 2003: 140). The event might be the condition required for us to be able to explore the aesthetic space between autobiography and fiction that we were drawn to. The ethics of our aesthetics, while guided by the protocols we had come up with in the past, also needed to be guided by our "fidelity to an event", because ethics cannot exist outside truth. Having reflected on Jameson's concept of identity and Badiou's concept of multiplicity, I became convinced that the way forward for non-hierarchical production was for me to create some sort of event where the dialectical self could be operative.

I refined my thinking on DCT to include a rehearsal methodology inspired by Badiou's event, where we could create our performance in multiple identities, moving away from the actor/character or self/autobiography paradigm of performance-making. The event began with me writing to the collective:[11]

> *Dear Theatre Practitioner,*
>
> **Re: International Residency at the Tron, 10-15 October 2011**
>
> *On behalf of the Tron Theatre, I would like to invite you to apply for the above…*
>
> *Dear Gordon, Pritam, Monika, Lucy and Fatima,*
>
> **Re: International Residency at the Tron, 10-15 October 2011**
>
> *We are delighted that you have accepted our offer of a place on the above…*

The letters in themselves came as no surprise to the group because I had discussed the idea of bringing in a fictional character to the rehearsal room at our previous rehearsal. However, everyone in the group was taken aback by the very real and believable tone of the letters. We started working on our essays in support of our participation for this fictional residency and for the real performance we had to create for the 15th of October 2011 at the Tron.[12]

Gordon, Pritam, Monika, Lucy and Fatima were born. When writing the essay in May 2011 and developing our characters, we each explored a personal connection to the fictional characters we had created, characters which were seemingly far removed from our backgrounds and where we were living at the time. Lucy came about because of the time SM spent living and working in Australia in 2004; Pritam was adapted from a Singaporean character PC had played in *Eclipse* by Haresh Sharma; AN's Monika was the result of her attendance at the Festiwal Młody Teatr Niezależny; the stimulus for Gordon was a colleague from Belfast whom GW had briefly worked with.. My starting point for Fatima was a combination of the Egyptian writer Ahdaf Soueif, and the Freedom Theatre in Jenin. In keeping with the unpredictability of the event and its potential to disrupt status quo, I advised that we should attend the next rehearsal in character.

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[11] Appendix 9, the letters I wrote to introduce the fictional event
[12] Appendix 10, essays written by the fictional artists

On 9 June 2011, I walked from my home to the CCA dressed as Fatima, very self-conscious of the headscarf I was wearing, excited and anxious about meeting the fellow fictional residency artists. The others made the journey to the CCA in character as well. This event kicked off a rehearsal process which would help us develop a model of non-hierarchical production in facilitating the collective ownership of artistic vision.[13] It was evident that through this event I was able to play the role of facilitator without becoming the default leader/director and was able to take the lead where appropriate. Though not conscious of it at the time, I was employing Dorothy Heathcote's techniques in process drama where role play, enquiry-based learning and problem-solving were being used to reposition power relations within the ensemble (Heathcote and Bolton 1995).

> A person will wear the mantle of their responsibility so that all may see it and recognise it, and learn the skills which make it possible for them to be given the gift label

<div align="right">Heathcote in O'Neill, 2014: 105</div>

By constructing the event and introducing this fictional setting, I was able to create situations and use techniques which enabled individuals in the group to become experts and to develop confidence in taking responsibility and leading where appropriate.

Each of us had the most knowledge about our character and owned this character from the start. Through the situation of the artists' residency the previous status quo had been disrupted allowing for new experts to emerge. None of us were familiar with the expertise of the other in this imagined world, but all of us had to take responsibility for the creation of the work in the real world. Problem solving and negotiating the "mantle" of our responsibility had taken root. In my role as Fatima, and absorbing the role of facilitator within this, I reminded the characters of the instructions from the Tron and we cleared up confusion about these instructions collectively. I asked if we should take notes and this led to a scramble for pens and GW/Gordon took the lead in good practice by printing his essay for each of us. He read his essay first and I initiated asking questions about his background and very quickly the others shared this role of breaking the ice within the group. I opened the discussion on

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[13] Edited video footage of the first meeting of the artists documented in appendix 11a

Freedom Theatre's production of *Animal Farm* but it was AN/Monika and PC/Pritam who deepened this discussion through sharing their differing positions. SM/Lucy asked me/Fatima if I/she was the leader of this project and I/she replied "no". PC/Pritam added, "There are no leaders". Towards the end of the session I/Fatima asked the group how we would proceed with the rehearsal the following day so that we would be ready for our small performance at the end of our residency. GW/Gordon asked if any of us could write and it became clear that none of us had experience in theatre writing. PC/Pritam was put on the spot about suggesting a way forward. He rose to the challenge saying that we could begin the next day's rehearsal by using the journey we made from our homes to our first rehearsal at the residency as the stimulus for the devising process.

It was clear that everyone invested much in developing the character they brought into the rehearsal room and the process of owning this character in developing the group's work would in all likelihood lead to the ownership of our creative processes. Our identity was in a state of flux throughout, with the underlying tension between self-identity and character-identity allowing us to negotiate our egos in ways we were not accustomed to. Power relations had almost certainly become realigned with initiative evolving naturally, much in the vein of the Grotowski exercise that AN had led on when she shared her practice. There were many aspects about these characters that were close to and far from removed from the people we perceived ourselves to be but there were two things said at this rehearsal which made me aware of the possibilities for truth to surface in the void of the unknown. SM/Lucy asked me/Fatima, "How old are you?" When SM/Lucy was late in arriving for the rehearsal, I/Fatima said "the other girl can come when she comes". Knowing SM, she would think it rude to ask anyone their age yet in character there was a child-like earnestness in her question. I was shocked at Fatima's dismissal of Lucy referring to her as "the other girl". It might have just been a throwaway line but to me it said a lot about possible prejudices within me that I guard against carefully in everyday life which surfaced in this situation. It was frightening and humbling to be made aware of this and to be given the opportunity to reflect on and challenge my ethics in everyday life.

The video diary question at the end of this session was "Why this character and how did you feel embodying him/her?" (Appendix 8, 9 June 2011). All of us referred to the awkwardness

as well as the excitement we felt in this situation of the characters meeting for the first time with AN adding that our responses to each other were real and so different to what they would have been had we responded as ourselves. She said she had filmed herself doing an array of characters and chose the one that captured her imagination the most. She found choosing the character fascinating. I had difficulty coming up with my character. I was interested in the Freedom Theatre but I did not want to misrepresent someone from Jenin and I did not speak Arabic. Then again I thought I could construct a narrative that still allowed me into that space without necessarily coming from there. GW shared that the stimulus for his character was someone at work, from Belfast. As he wrote the statement in support of the residency, the voice, the accent and the background of the character became clearer for him. PC noted that even in our characters the sticking point about what we would make together surfaced again. GW thought all the characters were very believable and felt confident that we would be able to create material from these characters. PC loved the exercise and did not want to come out of character. Like me GW felt "totally freaked out by doing it". Perhaps he too had discovered truths he was not aware of.

The video diary responses legitimated the value of the event in addressing hierarchy and developing the ethics and aesthetics of our processes. We were beginning to develop the dialectical self through "second degree thinking" and were able to engage with the devising process dialectically by empowering the self through character (Jameson 2011: 137. This was a critical rehearsal for advancing the group's processes in developing content for the work-in-progress Tron show and for advancing artistic ownership of our collaborative theatre through deepening our practice of DCT. Face B of DCT thrived because the tensions of identity/non-identity allowed for the interplay and the continual changing of places between novices and experts to influence the artistic direction of our work. Face C of DCT thrived because we had now found a rehearsal methodology premised on both equality and truth which in turn could facilitate our collective ownership of artistic vision.

BloodWater Theatre Artists as Dialectical Beings

Once the 'event' had been introduced as part of our rehearsal methodology, the dialectic became rooted in our processes because we grew in confidence about applying Jameson's

second degree observations, thinking and reacting to the choices we made in performing self and character simultaneously. The making of the work as dialectical beings not only enabled us to develop content spontaneously but also alerted us to how improvisations in these dual roles could be used to realign power relationships within the collective. Face B and Face C of DCT continued to flourish as we developed the performance text.

Building on our practice of making the work in our dialectical status, we suggested that PC (as Pritam) lead the next rehearsal following the first encounter of the characters and in doing so he could develop his own stake in our performance as he was not able to share his practice early on. We acknowledged that this approach was different to how the rest of us had begun to invest in BWT and asked PC how he felt about investing in BWT from a different starting point. PC said that he did not feel he needed to share his practice to have an investment in BWT. Our processes had moved on in his absence and he was happy to plug in at the point we were at.

In preparation he built on ideas we were working with at our rehearsals on the 12th of May 2011and the 9th of June 2011 and wrote to the group as Pritam (Appendix 7). His instructions to the fictional characters (us) about *The Comedy of Errors*, the buzz words about our journeys and the song lyrics set the ground for how we (they) could develop our performance from the dialectic of text-based and devised performance. At this rehearsal it occurred to us that it might be interesting to do scenes from *The Comedy of Errors* in our fictional characters and alongside this we could devise scenes to explore how these fictional characters were coping with the residency. Our video diary entries for this session were unlike others as we reflected both as the fictional character and as ourselves (Appendix 8, 16 June 2011). We responded in character about our reasons for bringing in words like "cold", "hostess", "daunting", "pride", "expressing", "sharing", "uplifting", "manic", "duty" and "fulfilment" and then analysed the processes we went through during the rehearsal as self. I reflected that self and character seemed seamless and at points we were in an interesting space in our heads and bodies not fully sure which was the role and which was the self. AN enjoyed the professionalism of her character as opposed to the lack of professionalism of the other characters. GW recorded the diary entries for this session and chose to do it as Gordon, revealing yet another new space in our processes. As GW he believed a lot of good material

could come out of playing with the technique of multiple layers of characters within role. All of us seemed relieved when we came out of character and responded as self yet we all came across as very comfortable and believable in our characters. Everyone affirmed PC/Pritam for his excellent leadership skills and how well he integrated into this rehearsal in spite of his absence at previous rehearsals.

The application of Adorno's concept of identity and Badiou's concept of multiple in developing our creative processes had enabled the dialectical self to thrive. The edginess that the dialectic brought with it manifested itself in the uncertainty of whether Pritam was posh or acting posh; whether Fatima's lack of confidence masked a confidence of my convictions both as Fatima and me; whether Monika's lack of humour is only possible because of AN's laughter; whether SM's authenticity with the stereotype of Lucy's naivety is prompted by her feminism and whether GW needs Gordon to open up as GW.

The video diary entries in the subsequent few rehearsals demonstrated how challenging it was to be "thinking dialectically all the time" during rehearsals (Jameson 2010: 279). At the end of the rehearsal on 26th June 2011 I asked, "How can I bring my creativity to the rehearsal room?" (Appendix 8, 26 June 2011). Most responded by saying that developing creativity within a single role was tough in itself but even tougher in our multiple roles when our fictional characters took on other roles from *The Comedy of Errors*. DS posed a valuable question in his entry which helped us refine our applications of the event. He asked whether the characters could be discussed out with the event or whether that would undermine the process in anyway like in court when the jurors are not allowed to discuss the case out with the trial. He suggested that we would have more control if we discussed the characters out with the event but was not sure whether this would enhance or impede creativity. We thought this was a good suggestion as it would help us go deeper into our characters as our choices could be challenged by others in the group. In seeing the value of challenging the group's choices, we also recognised that each of us could play the role of director/facilitator at different times during our processes, by taking responsibility for directing sections of the performance and by facilitating the intentions of the artist in developing the character she had invented. Participating in the event of the fictional residency allowed us to take collective responsibility for the creation of the performance. Stepping out of the event allowed us to

critique the quality of what we were making, paving the way for all of us to function as directors who could potentially enhance quality, but at the same time function as facilitators who could negotiate individual aesthetics within the collective thereby progressing equality. The period of chaos, the inconsistent multiplicity, was necessary in the rehearsal room in the early stages to develop the work so as to allow for disruptions in power relations and facilitate the spontaneity of responses.

However as we moved towards performance, the composition of the terms of presentation necessitated count-as-one consistent multiplicity so that we could construct some sort of narrative, as GW had suggested in earlier rehearsals. We were nevertheless mindful that the performance was a work-in-progress at this stage and testing ideas was just as important as developing a narrative (Face A, B and C). Thus we developed the work both as self and the character, sometimes in-between these identities and beyond. We would make the work in the character (including when the character had to take on other character roles) and then step out of character to assess the work. The cycle of stepping in and out continued during the rehearsals very much in the vein of the iterative processes advocated by Smith and Dean (2011), where iteration allows for alternative results to emerge. On reviewing the footage of the video diary entries recorded on 26th June 2011, I noticed how tired everyone looked. Sustained working with the dialectic was taking a toll on us but at the same time our collective leadership and creativity was growing.

Collective Ownership of the Narrative

Thursday the 30th of June 2011 was an equally tough rehearsal. The complexity of the process of the actor inhabiting a character devised from scratch and then performing other characters from *The Comedy of Errors* as this character was taking a lot out of us. It was confusing, imaginative, demanding and exhausting all at the same time. While taking all of us out of our comfort zone, none of us wanted to abandon our rehearsal methodology of inhabiting multiple identities rooted in alter ego and self (with the stepping in and out of self to assess the work) as fundamental to our practice of DCT. Making the work this way ensured that we all contributed as much or as little as we wished to developing the

performance narrative. In doing so each of us had the opportunity to define our own stake in the performance we developed.

During a prior small group rehearsal (AN, SM and I) we had explored possible titles for our performance and agreed we would propose, *Whose Story Is It Anyway* when the big group met again. There was not much discussion on the title at this rehearsal. The big group accepted the title unanimously. The title resonated with everyone, requiring no further discussion. Perhaps the title reflected our collective stake in the performance and accurately described our intention to tell stories with no clear protagonists.

At this rehearsal GW advised that unfortunately he had secured paid employment elsewhere on the day of our performance. We discussed which elements of *The Comedy of Errors* would be screen based so that GW could still be involved, a strategy we had discussed for presenting absence in our live performance at the Tron. We also brainstormed on a storyline which justified Gordon's (GW) absence from the fictional (real) artists' live performance at the Tron. As much as we were delighted that GW had secured paid acting work we were disappointed he would not be with us for the Tron show. Developing intermedia approaches as part of our aesthetics allowed GW to invest in developing *WSA* and influence the plot/themes of it even though he could not be physically present for the live Tron performance.

At the end of this rehearsal, I posed the question, "How are we coping with our multiple roles?" and was reassured by everyone's stamina and persistence with the dialectic (Appendix 8, 30 June 2011). I started my diary entry by acknowledging that we were finding it difficult to negotiate self, actor and character during rehearsals but said that this was the point when our creativity was "at its best but also at its most testing". AN reflected in her recording that she had viewed a rehearsal video and observed that each of us were present as self in the characters that we developed and that she liked the concept of two realities coming together or informing each other. SM said the intensity of playing all the different roles confused her at times but that she believed that the self within these multiple roles was a very interesting idea requiring skills and experience "to make a decent piece of

work". Both PC and GW also thought that we were exploring important terrain with our characters playing other characters. PC added that "we have been thrown at the deep end but we are good swimmers". It was clear from the diary entries on this day that we owned the processes of DCT and the outputs from these processes i.e. the characters/story/themes of *WSA*. The operation of the three faces of DCT enabled us to own both the processes and the products of our labour.

Collective Ownership of BloodWater Theatre

In the run up to the following rehearsal we discussed via email our suggestions for a name for the group and at the rehearsal on 10th July 2011 we agreed on BloodWater Theatre (BWT). At this rehearsal I shared with the group that MS and I would be meeting JW later in the week as he would be helping us with developing our website, leading on publicity and working with MS on the technical aspects of the show. I added that JW was a performer as well and the group were keen to get him involved in the future development of the performance after the Tron show. DS had volunteered to design the logo for BWT. It was becoming clear that the specialist skills of DS, MS and JW were vital to developing our performance as a whole. Though DS and JW were not able to perform in the Tron show this time around they were not averse to doing so in the future. Similarly, the rest of BWT were also not averse to taking on technical roles if required. This fluidity between backstage and front of stage; generic skills and specialist expertise was beginning to take root. The question I posed for this session's video diary was "Why BloodWater Theatre and what logo? (Appendix 8, 10 July 2011). Our responses captured the success of DCT in putting ownership at the centre of our processes in building a community of artists confident in articulating personal aesthetics and ethics within the collective aesthetics and ethics of BWT,

> JR: …It's a logo of solidarity, friendship, art and artistic impulse, all in one…
>
> DS: BloodWater makes me think about blood being thicker than water and the connotations of family and the connotations of us as a group working together like a family, and also as two separate entities … I am going to start thinking about the design of the logo in terms of what vessels carry blood and water and maybe how they can correlate…
>
> PC: The trouble we had at the beginning and the worry that Jo had was whether everybody would have ownership and her not taking too much charge, that is now

happening - everybody giving their own ideas… having the seven of us work together and it's solid

GW: …there is a real sense of ownership, not necessarily fighting to speak at the one time but wanting to make sure your voice is heard, that your input is factored into anything that is created…

SM: …maybe blood is not thicker than water - you can come together as these people without having this blood tie but still have this coming together and working together, feeling comfortable to put our ideas in as time goes on…

AN: … like everyone else has said, things are happening

DS's design for the logo was unanimously accepted by the group.

Appendix 8

Image 3: BloodWater Theatre logo
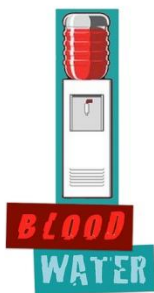
Through our contributions of non-hierarchical specialist/generic skills and the shared pedagogy we developed we came to collectively own not only the performances we created but BWT itself. The three faces of DCT not only facilitated our ownership of artistic processes and products but also of our collective ownership of artistic identity expressed through our membership of BWT.

Evolving Artistic Vision and Determining Ownership

The period between mid- July and mid-September 2011 was a significant one as the work needed to continue in spite of the fact that BWT members were on holiday at different times. The performance had to be ready in time for the Tron shows. It was imperative that those available needed to progress the work in the absence of others. I had to be in Singapore for a month during this time and as much as I was worried about being away at this critical time of the production, I was at the same time excited that my trust in others would be tested.

Different leaders and participants had to emerge based on everyone's summer holiday schedules. Specialisms and expertise needed to be identified to determine what jobs had to be done and who was best placed to do them. We met to discuss the ensemble's varied expertise and how the work could progress over the summer. An action plan was drawn up and I circulated it to everyone (Appendix 12). I was coordinating leadership and the leadership was evolving. I was surprised that I was not worried about the filming, the editing or the publicity while I was away. Everyone was very committed to fulfilling the tasks they took on. Perhaps I was never in doubt that the jobs would be done but I had to reflect on whether I had concerns about the quality or the standard of the work and realised that there would only be worry if my artistic vision dominated the process and its outcomes.

The first stage of the collaboration was about understanding each other's practice and negotiating the devising process so that the singular vision of each artist could inform the whole vision. However, we were now at the stage when the artistic whole needed to be collectively framed and specific tasks arising from our collaborative process needed to be led by individuals who could in turn facilitate BWT's collective artistic vision for the performance as a whole. AN directed all the screen scenes and operated like a professional director in conventional film and television production, deciding on the location, the shots and having the final say in artistic decisions (Appendix 13). Everyone involved in these scenes welcomed AN's artistic leadership and did not feel that her leadership for this particular aspect of our performance undermined our collective stake in the ownership of the performance and AN did not want to be singled out for credit. Similarly MS did not want to be credited for his camera work and film edits, DS for his logo design, SM and GW for script edits. None of us wanted individual credit for our contributions to devising and performing the script. However, conversely, none of us had any objections to JW being credited for the website design. At the time JW was seeking employment in website design and photography and we wanted to support him in promoting his expertise. There was space within our collaborative processes for individual acknowledgement where appropriate. While MS had not led a session on his practice in the early stages of the process, his practice was evident in the work developed during this time through his interventions in the screen aspects of our production.

On the 15th of September 2011, the big group met before GW left for his employment in Pitlochry. Unfortunately, DS was in Hong Kong and AN in Poland. MS had dealt with all

the last minute changes and the edits required for the film. He had also created montages and images on screen to help with communicating the plot of *The Comedy of Errors*. We previewed the film components of our performance and we all approved of the directing, acting and production. JW had worked on the publicity, the programme and had checked out the performance space but this was the first time he was meeting some of the artists, and it was his first big group rehearsal. There was a sense of a whole community (even though DS and AN were absent) with all of us referring to them and each of us taking responsibility to follow up with them on areas that required their input. Presence seemed to be represented in absence in ways that challenged live performance-making.

It was GW's last session with BWT prior to the Tron performance and his diary entry captured the processes of BWT during the summer of 2011and how we had come to own the processes of our creation (Appendix 8, 15 September 2011). GW referred to the fact that small groups had been rehearsing during the summer but it that had been a while since the big group had met. He identified the tasks we had been involved in during the summer and how this involvement had led to our growing stake in the performance,

> …whether it was myself and Paul filming one of the scenes… Anna going away and working with Martin…there is a real sense of we all kind of own it now which has come from getting to know each other more and also having a real sort of purpose in terms of the content that we are going to put on

He regretted not being able to participate in the performance but also expressed joy at how we had "all pulled together" in our own time, "dancing around different holiday times" and hoped we would be able to give our work "the final push" it deserved. SM, PC and I concurred with GW about all the various tasks we had been involved in with PC acknowledging MS's editing skills and welcoming JW on board and SM referring to the "final push" required as well. PC also thanked everyone and said, "We came, we had nothing, now we have something". JW referred to the tasks he had been involved in and how, from his observations so far, he thought that what we were creating together was something we could all be proud of. I reflected on the purpose of my research when I talked about the work BWT had done in my absence,

> I needed to let go and challenge myself to trust my co-collaborators and if I truly respected them as co-collaborators, have faith that artistic vision would evolve in my absence… they put their stamp on it and it's a truly touching moment…when you are

actually trying to test out whether equality and egalitarian theatre can really materialise and when your co-collaborators actually take the lead, it's very heartening…

It was evident that collective ownership of artistic vision for *WSA* had materialised through firstly, how we took individual responsibility for developing the character we brought into the rehearsal room informed by the feedback of fellow BWT artists; secondly, how we took individual responsibility for leading on the collective framing of aspects from *The Comedy of Errors* and the story of the fictional residency; and finally, how we collectively discussed individual artistic choices in filming, editing and publicity. We discussed the issue of acknowledging specialist skills and while most of us did not want to be singled out for any specific role we led on, we also agreed that acknowledging JW as the designer of the BWT website was necessary as he was promoting to industry his specialist skill in web design and singling him out for credit did not undermine BWT's collective ownership of the artistic vision for *WSA*. Working with the dialectic of individual/collective became important to developing the collective ownership of our collaboratively produced theatre. Face B and Face C of DCT were operating at its optimum during this stage of our processes because of our sophisticated experimentations with the dialectical formulations of individual/collective, big group/small group, solo credit/ensemble credit and presence/absence in developing our central pedagogy - the collective ownership of artistic vision premised on truth and equality.

Labour and Commodity

Thus far Face B and Face C of DCT dominated our ownership of the collaborative theatre we were producing with Face A featuring intermittently. However, this changed as we moved closer to our performance at the Tron. In my diary entry of 15th September 2011(Appendix 8) I referred to how tough it had been for everyone to make time and how creative we had to be to make the work without funds, reiterating my commitment to get funding for the follow-on work from *WSA*. The weeks leading up to the performance proved to be very challenging. Fitting in rehearsals around our paid employment proved almost impossible. We rehearsed in small groups a few times and agreed that we would need to use the time at the Tron to do a full run of the performance as we had run out of time for this. There was stress about the quality of *WSA* but we all agreed there was no alternative. We took comfort in the fact that we had publicised *WSA* as a work in progress, that the performance was ticketed but free to attend and this was in effect a pitching exercise of ideas rather than a finished product

promoted to potential funders in order to secure funds for the future development of our collective's work. Our time at the Tron, the performance of *WSA*, the feedback, the issues relating to time, remuneration and funding are discussed in Chapter 4 and are analysed in relation to the commodity aspect of our labour power. However, it is important to conclude this section by mentioning the tensions of Face A of DCT that we were experiencing as we moved closer to our time at the Tron. Our engagement with the primary dialectic of capital/cooperation; process/product took a toll on the collaborative processes developed from our collective labour. While we achieved our pedagogical aims for equality and collective ownership, we recognised how difficult it was to make a performance which had use value and potential exchange value.

The First Lull (October 2011 – August 2012)

In keeping with my thinking on the dialectic and how I had developed DCT, the lull period was characterised by respite and the quiet time necessary before the eruption of activity that an iteration of *WSA* would bring along with it. BWT were exhausted having created and performed *WSA* while working full time in employment necessary for our subsistence and let-up and rest were required. However, a quiet time did not mean an absence of activity but rather a carrying on of unpressured activity to continue building a community of artists without the intensity and stress of a deadline for making a performance for an audience. For me as the researcher, this time was not only important to reflect on my findings and use these to refine DCT for stage two of BWT's work but also to attempt to secure funding for stage two. During the lull I worked on researching and understanding the theoretical infrastructure supporting BWT's practice. The focus groups also took place during this time with the aim of supporting funding applications.

Personal and Professional Journeys

BWT did not meet up again until 12th January 2012. Everyone was relaxed and enjoyed being in the company of each other again. GW announced that he would be getting married in April 2013. We were delighted for him and his partner and while the intention of the session was to discuss the next phase of BWT's work, more time was spent celebrating GW's good news. Unfortunately AN and PC were unable to attend although I chatted with them beforehand. We watched MS's recording of *WSA* and discussed the audience feedback, particularly with respect to the question posed about the value of (or lack of) having an

obvious protagonist. I asked everyone whether they wanted to continue to be involved with BWT. Both AN and PC had told me beforehand that they were happy to continue and contribute to making a product if funds allowed. AN shared that she would be relocating to London for work but that, through the screen aspects she was keen to explore with MS, and regular visits to Glasgow, she would still be able to contribute without being physically present all the time. PC said his own professional development as an actor benefitted from being involved in BWT and he would like to continue. Echoing this at the meeting both SM and MS referred to the impact of BWT on their professional development as artists. MS said his involvement with BWT had given him the motivation to make the type of films he had thought about making for a long time. SM said she was delighted to have had the opportunity to direct sections of *WSA* and would like to continue to develop her directing skills within BWT's processes. GW commented on the value of professional development but added that friendship and the solidarity of artists connected in this way were equally important. DS said he was drawn to BWT as a community of artists committed to exploring different ways of making performance but said that he had to reluctantly bow out of BWT's next phase of work. He said that the demands of his paid employment did not leave him time for much else. The rest of us were sad about DS's decision but understood and appreciated his reasons for it.

I confessed that I had not had much time to pursue funding options but would start dedicating more time to this in the next few months and suggested we should meet again in April 2012. We agreed that for the next phase we should begin by sharing our practice again, starting whenever the funding situation and the timing of the next production were clearer. I suggested that each of us should take turns to think about the video diary question before the session and pose it at the session instead of responding to questions coming from me alone. We had a lot of pizza and wine and MS advised that perhaps doing a video diary entry that evening was not appropriate.

Defining Value

This first meeting after the Tron production highlighted to me how the artists' reasons for being involved were evolving from helping me out with my research, to interest in the process and the opportunity to perform, to being able to identify personal gain from their involvement in BWT. The meeting also gave me confidence to persevere with the practice-based approach to my research and allowed me to rethink aspects of the practice. Based on

my initial design, the priority at this stage was for me to seek funds so that we could be paid for developing a fuller work following on from *WSA*. However my own subsistence employment did not leave me with any time to seek funds. It was interesting to note that the reasons everyone offered for their continued involvement with BWT had little to do with remuneration and all to do with professional development, growing as artists, friendship and community. Apart from DS, we all wanted to continue our involvement, aware of the challenges of developing performance without pay and that I had yet to secure funding for stage two.

GW was not able to perform with us at the Tron because his subsistence employment took him to Pitlochory Theatre. Those of us who were performing live and operating the technical aspects of the show did not manage to get a run before our get in at the Tron because our subsistence employment schedules did not allow for this. We were acutely aware of how difficult it was to make the work without having sufficient time to develop it. The ethics of working without pay are discussed in Chapter 4 but it is useful to point out here that all of us seemed gratified solely by the use value of our labour in developing *WSA*. Most of us wanted to find ways of continuing our involvement despite the stresses and the challenges we had faced in the making of *WSA*. In the aftermath I had considered abandoning the practice based approach to my research and pursuing a conventional research route. However, discussions with colleagues and peers who had seen *WSA,* and the affirmation by most of the BWT artists about their continued involvement, made it possible for me to persist with my idealism about non-hierarchical collaborative practice materialising in the real world. My suggestion that others pose the video diary questions made me aware that I was becoming more secure about the exploratory nature of my research, and that it should not be limited to the intentions I set out but also include the intentions of my collaborators.

Professional: Aesthetics or Wages?

MS, JW, AN and I met on 26th January 2012 because I thought it might be useful for AN to share her practice before she left for London. AN's session was very interesting in terms of how the intermedia aspects of our performance could be developed with MS taking the lead for this aspect of our work. AN posed the video diary question at the end of the session, "What role can the screen take on in the future development of this work?" (Appendix 8, 26 January 2012). AN said she developed the workshop with the intention of exploring the

screen's potential to "bring a bit of magic" to the stage adding that the images on screen can become the "visual installations like artworks in galleries" that need to be interpreted. JW and I shared how much we enjoyed AN's workshop and off camera, MS shared how keen he was to explore some of AN's techniques. While this was an interesting workshop, I began to see that a distinct period (similar to phase one when we shared our practice), was not necessary. We had learnt to take collective responsibility for developing *WSA* and our different aesthetics had informed its creation. Accordingly, in developing the follow-on work, our growing practice (and in AN's and MS's case their particular interest in screen) could be accommodated while rehearsing as part of the pedagogically driven methodology of DCT. There was a worry that only four of us could attend this session and I began to think that rehearsals at this stage needed to be structured around product orientated goals with pedagogically driven processes embedded within these goals if we were to develop use value and exchange value dialectically. So when BWT met next on 12 April 2012, we decided not to start off again with another sharing of practice phase but to focus on the aspects of *WSA* we would like to develop, using the DCT approaches we had employed in phase one.

JW posed the video diary question at the end of this session, "What is the one thing you would want to get out of the next show?" (Appendix 8, 12 April 2012). Many of us responded by offering suggestions for the development of *WSA* but the most troubling contribution had little to do with the content of our future work. GW qualified before he answered (looking at me), "this is going to sound cynical" and said it would be great to be given a "contract for the next show". He believed a contract would signal professional work from what started out as a group of artists helping me out with my PhD to something that goes beyond that, "something professional from nothing, that would be really good". I agreed with GW saying that getting funding was crucial and "it would not be right to do the work at this level without getting paid". I said that we should not do it as a professional production and that we should consider alternatives if I was not able to secure funds. GW's response suggested that professionalism was defined in terms of whether we got paid and not in terms of the quality of the work produced. Yet when he said it would be good to create "something professional from nothing" he seemed to imply the good quality of work we had produced in the past with no pay, suggesting that our professionalism had more to do with our abilities rather than whether we got paid. Thus GW's response brought to the fore the professional/amateur divide and how BWT's work was located within this binary.

My response about not doing the work professionally if I could not secure funding was not about the status or perceived value of the work but more about the ethics of managing our subsistence and leisure time while not getting paid for working with BWT. I discuss my challenges with funding in Chapter four but it was clear from my video diary entry that I was not confident about securing funds and had already begun to raise the possibility of not producing our next performance professionally. At this point it seemed difficult to work with the law of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa. The use value and exchange value of our labour power seemed polarised, no longer able to operate dialectically in defining what constituted professional work. Yet GW's, "something professional from nothing" gave me hope that further down the line it might become clear how the first law of the dialectic could help BWT define the second phase of our work.

As this was a critical meeting for the second phase of our work, MS agreed to go on camera sharing his enthusiasm for "using the video and multimedia" in developing BWT's performances. This was MS's first video diary entry but sadly it was DS's last and he shared, "I would like to see a company come to fruition, I would like the company to tour because I think there are sadly not enough touring companies left in Scotland… I would also like a couple of comps". AN and PC were not able to attend this session and it was becoming increasingly clear how difficult it was going to be to schedule future meetings around each artist's availability.

The New Beginning (August 2012 – September 2012)

The lull ended in August 2012, ironically not when I secured funding but when I let BWT artists know that I would no longer be pursuing funds for the development of phase two. I met each artist individually over the summer of 2012 and similar to the meeting on 12 January 2012, I asked them if they would still like to continue but this time made clear that there would be no remuneration. Alongside the original intention for phase two to culminate in a ticketed performance, marketed as a professional product an audience would consider paying to see, I also suggested phase two could be an ongoing project, where the purpose was solely to help us in our professional development, with no requirement for any sort of

product. Additionally I asked them to consider abandoning phase two altogether. Everyone opted to follow through with the original intention of making a performance developed from *WSA* for a ticketed audience.

Collective Ownership of Failure

This process of engaging with each artist was very humbling. Up to this point I believed that the inability to secure funding was my failure alone but the responses of the other BWT artists made me see that they wanted to own this failure too and take collective responsibility in moving forward, putting into practice what PC had earlier said about owning failure (4 February 2011). They had gained personally from the creative processes in developing *WSA*, but it was clear to me that, while it was important to them to follow through the original project (without remuneration) they also wanted to support me in achieving my PhD by continuing the work of BWT. I accepted the gift of their unremunerated labour, suggesting to each of them that we continue to look for ways in which the work we created together could carry on having value to us as artists, and for us to collectively come up with schedules which would allow us to earn our subsistence (and ensure that we have leisure/personal time) while developing our performance in phase two for a ticketed audience.

Owning Performative Identity

It became apparent during these meetings that each of us who had developed a character for *WSA* had an investment in and ownership of that character. It was now clear that we were unanimous in wanting to develop the characters further and employ similar rehearsal processes to those used in the development of *WSA*. MS and JW, who did not develop a character for *WSA,* supported the idea of developing the work from these characters and committed to developing their roles within the fictional world we had already created. Both MS and JW believed it was not necessary for them to adopt a fictional persona and wanted to contribute to the creation of the fictional world as MS and JW. MS committed to leading on the multimedia aspects of the follow-on work. JW believed that the multimedia aspects of *WSA* "showed real promise" but felt that they were not integrated sufficiently with the live performance (Appendix 8, 12 April 2012). He volunteered to take on the role of stage manager both in the real world of BWT and in the fictional drama that we would create in our characters, so that he could participate in the drama but at the same time, as JW, he would be able to integrate the stage and screen elements more coherently. In the light of the artists' feedback on how the follow- on work could be developed, I suggested that the scenario for

this work could be when the artists reunite for a second residency. Everyone seemed motivated by this idea so I said I would initiate an email correspondence between the artists involved in the first residency so that we could begin the process of familiarising ourselves with our characters again and revising the given circumstances. I/Fatima wrote an e-mail to all the artists,

> *Dear Gordon, Lucy, Pritam, Martin, Jamie and Monika,*
>
> *Miss you all. Hope you are all doing well. It would be lovely to hear from you if you have the time. As always I am chasing deadlines but miss the live theatre experience we all shared together.*
>
> *Warmest Regards,*
> *Fatima*

This prompted a series of emails, some from an individual to the whole group, some between individuals and some between groups of individuals but not including the whole group, allowing us to reignite the characters and begin developing the changes in the characters' lives since the last residency. It also allowed for the formation of relationships out with the context of the residency. Alongside this informal network of conversations, JW in his new role of stage manager (both in the real world of BWT and the fictional world of the residency) wrote to all the artists inviting us to participate in the second residency at the Tron (Appendix 14). Similar to the letter I wrote back in May 2011, this invitation written by JW on 10 September 2012 provided us with a purpose and a context to develop our ideas from *WSA* and create a new performance for a paying audience.

Developing Ownership through Iteration

The new beginning started with me accepting the impossibility of securing funds for phase two. It was characterised by BWT artists' pledge to continue with our work unpaid. During this time our investment in the respective characters we brought into the rehearsal room and our ownership of the processes we had used to create *WSA* became evident. MS and JW wanted to contribute to BWT's creative processes in their everyday identities but negotiate these in the context of the fictional characters, much in the vein of Goffman's, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, where "the part one individual plays is tailored to the parts played by the others present" (Goffman 1959: xi). In advancing equality with collective responsibility, each of the artists took responsibility for reigniting their characters through the correspondence tasks that we undertook. MS offered each artist technical support and JW

took the lead in initiating the second encounter. I felt humbled by the generosity of my fellow collaborators in wanting to persist with the experiment despite knowing that we would not be paid. I reflected back to January 2011 when I began inviting the artists to participate in the experiment and remembered their attraction not only to the process of creation but to the guarantee of a performance at the Tron. We owned the processes of our creation and gained knowledge from developing and performing *WSA*. The video diary entries demonstrated the value the artists ascribed to our processes. I wondered whether, if I could secure another professional theatre venue, the remuneration could be replaced by the use value of the non-material ownership of artistic vision, knowledge and learning. The challenge for me as the researcher was to ensure that the potential value generated by the second phase did not rest with me alone (because of my singular ownership of the thesis). Non-monetary gains from phase two could be achieved by ensuring that the collective ownership of our collaborative processes continued to be developed through DCT. While tensions in use and exchange value had taken a toll on us as we approached our performance at the Tron, the excitement and buzz we gained from performing for an audience at a reputable theatre venue could not be negated. As the researcher I needed to reflect on how all the three faces of DCT could be developed to so that the performance we created in phase two would have meaning for us as artists and for an audience who would consider paying to see our show unlike the free performance of *WSA*. The second phase would be an iteration of the first, enabling each of us and the collective as a whole to deepen our dialogue with aesthetics, ethics and ownership, with a view to taking responsibility for the overall artistic vision for the performance.

Developing the Second Performance Text (September 2012 – January 2014)

In keeping with the principles of iteration, the processes for phase two from September 2012 to January 2014 mirrored the first phase but with alterations where appropriate. I begin this section by summarising BWT's practice of DCT in terms of dialectical formulations during this phase of development and discuss the work in progress dimension of our performance. I go on to analyse chronologically the distinct periods of creation and rehearsal. We tried out initial ideas for developing the performance text from September to October 2012, when the reunion of the fictional artists and follow up meetings (signalling PC's changed involvement with BWT) took place. Frome November 2012 to February 2013 we reacquainted ourselves with our fictional characters, committed to a structure for developing the content of our

performance and set targets. From March to October 2013 we developed and rehearsed the script. From November 2013 to January 2014 we tested the script with the focus group and made revisions, accommodated JW's decision to withdraw from the performance for personal reasons, and improved the overall aesthetic of our performance.

Multiple Dialectical Formulations

The period from September 2012 to January 2014 was characterised by how BWT artists had come to live as dialectical beings "capable of thinking dialectically all the time" mirroring phase one after the 'event' was introduced as part of our rehearsal methodology (refer to earlier section entitled "BloodWater Theatre Artists as Dialectical Beings") (Jameson 2010: 279). This enabled us to address challenges and solve problems arising from non-hierarchical production, having no remuneration and putting ownership at the centre of our practice. We had learned from creating *WSA* that even weekly rehearsals were challenging because of our conflicting subsistence employment schedules so we agreed to make the work over a longer period of time to ensure that rehearsal times were negotiated well in advance. BWT met monthly to develop the work collectively and alongside full group rehearsals, we also worked individually and in small groups. This enabled us to develop the performance in the time we had and to schedule rehearsals around our subsistence employment and make them part of our "daily life" activities, challenging the "ideological projection of capitalism" where the public space of work is divorced from the private life of home (Jameson 2010: 353). AN was now working in London and the monthly rehearsals were planned around her visits to Glasgow. We took into account family and personal life arrangements in scheduling rehearsals. We rehearsed in the private space of our homes and in the rehearsal space available at the CCA. We looked to our families and fellow artist-friends to help us with the work.

I suggested a way of developing the content of our work where each artist would take the lead in creating a narrative about their fictional character, in individual and small group time, alongside all of us creating a collective narrative during the big group monthly rehearsal time. However, individual and small group rehearsals had to also feed into the big group rehearsals so that the collective were in a position develop the artistic whole coherently. This relationship between the big and small group rehearsals was introduced during our creation of *WSA* but not developed enough to aid the coherence of the piece as a whole. This iteration

was our opportunity to refine our practice. We developed our characters' narratives in our private time but also during small and big group rehearsals.

JW organised the scheduling of the monthly rehearsals and each of us took responsibility for initiating small group rehearsals and worked individually on developing our role. We used skype and facetime to progress the work in the virtual environment during and between rehearsals and when we were not able to attend sessions. Through drop box, vimeo and google documents we were able to review rehearsal footage, screen elements of our performance and publicity materials in order to develop and make changes to our evolving script as well as progress the 'selling' of our product. In addition to the email and texting that had been our primary source of communication in the past, we used Group Me to keep all of us simultaneously abreast with developments.

Through addressing time dialectically in terms of private/public, individual/group, present/past and face-to-face/virtual, we were able to pursue our ambition of making quality work in our amateur/professional status. Through continuing to explore self dialectically, where our performance was created in between identities, we were able to discover truths and realign hierarchical relationships. Through persisting with addressing leadership dialectically, we were able to discover collaborative approaches which promoted ethical collective ownership. DCT, premised on the dialectical self and the dialectical collective, paved the way for BWT to develop ownership in collaborative theatre practice and gave us belief that we would be able to make quality work despite scheduling difficulties, changing priorities and shifting personal circumstances (Appendix 15)[14]. Thus while we developed the second performance text we refined Face A of DCT by engaging with time dialectically so that we could work with the tensions of the process/product dialectic to ensure that we had time for our subsistence employment while creating use value for our collaborative processes as we made our product which had exchange value. Face B and Face C of DCT consistently aided in the development of the pedagogy of truth, equality and collective ownership of artistic vision.

Jameson's caution against the dialectic becoming "Utopian lingua franca" and his defence of utopia as "an operation calculated to disclose the limits of our own imagination of the future"

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[14] Illustration of dialectical self and dialectical collective

guided me/us in the development of DCT during this phase of BWT's work (Jameson 2010: 135; 413). Exploiting the tensions of opposing statuses, realities and spaces was not in itself enough to develop an ethical collaborative model of production during pressurising and testing times (Face B). We had to reignite our discussions on ideology and its place in our work (Face C). We had to reflect on whether we still believed in our commitment to equality and the ethics of non-hierarchical production. We had to reflect on whether our idealism would drive us to discover alternatives to mainstream utility-led collaborative theatre practice in the material world (Face A, B and C).

Work-in-Progress

As our confidence in living as dialectical beings grew during the development of the second performance text, but this time developed as a commodity for a ticketed audience, I recognised that the concept of work-in-progress had to be developed dialectically alongside commodity. This stage was different from and similar to the development of the performance text for *WSA,* created as a work-in-progress and publicised accordingly. Freeman's (2010) definition of iteration (where iteration is described as the process of repetition which brings about alternatives) while complementing Smith and Dean's (2011) definition discussed in Chapter two, goes a step further by making explicit the work-in-progress dimension of PaR. He argues for iterative processes being central to practice-based research methodology, defining iteration as the process whereby "problems are identified and reworked" but not necessarily always resolved. He says such processes take "an intrinsically heuristic approach to the value of failures as well as successes" and in doing so "all work becomes work-in-progress" (Freeman 2010: 68). While I had suggested the reunion event of the artists as being a good starting point for developing the new performance text, I was troubled by the process/product dialect at this early stage of the second phase of our work. Freeman's suggestion that all work could be considered as work-in-progress and BWT's readiness to own the failure of not securing funds, guided me in my thinking about the relationship between *WSA* and this new work. It made me revisit my reasons for designing the practice as a two stage inquiry and allowed me to address the final unanswered question of my MA research of whether process could feature in the product.

Heddon and Milling refer to the 1950s and 1960s as the period where process orientated theatre was developed to "resist the commodification of performance" and the aesthetic of the 'unfinished' gained recognition. Their description of artistic process versus artistic

commodity during this period reaffirmed the appropriateness of DCT in developing this second stage of BWT's work,

> While this move [towards process orientated performance] was for some a demystification of creativity, an attempt to blur the divisions between amateur and professional, ironically for others it led to an increased professionalization of the artist, championing and scrutinising the aesthetics of the labour of the creative artist, rather than simply the product.

> Heddon and Milling 2006: 21

Heddon and Milling's characterisation of the artistic work produced in the fifties and sixties, and Freeman's suggestion that works in progress could also be perceived as finished products, refined my thinking and the development of DCT as we transitioned to the making of the new work. In order to create the conditions for value to materialise for each of us in BWT in the absence of remuneration, the notion of "increased professionalization" through the dialectic of amateur and professional needed to be developed, alongside the features of work-in-progress, through the dialectic of process and product. Not getting paid would curtail the time we had to make the work but at the same time it would allow us to make a performance that had personal value to us because we did not have to meet any funding criteria and were free to make work out with most of the conditions of capitalism. In keeping with the second law of the dialectic, the amateur status of our production had the potential to increase the professional quality of our performance as our labour was defined in terms of our aesthetics as professional artists and not "simply the product" which an audience consumes, and ascribes value to, based on commodified taste.

While we did not want to apply Brook's notion of the "deadly spectator" who resists intensity and certain forms of entertainment, neither did we want to negate the spectator altogether in developing our aesthetic (Brook 1968: 10). We needed to acknowledge that an audience, however small, was necessary for our performance so that new aesthetics that "resist the commodification of performance" could emerge for both artists and audiences. Works-in-progress legitimise both success and failure and if we denied the work-in-progress aspects of our product we would become too risk averse, making work solely in the commodified, predominant style of ticketed venue based theatre. I recognised that as the researcher, I had to facilitate processes that would continue to enable BWT to take risks in working through problems encountered in the creation of *WSA,* acknowledging that these problems might not be resolved, and that the solutions we come up with might not be to the taste of all audiences.

Nevertheless, by continuing to take the risks involved in working dialectically with process and product, we could work with and against commodity, and discover if there would be an audience for a performance developed from the process/product dialectic.

Chapter four analyses ownership through the process/product dialectic from the commodity perspective of our labour power as we created a product developed from our individual/collective aesthetics and informed by the feedback from the focus group/audience. But in this chapter it is important to point out that the primary process/product dialectic, from the perspective of labour as a means of production, was developed through legitimating works in progress as finished products (Face A, B and C).

September 2012 – October 2012: Real and Fictional Worlds

It was difficult to get everyone together for the first rehearsal after the summer as we had not yet put in place the system of scheduling monthly rehearsals and JW's role in facilitating this. So I initiated the restart by coordinating everyone's availability. 21st September 2012 was agreed even though GW would be in New York with the National Theatre of Scotland's production of *Black Watch*, AN would be visiting her family in Poland and MS was available only for part of the session. We had decided not to defer the reunion event any longer but to make provision for AN/Monika and GW/Gordon to be skyped into the rehearsal. In their characters, AN and GW had let JW (in his role as the fictitious Tron stage manager) know that they would be joining the other artists for the second day of the residency and would participate in the first day of the residency via skype. This restarted the process of creating fictional narratives to justify personal, real life reasons for absence. This had begun when GW could not perform as Gordon in *WSA* at the Tron because he was performing at Pitlochory at the same time. For this stage I volunteered to produce an agenda for every rehearsal so that we could be efficient and productive with the big group time. The first agenda was based on feedback from the summer meetings and the initial suggestions we had agreed on for the follow on work[15]. Subsequent agendas proved beneficial in recapping previous rehearsals, reminding the artists on the tasks they had agreed to be responsible for and generally facilitating coherence in developing the work.

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[15] Exemplar of agendas produced in the course of developing the follow on work

It was very impressive being in a rehearsal room with BWT members present in reality and virtually. There was a great sense of joy speaking with AN/Monika in Poland and GW/Gordon in America as I/Fatima, PC/Pritam, SM/Lucy JW and MS were in Glasgow. However, the rehearsal in itself was amateurish with all of us having little sense of our characters or sufficient memory of our previous interaction despite the email exchange we had had in character over the summer. This reduced the devising to a stage one process, producing a first rehearsal type of material. Having said that, the discussion with AN/Monika was valuable in making us aware of the complexity of the devising processes we were grappling with in playing out the different layers of identities we were exploring to develop our performance text. There were technical difficulties with the skype and as MS was not present for part of the session, the video recording did not capture the reunion fully or clearly. PC had to leave the session earlier than expected and was not able to do a video diary. However the responses to the question posed by JW gave me/us ideas on how some of the challenges encountered at this rehearsal could be tackled, and the need for me as the facilitator of equality to follow up with each individual artist before BWT met again. I also committed to ensuring that each artist was kept abreast with developments using Group Me and email. This rehearsal reassured us in some ways but also raised questions about our knowledge and understanding of our processes and my role as researcher as well as artist within them.

JW posed the question, "Which aspect of your character would you like to probe?" (Appendix 8, 21 September 2012). All of our responses suggested that we had not lived with our characters sufficiently since *WSA* and that the correspondence over the summer had been of limited value in deepening our knowledge of them. Strategies for reacquainting ourselves with our characters had to be factored into future rehearsals. Nevertheless our responses revealed the continued success of using the dialectic of real and fictional worlds to develop our performance but highlighted that we had to be mindful about how meaning was created for an audience, because of the complexity of the multiple identity processes we were using. The question also allowed me to reflect further on my role as researcher while being an artist in BWT committed to living in a fictional world, alongside my concurrent role as investigator of non-hierarchical collaboration production in the real world.

JW's response about being in role for the first time as the Tron stage manager confirmed for me the value of using the event of each rehearsal in the fictional world of the artists to uncover truths about identity and processes. He said it was the first time he had entered the rehearsal space as the fictional Tron stage manager and thought he had dived in at the deep end but what it revealed to him was that he had " to hit it front on and go with it" and find out "what [was] unveiled" in the process. He assumed authority in his role and felt like a go between when I/Fatima and PC/Pritam had a clash. His off the cuff response about being the stage manager for BWT (when referring to the fictional world of the artists where he was the Tron stage manager) and AN/Monika's discussion of the potential confusion arising from complex devising processes during the skype session, alerted us to the possibility of the audience being alienated and losing the simplicity of truth unveiled to an audience through the event of the reunion of the artists. Before this rehearsal the focus group had met (in May 2012) and their feedback will be discussed more fully in Chapter four but they too had raised the issue of alienation and this influenced some of our choices on aesthetics. My thinking on work-in-progress had convinced me that if we were to continue to advance ownership in BWT our follow on performance should be developed from the process/product dialectic. We had to become more astute about how we could balance the unfinished work-in-progress aspects of our performance with the audiences' expectations (generally associated with commodified performance) for a clear narrative. We had to recognise that we were now in Badiou's count-as-one consistent multiplicity phase where our performance needed to have meaning for an audience just like count-as-one in sum presentation (Badiou in Hallward 2003: 140). The terms of our composition, however complex had to be clear for an audience.

I shared in my diary entry that I was experiencing the tensions of the research where I was exploring whether non-hierarchical collaborative theatre could work in the real world and the truth of Fatima's interventions in the fictional world.

> …and because I think dialectically, I find it very hard to just function as a member of this group without thinking about the PhD and that is becoming an increasing worry but I have to say at the point when I was provoked as Fatima today, I was provoked…I responded in the moment as Fatima as truthfully as possible. I also realised that there has to be some shifts in the way I deal with these rehearsals, I am stressed about developing a script and try to provoke, get people talking and when I do this everyone makes me the centre…

When we were developing the material for *WSA* in our fictional roles I was not consciously aware that I was employing Heathcote's teacher in role techniques (Heathcote and Bolton 1995). However in this rehearsal, I was very aware that I was using these techniques but acknowledged that this did not detract from the truth of the moment for me as Fatima. I believed that I responded truthfully as Fatima but acknowledged that my simultaneous role as the researcher was "becoming an increasing worry" because it made me question whether it was possible for me to be Fatima and the researcher at the same time. I was concerned that through the tensions and inquiry based aspects of the process-led drama I was initiating in role, I was inadvertently becoming the protagonist of the drama rather than passing on the mantle of the expert (as intended by Heathcote) to enable a repositioning of power relations in the rehearsal room. In the time away from the other BWT artists, I found renewed clarity in my dialectical status as artist/researcher. It was possible for me to think, act and wrestle with truth in my simultaneous role of artist and researcher if I persisted with the idea of the dialectical self and the dialectical collective as we developed the work (Appendix 15).

The application of the dialectical self during artistic processes allowed me to operate freely and spontaneously as an artist, but at the same time it enabled me to be critical of BWT's processes through the application of the principles of the dialectical collective we had developed to promote ethical ownership within the collective. Badiou's theories on truth and multiplicity and his identification of the subject as a "militant of truth" who does not necessarily have to be a political activist but could also be "the artist-creator, the scientist who opens up a new theoretical field" justified the value of my dual and simultaneous role of researcher and artist and gave me confidence to persist with the artist/researcher dialectic (Badiou 2005: xiii). What I needed to do was to familiarise the collective with the Heathcote's techniques I was using in role as Fatima so that they could recognise them and become aware that they had to step up in realigning the power relations in both the real and fictional collectives as we developed our performance and use these techniques themselves in putting ownership at the centre of our practice. In keeping with the dialectic of facilitator/director (which we had begun to work with during the creation of *WSA)* and my renewed confidence about my artist/researcher status, I believed I could take the lead at this stage in proposing strategies to overcome challenges we were facing, without undermining non-hierarchical production.

After the rehearsal on 21 September 2012, PC and I had a small group rehearsal where it was clear that while PC had a sense of belonging to BWT and wanted to continue his involvement in some way, he was reassessing the time he had available to develop the work. Creative solutions began to emerge talking through with PC about his personal circumstances, the reasons he was drawn to the experiment, how these had changed over time and exploring ways we could create a performance of sufficient quality to be performed to an audience in fifteen to eighteen months' time. PC was initially drawn to the experiment because he was interested in the ideas I was exploring, the performance at the Tron, his respect for me as a theatre director who had worked with him professionally in the past and our friendship. However, these reasons were beginning to change particularly since he had replaced his Scottish based agent with a London based one, who had the potential to secure him more film and television work. PC's interest was now less about the dialectic of process/product and more about the actor as a commodity.

This awareness made me question again the relationship between the PhD and BWT. Everyone in the collective, including DS who had left us in April 2012, was important to BWT but not everyone in the collective was necessarily important to the research. The artists' investment in developing ethical collaborative processes was central to advancing my research aims. However BWT was bigger than these aims and could accommodate artists/actors prepared to work with the process/product dialect as well as artists/actors who were primarily interested in the product dimension of the work. The PhD and BWT were inextricably linked but not synonymous. This reflection (alongside my analysis of JW's off the cuff response about being BWT's stage manager in the fictional world, AN/Monika's skype discussion of the complexities of the devising process, which I explored further during our follow up small group rehearsal, and the unprompted conflict between PC/Pritam and I/Fatima during the reunion of the fictional artists) gave me ideas on a possible structure and a stimulus we could use to develop the performance text. My belief in utopia as an operation rather than a place allowed me to use the dialectic in exploring each artist's place in the world of the experiment and the world of BWT, enabling me to see that the terms of collective ownership had to be determined through a dialectical relationship between the individual artist and the artist collective.

BWT existed in the real world, but in developing *WSA* and experimenting with work-in-progress ideas, we had confused the existence of BWT in the real world with the existence of the artists in the fictional world. JW's reference to BWT in the fictional world brought home the validity of the focus group's feedback about the confusion between BWT's place in the fictional world which some of them raised at the focus group sessions in May 2012. This was discussed with everyone and we agreed that the fictional artists needed to have a name and identity separate from BWT. JW was the stage manager for BWT in the real world but in the fictional world he was the stage manager of the Tron. These distinctions were important in deepening our understanding of the devising processes we were developing and in improving the quality of the performance text. Building on the idea of developing fictional narratives to justify real life absences (as in GW/Gordon's storyline in *WSA*) and exploiting the space between fiction and reality, I proposed a framework and a way of working which would allow each artist in BWT to reassess their involvement with BWT and enable them to determine the purpose and nature of their involvement.

I suggested that we develop a screen narrative alongside a stage narrative with the two narratives intersecting in the construction of the narrative as a whole. The screen narrative would feature the processes the fictional artists were experimenting with in developing a performance for an audience during the five day artists' residency, and the stage performance would feature the personal stories the fictional artists chose to share with an audience in the magic space of live theatre, defying the unities of time and space. There was scope for the final unanswered question of the MA, "Should process feature in the product" to be addressed through these strategies I was proposing. If BWT artists were still interested in exploring ownership of collaborative processes, it would be necessary for them to contribute to the development of these processes whether or not they would be able to participate in the actual performance on the day. However, there was also the option of an artist choosing to limit her performance to the screen and in doing so continue her involvement with BWT but with less contribution of time and no responsibility for the artistic whole. Nevertheless her valued skills and talents could be used to serve the artistic vision of those artists who wanted to continue to develop artistic vision collectively. In short I was asking each artist if they wanted to continue with the experiment and with BWT or to limit their involvement to BWT

alone, and in doing so redefine the terms of their involvement and their stake in the work produced by the collective. PC opted to limit his contribution to the screen elements and said he was glad that there was a way he could continue to be part of BWT. He added that he was happy for others in BWT to take responsibility for the artistic whole and for him to be directed in his contribution to this. The other artists chose to continue with the experiment and BWT. My suggestion of using Pritam and Fatima's conflict at the reunion as the stimulus for the construction of the screen narrative, including Pritam's premature departure from the residency, excited everyone. It enabled us to develop a fictional narrative to justify Pritam's exit from the residency and in doing so accommodated PC's personal circumstances and limited availability for the development of the follow on performance. This began the process of how we used spontaneous situations that took place during the event of our rehearsals, either in its original form or reconstructed form, to help us develop our performance narrative. The video footage of this rehearsal was poor but the real time conflicts and the interactions with the artists on skype were rich so we reconstructed these aspects in developing a narrative for the first day of the fictional artists' second residency (Appendix 11b)

Starting again was difficult but rewarding as each of us began to find our own place and stake within the research and BWT. MS volunteered to lead on all screen aspects of our performance and help the group identify dramatically rich situations that occurred during rehearsals when we were improvising in role. He observed the event of our rehearsal through the camera lens and was best placed to offer feedback. To help us with owning our characters once again GW suggested that hot-seating our characters should become an integral part of future rehearsals and he was happy to lead on this. It was interesting to note that GW was taking responsibility for aspects of pedagogy he had introduced in the early sharing of practice stage and was now following through with it in phase two of our work. He also said he would be responsible for the continuity elements of the filming. He suggested that the fictional artists were named 5 Day Theatre so that there was no longer any confusion with the fictional status of the artists and the real life status of BWT artists. JW said he would take the lead in his capacity as the fictional Tron stage manager to ensure that the given circumstances of the artists were adhered to during rehearsals and not confused with the given circumstances of the BWT artists. SM was excited by Heathcote's pedagogy and shared that as she was now more attuned with what I was trying to do during the

rehearsals, she would take more responsibility to ensure that the mantle of the expert was passed more equitably during rehearsals. AN said that it would be difficult for her to be plugged into small group rehearsals from London but was committed to supporting and challenging the group on the devising processes we employed during big group rehearsals. I shared that I would continue in my role as facilitator of equality, responsible for developing collective ownership of artistic vision and be committed to the dissemination of knowledge through the agendas I produced for each rehearsal. PC said he would work with MS and me on the filming of his scenes and support the group where possible and try to attend the monthly rehearsals when he could. The discussions on the distinction between the experiment and BWT allowed us to engage more profoundly with the process/product dialectic and while both had a place in our work it was becoming clear that all of us were keen to give more attention to the commodity dimension of our work at this stage. This perhaps was the critical difference between *WSA* and the new work. The former was more work-in-progress and the latter, while retaining aspects of work-in-progress, was more focussed on the count as one multiplicity finished product dimension. Both performances explored/would explore the dialectical nature of process/product in making performance.

During the development of the first performance text Face B and Face C of DCT had already become operational and taken root in BWT's practice but the operation of Face A while evident, did not influence our artistic strategies and rehearsal methodology as much as Face B and Face C. However during the development of the second performance text it was becoming clear that all the three faces of DCT were fully operational and cooperating with each other in developing the collective ownership of our processes and our performances. The collision of the real and fictional worlds we inhabited became a regular feature of our practice bringing along with it problems, solutions and opportunities. The tensions of the primary product/process dialectic were addressed through the practice of secondary dialectics in developing innovations in pedagogy. PC was no longer concerned with the objectives of the experiment but wanted to continue to belong to and perform with BWT. He was less interested in use value and more interested in efficient ways of producing performance which would take up a limited amount of his time. The others in the collective wanted to be involved in both the experiment and BWT. Thus to deal with the tension of those wanting to continue with developing the process/product dialectic in the making of our performance and those who wanted to focus primarily on product we were able to use fictional narratives to

justify real life absences during our rehearsals and the live performances. The aesthetic of the stage and screen dialectic was developed where two intersecting/parallel narratives ran alongside each other where each artist could determine how much or how little time she wanted to give to developing the product. The intersection of the real and fictional worlds where multiple performative identities could dwell while enriching for the devising process could be confusing for an audience who may have come to the theatre to consume a recognisable performance commodity. To address this we worked with the dialectic of BWT and 5 Day Theatre. To unite work in progress aesthetics with finished product aesthetics we worked with the spontaneity of truths which materialised via the events of the fictional residency but at times reconstructed/edited/refined these to make them accessible for an audience.

The relationship between secondary dialectics and pedagogy continued to thrive in determining artistic agency in the real/fictional worlds. To develop equality and create opportunities for the collective ownership of artistic vision, I shared Heathcote's techniques of passing the mantle of the expert with the other BWT artists who then became more confident about applying these during the improvisations in the fictional world of our theatre residency. Each artist took individual responsibility for specific aspects of the production process not only to enhance the overall aesthetics of our performance but to develop the pedagogy of equality and collective ownership within BWT. Thus unlike divisions of labour in capitalist economy where role specification divorces the worker from the ownership of the whole product which her specific labour power has contributed to, here our individual responsibilities facilitated collective ownership through our shared pedagogical premises while making it possible for us to make a performance product in the time we had. Our pedagogy enabled the valorisation of our property i.e. our labour power, challenging Marx's premise that only capital can be valorised, subverting the purpose of valorisation for profit-making to collective ownership of labour processes.

Finally, just like during the creation of *WSA*, I worked with the conflicting demands of being an artist and a researcher at the same time.   This iteration of the first fictional residency confirmed for me that it was possible to be an equal artist in BWT while continuing to lead on the experiment if I continued to develop my role as artist and researcher dialectically.

November 2012 – February 2013: Dialectical Self, Dialectical Collective

The next rehearsal was on the 3rd of November 2012. By this time I was reassured that both BWT and the PhD could progress and that the other BWT artists were clearer about their involvement, the direction of the work and the intersections and distinctions between BWT and my PhD. GW guided us on the hot-seating and asked us to bring in three objects which were important to our fictional characters for the next rehearsal. My documentation/analysis of the previous session and its relationship to the current agenda, and my inclusion of a reminder of the area of responsibility each artist had agreed to undertake, was useful in advancing both the product and process dimension of our work. When GW posed the video diary questions "Has today helped clarify things?" and "What do you hope to get from the hot seating?" (Appendix 8, 3 November 2012) all of us referred to the value of hot seating and the documentation I produced in our responses. I shared that I should be timely with the dissemination of the notes so that it could be "the driver for the reflective process". Perhaps in the past when I had shared my journal notes with BWT, it had been more for the purpose of ensuring that I did not misrepresent what anyone said or did in the rehearsal room. Whereas now when I shared my reflections, notes, the group's planning and the sessions' agendas, it was more clearly focussed on empowering the collective with knowledge so that they could have agency in contributing to the artistic vision of our performance and ensure that all artists' reflections fed into our processes. JW captured the essence of this rehearsal when he said in his entry, "today was a good refresher of the past and what the future holds". SM summarised accurately the feeling of the artists present at this rehearsal when she said, "Today has been very valuable in clarifying where we are at… establishing that we all want to take part and continue and move forward with BloodWater".

During the next few rehearsals each of us took turns to be hot seated and brought along with us three objects of value to our characters. One of AN's hot seating sessions was done via skype but it was nevertheless productive and made us more aware of the potential for including absent BWT artists in the rehearsals if they could not be physically present. These exercises helped give purpose and deeper meaning to the characters. Unfortunately, JW did not get a chance to be hot seated during the early stages of the restart and on hindsight this was an oversight on the part of the rest of us. JW was navigating through tricky autobiographical territory and we needed to integrate him more fully into the processes we

had been developing before he joined BWT. MS was not keen to be hot seated and said that he felt he had sufficient stake in the work through his contribution of the screen aspects of the performance. The investment in frequent hot seating not only gave us ownership of our respective characters but also helped with the quality of our improvisations and gave us ideas on how we would like to stage the characters' personal stories.

We supported GW's suggestion of naming the fictional theatre company 5 Day Theatre and agreed on a structure where the screen narrative would cover the five days of the residency and the live performance would cover personal stories of the fictional artists which needn't comply with the unities of time and place of traditional playwriting. Each artist would take the lead in developing/staging her fictional character's story with the rest of the artists supporting her in actualising her singular artistic vision for this section of the performance. The big group rehearsals prioritised collective artistic vision through working together to develop the screen narrative which focussed on the encounters between the fictional characters. We consulted each other on the relationship between the stage and screen in communicating the fictional artists' stories to an audience. Some of the footage of the artists' improvisations was used in the final performance without any reconstruction, and some of it was reconstructed when a narrative thread needed to be followed through for coherence. For example the fallout between Pritam and Fatima needed to be developed through further scenes. As BWT artists we collectively came up with ideas for these and the relationship dynamics of the residency artists in the absence of Pritam, continuing to play with the dialectic of our real life identities and fictional identities to develop our performance. Those not involved in the scenes, directed them, with MS taking responsibility for filming them and sharing with us his edits through drop box and vimeo.   The dialectical nature of the stage and screen aspects of our performance mirrored the small group/big group dialectical way of working where scenes requiring everyone were prioritised during the monthly big group rehearsals while the personal stories were developed in small groups, allowing us to make progress in developing the performance without everyone having to be physically present. However we were all kept abreast with how the performance was developing through sharing videos and the documentation of rehearsals which I circulated.

The video diary entries at the end of the rehearsal on 2nd February 2013 evidenced our optimism with the progress we were making in developing the performance text. GW asked the questions, "What was the rehearsal today like for Gordon, Fatima, Monika and Lucy? What was the rehearsal today like for Gavin, Jo, Anna and Suzanne?" (Appendix 8, 2 February 2013). GW's question itself reflected BWT's growing confidence in living through creative processes as dialectical beings. We were putting into practice dialectical thinking as a matter of course and applying "second degree thinking" during our artistic processes (Jameson 2011: 137). In GW's entry he said that the rehearsal "was very useful in terms of creating some stuff for video purposes that can be used because it's starting to sow seeds of a narrative of tension and hopefully that tension will lead to some sort of conflict and drama". AN echoed this optimism describing the benefits of the rehearsal as, "We got the structure and everyone seems to be very excited about it in some ways and I think we understand it better". SM identified the purpose of the structure in advancing ownership of artistic processes saying, "we feel clearer about how each of us can have our character take charge and control of a bit and take ownership of a particular section in what's going to be the final thing so I feel excited about that and am looking forward to it". My entry gave a flavour of how each of us were becoming increasingly comfortable as dialectical beings,

> For me today was really good. I think both me and Fatima, both BloodWater and the PhD, both are progressing well and that makes me happy as both people, I am very confused these days. Today when Gavin walked in and I was walking around in my headscarf, I began to think Fatima is creeping up on me…

This was also the period when we set targets and confirmed the dates for our performance. I had meetings with the artistic directors of the Tron and the CCA to discuss the possibility of free venue hire. BWT artists had proposed an end of January date in 2014 for our performance as most of us would have flexibility with our subsistence employment during this time. I secured the CCA from the 29th – 31st of January 2014 for our technical/dress rehearsals and performances. BWT artists with the exception of PC, committed to these dates in principle but whether all of us would be able to perform live would be reviewed once we knew our subsistence work schedule for January 2014. With the performance date confirmed, I proposed that we do a full run of our performance for the focus group in November 2013. With *WSA* we went into the Tron not having had a full run and we were all keen not to repeat that situation. Inviting the focus group in November would not only give

us time to apply their feedback where appropriate but also provide us a deadline for a full run well before our performance on the 31st of January 2014. All BWT artists agreed to perform the work to the focus group on Saturday the 23rd of November 2013.

This particular period during the development of the second performance text was very fruitful in making good progress with the performance and the experiment. We developed a story and themes which could have meaning for an audience as well as facilitated collective ownership by developing the dialectic of individual/collective artistic vision. All three faces of DCT were operational. My meticulous documentation of rehearsals and our review of diary entry recordings empowered us with collective knowledge of the 'big picture' and the specifics within this which in turn gave us confidence to influence the overall artistic vision for our performance. We enjoyed taking singular responsibility for leading on the development of our characters but recognised that the quality of these characters could be enhanced with guidance from fellow BWT artists. We appreciated that we had to make time for leading on our characters, support each other in developing our respective characters and exercise collective responsibility for developing the artistic whole. We grew in confidence in making the work and reflecting on it in our dialectical status as self/character and for me this confidence extended to my artist/researcher status. As the structure of our operations became clearer, we became more confident about developing the process/product dialectic as we moved closer to making a performance for an audience. In addition to the support we gave each other we recognised that the focus group was important in supporting us in improving the quality of our work. While this was a very productive period, it was also the time when we failed to see the implications of JW and MS developing their stake in the performance in a different way to how SM, AN, GW and I were developing our stake which again was different to the way PC expressed his stake.

March 2013 – October 2013: Recognising and Missing the Dialectic

News, good news and sad news characterised this follow-on period of productive and fruitful work. JW proposed to his partner and would be getting married in November 2013, SM and GW were to become parents and GW discovered that his father was terminally ill. Perhaps this was the period when the opposition between BWT's public space of work and the private

life of home was at its most testing. We had to constantly reconstruct the public/private dialectic in order to create a work environment where the "daily life" experiences of joy, sadness, anxieties and pain were legitimated (Jameson 2010: 353). Everyone worked hard to develop the performance but it was clear that all our personal circumstances and the need to continue earning a wage while we developed the performance was taking a toll on all of us. Yet we all seemed determined to follow through with the making of our performance. We had become a community of artists in Joseph's (2002) sense of community as "locality" and an investment in this community was a necessary part of our daily living signifying BWT's "dialectical relation to the quotidian" (Read 1995: 2). The sense of community, evident during the creation of *WSA* as pointed out by DS in earlier diary entries, continued to grow during phase two of BWT's work (Appendix 8, 11 April 2011; 10 July 2011). During this testing phase, the blurring between a community space and professional one allowed us to believe that we could make quality work in a compassionate environment, where the challenges of daily living could be accommodated alongside expectations for quality aesthetics. During this phase I/we continued to recognise, name and work with the dialectic but also failed to do so in a particular context.

We continued to develop the performance text for the screen within the structure we had agreed on and began to develop the personal stories (or now what we were calling the fictional artists' journeys) in preparation for performing the work to the focus group on 23rd November 2013. We gained confidence in the potential of the screen to communicate to an audience the tensions experienced by the fictional artists during the residency and we seemed motivated to develop this journey for our fictional character. MS posed the video diary question, "How do we feel about the structure that is emerging?" (Appendix 8, 9 March 2013). GW in responding to MS's question summarised our understanding of how we were developing the performance text and at our relief at having found a viable way of doing this:

> … in short a lot more reassured…We have come up with a plan that it's going to take place over five days and it's going to keep the actual live show as the fifth day and the rest of it on video which will be interspersed with journeys from different characters and now I need to come up with some journey ideas for the next rehearsal and that is all I am thinking about now - yeah but reassured

I added that "in terms of owning structure and content, everybody seems to be having a growing stake in this work" and expressed reassurance about achieving the aims of my research alongside the aims of BWT.

However, in keeping with the fluctuations of the dialectic, this settled reassurance gave way to new concerns arising from the tensions between investing in collective big group tasks and individual/small group work within the time available in the big group monthly rehearsals. We shared responsibilities and tasks with each of us taking the lead in developing our fictional character's journey. In addition to this SM and MS led on developing the screen based narrative for the fictional residency and GW carried on with responsibility for continuity and implementing what was required in terms of costume and set when we filmed. JW and I worked on a prologue which would give the audience a context for the residency and we worked together on collating and editing scripts that were submitted to dropbox for review by all. In the light of JW's many roles including leading on publicity, AN volunteered to take over the management of the spreadsheet, coordinating everyone's availability. These strategies worked very well initially and we produced good quality work in the time available. However as the performance date approached, it became increasingly difficult to factor in everyone's suggestions for developing the narrative as a whole while making sure everyone kept abreast with how each other's work on their journeys was progressing, and to find time to discuss how the journeys would work within the overall narrative of the piece. Often we forgot to share the thinking behind what was being proposed for screen improvisations or the prologue which sometimes caused misunderstandings.

At the rehearsal on 8th April 2013 we discussed everyone's initial ideas for our fictional character's journey with AN joining us on skype. We decided to use resources from the social capital we had access to as well as from within BWT and to employ devising strategies which we were confident with to develop the section of the performance text we had to lead on. GW tested out his ideas during this rehearsal as he would not be able to join us for the big group rehearsal the following month. He had discussed with me beforehand his intention to use a scene from Anthony Neilson's, *The Wonderful World of Dissocia* to devise his fictional character's journey and I had secured the author's approval for this. He used Neilson's text as the subtext for improvisations in order to explore the world that Gordon

lived in with SM taking on new fictional roles within these improvisations. The responses to GW's video diary question, "In the light of seeing the beginning of Gordon's journey, how do you feel about constructing your own journey?" affirmed our growing confidence in making the work in multiple identities and in between identities (Appendix 8, 8 April 2013). SM said she was inspired by what GW did for Gordon's journey as it gave her ideas for Lucy's journey and excited her about how the creativity of the other artists in BWT could help her develop the performance text she would lead on. I believed the individual and the collective were coming together well and was heartened "to see how the group were using different skills to push [GW's] narrative, the best we can do for [Gordon's] story".

JW said something very interesting in his entry which none of us picked up on but it needed to be and discussed more fully out with the recording. This was the first time JW had been hot seated and perhaps the first opportunity for the rest of us to clarify his role within the fictional narrative and support him in developing his journey. In his entry he said, "Seeing one of the journeys come together today has made me feel more comfortable about the practice we are going through with our journey". However, the practice that JW was going through was quite different from the practice the rest of us were going through because we participated in the initial event of the residency in a named, fictional persona whereas JW retained his identity as JW in taking on the stage manager role in the fictional world we created. I noted in my journal that the objects that JW had brought in for the hot seating were deeply personal and inspired his ideas for a very moving story about his relationship with his real life grandmother. The ethics and aesthetics of this needed to be discussed but none of us followed up on this until after the interim performance to the focus group in November.

During the following big group rehearsal on 5 May 2013 some of these tensions between autobiography and fiction surfaced again and we yet again missed another opportunity to explore as a group how JW's autobiographically-led text could have space within the collective aesthetic. The stress of having limited time to make the work perhaps resulted in us not following up on JW's diary entry when he articulated how challenging it was for him to develop his story as he had not been present at the initial residence event. In response to AN's video diary question, "What do you as yourself think about the journey you are creating for your character?" he said,

I suppose for me because my character wasn't there at the beginning, I need to think how I can put things in which were not there naturally before - like all the other characters are lucky in such a way that there were little gems that were mentioned before like maybe a year ago didn't mean anything but now we can pick those little things and make something out of that whereas for me I need to be thinking about how my story fits in with all these characters that have had a previous production behind them. So mine just needs to fit in and make it seem like it has got its own place there, that it belongs there, that it doesn't stand out as something that has been added this time round.

Appendix 8, 5 May 2013

AN's question itself didn't accommodate JW's autobiographical approach to developing the performance text as there was little distinction between self and character in his devising process. While he adopted the persona of the Tron stage manager facilitating the requirements of the fictional artists, the story he was developing was autobiographical and would be told as JW. It was evident that JW owned this narrative but what we did not pick up on at the time was his powerlessness in contributing to the overall direction of the piece and his feeling that he needed to fit into what already existed. When I suggested the five day structure and the fictional artists' journeys within this, I was thinking about an efficient way of working which could lead to good quality work. The idea was inspired by the event of the first fictional residency which JW did not play a part in. While I was able to subvert Marx's concept of cooperation to advance themes of ownership for most of the BWT artists, this was not the case for JW. He did not have the "little gems" from the first fictional residency. He felt he needed to fit in with what was already there and we did not make time to address this early on. As the researcher, I did not apply theoretical readings to this situation which could have paved the way for a more thorough analysis and appropriate solutions. I/we had missed the opportunity to recognise the complexities of working with autobiography and fiction alongside each other in this context. I/we failed to apply dialectical thinking to explore how JW could have equal ownership of the artistic processes which we had developed from *WSA,* when he had not been involved in the initial construction of these processes. I/we had not recognised and named the dialectic in operation here and so missed the chance to explore solutions.

Nevertheless, for the artists who had been involved in the first fictional residency, I was able to propose a way of working which enabled personal material to be used in the security of developing fictional narratives. AN's diary entry on the same day evidenced this. She shared

that she did not understand why she was having great difficulty with developing this fictional journey and said that it was only when she recognised the similarities of this work to the work she had done with the Danish company, Cantabile 2, did she stop resisting the deeply personal dimension of what we were doing. Referring to her participation in *Venus Labyrinth* with Cantabile 2 and its relevance to BWT's work she said,

> …all these women came together and were telling their personal stories and I realised that this is a very similar process that even though we developed a character, each of our characters are also reflections of ourselves, bits of our own personality, our own character that is in this character so there is no way to avoid the fact of this journey being personal…that helped me to start thinking and opening up…

Although this rehearsal (5 May 2013) highlighted our lack of awareness of the difficult situation JW was in and our inability to address it at the time, it was also fruitful on many counts. AN was more assured about taking risks with her character's journey. SM began collaborating with MS on the development of her journey, I tested with the other BWT artists the script my husband had written for Fatima's journey, MS inducted us on the five day colour coded chart he produced which would keep us on track with achieving the outcomes for the screen narrative, and JW and I shared with the group the preliminary work we had done with the prologue. The artists affirmed the value of the tasks we were undertaking, particularly with MS's colour coded chart and our skeleton script for the prologue as they provided a basis for narrative coherence which in turn allowed us to refine or edit the script without losing a sense of the whole.

This period of activity where cooperation enabled productivity without any accompanying experiences of alienation continued for the next few rehearsals for most of us but perhaps regrettably not for JW (Face, A, B and C). While there were looming challenges to come with JW's autobiographical journey, he nevertheless contributed fully to the artistic vision for the performance as a whole with the script edits he did and his work on marketing BWT via the publicity shots he took and his maintenance of our website. We prioritised the filmed aspects of our production, including the prologue which was developing into a kind of slide show, so that there was narrative coherence which an audience would be able to make sense of and enjoy in some way. This period culminated in an extremely valuable rehearsal on 20 July 2013 despite the fact that AN didn't manage to attend. In the weeks before this rehearsal we had exchanged emails on possible titles for our performance with me suggesting, titles

like *Seven Subjects in Search of a Story*, *The Subject/the Story/the Storyteller…* and *The Story?/The Storyteller?* None of these were popular with the other artists but at our rehearsal on 20 July 2013 we came up with a title we were all happy with. Discussing possible titles collectively was fun. SM came up with a diatribe of ridiculous titles, JW proposed cheesy music to go with SM's suggested titles, MS offered a horror spin on all the proposed titles and GW was determined to ensure that I kept the academic side of things out of the title, that the title was not literal and that it reflected our creativity. It took time, we persevered and there was one point when someone mentioned shoes and I suggested, *Leave Your Shoes at the Door* (*LYSD*). It was a wonderful moment, a collective feeling of hitting something raw and deep about our work. AN later confirmed that she supported the title after which JW updated our website and began promoting *LYSD*.

Much was achieved at this rehearsal. We developed a clear overview of the content of the screen footage over the five days of the residency and how the live storytelling would intersect with it. We discussed what should happen on the fifth day and we came up with the idea of a recorded apology which Pritam would send to the fictional artists and perhaps also include some elements of the performance the artists had been working on during the fictional residency. MS and I volunteered to work with PC on filming the apology out with the big group rehearsal time. The work on the prologue was so enjoyable, filled with laughter and creativity with everyone having an equal stake in its creation. Everyone was very meticulous about what their characters would and would not say and it was great to see MS take responsibility for the prologue as a whole with all the relevant film clips he had sourced from *WSA* and how our new ideas would work within this. He also volunteered to work with AN on her sections of the prologue before the next rehearsal, follow up with her on the notes from this rehearsal in case it was not clear and give her the opportunity to feed into or challenge the ideas we were developing. This rehearsal was a wonderful experience of collaboration, cooperation and an enjoyment of ownership of process/product coming together. The video diary entry responses to SM's question, "How do you feel about today's rehearsal?" support the observations and analysis I noted in my journal (Appendix 8, 20 July 2013). SM and I acknowledged our disappointment about AN not being present at this fruitful, enjoyable rehearsal but we also shared our gratification with what was achieved and how it was achieved with SM saying,

Today has been lots of fun. It has been really useful in adding clarity to everything. The prologue has been a real team effort and we have been able to decide what is needed, what worked, what didn't for what was already down there, that was really beneficial and we all had input into that.

GW had not been able to attend the previous big group rehearsal and said he felt like he was "back in the loop" again as this session enabled him to make sense of the earlier documentation circulated and allowed him to contribute positively to the work. JW reminded us that we needed to commit to our "plan of action… so that next time we [could] get cracking and get on with the things we [needed] to do". There was a real sense of optimism about *LYSD* at the end of this rehearsal which was put to the test yet again at the following big group BWT rehearsal.

It was very difficult trying to organise a big group rehearsal over the summer and we only met once in a small group over this time. SM, JW and I worked together on juxtaposing SM's fictional narrative and JW's autobiographical narrative about their grandmothers and explored possibilities for staging this. We only met again with the full composite of BWT on 14th September 2013. So much needed to be done before we performed the work to the focus group on 23rd November 2013 and the over ambitious agenda for this rehearsal included reviewing the script for the prologue and its relationship to the five day structure for the screen narrative, refining the fictional journey stories, taking publicity shots and writing the text for the publicity (Appendix 16). I began to panic about the script not progressing sufficiently during the summer so undertook some solo work on the script for the prologue to fill in the gaps, based on ideas we had discussed in the previous rehearsals. I knew that my strengths did not lie in scriptwriting but was equally aware that we needed to finalise the prologue as soon as possible so that the five day screen narrative could be built from it. I thought that if everyone agreed to the script for the prologue, we could begin developing the different aspects of the performance based on a common understanding of the premise and structure. When we read the script for the prologue, some thought it was confusing as the relationship between *WSA* and *LYSD* was not clear and that the present show was being eclipsed by the past. My panic had undermined our collective approach to developing the narrative as a whole, which was time consuming but gave each of us a real sense of purpose and ownership of the script. The discussions on the prologue were heated and we had to leave the rehearsal room, go down to the café to clarify things and clear our heads over a cup

of tea. I was defensive at times about valuable feedback from the others in the collective perhaps because I was concerned about how long it would take to fix the issues but at the same time I was conscious of Berger's dialectical premise of collaboration, where the only rule is never to strike deals or compromise and to allow disagreements to motivate us to "accept that the solution is not right and carry on until it is right". We put Berger's premise into practice and fixed the prologue to everyone's satisfaction but it took a long time, some very difficult negotiations with a wide range of turbulent emotions experienced, some expressed and others not. As much as the process was exhausting and at times painful, I was inspired by how there was an eventual acceptance that the "solution [was] not right" and a commitment by everyone around the table to labour to find the solution, and in doing so we collectively owned the prologue. This rehearsal showed us that it was possible to have convictions and strive towards achieving equality in the collective. The question DS had raised in his earlier feedback on *Error of Comedy*, about the possibility of conviction and equality co-existing, had been answered.

In prioritising the collective ownership of the prologue, we took big group time away from the sections of the script which were led by our individual artistic visions but which also required input from other BWT artists. Thus a new tension arose, that of allocation of time for the collective sections of the script versus the allocation of time for the individually developed sections of the script. We spent a very short time discussing the script for JW's autobiographical journey and no time on any of the other fictional journeys. JW followed up on his concern about this in an e-mail to BWT on 17th September 2013 saying "a day well spent on the script but to think 1pm till 9 pm and no character time or even standing up". He shared that in theory it was a good idea to work with SM on bringing her fictional and his autobiographical journey together but practically there was no time to do this. These tensions during this rehearsal were further exacerbated yet again by the work I had done on the script during the summer. I had got in touch with all the artists during the summer asking them for the scripts for the respective journeys they were developing, but had not made it clear to them that I was going to set these in a provisional order, and that I would be circulating this working script at the rehearsal for discussion. In my haste in getting everything done in time for the rehearsal, I had copied and pasted JW's section of the script without realising that he was still developing it and had wanted to only share it with SM and me as we were working on it during the summer, before it was circulated to the larger group. There were some lines

in the script which should have been deleted before it was shared with the group and I only became aware of this during JW's video diary recording when he said,

> …I kind of realised today how close I am to it which is hard to digest because I wrote that as a piece and straight away there it is in the script. It's hard when you have written something that is close to you and all of a sudden it's there…

<div align="right">Appendix 8, 14 September 2014</div>

I was upset by my lack of sensitivity and my task orientated approach which resulted in this error. SM and AN supported both JW and me in dealing with this situation and I apologised to JW who accepted my apology. We chatted after the rehearsal checking whether JW was comfortable with his choice of going down the autobiographical route and he said he was committed to developing his journey through this approach.

As we were making this work in our personal time, we always made sure we gave each other advance notice about when we could not make rehearsals. JW shared that he may not be able to attend all the rehearsals leading up to the sharing of the work with the focus group as he would be getting married in November. We were delighted for him but worried at the same time about how we would make the work in his absence. There were so many challenges and competing demands at this rehearsal yet time had to be made for the publicity shots as we had asked PC to drop into the rehearsal because we thought it would be good to have the full composite of BWT for this. Considering the stresses of this rehearsal, it was gratifying to hear laughter as the publicity shots were being taken. I noticed JW working industriously away at this and I observed his sense of responsibility in representing BWT and its work professionally and accurately. MS did not want to be included in the publicity shots but was comfortable being included in the company photo. It was great when MS stepped in to take some of the photographs because it allowed JW the space to enjoy being in the photos without the responsibility of representation.

AN's video diary question, "How will we manage" reflected the worry of each BWT artist. AN captured the essence of everyone's response with her concern "I am worried we don't have much time… it needs time and I just realised there is not much time left". However our responses also reflected our collective desire to overcome the constraints of time through individual contributions we could make and new strategies which we could use to help us

manage our limited time (Appendix 8, 14 September 2013). We all referred to tightening up our plan of action and committing to the time we had pledged so that we all took collective responsibility for the completion of the work and also offered specific ways we could deal with time constraints. AN said that she would develop her fictional journey when she was back in London with the help of "two creative friends who work in the theatre in London" and present this work at the next big group rehearsal. This was her way of addressing the tensions arising from the time spent on individual and collective sections during big group rehearsals. We all suggested our own approaches to dealing with this. Both SM and JW reflected that we were worried because the work was beginning to show so much promise but our labour would not reach its full potential because of the lack of time. SM added that AN, GW and her "need to take a bit more ownership" of our processes so that it would free me, MS and JW up as we were undertaking a lot of tasks out with the rehearsal. I shared my hope that through this research we could find ways for creativity to thrive within the conditions of a capitalist-driven creative economy, adding that tough decisions will have to be made if we wanted to complete the work, but in making them we had "to respect that everybody has a life beyond this work". I acknowledged how difficult it was to create a performance like this with no funding. GW pointed out that while the emails contained a lot of useful information they "can be quite long and it's hard to keep track of everybody and where exactly everybody is". He suggested that we have a weekly conference call to address this.

Our video diary responses evidenced a commitment to redress a perhaps a lopsided sharing of responsibility at this stage. I had been facilitating ways of advancing equality and ownership within our processes by developing equality dialectically. However, at this point ownership and equality were perhaps not always exercised in relation to responsibility. This stressful rehearsal was necessary to renew the dialectical nature of equality we had been practicing in the past but had perhaps lost in the run up to the rehearsal on 14th September 2013. SM pointed this out and we all contributed to how this could be redressed with GW's suggestion of the weekly skype call taking root and giving us confidence that our artistic vision could continue to influence the choices for the whole performance and not only the sections we had individual responsibility for. At no other point during BWT's processes did we worry as much about the lack of time and it was clear from the diary entry responses that this was because we were getting closer to a product that we all valued. Unlike *WSA* (described as a work-in-progress with audiences able to attend for free, where value was determined

primarily in terms of ideas and processes of experimentation) *LYSD* was marketed as product which had features of our processes, with audiences given the opportunity to pay for their consumption of this different type of product, should they choose to do so. Our labour now not only had use value but potential exchange value as well and our worry came about because of our lack of experience in making work where use value and exchange value operated dialectically.

We were guided in developing ethical ways of working during these testing times by Ollman's definition of the quality/quantity dialectic (as a "relation between two temporally differentiated moments within the same process" (1993: 15)) and by Jameson's suggestion that this dialectic can be developed more constructively if time is identified with quantity and space with quality (2011: 111). I reminded everyone about my reasons for undertaking this research and their reasons for getting involved. Ownership of process was less important to PC than ownership of product and he redefined his involvement with BWT accordingly. But for the rest of us ownership of both process and product were important. As such quality (associated with the physical and metaphoric conditions of our working environment) and quantity (manifested in the time required for developing *LYSD)* were integral in determining the value of our labour power expressed through our investment in both process and product. Thus as long as product was not at the expense of process or vice versa, we would continue to perceive our labour power as having value. However, in order to achieve this we had to believe that the quality of our working environment (characterised by equality and the ownership of artistic processes) was commensurate to the quantity of our labour power (characterised by the time each of us could offer in developing *LYSD* for a ticketed audience). Revisiting the reasons for the research and each artist's involvement in the experiment was a timely reminder for all of us that while satisfying the audience with our performance of *LYSD* was important, satisfying ourselves as artists, having the opportunity to learn, explore and have a say were equally important. In short, reminding ourselves that "all work [can be] work-in-progress" and that there was value in retaining the work-in-progress ethos in our development of *LYSD* (Freeman 2010: 68).

The cycle continued with the taxing and demanding rehearsal of 14th September 2013, giving way to a more settled phase where we were confident we could make a good show. At the

end of the rehearsal on 29th September 2013 MS asked the video diary question, "Do you think there is an actual show here that an audience is going to be interested in?" with JW's response, "it feels like we are going in the right place and definitely going away today I know what I have to do to make sure that the performance is great" summing up the feeling of BWT artists at the time (Appendix 8, 29 September 2013). We believed the journeys we had developed and the staging of the fictional artists' rehearsal processes would be interesting for an audience.

It was also during this period of calm that I felt able to raise my interest in including the audience in some way during our performance of *LYSD*. I had been thinking about this a lot and had a few ideas but had not shared them because we already had our hands full during the past few rehearsals. While the primary aim of my research was to challenge hierarchical rehearsal processes, I also wanted to explore non-hierarchical relationships with an audience in venue based theatre by deconstructing Boal's "spect-actor", as developed in forum theatre. I was keen to challenge more common forms of audience participation like those used in pantomime or more recently, voting or accepting gifts as part of the contemporary theatre experience. I discussed with the other artists my idea of using the objects that our fictional characters had brought into the rehearsal room to stimulate a conversation with an audience, employing Heathcote's teacher in role techniques to help us do this. Initially some of the artists were resistant to this idea but all of us agreed we would try it during rehearsals and include it as part of our performance for the focus group and get feedback on it.

This period was largely characterised by the tensions which arose from the primary process/product dialectic and how working with these tensions of the three faces of DCT helped us overcome problems for the most part. As we moved closer to the performance date, the stresses arising from making quality work in the time we had tested our commitment to DCT. The first law of the dialectic helped us deal with the challenges we faced during this time because we were able to apply the quantity/quality dialectic in developing the process/product dialectic. Both process and product were perceived and developed as non-linear different moments within the creation of our performance where quantity was associated with exchange value/labour time and quality was associated with use value/ownership of artistic vision. As long as product was not developed at the expense of

process and vice-versa, and we continued to develop our performance premised on a dialectical relationship between both, our rights as artists were protected, and our use value (truth, equality and ownership artistic vision) grew, as we created our product (exchange value) which an audience might like to consume. The pressures of daily living while we developed our performance could have resulted in the polarisation of professional–community and public-private where we had to make a choice between our participation in BWT or reject BWT in order to be able to prioritise our personal circumstances. Instead such tensions were reconciled because use value had an entrenched place in BWT as we made work with potential exchange value. Thus preparations for marriage, parenthood and family illness were not negated but factored into the culture of our work ethic where professional practice was developed through a dialectical relationship to the quotidian. When I privileged product over process by scripting the prologue without fully consulting the others to save time, the other artists challenged me and in doing so gave use value its rightful place in determining how time should be spent within the process/product dialectic of our performance-making. Perhaps how we came up with the title for our performance and the title itself reflected how dialectical our collaborative processes had become in determining stake. When we hit on it, there was no discussion just a spontaneous acceptance, suggesting that use value for each of us was somehow reflected in *Leave Your Shoes at the Door*.

There were many positive outcomes during this period ranging from our growing confidence in exploring truths about ourselves through the safety of fiction as we developed our performance narrative to learning how to take collective responsibility for nurturing equality and ownership in BWT. However, it was also during this time we overlooked the fact that our applications of the dialectic of autobiography/fiction in developing our characters' stories were not appropriate for how JW was developing his autobiographical narrative. The individual/small group/big group rehearsal structure complemented by the leading/supporting dimension of our processes was working for most of us and we did not consider that these approaches perhaps did not work for JW who was constructing his performative identity from a different starting point.

November 2013 – January 2014: Persisting with the Dialectic

We worked industriously on our preparation for performing *LYSD* to the focus group on 23rd November 2013, aware that we would not be able to complete all aspects of it by then, but grateful that we had an opportunity to do a run before we entered the theatre space unlike our experience with *WSA*. At the end of our rehearsal on 16th November 2013 SM asked "What do you hope to get out of the feedback from the focus group?" (Appendix 8, 16 November 2013). All of us were keen to get feedback on the section where we use the objects to get a conversation going with an audience. AN said it would be valuable to test this as "the reactions from the audience might be unexpected" and SM added it would be useful to "rehearse some sort of interaction" with an audience. We also wanted to discover whether the performance as a whole, with its unconventional, unexpected elements alongside traditional storytelling techniques would be accessible to an audience. For SM it was important to have the opportunity to have a full run and "get a sense of the whole story" at this stage of our rehearsal process. GW was looking for "honesty" in the focus group's evaluation of our performance. SM had thought it worthwhile to pose this question and our sincerity in seeking honest feedback from the focus group was evident in all our responses.

The feedback from the focus group is discussed in the Chapter four but it's important to mention here that the focus group were divided on whether JW's autobiographical journey would work alongside the fictional journeys of the other artists. However, there seemed to be a consensus among the focus group that if a section of screen footage was removed from JW's staging of his journey, it would become unclear to an audience whether his story was fictional or autobiographical, making it more consistent with their readings of the other artists' journeys. JW took on board the feedback and the rest of BWT assured JW that he had the final say on the section of the work he had developed and that we would support his decision even if it contradicted the focus group. Following the focus group, JW and I met the CCA staff to discuss the technical, box office and publicity requirements for *LYSD* and afterwards we discussed the focus group's suggestion. JW said he would edit the footage referred to. While JW was positive and willing to accommodate the feedback, I felt that I and perhaps other BWT artists had let JW down because we had failed to recognise that JW was playing catch up with the processes we had developed before he joined BWT and we did not make sufficient time within our big group rehearsals to support him in the development of his

journey. Shortly after this JW let us know that his personal circumstances made it impossible for him to continue with *LYSD* and that he wanted to let us know as soon as possible so that we would still have time to make the necessary changes to accommodate his exclusion. JW had shared with the group some of these circumstances in the past and as much as we were very sorry to see him go, we understood and accepted his reasons for leaving the production.

We had many testing times and critical moments but on all of these occasions our persistence with the dialectic in empowering each of us to create a performance that had value to us personally, and possibly to an audience, fuelled our resilience. However, with JW's departure from *LYSD* I felt I had exhausted my resilience and that it was time to admit that we had taken the experiment as far as we could and that we should reconsider our decision to stage *LYSD* for a ticketed audience. My exhaustion had finally caught up with me, preventing further imaginings of the operation of my utopian ideals.

However, in keeping with the dialectic, my exhaustion paved the way for the renewed energy of the other BWT artists. The symbiotic relationship between pedagogy and ideology was fundamental to the practice of DCT. Over the three years of practising DCT, all BWT artists acquired capabilities in developing performance as dialectical beings, applying Althusser's dialectical possibilities for ideology whether or not we were aware of it at the time. Thus whatever utopia meant for each us, our personal engagement with our respective utopian impulses necessitated a belief that ideology was not only limited to our minds and our imagination but that it also had "material existence" and existed "in an apparatus, and its practice, or practices" (Althusser 1970). DCT was both BWT's pedagogical apparatus and practice and following on, each of us at BWT formulated and reformulated our respective constructions of dialectical ideology. On this occasion, exhaustion prevented me from operating as a dialectical being, leading me to believe that this experiment could only come to fruition in my imagination. However, at this point the persistence in the belief of the dialectical nature of ideology enabled the other BWT artists to have the stamina and confidence to follow through with the performance of *LYSD* in spite of JW's withdrawal.

This perhaps was the most significant finding of the experiment. While I had always struggled with my additional stake in the experiment because of the possible award of the PhD, I was ready to give up now because I believed I had pushed myself and the other BWT artists too far with this utopian project where I was in a way trying to replace "a capitalist mode of production with a radically different one" in the specific context of the experiment (Jameson 2010: 416). But the other BWT artists valued their own stake in performing *LYSD* irrespective of the PhD and believed that both the experiment and *LYSD* could come to fruition. This stake in the performance could only have come about because those wanting to continue with *LYSD* believed they owned it. MS, SM, AN and GW became the "true" materialists able to "push idealism to its limit" when they refused to give up when we had less than two months to rethink and re-rehearse aspects of the staging of *LYSD* while making time for our subsistence employment (Ruda in Žižek: 31). They believed we had enough time and I began to believe again.

SM contacted an artist friend Kirsty Bagan (KB) whom she knew would be available to perform at the CCA on the 31st of January 2014 and KB agreed to take on the performance role of JW. We discussed KB's role and recognised that her involvement would be both different from and similar to PC and JW. PC was not concerned with the ownership of artistic processes but was very much a part of BWT while JW, very much a part of BWT, wished to own the processes and products of BWT's labour but was not able to perform in *LYSD*. Thus like PC, KB would function like an actor who would be given a brief for a performance but unlike PC (and like JW) she could develop her own script for a particular section of the performance should she choose to do so. We invited KB to join BWT but her work took her out of Scotland for most of the year so she declined. She got involved because she welcomed the opportunity to perform at the CCA aware that there would be no remuneration. She made it clear to us that she would need support with developing her script and SM worked with her on this and we all helped with the direction of her fictional journey as we had done with each other in our respective journeys. We grew in confidence again about our ability to produce a show of value to us and an audience for the 31st of January 2014. Our time in the CCA theatre space and the performance of *LYSD* are discussed and analysed in the Chapter four.

The Second Lull (February 2014 – Present)

This period was/is characterised by BWT's reflections of *LYSD* and our hopes for the future of BWT. We are clear that BWT activity can only begin again once the thesis has been submitted. We acknowledge that BWT would not have materialised without the PhD but that there is a future for BWT independent of it. Researching practice will always be important to me but the starting point for the future work of BWT will no longer be driven by research questions explored through practice but rather by what we as BWT would collectively like to do together. The research paved the way for BWT to practice DCT and in doing so offered us a way of working which can be applied to future work should we choose to continue with this methodology. However, BWT has reached the stage of its "absolute recoil" and it's only through the negation of the PhD that BWT can regenerate itself and find new ways of seeing and doing, achievable only with the loss of the PhD (Žižek 2014: 148). MS had the presence of mind to record diary entries at the end of the performance of *LYSD*. An analysis of this, together with an analysis of the diary entries we recorded on the two occasions BWT met as a big group since the performance of *LYSD,* is undertaken below.

Pedagogy and Ownership

PC and JW attended the public performances of *LYSD*. Unfortunately JW left before the recordings took place and MS did not want to be recorded. No one asked any video diary questions so our entries were not in response to anything specific. Each artist shared their spontaneous thoughts in the immediate aftermath of the performance. Each of us attested to the value of our involvement and pointed to the future of BWT (Appendix 8, 31 January 2014),

> PC: It has been a fantastic process. I have enjoyed being part of it despite my not being there quite a lot. Watching these guys, I was very inspired. I had been working with them for a few years now and the feedback has been great … let's see where it takes BloodWater now …
>
> JR: … different people helping in the process not only of the show but the PhD as well. I hope we will find a way of seeing where we can go next and all of us continue with this creative impulse that we found in creating *Leave Your Shoes at the Door*…
>
> GW: I am exhausted. I don't know how, I don't know why because the amount of work Suzanne, Martin and Jo have put into it compared to me is astonishing. That said I still feel part of it. Very glad to have been involved, let's see what happens next

SM: I have absolutely loved doing the show, the first show I have done as a pregnant lady…I am really pleased with how it turned out … It has been such a good experience and I really hope that we can continue because this can't be it, it really can't

KB: I have enjoyed taking part with BloodWater Theatre. Thanks for having me and hopefully I can work with BloodWater Theatre again

AN: The show is good because the creative process allowed us to do different things that we normally don't have a chance to do like for example I did a bit of writing for my character – I am very unsure about writing in general so it kind of helped me build that confidence as well as helping others to direct, working together and challenging each other, trying not to do it in a bad way as well… It has been hard to put together … like thinking about months ago where we were, what we actually managed to pull off…

DCT is synonymous with the performance pedagogy developed by BWT and it was this opportunity to learn which sustained our unremunerated labour. Our enjoyment of the process was born out of our love for learning. Even PC who could not be involved to the same extent, identified his learning as a valuable benefit of his involvement. For me the benefits materialised not only in terms of what I learnt as a performer but the knowledge I gained from the practice of DCT which I can now share with others through my research. For SM the unique experience of performing a show while she was pregnant will always be an important part of her life. For AN, it was an opportunity to develop confidence in areas of performance she did not have experience in like scriptwriting and directing. She pointed out that in our working together we had challenged each other "trying not to do it in a bad way as well" suggesting that this way of working was not common. She echoed all of us when she said how difficult it had been for all of us to create *LYSD*. However most of us felt that the difficulties had not affected the quality of the show with PC saying that the "feedback has been great".

The audience feedback is discussed in the following chapter but it's important to note here the sense of achievement each of us felt in producing *LYSD* collectively. PC chose to opt out of developing the live sections of the work so it was particularly significant when he said, "watching these guys, I was very inspired". Perhaps he did not think it was possible to create a performance in this way and dormant utopian impulses within him were reignited through watching us. For BWT equality did not mean equal stage time or equal input into the work in determining ownership but rather how each of us chose to define our stake in developing the

performance collectively. Thus GW believed that SM, MS and I had contributed more to the process but qualified "that said I still feel part of it" and PC said he "enjoyed being part of it despite my not being there quite a lot". This was indeed an extraordinary way of working where each of us could determine our level of contribution which could vary over time but through the operation of our utopian ideals, which may have differed amongst us, we were able to produce *LYSD* for an audience. All of us involved with *LYSD* would like BWT to continue beyond the research experiment with KB (who had joined us for this production) assuming that we would carry on and that she might be able to work with us again in the future. It is clear that the learning opportunities, and the way ownership has been developed within our processes, have been valuable to us as artists and perhaps this is why in the immediate aftermath of the show, no one could imagine not working together again.

Sadly GW's father passed away the day after the performance of *LYSD*. He said he was comforted by the affection, solidarity and support fellow BWT artists had shown him during rehearsals and in the Group Me chat. GW had contributed to the making of *LYSD* not only as he worked for his daily subsistence but also while he spent time with his dad at the hospice every day. We learned much from GW's relationship to theatre and daily living even in these exceptional circumstances and this made us aware that we too had experienced theatre's "dialectical relation to the quotidian" and that BWT was indeed a special theatre collective (Read 1995: 2).

Personal and Professional Community

We met at my home on 29th November 2014, enjoyed food and each other's company (Appendix 8). AN was not able to join us physically or virtually, SM and JW skyped in at different times during our gathering. It had been ten months since we had met up and in this time GW, SM and JW had become parents. Enough time had passed to determine if our video diary responses recorded immediately after the show were still valid, or whether there would be changes or qualifications to what we said back then. I posed two questions, "What impact has BloodWater Theatre had on your life? What now for BloodWater? It was evident from our previous entries that we had all enjoyed the process but now it also became clear that the community we had built was integral to our processes. GW said that through BWT we had "forged a real community of people", echoed by SM who said that "the bonds that have been formed with BloodWater have been really strong" and JW who described BWT as a "really tight group… a big community where we can all rely on each other because we all

have a different skillset". For MS the sense of belonging was important and he "really, really enjoyed being a part of the group". Our private and professional lives had intersected over time. There were many examples of this but on this occasion it was evidenced through my invitation to the artists to my home not to work but for a celebration and GW letting us know about MS's generosity with his time and talent in filming/editing his and his partner's wedding. As we had had a long period of reflection since our diary entries after *LYSD*, we seemed clearer about the impact of BWT in our personal and professional life. GW said he had developed confidence with experimentation and felt able to "air [his] voice" which he could take "into the wider profession". SM shared that she found hierarchical production very troubling, particularly when she had worked in television in the past, but through BWT she had developed confidence with a different way of working and wanted to develop this "creative space" out with BWT as well. PC said his involvement had helped his professional development as an actor unashamedly admitting that he had "sponged off" BWT, adding that he was thankful for "the creativity and the lessons learned" and thanking MS in particular for producing an updated showreel for him. I shared my joy about discovering possibilities for collaborating on artistic vision acknowledging that BWT had benefitted my teaching "immensely" and I was "getting my students to negotiate hierarchies within their projects". This was only the second time that MS spoke to camera and it was significant that he mentioned how BWT had helped him challenge his shyness and his quietness. He found his involvement "really beneficial to growing as a person" motivating him to make videos and he said that it had "inspired the creative impulse" within him. JW, while acknowledging the value of the community approach to the work of BWT, did not articulate any direct benefit of BWT to his personal or professional life but for the rest of us it was clear from our responses that BWT impacted our personal and professional lives positively.

Our response to "What now for BloodWater" was more considered and less emotive than after the performance of *LYSD*. We had been clear, and continued to be so, about how we would not embark on any new project until the thesis had been submitted. However it was interesting to note that we were all beginning to have different ideas on the future of BWT. This pleased me as the work was moving on from its origins. I was reassured of the positive impact of this research when GW said that his involvement in BWT initially "was to help out a pal, that's not what it is now" and when SM suggested that someone else in BWT should propose an idea which we could collaborate on instead of the PhD being the starting point.

For MS, SM and JW the future of BWT lay in creating some sort of product/performance together again. For PC and me we made clear our continued involvement with BWT but did not specify how we saw BWT developing once the thesis had been submitted.

I was/am drawn to GW's approach to our future,

> I think we just need to assess what we want to do rather than what we want to create. Rather than trying to say, well that's the end or this is definitely something that is starting, something you continue until you actually know what the driving force behind it is… but I think that whatever happens, we will still continue to meet up … I think we will certainly stay in touch and be friends and from that we will create something.

The distinction GW makes between "do" and "create" is an interesting one because it suggests that it is only in the process of being which has no beginning or end, will we discover whether we would like to create something or not. Through DCT, BWT challenged the increasingly utility driven agendas of contemporary collaborative theatre practice and we found our unique place between "packaged commodification" and the "chaos of politicised performance" (Govan's et al 2007: 193). However, in achieving this we had to negotiate our time to make provision for our subsistence employment, our leisure and the work of BWT. Through these negotiations we discovered that the only way we could produce performance was by investing small amounts of our labour over a prolonged period of time, unlike commodified collaborative theatre production where performances are generally created through short, intensive rehearsal periods. GW's suggestion of not identifying a starting point and not having an end in sight when we go into the next stage of BWT's existence takes further the DCT model we developed by allowing us the space and time to redefine the quality/quantity dialectic in working with and against capitalist theatre production. He suggested continuing, staying in touch and being friends and in doing so we will discover "what the driving force behind" this is and "from that we will create something". Implicit in what GW is saying is that we would need to rediscover the purpose of BWT in the absence of the PhD and this process would take time and should not be rushed.

<u>Disentangling Origins</u>

Eleven months later and a year and seven months after our performance of *LYSD*, I invited BWT round to my home again to assess if interest in BWT was waning with the passing of time. JW was not able to join us. I shared with the group that I intended to submit my thesis in 2017 and asked the question, "On completion, of my PhD is there a future for BloodWater and if so what is it?" (Appendix 8, 18 October 2015)

> PC: I am surrounded and am being influenced by everybody. I think there has to be a future. Why let it die? Maybe there is scope for something there. Maybe we can develop and have sessions together. I know it's always hard to tie down times but it has helped me immensely

> AN: I definitely think it will be a shame if we decided we can't do it anymore or we didn't have time even if it's just a kind of collaboration for the social aspect of it or to support each other would be very nice. If it's something bigger, we will all have to agree on that - that would be nice

> GW: It's hard to say goodbye to the group as a collective. I don't think that will happen….No option to stop unless the majority of people want it to. I hope it doesn't

> SM: It's good to see everyone again. I feel a connection with everyone. It's strange even though we have not really been together for so long yet it's like we all have this connection from what we have done together in the past. I think any kind of way we can continue would be really worthwhile and I think I would really like for us to do something together again

> JR: I think we are a community of artists and it doesn't necessarily have to result in a product or a commodity but I think how we find what we are and what we would like to do might be better answered when the PhD is over

> MS: It was great working with all of you on the last show. It has been really nice doing it and I would hope that we do something again. I think it's going to be difficult with people's work, children, the whole bit but any help that each of us can give the other is automatic and it would be grand if we did something else.

The process of disentangling BWT from the PhD had begun and I am confident BWT will continue in some shape or form after the submission of the thesis. The collective desires this. DCT has become pedagogy that we are all well versed in and each of us in our own way will navigate through the intellectual and embodied knowledge gained from it as we practice our art in the context of BWT or out with.

Summary

The labour processes of BWT was described, discussed and analysed with a view to assessing to what extent DCT methodology had been successful in developing ownership in the collaborative theatre practice of our collective. The planning, observations, rehearsals, meetings and video diary entries pertinent to the creation of *WSA* and *LYSD* were documented in chronological order. An analysis of the place of DCT within these activities and its relationship to ownership was undertaken. From this chronological approach a natural cycle of inquiry arose with the cycle of 'beginning', 'development of the performance text' and 'lull' repeated, allowing for new knowledge to emerge from this iterative and cyclical mode of inquiry. The assessment of the labour processes of BWT's collaborative practice revealed the successful operation of the three faces of DCT in developing the collective ownership of artistic vision for our performances and BWT itself. Initially Face B and C dominated the practice of DCT but as we moved closer towards the Tron performance and during the creation of *LYSD* all three faces of DCT were fully operational leading us in using DCT methodology in its fullest form to solve the problems that we encountered. Using the iterative cycle as the focal point the key features of BWT's practice and my analysis of DCT are summarised below.

<u>Beginnings</u>

The first beginning was characterised by the formation of the collective and the sharing of practice. Face A and B of DCT were operational from the outset of the formation of the collective because the artists' reasons for forming the collective were not only related to the processes we could develop to explore the research question of collective ownership but had also to do with the opportunity to showcase a small scale performance product at the Tron Theatre. I recognised that I had secured the Tron prior to inviting the artists as I was using the process/product dialect to make the project attractive for the artists. As I did not have funds to hire a performance space, I worked with the dialectic of economic/social capital to secure the Tron venue with a view to using our performance there as a pitch to get funds for the development of our follow-on work. The operation of Face B and C of DCT was also evident when I raised the question of the ownership of the thesis at the outset. The artists concurred that while they were integral to the experiment, they believed it would be unethical to own the thesis. They advocated an unequal ownership of the thesis where authorship was

attributed to me but their contributions acknowledged in the thesis in terms of their equal and collective ownership of BWT's practice. Face C was operational through our discussions on my MA project *The Error of Comedy* and the workshops we led so that the aesthetics of our practice could be shared with the collective. This sharing of practice stage was critical in providing us with agency to influence the overall artistic vision for the creation of *WSA*. In this early phase of our work, DCT (Face B and Face C), made us aware of how the tensions of leader/participant, individual/collective artistic impulse, present/past, tight/loose workshop plans, autobiography/fiction and ethics/aesthetics could be nurtured to advance the collective ownership of our collaborative practice.

The second beginning was defined by both the failure to secure funding and BWT's success in deepening our commitment to develop performative identity through DCT. The failure to secure funds was critical as the experiment could have ceased because of this. The project had been described to BWT artists as a two stage project where stage one was unfunded and stage two, funded. In continuing with the experiment in spite of not being remunerated, the relationship between DCT, the BWT collective, the performance and the PhD in advancing collective ownership, became clear. BWT artists did not see the failure to secure funds as my individual failure but a collective failure which we could all own. Economic capital was no longer a pre-requisite condition for producing the follow-on work, subverting the premise of the first beginning. BWT owned the characters that they had created in *WSA* and welcomed the opportunity to develop these characters further. While BWT artists made clear at the outset that they had no desire to own the thesis, their investment in the research and their support for me achieving the PhD were unequivocal in the second beginning.

Development of Performance Texts

The iteration of the development of the performance text expressed through *LYSD* enabled me/BWT to refine DCT thinking, methodology and practice introduced during the development of the performance text expressed through *WSA*. While the three faces of DCT operated in the creation of the performance texts for both *WSA* and *LYSD*, Face B and Face C were more dominant in developing ownership during the creation of *WSA* whereas Face A, Face B and Face C cooperated with each other consistently in developing ownership during

the creation of *LYSD*. This was perhaps because *WSA* was conceived as a work in progress and *LYSD* conceived as a finished product. However, *WSA* was also a pitch used to attract funding for future product development and *LYSD* while labelled as a finished product could also be considered work in progress because of the raw, unconventional aesthetics developed for a conventional theatre space. For both shows BWT artists entered into a dialectical relationship, taking risks with how we explored individual/collective aesthetics. In reductive terms, *WSA* was process focussed with value limited to use value and audiences not having to pay to consume it. *LYSD* was product focussed with value limited to potential exchange value and audiences invited to pay to consume it. However, it is also true to say that the tensions of the process/product dialectic materialised in the creation of both *WSA* and *LYSD* but more so with *LYSD* where the cooperation of the three faces of the dialectic resolved the tensions of product/process born out of the capital/cooperation dialectic of economy. In short, the process/product dialectic is at the heart of DCT and when DCT is operating at its optimum, Face A, Face B and Face C cooperate fully in advancing ownership in collaborative theatre practice. Below is a summary of the mostly successful practice of DCT in advancing ownership during the development of the two performance texts.

In order to break down inherited or perceived norms of hierarchical production, I functioned as the facilitator of equality in BWT where I worked primarily with the second law of the dialectic (the law of the interpenetration of opposites) particularly with developing Face B and Face C of DCT in order to empower each of us in the collective with artistic agency. Artistic vision was identified as the central determiner of ownership in collaborative theatre practice but my fellow collaborators, not comfortable with taking responsibility for artistic vision, initially looked to me to provide leadership on this, thereby undermining collective ownership. As the facilitator of equality and the researcher, I was able to develop the concept of the primary dialectic of capital/cooperation analogous with the product/process dialectic through my intellectual interrogation of relevant theories and related concepts which I then tested out in practice during rehearsals with a view to nurturing equal relationships. By engaging with the theories of Jameson, Badiou and Heathcote, I was able to deconstruct identity in the rehearsal room and succeeded in realigning power relations. Jameson's analysis of Adorno's dialectic of identity/non-identity was used to challenge BWT to deny our egos in their function as "defence mechanism" in favour of our egos being used as an "instrument of praxis" (Jameson 2007: 17). Using this central idea of dialectical identity, I

developed Badiou's event as part of our rehearsals so that previous status quos tied in with possible defensive egos could be freed through the construction of alter egos, far enough from who we are but also undeniably close to the essence of our being. In the fictional world of a theatre residency, I employed Heathcote's role-play techniques of the mantle of the expert to legitimate each artist's place in the collective. Making performance in our status as dialectical beings became necessary for our practice of DCT as it paved the way for equal artistic relationships in the rehearsal room enabling each artist to contribute to the artistic vision of our performance via a method they/we felt we could work with. During the *WSA* phase all of us were comfortable in participating in the event of the fictional residency but at this stage the mantle of our expertise had yet to be passed on equitably. This practice was refined during the creation of *LYSD*. The diary entries for both periods attest to the collective ownership of artistic vision and artistic processes. This can be attributed to the operation of the dialectical self in realigning hierarchical relationships of the past and my initial function as the facilitator of equality (which others took on during the development of *LYSD*) in creating the conditions for this.

The dialectical self and the facilitation of equality were not in themselves sufficient to ensure equality and the collective ownership of artistic vision. Idealism and ideology played a significant role in uniting idealist/materialist tensions. As a collective we had to believe in the ideal of equality so that we could persist with DCT, when the material odds as evidenced in the field of collaborative practice, were against it. We committed to a non-hierarchical devising process in spite of the fact that most of us found it challenging, particularly during the creation of *WSA*, because we believed in the ideal of equality. We collectively became schooled in non-hierarchical devising during *WSA* which then enabled us to become confident in using these processes during the creation of *LYSD*. When my idealism waned and I suggested that the material conditions of JW not being able to perform in *LYSD* no longer made it possible for us to rethink and re-rehearse sections of *LYSD* in the time we had, the idealism of others in BWT enabled us to persist with the dialectic in reconciling idealist/materialist tensions which in turn brought about practical solutions.

Ethical considerations were important in our constructions of equality. Just like the issue of the ownership of the thesis, equality did not mean an equal and identical contribution to

labour power in determining stake. Our contribution to the labour process was dependant on our personal circumstances and our subsistence employment. We collectively agreed that equality/inequality had to be developed dialectically in determining collective stake ethically. These constructions were thorough during the development of both performance texts. In the development of *WSA* how we were going to create became clear to us but it took time to establish what we wanted to create. This arose perhaps because we were not confident about what artistic vision meant to each of us even after the sharing of the practice stage. However as we engaged more fully with the event of the fictional theatre residency it became clear to us that truth about self and embodying truth in performance alongside ethics and aesthetics were all essential to our definition of artistic vision. Thus our ownership of artistic vision materialised more fully and more coherently during the development of the performance text for *LYSD* when we became braver about developing our performance in spaces between autobiography and fiction where both could dwell dialectically. We discovered ways of working with ethics/aesthetics in bringing together real and fictional worlds, mindful of the ethical implications of working in the blurred space between autobiography and fiction. By working with ethics and aesthetics dialectically, we were able to create a performance that had meaning for us individually and collectively but at the same time were able to critique each other's aesthetics by analysing the ethics of these aesthetics and vice-versa. Through these means we came to own the collective aesthetics of our performance because of our investment in ethics throughout the creative processes. The one exception to this was when we neglected to invest in supporting JW in exploring the ethics of the aesthetics of the wholly autobiographical narrative he was developing, different from the dialectical approach the rest of us were using to develop real/fictional performative identity. Nevertheless the pedagogy of DCT (Face C) premised on the fusion of idealism with rehearsal methodology where constructions of equality and artistic vision (truth, aesthetics, ethics) were explored through the practice of numerous dialectical formulations developed to address the tensions that arose within the labour process (Face B of DCT), was mostly successful in advancing ownership in BWT's collaborative theatre practice.

The first law of the dialectic (the law of the transformation of quantity into quality and *vice versa*) was instrumental in how I was able to challenge Marx's assumption that only capital and not property can be valorised. By working with the primary dialectic of capital/cooperation; product/process we discovered ways of multiplying our labour through

how we developed the role of facilitator/leader and how addressed time dialectically within our processes (Face, A B and C). Initially the lavender process had led me to reject the role of director in developing non-hierarchical collaboration. However, the sharing of practice stage and my initial leadership in navigating artistic ownership through the aesthetic strategies we experimented with revealed the importance of leadership in promoting equality. My role of facilitator of equality particularly for the creation of *WSA* was integral as most BWT artists did not have much experience in non-hierarchical production but this role was shared by others during the creation of *LYSD*. Thus the role of facilitator of equality had a place in our processes from the outset but the role of leader emerged because of the need for leadership as we developed the performance texts. Diary entries reveal how BWT artists gained confidence in leadership during the sharing of practice stage and how they supported my initial leadership which they felt was necessary as they did not have sufficient knowledge and practice of non-hierarchical collaboration but intended to get this experience during the creation of *WSA*. Thus integral to Face B and C of DCT was the employment of the dialectic of facilitator/leader in developing ownership of our collaborative processes which we began during the creation of *WSA* and refined during the creation of *LYSD*. Leadership was about the ideas we brought into the rehearsal and we took turns to do this. Facilitation was about how we developed strategies for the collective ownership of these ideas. Whether it was AN leading on the ideas for the filming of *The Comedy of Errors* or JW leading on publicity, leaders had to facilitate pedagogy which facilitated collective ownership. During the creation of *WSA* we were not able to hone this practice which resulted in clashes between quantity and quality which we could not resolve as there was a lack of clarity on who was responsible for what. We went into the Tron not fully clear about the performance narrative and how our labour could be optimised to enhance the quality of *WSA*. These challenges were compounded by how we had yet to develop ways where time could be used more productively if we worked with time dialectically.

During the creation of *LYSD* we refined our practice of leader/facilitator and addressed time dialectically which paved the way for the union of the tensions of quantity/quality dialectic which in turn valorised our labour resulting in enhanced quality for use value and exchange value. The three faces of the dialectic were working at its optimum. Each of us took responsibility for leading on a narrative for the character we invented but we collectively facilitated the singular artistic vision for the characters we owned. All of us took collective

responsibility for the narrative as a whole (the story of the fictional residency) by group/pair/individual scripting, collective rewriting and editing, collective reviewing of film edits with agreed recommendations, taking turns to direct and rehearsing solo/in small groups/with the full ensemble. We all had specific responsibilities for publicity, documentation, film editing, continuity and liaising with the venue. We worked dialectically with the specialist/generic skills with no ranking to these skills, viewing each skill as equally important to the development of the whole performance. In a sense we were working with capitalism's divisions of labour as our productivity increased through these means but in another sense these divisions valorised our property i.e. our labour but this valorisation was not for profit but the efficiencies arising from it allowed us to optimise the limited time we had to create our performance.   We were able to make a quality product in the time that we had which had use value to us as artists and exchange value for an audience. The divisions of labour facilitated the collective ownership of the processes used to create *LYSD* because of how we developed the dialectic of facilitator/leader.

This way of working led us to innovations in how we could maximise our employment of time in what we had come to accept as our dialectical status of amateur/professional (discussed more fully in the following chapter). We were professional artists who made shows as BWT but were not remunerated for our labour power so had to seek subsistence employment elsewhere and this had to be factored into how time was managed within BWT. The seven month rehearsal period was too short to create *WSA* in our professional/amateur status where subsistence employment had to be factored in. We learnt from this and created *LYSD* over fifteen months. When PC wanted to give more time to his subsistence employment, we found ways of how his presence in the live performance could be represented on the screen thereby limiting his rehearsal time with BWT as he chose not to contribute to the live aspects of *LYSD*. Through addressing time dialectically in terms of private/public, personal/professional, individual/small group/big group, face-to-face/virtual and stage/screen we were able to make quality work in our amateur/professional status. This way of working with time enabled the valorisation of our labour power as we rejected the "ideological projection of capitalism" which promoted the divide between the public space of work and the private life of home. Instead we united the tensions of public/private by locating BWT within the broader "category of daily life" (Jameson (2010: 353). In guarding against the reification of our labour power we assessed the use value to us as artists by

weighing the quantity of our labour expressed through the time spent on creation against the quality of our labour expressed through the conditions of our working environment. We worked with the transformation of quantity into quality and vice-versa in how we addressed time dialectically as we developed *LYSD*.

Finally, I established that the conflicting roles of artist and researcher could be united in their opposition to the benefit of BWT and the research. DCT would not have materialised without a full investment in my dialectical status of artist/researcher.

Lulls

The two periods of lull could not be more different. The lull after the performance of *WSA* and before the creation of *LYSD* was defined by the condition of securing funds for the development of *LYSD*. Whereas the present lull BWT is in is defined by the condition of submitting the thesis before BWT artists can collaborate again. The first lull ended when we abandoned our condition for funds to make a performance that could enter the exchange relations of capitalism in a small way which resulted in a sold-out evening performance of *LYSD* with a waiting list for returns, and a nearly sold-out matinee on the same day. The diary entries attest to the fact that each of us felt we owned the processes of creation for *LYSD*. The collective ownership of the failure to secure funds led to our practice of DCT where we developed a dialectical relationship with use value and exchange value in producing *LYSD* which had value to us and to an audience. However, in the present lull, the principles of DCT challenge us to no longer rely on the PhD to be the driver of non-hierarchical collaborative performance production. Accordingly the condition for the submission of the thesis prior to any future collaboration still stands. This lull is characterised by BWT's "absolute recoil" and it is only through the loss of the PhD that BWT can regenerate itself to rediscover meanings for equality, truth and collective ownership of artistic vision out with the initial driver (Žižek 2014: 148). In both the periods of lull the knowledge gained from professional practice, the solidarity of BWT as a community of artists and the intention to continue working together in the future are articulated in the video diary entries. Theatre's "dialectical relation to the quotidian" is implied in all our reflections (Read 1995: 2).

DCT was introduced, developed, tested, practised, analysed and refined through the iterative cycles of beginnings, development of performance texts and lulls. DCT fuelled by the three laws of the dialectic was expressed through its three faces (commodity, means of production and pedagogy) where BWT discovered ways of addressing the tensions of the process/product dialectic. The interplay of the three faces of DCT resulted in the collective ownership of the collaborative aesthetic processes of BWT's labour power which in turn facilitated the collective ownership of *WSA* and *LYSD*.

Chapter 4: Capital, Commodity and BloodWater Theatre

This chapter advances Marx's postulation of the duality of labour power, in terms of labour's simultaneous function as a means of production and a commodity discussed in the introduction of the thesis and developed in Chapter three from the perspective of how BTW made our performance. Here it is analysed from the perspective of BWT's labour and our performances as commodities. Chapter three interrogated capital through the lens of cooperation (analogous with collaborative theatre-making processes), exploring how DCT empowered BWT to own artistic vision and enabled us to have a stake in *WSA* and *LYSD*. The processes of DCT were analysed in terms of concrete labour and use value. In this chapter capital is discussed from the commodity angle of BWT's labour power which resulted in the performance products of *WSA* and *LYSD*. Forms of capital (economic and social) and the aesthetics of commodified performance are examined to advance the argument for DCT facilitating BWT's ownership of the products of our labour power in the context of unremunerated labour and our varied contributions to developing *WSA* and *LYSD*. I analyse the intention to create performance products, the negotiation of our ownership of these products, and I consider abstract labour and exchange value. Full recordings of the performances of *WSA* and *LYSD* are documented in Appendix 11b and 11d.

While it is possible to analyse the ownership of our labour power and the ownership of *WSA* and *LYSD* through the lens of commodity alone, full analysis of BWT's ownership of artistic processes and products is only possible when the use value of BWT's labour process is considered alongside the exchange value of our labour power. Thus this chapter progresses the argument for ownership from the previous chapter through the commodity focus in the first instance but then develops and concludes the argument through uniting the tensions of the primary capital/cooperation; process/product dialectic. Following on, the three faces of DCT work in tandem with each other when capital (expressed through commodity) is given an equal place to cooperation (expressed through collaboration). As such the practice of DCT is discussed holistically in this chapter because Face B (means of production) and Face C (pedagogy) serve to unite the tensions of Face A (commodity) through interrogations of the primary dialectic (process/product). Much in the vein of the first law of the dialectic (transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa) which in itself is related to the other two laws of the dialectic (interpenetration of opposites and the negation of the negation), the

transformation of process into product and vice-versa takes place. Rosser Jr describes the third law of the dialectic as a union of the first and second laws which results in a "dynamic formulation" (2000: 314). DCT in its fullest form is as a holistic concept and practice where the contradictions of product/process and pedagogies to interrogate this primary dialectic are brought together, along with the unification of the three laws of dialectic, born out of the central idea of dialectical materialism and feeding the praxis of DCT.

Exchange value is divorced from any gratification gained from work in itself as it does not include use value. It arises when commodities enter into the economic sphere of circulation. In this sphere the owners of the means of production are able to make monetary profit because workers produce "object[s] of consumption" which exceed their subsistence requirements, thereby allowing the capitalist to generate surplus value (Marx 1990: 128). The experiment develops Marx's theory of the dual function of labour power and takes further the argument made in the previous chapter that not only money/capital can be valorised but labour power can be valorised too. In this chapter, the argument is developed from BWT's practice of frequently interrogating socially necessary labour time as we made our performances. In using the property of our collective labour power to enable us to own capital (as materialised in *WSA* and *LYSD)* we afforded ourselves the opportunity to sell BWT products in the future or use the capabilities derived from our practice to enhance the commodity value of our labour power in the wider performance industry.

Four of Kershaw's five minimum constituents of PaR: aesthetics, location, transmissions and key issues are discussed where relevant in this chapter to aid in the analysis of economic and social capital and of BWT artists/audiences' taste and judgement. The chapter concludes by bringing together the "troublesome contradictions" of the process/product dialectic of BWT's work by discussing the judgements made by BWT artists, the focus group I convened and the audiences for *WSA* and *LYSD* in the context of the primary capital/cooperation dialectic. The place of ownership in collaborative theatre practice is analysed within this scope (Kershaw 2011b: 64).

Economic Capital

The initial research project was based on a conventional economic capital model for cultural production – source a group of theatre artists to experiment with ideas so that these can be pitched to potential funders in the hope that monetary finance could be secured for the resources required to develop these ideas into a full length ticketed show. While the ideas and the way they were developed were not conventional, my original theatre production model complied with the norms of capitalist economy where ideas are pitched to attract investors for product development. It was only when I/we began to work dialectically with notions of economic capital that it became clear to me/us how we could protect our labour rights and own the products of our labour power beyond our ownership of artistic processes.

<u>Funding</u>

From the start our artistic collaborative processes went against the grain of common-place utility-led collaboration. However, the funding model did not evolve from a conventional capitalist-led one into an unconventional dialectically driven one, until after the performance of *WSA* and during the period where I tried to secure funds for the production of *LYSD*. *WSA* was publicised as a "developing project" inviting "Theatre-Makers, Funders and Audience" to "catch the nascent stage of this pioneering work" where assumptions of how theatre is made would be challenged (Appendix 17). The attendance of funders was vital in seeking their funds for the development of the full length follow-on show. The invitations sent to potential funders, a selection of responses from them and an example of how I tried to follow up on funding opportunities are documented in Appendix 18. The invitation letter describes *WSA* as a "Practice-based Research Pitch" which uses "egalitarian modes of theatre production" hoping to attract "investors from both the creative industries and research communities" (Appendix 17). I invited key leaders from Creative Scotland, The National Theatre of Scotland, venue-based theatres in Scotland (including the Tron, the Traverse, and the CCA), trusts and foundations (including Leverhulme, Carnegie, Hunter and the Royal Society of Edinburgh). I invited arts managers from Glasgow Life (the arts and sports arm of Glasgow City Council) and representatives from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). Many did not reply and those who did mostly sent their apologies.

The replies from Creative Scotland were varied. The Chief Executive couldn't attend because of another engagement and neither could the Portfolio Partnership Manager because "workload commitments [didn't] allow for this kind of involvement". The Director of Creative Development replied that even if she could attend she "would not be able to consider this as part of [Creative Scotland's] investment process" as all potential applicants needed to be treated in the same way. This response troubled me for two reasons. Firstly, the work of both emerging and established artists is 'out there' in the cultural domain in some shape or form so it is impossible to treat all potential applicants in the same way because of this prior knowledge. Secondly, similar to the assessment of practice-based research, seeing an example of BWT's live work was integral to assessing any formal funding application.

I was hoping that the Tron's artistic director, Andy Arnold, would be able to attend the live performance of *WSA* so that it would be easier to 'sell' the work of BWT to him and that the Tron could partner BWT in producing *LYSD* but unfortunately he was not able to attend. None of the trusts and foundations I wrote to replied or were able to attend and neither could the National Theatre of Scotland. I did not receive a reply from the AHRC. Thus the formal written application processes began with no potential funder having had prior exposure to BWT's work. The producer/arts manager of Glasgow Life did attend but as he had accepted my invitation to become a member of the focus group, I did not feel it was appropriate to pursue funding opportunities with him.

My intention was to promote the follow-on work as a hybrid product which could be developed with investment from both arts and research funding bodies. I would try to get the Tron to produce *LYSD* and use any funds I could secure to cover the production costs and BWT artists' wages for a one month rehearsal period. I would apply to research funders to cover my lecturing salary so that I could work full time for six months on my practice as research thesis. I had organised a longitudinal focus group, sourced from the audience of *WSA,* to assess and support the work of BWT and to demonstrate to potential funders that a performance created without artistic hierarchy could appeal to an audience. The emails in Appendix 18 demonstrate how naïve I was about the length of time it would take to secure funding and whether producing theatres like the Tron would be attracted to projects like this.

My starting point for securing funds was to contact the enquiries department at Creative Scotland. Nick Wong, who dealt with my initial correspondence, advised that I would not be entitled to any funding because I was a student. It was only when I clarified my dialectical status as a student, a professional artist and an academic that he advised on funding eligibility options. When I investigated the Quality Production Arts investment programme that Wong had kindly recommended and other Creative Scotland initiatives like the Access, Audience Development and Participation fund and the Ideas Bank, I realised how long it would take to complete such applications with no guarantee of success. If I worked on other applications to trusts, charities and local authorities alongside applications to Creative Scotland, there would be time for little else. I had to accept that it would be impossible for me to be a full time lecturer, a part time PhD student, a facilitator of equality in BWT, a BWT artist developing *LYSD*, to make time for family and rest and to write funding applications, all at the same time. While corresponding with Creative Scotland, I was also trying to sell the work of BWT to Arnold at the Tron in the hope that the Tron would produce *LYSD*. I corresponded with Arnold between March–May 2012. When he shared that he had "looked at the website and watched some of the video clips [which he found] very helpful" and wished me well with the focus group, I realised that it would be difficult for the Tron to produce *LYSD*, a different type of product to the shows regularly programmed there.

I believed it would be unethical to expect BWT artists to commit to the time required to develop *LYSD* without any remuneration. Once I accepted that it would be impossible for me to get funding to produce *LYSD*, it became clear that there were only two options open to me in completing this research. One, I rethink my central premise of the process/product dialectic of the research and focus solely on process, with BWT being the vehicle for developing creative processes which could help each of us in our professional artistic lives. Two, we stick with original intention to produce *LYSD* as a ticketed performance but develop it in our leisure time with no remuneration. I presented both options to BWT artists individually during the summer of 2012. I was surprised by their unanimous support for option two, particularly because I was promoting option one (as I was uncomfortable with seeking unremunerated labour) and because of GW's earlier diary entry, when he said it

would be useful to get a "contract for the next show" so that we [could] create "something professional" (Appendix 8, 12 April 2012). What had changed?

Kershaw's fifth minimal constituent of PaR, that of key issues, and Jameson's possibilities of working with and against concept, guided me through this critical stage of my research. Kershaw's caution about not falling into contradiction only to contradict itself (referred to in Chapter two) urged me to reflect on the purpose of the third law of the dialectic, that of the negation of the negation (Kershaw 2011b: 67). BWT could not have come into being without the PhD yet it's only in the absence of the PhD that the true material presence of BWT can be tested. Similarly perhaps the only way to discover how contradictions could thrive in exchange relationships within the system was to negate the fundamental premise of my project design.

By agreeing to make professional work with no funding the BWT artists secured their entitlement to the property of *LYSD* because the in-kind contribution of their unwaged labour offered them entitlements which they perhaps would not have had otherwise. I realised that by facilitating the ownership of property in the absence of wages I was in effect putting into practice Adorno's theory of concept, introduced in chapter two, where the dialectical interplay of identity, non-identity and the economic system allowed for the reification/dereification of labour power within capitalism. As Adorno suggests, if concept is reinserted into the system ways can be found for concept to be "retained and dereified all at once" (Jameson 2007: 26). BWT artists could be both objects and subjects of our labour power. By dwelling in the primal flux of identity and non-identity we could function as unremunerated, objectified factors of production required for the development of *LYSD* as well as function as subjects who could determine how and when we produced *LYSD* and be entitled to own it.

We decided on how we created *LYSD* and when it would be performed at the CCA. Our advanced planning and our anti-commodity way of working, by making performance over a long period of time, allowed us to secure a date at the CCA which fitted in with our subsistence employment schedules. We could develop a commodity for audiences to

consume using our unremunerated labour, but our labour power was not exploited because we had power in what and how we developed our commodity within the exchange relations of capitalism. Adorno's theory of concept showed me the way ahead with BWT's commodity. We could make professional theatre with no funding and be able to reinsert the collectively owned *LYSD* into the capitalist economy once it had been created.

In addition to Kershaw and Jameson, the advice given by one of our focus group members, Martin McCardie (scriptwriter/actor) was also instrumental in my shift from option one to two:

> We did 18 months of doing what you're doing with *Tinsel Town* without any end in sight … and then it became a product once it was made into a television series. And that completely changed everything. There was a whole hierarchy of people involved in it. As soon as the money becomes involved, there are deadlines and things that you have to do … If you've got Creative Scotland involved in it … they won't fund you to explore. You can explore when you're doing it for nothing, like you've been doing.

Appendix 19

The focus groups took place while I was seeking funds for the development of *LYSD*. The feedback from McCardie not only consoled me, after I accepted that I would not have time to source funding, but also made me aware of the benefits of being un-funded. This alerted me to how BWT's ownership of *LYSD* had to be safeguarded when it entered the cultural market and the appropriate time for this to take place. So what had changed for me was that I was now able to appreciate the value of making performance with no capital. I was able to see how our labour could be dereified as we worked with no wages as long as we collectively owned *LYSD* and ensured that we had sufficient time to earn our subsistence out with BWT. Until this point, DCT had been limited to the dialectically driven collaborative theatre-making processes we had developed. Now the project design had evolved to accommodate a dialectically driven engagement with economic capital as well. For the other BWT artists perhaps what had changed was that they no longer accepted a standardised, capitalist-led definition for 'professional' and favoured a more dialectically fluid one as they began to believe it was possible to make professional work in their unwaged, amateur status. In studying the value of the work of amateur theatre companies, Walcon and Nicholson (2017) examine the "relationship between the materiality of theatre-making and the immateriality of the imagination". Perhaps it was this relationship between material and non-material,

exemplified in our thinking on reification/dereification and professional/amateur, which motivated us to follow through with the production of *LYSD*.

In keeping with the third law of the dialectic (the negation of the negation), the loss of funding brought about many other gains which promoted equality and advanced ownership within the collective. Firstly, if I had persisted with seeking funds and we had continued to subscribe to securing monetary capital as a condition of our production, *LYSD* would not have been performed for an audience in January 2014. Secondly, it provided BWT the opportunity to collectively own failure (as discussed in the previous chapter). Thirdly, the failure led us to opportunities in social capital. Fourthly, we could decide on the conditions and terms of our production. Finally, it enabled us to develop a dialectical relationship between our amateur and professional statuses helping us define use value in ways where our labour power could be reified and dereified at the same time, protecting our rights as artists to make art for a multitude of reasons and enabled us to not be bound by the binaries of work and leisure.

Unremunerated Labour

The key issue of not being able to secure funding for the development of *LYSD,* and the subsequent decision to produce the work without funds, necessitated a consideration of the ethics of unwaged labour. As referred to in Chapter two, one of the longest running online SCUDD debates was about unpaid labour. Since this issue was first raised on the 22nd of November 2011, there have been calls to censor postings which advertise unpaid opportunities for artists and there have been further debates on this issue, the most recent being Justine Malone's (on behalf of BMH Productions) advertisement for an unpaid musical director and musicians for the company's forthcoming production, *Twelfth Night & The Tempest*: *Two Hours. Two Shows. One Storm* (SCUDD forum 2017). The debate was again heated with the general consensus being that the advertisement would have been acceptable had Malone made it clear from the outset that BMH Productions was an amateur theatre company. Professor Nicholson contributed to this debate because she and fellow academics, Milling and Holdsworth had been leading on two AHRC projects on amateur theatre. While she supported Malone's clarification on the amateur status of BMH Productions as "it avoids

all kinds of other euphemisms that avoid (or mask), the exploitation and non-payment of artists", she also added that the "boundaries between amateur and professional theatre are rather blurred" (SCUDD forum 2017). The non-payment of artists involved in amateur productions and the blurring of lines between amateur and professional are thorny issues which can only be addressed ethically if artists engage with definitions of socially necessary labour time when producing non-funded, partly funded or fully funded projects.

Irrespective of whether a performance is labelled professional or amateur, when tickets are sold the performance takes on the form of a commodity because it becomes "an object of consumption". The operation of exchange value, where abstract labour does not "contain an atom of use value", must be acknowledged and acted upon (Marx 1990: 125; 128). The issue of the exploitation of unpaid artists, whether they deem their status to be professional or amateur, arises because personal use value often becomes the justification for not paying artists, when the opportunity exists for surplus value to be created from their labour power when the performance is commodified. Cambridge Dictionary defines amateur as "taking part in an activity for pleasure, not as a job" or "relating to an activity …where the people taking part do not receive money" (Online Cambridge Dictionary). Since it is becoming increasingly difficult to definitively distinguish between amateur and professional theatre, the ethics of non-payment for labour spent on making theatre for personal enjoyment when this theatre performance enters into the quantitative exchange relationships of capitalist economy in some way, needs to be tackled. Marx's definition of socially necessary labour time guided me in my ethical dilemmas in balancing my research aims and labour relations within BWT.

> If we then disregard the use value of commodities, only one property remains, that of being products of human labour
>
> Marx 1990: 128

Use value and exchange value are inextricably linked yet Marx, while developing his theory of capital based on this relationship, hypothesised on the disregard for "the use value of commodities" in order to highlight that commodity cannot materialise without "human labour". By hypothesising in this way, he makes a case for value being determined solely by labour power and defined as socially necessary labour time. Following on, it is only when a rigorous assessment of socially necessary labour time becomes fundamental to the creation of any performance with commodity value that we are able to put ethics at the centre of practice.

Marx defines socially necessary labour time as "the labour time required to produce any use-value under the conditions of production normal for a given society and with the average degree of skill and intensity of labour prevalent in that society" (Marx 1990: 129). This definition suggests that use value is not limited to personal value, because the labour power of one worker can be used to create use value for another. We need to consider what constitutes "normal" for conditions of production, how the "degree of skill and intensity" of a particular artist is rewarded in relation to other artists involved in the development of the same performance and how rewards are determined for similar artistic projects in a "given society".

Although *WSA* was not a commodity, in the sense that there was no funding received to create it and tickets for the performance were free, I had discussed socially necessary labour time with BWT artists from the inception of the collective. We acknowledged from the outset that our skillsets were diverse but we agreed that we were not going to rank them but instead use them to collectively create *WSA* as a pitch to seek funds for *LYSD*. Rehearsal times were arranged around our subsistence employment schedules. When GW's subsistence employment did not allow for him to perform live in *WSA*, artistic strategies were developed so that the narrative could be developed with his presence limited to the screen. Each artist was comfortable with their individual contributions to the socially necessary labour time required to produce *WSA,* aware that each of our quantitative and qualitative contributions differed.

When we collectively decided to abandon our earlier condition of securing wages for the *LYSD* production and to proceed with a ticketed performance, we recognised that a lot more time would be required. We assessed how the performance could be developed with each of us feeling comfortable about our contributions to the socially necessary labour time required. Unlike the shorter, intense, ad hoc rehearsal times for *WSA* between February and October 2011 we agreed on monthly rehearsals at weekends starting from September 2012 to when *LYSD* was staged in January 2014. PC felt that, although he wanted to continue to be involved in the development of *LYSD* in some way, it would be impossible for him to contribute the socially necessary labour time required, because of the direction he wanted to pursue with his subsistence employment. I came up with a narrative structure which could accommodate this. The rest of the artists were unanimous in their view that PC should continue to own *LYSD* as part of the BWT collective. Similarly, when JW withdrew from the

performance of *LYSD* for personal reasons at the end of November 2013, the other BWT artists came together, with SM leading on the artistic strategies required to accommodate this, and again we all agreed that JW should continue to have an equal stake in *LYSD*. JW continued in his role of promoting the work of BWT and supporting us artistically when he was able to.

Our practice of DCT also helped us see that it was possible to have an unequal stake in BWT products while applying ethical considerations for socially necessary labour time and developing new definitions for equality. When KB stepped in to replace JW's fictional role of stage manager essential to the storyline of *LYSD*, we had to develop new labour relations to ensure that ownership could be negotiated in the context of KB not having been involved in the development of the artistic whole to date or wanting to be and not being able to pay her for her timely contribution. KB shared with us the value to her of being involved, and the time she could offer to the production and clarified that her contribution was 'one-off' as her subsistence employment did not allow for anything more than that. She added that she saw her contribution as that of a conventional actor taking on an existing prescribed role and that she had no desire to have a stake in the artistic whole of *LYSD*. BWT artists were comfortable with this but were concerned that a wholesale replacement of what JW had developed so far for the stage manager role might not work when KB took over the part. So we discussed with KB the additional labour time required for script development and SM volunteered to contribute additional labour time to support KB with this. Each of us had a clear sense of ownership for the characters we had invented and felt that it was necessary for artistic consistency that KB developed a fictional stage manager character she was comfortable with and which could fit into the narrative that we had already developed. There was space within BWT's practice for conventional actors to be involved in more localised, specific ways without any requirement to take responsibility for the artistic whole, but even with this type of involvement there was scope to develop ownership of some sort, without a director or playwright having the power to overrule artistic choices. The stage manager character that KB created was very different to JW's. It was evident that KB owned this character and with SM's support, she was able to integrate the character into the narrative which had been evolving since February 2011. The practice of DCT enabled us to develop different types and layers of ownership much in the vein of SCV's practice of cultural ownership which Latrell assessed to be "contextual and multiple" (Latrell 2008: 49).

The constant review of socially necessary labour time and its relationship to ownership of BWT's products were normalised within our production processes. In the absence of remuneration, artistic ownership became our only reward. An interrogation of the ethics and the responsibilities associated with this reward were paramount in ensuring that each of us felt we were being treated fairly within BWT's processes, aware that these were not "conditions of production normal for a given society". It was clear that we were able to develop ethical practice by normalising constant assessments of socially necessary labour time, which was not normal for common place cultural production. Beyond our ownership of artistic processes discussed in Chapter three, socially necessary labour time became integral to our practice of DCT in determining the stake we had in *LYSD* as an artistic product for audience consumption.

Exchange Value

LYSD entered the cultural market and gained commodity status in a small but significant way because of its staging at a professional arts venue with tickets on sale at prices ranging from £0 - £10. Exchange value (where use values of one kind are exchanged for use values of another kind) determines the value of a commodity. However unlike barter societies of the past, in capitalist society this exchange can only take place through money defined as the universal equivalent form of exchange (Marx 1990: (126-162). As a researcher I wanted the experiment to be conducted in the real world and for it not to be confined to the safety of laboratory conditions. It was important to all of us that the value of the product we made was assessed and critiqued by an audience, so that we could determine individually and collectively the commodity value of performance made through DCT processes, and compare *LYSD* to our other professional artistic outputs. I was keen to offer the audience a choice of ticket prices, including an option to pay nothing, because I wanted to find out how an audience would determine value. The company members were supportive and we proposed a pricing structure to Francis McKee (Director) and Arlene Steven (Events Manager) at the CCA. McKee supported the research aims and kindly offered to cover the booking fee for the £0 pound ticket and Steven set up a box office system to support the audience choosing the price they wanted to pay for a ticket. The CCA invoice issued to BWT details the number of tickets sold and a breakdown of the prices they were sold at (Appendix 26). At the end of the two performances of *LYSD*, the audience were given feedback forms to complete (Appendix 29). A study of the CCA invoice alongside audience responses to questions one

and two (Appendix 30) point to the importance of DCT in developing aesthetic and ethical considerations for commodified performance.

The choice of ticket prices was governed by our aim of developing an ethical ticketing system to enhance inclusivity and access for attendance at theatre performances housed in arts venues. Tickets were priced at £0, £2, £5, £8 and £10, with online booking guidance and box office staff advising ticket buyers that they could decide how much to pay and that seating was unreserved. It is interesting to note that 36 tickets were sold for £0 or £2 and 36 were also sold for £8 or £10. 35 tickets were sold for £5 (Appendix 26). In total 36 tickets were sold at the higher prices, 35 at the median price and 36 at the lower prices. While the almost identical number of tickets sold in each bracket is surprising and could not have been predicted, the consistency across the range of options could also indicate that the results are not coincidental. This distribution suggests that the pricing system enabled the higher and the lower bracket options to even themselves out without any intervention, enabling all consumers, irrespective of their financial standing, to attend the performance. It also suggests that audiences apply ethical considerations when determining how much to pay and do not always pay as little as possible. The following feedback responses confirm this (Appendix 30):

> "I agree with the price I selected, I would happily pay more for such a collaborative, innovative, fresh and dynamic project"

> "…put a £15 option the next time"

> "I would have paid £10 if I was earning"

> "If I could I would have paid more"

> "…would like to support future projects"

> "…the benefit I got from seeing the show was worth more"

> "…I feel further support is warranted and required"

The optional prices on offer were perhaps lower than the general prices for performances staged at in-house arts/theatre buildings but the responses show that audiences are willing to pay for experimental work like this based on what they can afford. This suggests that there is scope to develop ethical variable pricing systems in collaboration with the state to ensure that artists can get paid for their labour power and audiences can have access to performances like

these irrespective of their incomes. In keeping with capitalist mixed economy models for producing theatre, the state as potential funder can be reassured that revenue can still materialise in a context like this because audiences tend to apply ethics in determining value. As discussed in the introduction, Wilkinson and Pickett (2010: 33) advise that "the best way of responding to the harm done by high levels of inequality would be to reduce inequality itself". In our own small way I/BWT was experimenting with a pricing system designed to facilitate equal access to our performance. At the same time we did not want to devalue our labour power by not charging anything. A free performance might discourage audiences from reflecting on the commodity value of the theatre they consume in arts buildings but an option to pay nothing (or different amounts) might draw their attention to the value of the performance. It is useful for audiences to reflect on what they would like to pay for a particular theatre product because it can potentially ignite debates on the relationship between aesthetics and value. New aesthetics might emerge, perhaps resulting in alternatives to hegemonic theatre production models. Current systems of ensuring fairer access include offering discounts to certain categories of ticket buyers, for example retired or unemployed people or students.   These systems do not allow consumers to decide how much they are going to pay. Giving an option to pay nothing is extremely rare. Our wide range of price options (with unreserved seating) empowered consumers more than prevailing systems, by allowing them to decide the price they could pay, based on their personal circumstances.

My thinking behind offering the audience a choice of prices was not only to encourage them to reflect on what they could afford to pay but also to find out if the potential quality of the performance or any other factors informed their choice. My hunch was that while there would be a number of ticket purchasers whose sole consideration would be personal and unrelated to quality, for others the relationship between affordability and quality might not be so clear. The operation of the quantity/quality dialectic is evident when analysing the responses to questions one and two, which asked whether, having seen the show, the ticket buyers would have changed the price they chose to pay when booking their ticket, and if so, their reasons for this (Appendix 30). When booking tickets the main reasons people gave for deciding how much to pay (question one) were as follows:

The potential quality of the work - 17

Affordability - 15

Artists' labour – 11

Personal ethics - 10

This ranking is mirrored when respondents were asked (question 2) having seen the performance, would they stick with the price they had paid or alter their choice, and why:

Figure 2: Reasons for determining price of ticket purchased

Reasons for	Same Price	Lower Price	Higher Price
Quality	16	0	13
Affordability	8	0	1
Artists' Labour	6	0	8
Comparable Products	3	0	0
No reason offered	9	1	2
Future BWT work	3	0	3
Other reasons	1	1	0
Total	46	2	27

Quality was the most popular reason for both sticking with the original price paid and for changing. However, for sticking with the same price, affordability scored highly, with only one respondent choosing to pay more. This suggests that income limits the options, which is not the case for respondents who considered quality and artists' labour as key factors in determining value. So if we remove affordability from the data (taking into account the very small sample), a dialectical relationship between the quality of the performance and the quantity of the labour power, emerges.

Jameson develops the quality/quantity dialectic in terms of use and exchange value and concrete and abstract labour, suggesting that "capitalist rationality" necessitates an ethical engagement with the commodified empty time of labour power (Jameson 2010: 330). Borrowing from Jameson's analysis of the quantity/quality dialectic, I/we implemented a

pricing and feedback system where audiences had the opportunity to assess BWT's quantitative labour time and its relationship to the quality of *LYSD*. Thus by offering the audience a choice in pricing and then inviting them to reflect on this choice, we facilitated an examination of immeasurable use value, where the qualitative gratification (or lack thereof) from experiencing *LYSD* had to be considered alongside or against the measurable quantitative exchange value of the labour power required to produce *LYSD,* as determined through price. The following comments, a cross section of the data gathered reflect the operation of the quantity quality dialectic in considering value (Appendix 30).

> "…putting a value on your work was probably the most important factor so I wouldn't have changed even if I didn't enjoy the show (which I did)"

> "Would pay more as it was clear to see the amount of hard work and effort that went into making the performance"

> "Could have paid more after seeing the amount of work that was put into the performance"

> "It was clear a lot of time, effort and hard work as well as devotion went into the performance. I would always expect to pay for any live performance"

> "I loved the performance! It was really interesting and thought-provoking. I wish I could have paid the highest price of £10. I think it deserves even more"

> "Maybe pay higher as it was such a professional piece"

> "If I could I would pay £10 to not only help to support the work but to show my enjoyment"

> "I felt the performance was different. However, taking into consideration location, space and the type of show it was, I wouldn't pay much more"

> "…they might not take it seriously if it's free"

These responses reveal the complexity of determining the value of a performance but money is the only way of determining value to the consumer. Commodified performance requires monetised tickets because money, the only recognised form of exchange, determines value in capitalist economy. The responses also show that the audience have reflected on the relationship between use value and exchange value and gave visibility to abstract labour, by considering concrete labour within this particular exchange relationship. They might not have considered this, if the price for the performance had been fixed. BWT's experimentation with pricing for *LYSD,* premised on the quantity/quality dialectic, enabled

audiences to engage with the ethics/aesthetics dialectic in determining commodity value, and by doing so perhaps their own stake in *LYSD* grew a little.

The final point worth considering in terms of how BWT navigated its way through exchange relationships was that BWT made a small profit of £131.91. While many of our production costs were covered by social capital, we incurred technical and front of house costs. We accrued a profit because the revenue from ticket sales exceeded these costs. We did not make this profit in the sense of a capitalist who employs workers to make objects of consumption which exceed their requirement for subsistence so that surplus value can be generated (Marx 1990: 128). We did not make *LYSD* with monetary economic capital from investors but with the unremunerated labour power of BWT. As our labour power could not be sold, because no investor wanted to purchase it, we had to earn our subsistence out with BWT. While our subsistence was taken care of, it would have been perfectly reasonable for BWT to share this small profit among us because of the unwaged labour time and skills we used to produce *LYSD*. However, defying the primary capitalist motive of commodity production for profit, BWT artists unanimously agreed to donate the profit to the CCA in recognition of their support for our work. The CCA staff did not expect this and thanked us for the donation.

BWT's/my engagement with exchange value was an important part of DCT as we/I aspired to develop ownership not only within BWT but for audiences who see our shows. My hunch was that the starting point for ownership for an audience could be a dialogue about pricing. I also wanted to experiment with a flexible pricing system (inclusive of a zero price ticket) to open up debates on fairer accesses to performance beyond current systems that are in operation. BWT and the CCA supported me in this aim. The audience feedback suggests this process of having a small stake in BWT has begun as evidenced by responses premised on a dialectical relationship between quantity and quality in determining the price of their tickets for *LYSD*. The issue of fairer access requires further investigation but what this small sample reveals is that those who can afford it, do want to pay more; many would like to pay more if they can afford it; and most pay according to their means suggesting that there is scope to develop a flexible system of pricing where audiences can be empowered to determine price without adverse effects to revenue. Finally, by unanimously agreeing to give

our profit to the CCA, we validated that ownership for BWT meant a stake in the artistic vision for *LYSD* not a share of profits.

Social Capital

An important aspect of DCT is the relationship between social and economic capital and how this was addressed in the work we made. Our work began with social capital being used as the precursor to securing economic capital, in that *WSA* was staged in a professional theatre venue because of my/our access to social capital. I had hoped that this social capital could be converted to economic capital for the future development of *LYSD*. However, the failure to secure funds for *LYSD* made me rethink the project design, not only in relation to the ethics of unremunerated labour, but also to what extent social capital could be employed to cover production costs, allowing for the third law of the dialectic (the negation of the negation) to become operative. It was only when the fundamental condition for the creation of *LYSD* was negated that I/we became more confident in my/our employment of social capital. In this section, social capital is discussed in the context of what we gained from it because of our abandonment of economic capital.

As equality and ownership were central to this research, Bourdieu's caution about social capital being the means by which inequality in society could be perpetuated needed to be addressed.

> [Social] effects in which spontaneous sociology readily perceives the work of "connections", are particularly visible in all cases in which different individuals obtain very unequal profits from virtually equivalent (economic or cultural) capital, depending on the extent to which they can mobilize by proxy the capital of a group

> Bourdieu, in Richardson, 1986: 27

We agreed that we had privileged "connections" which we could mobilise to help us produce *LYSD* but felt justified in using them as we were not remunerated and our intention in making this performance had all to do with facilitating collective ownership of artistic vision and nothing to do with profit. We ensured that audiences had access to what we made irrespective of what they could afford. In short, the free *WSA* performance, the variable ticket prices for *LYSD*, the unanimous decision to gift the CCA our small profit from ticket sales,

the fact that we did not receive wages and the continual assessment of our socially necessary labour time made us feel secure that our employment of social capital did not in any way promote inequality in the sense suggested by Bourdieu. We were not exploiting our access to social capital for any unfair advantage and in fact social capital enabled use value to materialise for BWT without monetary investment as a condition for the production of *WSA* and *LYSD*. Walcon's and Nicholson's (2017) more recent discussion of Robert D. Putnam's more positive reading of social capital as "a collective resource that creates enduring social bonds" made me aware about how instrumental social capital was in sustaining the BWT collective, keeping us motivated in the face of the numerous adversities we encountered and our intention to continue with the collective beyond the experiment. The Tron, the CCA, UWS, fellow artists, family and friends became BWT's "collective resource", without which *WSA* and *LYSD* would not have materialised.

The Performance and Rehearsal Location

My reasons for choosing the Tron as the preferred venue for the staging of *WSA* were because I knew Arnold, the artistic director; it was a reputable theatre venue which potential funders may look favourably on when I applied for economic capital to produce *LYSD*; the prospect of a performance at a mainstream, conventional theatre might attract professional artists to the experiment despite there being no remuneration. Arnold was supportive and willing to programme *WSA* as part of the Tron's Theatre Lab programme, offering in kind support including venue hire, front of house staff, box office administration and website promotion (Appendix 23). However, I also had contacts at The Arches in Glasgow and knew McKee at the CCA but did not approach them because the former was associated with emerging artists and the latter was perceived as an experimental arts venue.

Initially when the Tron was refurbished in 1999, the studio space was a flexible performance space but shortly after, it was deemed not profitable to frequently reconfigure the space to meet specific staging requirements. It was then turned into a fixed, end on 50 seat theatre venue. I thought the fixed, end-on seating would be limiting but saw this as a challenge in making non-mainstream theatre in a conventional space, in keeping with the commodity dimension of this research. My access to social capital allowed me a few options as to where *WSA* could be staged. When I started this research I was more confident about developing a dialectical approach to the collaborative processes but less clear about how dialectical

thinking could be applied to the commodity aspects of our performance. I chose the Tron because it was a conventional, commodified theatre space.

When BWT was formed, all artists took responsibility for liaising with the Tron on administrative and production aspects. The Tron staff were not entirely comfortable with this, or the fictional scenario of the Tron having invited artists to an international theatre residency. During our time at the Tron, it also became clear that the fixed, raked seating limited the aesthetic strategies for our performance. Kershaw's third minimal constituent of PaR (locations) was instrumental in how I redesigned the commodity aspects of DCT. He points out that "all performance and theatre is bound by location" and there are "limits that it cannot completely escape" but also adds that "performance itself is boundless" (2011b: 66). In choosing the Tron as the preferred venue, I was being too simplistic in my application of the dialectic in addressing the binaries of professional/amateur, established/emerging, commodified/experimental. Instead of working with the tensions of these binaries dialectically, I privileged the professional, established and commodified. The location limited the possibilities for forming dialectical relationships between audience and artists and it was necessary to consider an alternative location for *LYSD*, where there could be a greater chance of the "boundless" aesthetics of performance materialising.

When I did not succeed in securing funding and began to see the opportunities for employing social capital yet again, I/BWT became more confident about using the process/product dialectic in choosing the venue for *LYSD*. Through McKee, I secured CCA 5, a bigger, more flexible theatre space with the staff there more comfortable with the unconventional working processes of the BWT collective. McKee is not only the director of the CCA but also a contemporary arts scholar who was sympathetic to my research aims. He waived the venue hire fee, accommodated my/our request for flexible ticket pricing, offered to cover the booking fee for the zero value tickets and programmed *LYSD* as a commodity. Perhaps because of his own dialectical status as a researcher committed to bringing new knowledge to interdisciplinary arts as well as a director tasked with ensuring the economic viability of the CCA, he was able to promote a commodity like *LYSD*, developed from product/process tensions. The collective decision to showcase our work at the CCA signalled to us that we were becoming less concerned about promoting our status as professional artists and becoming more accepting of the blurring of the lines between amateur/professional and emerging/established.

As there was no funding for the development of *LYSD*, the social capital we had access to in terms of securing rehearsal space for the development of *WSA* was used again for this phase of our work. Social capital materialised in the form of the UWS rehearsal room at the CCA, my home and MS' and JW's homes. UWS is a cultural tenant at the CCA and have a room there which can be used as a rehearsal space. A booking system is in place and I was allowed to book this space for BWT rehearsals. When the CCA room was not available, we rehearsed in my home. Fortunately, we live in an old tenement flat and the living room is big enough for small scale rehearsals.   Apart from our collective rehearsal spaces, MS and JW worked individually in their homes, using their own editing, camera and software tools augmenting the social capital we had access to.

DCT expressed through the quantity/quality dialectic was fully operational because the quantity of our time and tasks was constantly pitted against the quality of our work environment and the quality of the work we made in determining our individual and collective stake in *LYSD*. Navigating through the dialectical formulations of professional/amateur, established/emerging, commodified/experimental, private rehearsal space/professional rehearsal space and individual resources/collective resources, we found ways of clarifying for ourselves why we invested so much time to develop *LYSD* with no remuneration and why BWT was important to each of us.

The Academy

Clark (2015), a practice as research scholar, discusses Harney and Moten's challenges of what it means "to be in but not of the university" (Harney and Moten 2013: 26). He questions whether it's possible "to steal into the academy and poach its resources" without suppressing radical or subversive artistic impulses particularly in the context of the impact case studies required for the previous 2014 and the future 2020 REF submissions[16]. He asks, "Can our practices be dissociated from capital and returned to common sense or collective knowledge, as public goods?" UWS funded my doctoral studies but did not dictate the topic

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[16] The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the new system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions (REF 2014). Impact case studies are required to describe the social, cultural or political significance of 'the research insights with which the public have engaged' (REF Panel Criteria 2012: 91)

or the nature of my research yet my research has generated data for possible inclusion in future impact case studies submissions. UWS provided rehearsal space for BWT via its cultural tenancy at the CCA and covered some of the *WSA* and *LYSD* staging costs. Once I received the Tron Lab agreement (Appendix 23), UWS agreed to cover the front of house costs as long as I covered the technical costs. UWS paid Tron Invoice 1 (Appendix 24) and I paid Tron Invoice 2 (Appendix 25). UWS also covered printing costs for programmes and feedback forms and UWS staff recorded the performances.

In the same way that social capital can both perpetuate inequality and be used ethically, it is also possible to find ways of working with the academy and gaining its support without compromising on personal research goals. When Clarke questions whether "our practices can be disassociated from capital", he highlights the difficulty of articulating to academy managers the potential for knowledge to be gained from exploratory and perhaps subversive work, when the commodity dimension and the impact of the research may not be clear at the outset. Kershaw's fourth constituent of PaR (transmission) guided me in making a case for the potential impact of my research. Managers could assess the potential impact through my project design where the communication of knowledge through "multi-modal" means and "diverse channels" was evident (Kershaw 2011b: 66). In the early stages I was able to demonstrate the potential for this research to influence in-house curriculum design and delivery but I was less able to articulate its impact on the wider field of performance. However, the initial partnership I set up with the Tron Theatre highlighted to UWS mangers my intention to engage with the public and encouraged them to be supportive. The framing of the relationship between pedagogy, praxis, scholarly publications and research funding allowed me to justify the exploratory nature of my research and secure UWS's support. I did not know what I would discover through this experiment and it is only because of UWS support for my research that I am able to argue for radical theatre-making and consumption which could possibly have an impact on new ways of how theatre is taught, created, produced and consumed in society. I needed access to the academy's social capital and accordingly had to justify the experiment's worth. Just like how BWT/I were trying to develop audience stake in our performances, through this experiment it became clear that the academy's stake in the research had to be factored into the project design too.

Informal Networks

Harper (2002) in her paper on social capital produced for the Office for National Statistics identifies formal and informal networks as "central to the conceptualisation of social capital" naming bonding, bridging and linking networks as categories of social capital. She distinguishes bonding networks from bridging ones with the former characterised by stronger ties and the latter by weaker but "more cross- cutting" ones. The absence of economic capital paved the way for the operations of DCT to be advanced through the formal bridging networks of the academy and the informal bonding networks of friends and family. The academy's support had to be formalised and the potential for institutional gain from this support had to be identified. However for bonding networks the offer of support comes with no condition for reciprocal gain. *WSA* and *LYSD* would not have materialised without the operation of bonding networks which in turn facilitated the valorisation of work itself, with similarities to the practices of studiinost (Brown 2013: 54). Our bonding network resources included my family home as a rehearsal space and BWT artists taking on roles in script development, directing, filming and editing for sections of the performance we were not involved in as well as taking on collective responsibility for the aesthetic whole. These bonded ties extended to friends and family who contributed to the creation of *LYSD* as evidenced by AN's London based artist-friends who helped her develop her performance text, my husband who scripted Fatima, GW's and my artist-friend who helped with the choreography and the longitudinal focus group who gave us interim feedback on the development of *LYSD*.

Bonding networks serve two functions. They enable the valorisation of labour power and facilitate the wider ownership of performance. Boyle (in his article in *Performance Journal's* special issue 'On Dialectics') discusses Brecht's distinction between "renovating innovations" (where artists make changes to their practice, accepting theatre as a cultural apparatus of the state) and "real innovations" (where artists "altered not just what was provided to an apparatus, but the role that apparatus played in society" by attacking the base of cultural production) (Boyle 2016: 23). By working unfunded and against this hegemonic condition for theatre production, BWT was able to subvert Marx's definition of property, and

his assumption that only capital can be valorised, as *LYSD* was able to enter the cultural market in some way (Marx 1990: 268). The aggregate sum of a labourer's capabilities can be valorised if individual labour is converted into "common labour" for the "common hearth" and surplus value defined not in terms of profit but the extent of contribution to labour power by artists, family and friends (Brown 2013: 54). BWT made *LYSD* without monetary capital but with social capital and sold it as a product, making a small profit. Had the profit been much bigger, discussions on what to do with it, would have included BWT's artists- friends and family, who had contributed to our processes without expecting anything in return. Their contribution to our processes enabled them to have a small stake in our work, thereby increasing yet again another layer of ownership BWT had created for those investing their time and expertise in our work.

By using social capital and our unremunerated labour power to produce *LYSD* as a commodity, we attacked the base of cultural production and in doing so discovered ways to valorise labour power, broaden ownership of *LYSD* and develop a discourse on the profit made from performance made this way. Bourdieu maintains that social capital perpetuates inequality and is therefore inextricably linked with economic capital. Perhaps it was the way BWT engaged with the dialectic of economic/social capital which allowed us to subvert Bourdieu's theory, advancing equality and putting collective ownership at the centre of our collaborative practice. We became far more innovative with our access to and use of social capital only after failing to secure economic capital. We prioritised our subsistence but did not develop our performance for profit. We used social capital to help us make a non-hierarchical collaborative theatre performance for a ticketed audience. Perhaps this would not have been possible if we had secured economic capital and had had to comply with conventional funding criteria with their attendant hierarchical and utility-led ways of working.

Process/Product Dialect in Developing Commodity

DCT developed from the primary capital/cooperation dialectic of political economy, which in practice translated into the product/process dialectic in the making of our performance, necessitated that BWT develop *LYSD* as a commodity while retaining collective ownership of the collaborative processes used to create it. BWT artists rehearsed as dialectical beings to develop aesthetics led by our artistic impulses while being guided by our commitment to develop non-hierarchical collaborative theatre and taking into account what an audience

might appreciate. Feedback from the *WSA* audience and the focus group informed our aesthetic choices as we developed our commodity. As the researcher, I put the necessary structures in place to enable audiences and focus group members to have the opportunity to feedback/feed forward about previous and future work by BWT thereby facilitating their possible stake in BWT, should they choose to invest their time and their expertise.

The Artists

Working with the process/product dialect enabled BWT to own the products of our labour power. We collectively owned the scripts and performances of *WSA* and *LYSD* because we invented the processes we used to create them. There was no hierarchy in the roles we performed while creating our performances. Everyone had an equal stake in the work irrespective of how much time or resources they had put into the creative process. By constructing reward in terms of qualitative use value, and time in terms of quantitative leisure and subsistence time, we were able to own the products of our collective labour power and advance the argument for the ownership of the performance product resulting from of our ownership of dialectically driven egalitarian artistic processes. In the future, if we reproduced *LYSD it* would be less labour intensive because the core product already exists and changes to the core product would require less labour time. *LYSD* has become BWT's collective capital and any decisions on the potential valorisation of this capital must be collectively agreed. We collectively own both the processes and the products of our labour power.

Early on during the devising processes for *WSA* we each expressed our aesthetic preferences for the content of our work. These ranged from the performance being personal, reflecting something of ourselves and the collective as a whole, "soul searching", having "a narrative first and foremost" to interaction with an audience on a "deeper level" (Appendix 8, 28 April 2011). As the facilitator for equality in the ownership of artistic processes, I proposed a way of working where each of us would have artistic freedom to develop a section of the performance, and all of us would have collective responsibility for ensuring the cohesion of the performance as a whole. All the artists agreed to develop the performance this way except PC whose personal circumstances only allowed for limited involvement. This way of

working was tested during the creation and performance of *WSA* and developed more fully during the creation and performance of *LYSD,* where its commodity value was considered more fully. The commodity focus of *LYSD* tempted us to consider recruiting a writer into the group, bringing the process/product tensions to the fore and generating much debate in BWT.

I argued against the inclusion of a writer as I believed it would undermine the central tenet of the experiment. We wanted to have a shared and equal stake in what we made and how we made it. We had agreed from the outset that having a designated director would undermine this but the temptation of having a writer to solve our creative challenges in the rehearsal room was great. I shared with BWT McAuley's ethnographic study of Belvoir Street Theatre's (Company B) rehearsal process for its production of *Toy Symphony* and her unease with "the authorial role being attributed to the director [which she felt] seemed as misleading and reductive as claiming the same for the playwright". I supported her view of the inaccuracy of singling out the role of writer and director in describing performative roles within *Toy Symphony* and discussed parallels with BWT (McAuley 2012: 4).   In addition to generic performance skills some of us had specialist skills in movement, singing, filming and editing, and discussions took place on whether directing or writing were simply other skills that could be included in the mix. There was an acknowledgement that the need for a writer arose perhaps because we were worried about the coherence of the product as a whole and lacked confidence in scriptwriting. We agreed that directing and writing attracted a higher status compared to other specialist roles because they were associated with responsibility for the artistic whole and we were against centralising responsibility in this way. We eventually decided against recruiting a writer because we wanted to have the courage to take responsibility for the artistic whole, thereby allowing us to own the whole process of creation more fully.

In developing the sections of *LYSD* where we took responsibility for the performance text for the protagonist we had invented (and in MS' case responsibility for all screen aspects) it became clear that we had to engage with dialectical thinking to allow personal aesthetics, collective ownership agendas and audience appreciation to work alongside each other. GW located his fictional Gordon within the fractured scenario of Anthony Neilson' s *The*

Wonderful World of Dissocia[17]*,* where he felt more confident that his postmodernist staging of a scene from the text could work for an audience. SM believed that her preference for the stripped down staging of her section would have audience appeal because of the screen aspects she developed with MS. AN thought that experimenting with alienating devices like physical exhaustion, repetition and thunderous music could resonate with an audience because of the emotional vulnerability of the fictional Monika she had developed. I believed the simplicity of Fatima's storytelling could work with an audience because of the intermedia aspects, the power of Boal's slow walk and the specificity of the detail in the script. MS's ability to balance audience appreciation, his technical expertise, his personal aesthetics and his commitment to developing collective ownership enabled him to support/lead us in our artistic vision for our respective sections. With JW it was unfortunate that none of us were confident about how to develop strategies for an audience to be able to appreciate autobiographical verbatim elements within the overall of aesthetics of *LYSD*. PC wanted to continue to be involved with BWT but was less concerned with ownership agendas. He entered into a dialectical relationship with BWT on leading and being led on the development of Pritam's story. For KB who took over from JW, her relationship with BWT was similar to PC's with regards to the development of her character. The production of *LYSD* was only possible because of the valorisation of labour power resulting from the dialectical relationship between individual and collective creation used in the development of our overall aesthetics. Apart from PC, all of us worked collectively to develop the narrative for the fictional 5 Day Theatre which provided an overarching umbrella for the personal stories we created for our characters, giving the performance a unified structure which an audience could follow. In doing so we were able to develop the performance text without a writer and rejected singular artistic vision in favour of DCT's coexistence of singular and collective artistic vision.

The tensions between product and process were more acute during our time at the Tron than the CCA. At the matinee performance of *WSA* I read a paper on my research as part of the performance because I wanted to let the audience into the questions of the research and how BWT processes were addressing these questions. The rest of BWT had agreed to this initially but after the matinee performance they asked if I would reconsider my decision to read the paper at the evening performance because they felt this aspect of the performance

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[17] Permission from professional playwright Anthony Neilson was sought and the source was acknowledged in the *LYSD* programme

undermined the potential of *WSA* to be developed in the future into a recognisable commodity for an audience. We had a good discussion on what was appropriate for the Tron and its audience and I realised that my anxieties about the research were adversely affecting the operation of the experiment in the real world and in effect hampering our collective stake in *WSA*. We were all unhappy that our personal schedules did not allow for a proper technical and dress rehearsal at the Tron, and this affected the quality of the performance. Through better planning we ensured that we had quality production time for *LYSD* at the CCA. We made time to get feedback on *LYSD* from PC and JW who gave us confidence about our product. The commodity dimension of DCT materialised more effectively during this production time because of the lessons learned from the Tron show. We became more familiar with the operation of the process/product dialect as we developed *LYSD* and more astute about identifying the tensions arising from this basic dialectic, more able to address them in developing collective ownership.

The Focus Group

The initial function of the eleven participants of the focus group[18] was to give BWT artists feedback on the aesthetics of *WSA* with a view to giving us ideas on the follow-on work. However, the focus group seemed invested in BWT and their function evolved to include feedback on our non-hierarchical processes in developing performance as a commodity. During the last focus group session shortly after the performance of *LYSD*, it became clear that many of them had developed a level of ownership for BWT's performance and processes through the investment of their time in assessing the work of BWT. Their involvement included feedback on *WSA,* on how we were developing *LYSD*, and on the performance of *LYSD* at the CCA. In keeping with Kershaw's ideas on transmission not only did BWT gain from the feedback of the focus group but a dialogic conversation about our way of working developed with the focus group over the period from the performance of *WSA* to the performance of *LYSD*.

The focus group discussions on *WSA* helped BWT develop our thinking on the process/product dialectic as we developed *LYSD*. Excerpts from the transcripts of the focus

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[18] Composition of the focus group detailed in the introduction

groups held on the 8th and 12th of May 2012 are documented in Appendix 19 and 20. Quinn, the moderator, facilitated both sessions with a loose structure enabling participants to direct the discussions in ways they chose to do so. The interest in process was shared by all with McCann saying it was "nice getting to see little glimpses of the process". McCardie and Frater agreed that the process interested them. Price said she wanted to "hear more about the process" and Little shared that he "felt that the performance, wasn't really the main part of the thing, it was almost as though it was more beneficial the documentary stuff and the scenes within the scenes". However Mele challenged the commodity dimension of the process which led to McCardie and Frater offering BWT suggestions on how to work with the dialectic of process/product:

> Mele: …But where the process is one thing, however radical the process, does it then just become this thing that's sold in the marketplace against everything else that's sold in the market place…

> McCardie: … I would try and sell the process as the product… might not have a gigantic wide audience, but it would certainly have a niche audience

> Frater: … would somebody be entertained by watching the process as a product and I think some people would be. I think I would be because I think it's different. (**Voices in agreement**)

The focus group gave us confidence in the commodity dimension of process but they also challenged us on non-hierarchical production in this context:

> Mele: Working in a collaborative way, at what point do you say, not everyone's idea is equal?

> Frater: … if you have got a fully collaborative thing, I don't think it will ever come to an end.

> McCann: … for more than one person to lead, it needs to be a long process that builds up the structures that enables everybody within that to feel like they can own it …

> McFarlane: … I think someone needs to have the first say and then it can evolve.

> Frater: There are also people who want to be led …

> McCann: I think it's absolutely essential that the opportunity is there, regardless of whether they want to take it or not …

> Little: What would potentially be quite interesting is if the process got to a certain stage of development and then someone else came in to shape what was potentially already there...

Warrack: … if a principal horn has a solo and he wants to play it his way, he will discuss that with the conductor … but you could do it in chamber works like the number of people you had on the stage

Begg: I do community based and public art … so essentially it was the three of us, as artists without hierarchy who had to negotiate how we would develop work together with the young people … it was a really well funded project so we had time to have those discussions…

The focus group was divided on whether true equality and ownership could materialise within BWT. The discussions helped us clarify how we could achieve this and made us more determined in our collective ambitions to do so. We took cognisance of McCann's advice that building ownership was a "long process" and developed "structures" (evidenced in the Chapter three) which facilitated ownership. We noted Warrack's distinction between orchestras and "chamber works" and agreed that our performance-making was more akin to a chamber work. We recognised that we had to make time, "to have those discussions" as Begg suggested, on non-hierarchical production, especially as we had no funding. Most importantly we concurred with both Frater and McCann that some artists want to be led but that it is necessary to provide all artists with the opportunity to participate as active agents in collaborative practice. We took on board many of the suggestions on how process could be the product, paying special attention to MacDonald's advice to cut down the number of characters each performer took on as she felt it was "a lot for an audience to take in". Price raised the point about the accessibility of devised theatre and questioned whether audiences have the required "shared language" to enter into the world of theatre made this way. Kane countered this pointing out that even in conventional Shakespearean works "you might not have understood every word … (but) you understand what [is] happening". This feedback made us aware that we needed to factor in the tensions of accessibility/inaccessibility in developing *LYSD* for an audience and that both aspects were important to the performance we wanted to make.

Could I stop acting, and what was it I actually did when I acted? Was I, in fact, acting all the time, and was my acting in the theatre the surface showing of that? ... These identity questions became a foundation for more personal work.
Gray in Marranca 2003: 10)

Many of the focus group members valued the inclusion of the video diary entries in our performance with Mele stating they were "interesting" because through them the audience

were able to see how we got our "heads round working on two levels, if not more". In a way the focus group gave us license to create "personal work" through the "collage" and multiple identity strategies that we were developing. Perhaps ironically, in giving us confidence about our aesthetics they enabled us to reject their suggestion for the inclusion of a writer.

Finally McCann's and Price's feedback reassured me that we could experiment with ideas of audience participation as we developed *LYSD*,

> McCann: … I think sometimes when you see something that is...just a finished product, you are completely removed from it and I think that's part of the thing about community theatre is that you're trying to get people involved and I think to reveal a process, something that you can show people, it immediately opens up that line of access …

> Price: ... I think audience participation was connected to the layers of fiction, trying to work out for example the final video entry - was that genuinely her or was this yet another layer of a character and when did it take place …

As the researcher, I had a special interest in the binary of professional venue based theatre and participatory community theatre. McCann's and Price's responses gave me hope that the agency for expressions of self, community and dialogic processes could materialise in a professional theatre venue (Govan et al 2007: 194-195). This in turn gave me confidence to propose further participatory strategies to other BWT artists as we developed *LYSD*, aware that some of them were resistant to this. I had been thinking a lot about theatre participation in relation to Badiou's 'event' and wanted to experiment with some of these ideas during future rehearsals.

All focus group members were invited to a preview of *LYSD* on 23rd November 2013, two months before the public performances, but only six, including the moderator, were able to attend. The growing investment of those who attended the preview became clear. A new layer of ownership was growing. The feedback they gave us was constructive and their desire to see the production do well with an audience was evident (Appendix 21)[19]. They all thought the characters had developed in an interesting way and believed that an audience would be engaged. Mele suggested that the structure could be tighter by having a more

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[19] Excerpts from focus group, Saturday 23rd November 2013

coherent framing of the opening sections and by providing greater clarity about what it was the fictional artists were rehearsing. Begg "liked the lack of structure". After discussion, BWT decided to follow Mele's advice. With the exception of Begg, all the focus group members had reservations about the autobiographical performance within the fictional world. In revising the performance we worked with the dialectic of accessibility/inaccessibility in developing a storyline which an audience could follow but which was loose enough in structure to offer multiple readings of the content and purpose of our work. However, as discussed in Chapter three, we did not know how to use dialectical thinking to find ways of making the autobiographical element compatible with the fiction. All the focus group members supported the new participatory element introduced (where the characters chatted with audiences at the tables they were seated at) with Begg saying he enjoyed this part even though he is "quite shy" and Quinn saying "you don't get this type of personal encounter in mainstream theatre". This feedback gave BWT artists confidence in taking risks with the participatory aspects of *LYSD*. For me the aesthetic of some sort of event happening in the theatre which the audience did not expect raised the possibility of truth materialising via an unplanned encounter with the audience.

After focus group members attended the public performance of *LYSD* a final discussion took place on the 15th of February 2014. The members who could not attend offered written feedback. The first focus group sessions held in May 2012 comprised twelve people including the moderator. Price, McCann and McCardie did not see *LYSD* in January 2014 and their schedules did not allow for them to continue with the focus group, reducing the number to nine. The final focus group session lasted more than two hours and the transcript is over forty-five pages long. A heavily edited version, signposting the key areas of the process/product dialectic, quality, collaboration and the members growing investment in BWT, is included in Appendix 22 alongside written feedback from the moderator and those who could not attend the final session. This final discussion was particularly useful for my findings because of how the process/product dialect materialised in the exchange between Mele and Begg and how MacDonald and Little mediated the tensions arising from this primary dialectic.

At the outset of the discussion the issue of the PhD influencing the work of BWT was raised. Mele acknowledged "the collaborative balance", echoed by MacDonald who thought we worked "really well as a team". But Mele felt that questions of the research still felt "like the driver". Both Quinn and I viewed this as a positive outcome with Quinn adding that the PhD "brought people together and then empowered them to take ownership of the process, or not, if they didn't want to". When I asked whether it were possible to view *LYSD* solely as a piece of theatre, all agreed that this was possible but Little challenged this false dichotomy saying that, notwithstanding the PhD, he "was quite taken aback watching it, how much of it was the theatre". MacDonald said that she was "moved", "really enjoyed it" and found that "it was really stimulating" and "it was a lot better" than she "thought it might be". Begg believed *LYSD* to be "more balanced in terms of where the drama lay across each of the characters" and "more clearly structured" than *WSA* but in achieving this he felt that we had lost "some of the playfulness" that was evident when he saw the preview of *LYSD* back in November 2013. He said the November discussions were "more around product" and his interests lay with "playing about with form". He thought what BWT was "seeking to express [was] process" Mele, while acknowledging there was "something fascinating about the process" was more concerned with "content and pace". He questioned the need for all the performers to do a monologue, the collective decision making processes and whether it was possible to address these issues in rehearsal and "assess if the piece [worked]" without the guidance of an "objective eye". By the end of the discussion, Begg concluded that it made "more sense to think about the product" admitting he was in the minority of audiences who were "less interested" in product rhetorically asking, "why should we make theatre just for the likes of [him]?" On the other hand, Mele concluded by identifying that the most important question that had emerged from the discussion was whether you could "make a process that [allowed] different people to enter into it in different ways depending on their life circumstances [but still be able to find] their creative moment or input into the work" adding that thinking "about product too much" could stifle this opportunity.

The debate between Begg and Mele exemplified Jameson's caution about the denunciation of capitalism as a whole, when we polarise the features of capitalism into fixed negatives and positives, instead of developing dialectical contradictions as a "perpetual changing of places between them and a perpetual transformation of one into the other" (Jameson 2011: 131-136). Begg, while changing his position on product/process regarding the appeal of *LYSD,* retains

his ideological position that process is more favourable than product. Mele too changes his position but he seems less absolute about whether process or product is more favourable. MacDonald and Little seem to enter into the product/process dialectic of BWT's work with more ease, with MacDonald (referring to the feedback forms) asserting that the "positive comments" were due to the "good balance" of process/product and not one at the expense of the other.

> Little: … I definitely think as a piece of theatre it was interesting, it was engaging, I don't know if I necessarily understood everything, I don't know if anybody would necessarily claim to have understood anything, or everything...

Much of the focus group discussions had centred on the accessibility of BWT's work for an audience and whether BWT needed to be more product-friendly. However Little's comment captured BWT's experimentation with accessible/inaccessible strategies in developing the product/process dialectic of our work and performance. Despite having been alienated at times he found the performance "interesting" and "engaging". Quinn's feedback takes Little's response further and perhaps sums up the intentions of BWT accurately:

> Quinn: … I wouldn't want it to replace conventional modes of production, I like them, they serve a purpose … They are easy for me as the consumer, and sometimes that's what I want. But I'm glad that the BloodWater exploration has occurred, and for me the beauty of it is that it sits within a wider context of theatre … the BloodWater process has meaning due to its proximity and distance from conventional processes of theatre… the process seems to be fundamentally different. I'm searching almost, searching to understand the processes and the artefacts in their context. I don't seem to just simply accept them as they exist …. I'm far more active here. And that surprised me.

The accessibility/inaccessibility of our performance for an audience and the proximity to/distance from conventional processes of theatre characterised the operation of the primary process/product dialectic in BWT's DCT.

The final point on the focus group is that the dialogic engagement between the focus group and BWT enabled some sort of extension of ownership for *LYSD* beyond BWT. In response to Begg's suggestion that funding could potentially dictate the direction of our work, I shared that having no funds allowed us not to be "influenced by anybody except by our own artistic impulses". To which Mele interjected, "and the focus group!" He added, "I'm aware of the journey, I'm aware of the people" and thanked us for the "opportunity to be a part of this kind of dialogue". Begg said he had "seen the work the whole way through". MacDonald and Little hoped the work of BWT would continue. Quinn pointed out the distinctions and the

intersections between 'stake' and 'ownership' making a case for "emotional ownership". It was clear that members of the focus group had varying stakes in our work which accordingly determined the levels of ownership they had for BWT's work.

Many of the focus group members raised the issue of their own objectivity as their stake in our work grew, and this helped me to formulate an answer to one of the initial research questions – why are definitions of political theatre defined mainly in terms of content rather than process? Through the mechanism of the focus group, the politics of theatre-making processes rather than political content was debated. Clouded judgement was positive because it reflected a growing stake in BWT's work beyond the artists who created its work to larger questions about theatre production in society. The question for me is how I/we can continue to develop work in the future where we can grow the audience's stake beyond that of the focus group, so that performance can be read not only from consumption/economic perspectives but from socio/political ones as well. McCann made a case early on for community theatre and for opening up access by challenging the notion of theatre as a "finished product". The focus group was initially intended as a utilitarian consultative forum which might enable me to make a stronger case for securing funding. However, as DCT developed, its purpose changed to the point where it became a mechanism for enabling layers of ownership for performances consumed in conventional venues.

All the focus group members referred to the section of the performance where the characters encountered the audience at their tables at and chatted with them about the objects that were on the table. Some enjoyed this section more than others but all identified some kind of value,

> MacDonald: When you go to theatre you are not expecting that sort of level of interaction … it was good though … I wasn't at all expecting that …

> Frater: I was disappointed with my favourite bit in the interim showing where the characters came to talk to the audience. This time round it seemed to happen too quickly and it didn't have the personal feel I experienced the last time. I still think it's a really good idea, worth persevering with and perhaps finding ways to make it work in a theatre space with a lot more people

> Kane: I like the fact that the actors were out of their comfort zone when they came to talk to us in character – it made me feel like they were only human like the rest of us

As Fatima, chatting to the audience, I/she felt vulnerable and empowered at the same time. The act of giving time and attention to the audience, instead of assuming that only the

audience has to be attentive, could potentially radicalise audience/performer relations in conventional theatre. There was a woman at the table I/Fatima was at who could not stop giggling. Perhaps she had never encountered an Egyptian woman in a headscarf before. Perhaps the truth that surfaced for her during the event of the encounter made her feel uncomfortable. The politics lay not in what was said but in the act of the encounter. Increasingly it was becoming clear that BWT inhabited a political theatre landscape through how we worked and how we shared this work rather than through being a purveyor of political issues.

The Audience

BWT's intention for our performance to enter the cultural market in some way necessitated an audience development strategy. However, our commitment to DCT required that the role of the audience was not limited to passive consumption. The challenge for us was getting a big enough audience to justify entering the cultural market in some small way, but at the same time develop strategies for the active engagement of an audience. Our publicity for *WSA* was low key with an understated promotion on the Tron website and invitations I had sent to my industry contacts and those on the Tron audience data base (Appendix 17). The capacity for the Tron studio was forty-nine and we managed to fill 67% of the seats (Appendix 28). We had hoped to attract a bigger audience. We learnt from our experience of promoting *WSA* and recognised that we had to invest in marketing and publicity for our follow-on production. A full recording of *WSA* is included in Appendix 11b. Our active audience engagement strategies included non sequitur stage and screen narratives, video diaries which let the audience into how we made the show, a post show discussion, getting the audience to guess the musical tastes of the fictional artists and asking them via feedback forms their views on whether a protagonist was necessary to develop the ideas being tested in this work-in-progress (Appendix 27). On the forms there was the option to include contact details and it was through this that I was able to invite audience members to join the focus group. The majority of the audience did not see a need for a protagonist (Appendix 28). BWT artists and the focus group discussed the findings from the feedback forms and also issues raised from the post show discussion. The development of *LYSD* was influenced by the Tron audience and in particular by the focus group members who were drawn from it.

In choosing the CCA for *LYSD* we not only wanted to try to increase the audience and cover our production costs but also find ways to actively involve the audience in some way in a venue with a larger capacity. The capacity for the CCA based on our configuration of the space (where audiences were seated in a semi-circle behind five tables and the CCA was amenable to our design even though the auditorium could potentially seat one hundred and fifty) was fifty-nine, ten more than the Tron. For the evening performance, we were sold out with a waiting list in place and for the matinee attendance was 81%, much higher than the average for matinee performances at the venue (Appendix 26 and 30). This increase in attendance could be attributed to the fact that we did not resist but worked with contemporary capitalist modes of marketing in promoting *LYSD*. In addition to the marketing strategies used for *WSA* (using the CCA's website and its audience data base) JW produced an eye catching poster (Appendix 31) and we publicised the show on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. I liaised with UWS' corporate marketing services to help get press interest in *LYSD* (Appendix 32) and contacted arts journalists I knew resulting in a preview article in *The Herald* (Appendix 33). All the press articles referred to how BWT was experimenting with developing process as a performance product and our intention to grow artist and audience stake in performance. A full recording of *LYSD* is included in Appendix 11d.

The *LYSD* audience's feedback suggests that we were successful in extending a degree of ownership of our processes to the audience, but not at the expense of the consumption value of our performance (Appendix 30). The feedback is analysed through the lens of the process/product dialectic in establishing whether there is scope within the processes of DCT to grow audience's stake in our performance and whether there is a market for theatre made in this way. The comments on the aesthetics were very positive with some constructive suggestions for improvement. The quality of the acting/performing and the intermedia aspects were consistently praised. Some respondents mentioned how much they enjoyed the multi-layered approach, the characterisation, the humour and the writing. A few respondents said the stories could have been connected more fully and others would have liked to have seen more interaction between the characters on stage.

In determining quality the respondents may not have used the term 'dialectic' but their comments relating to process, reality and fiction reflected their engagement with the

process/product dialectic which BWT used to develop *LYSD*. The feedback ranged from wanting to see more of the process within the product, to comments on the navigation through the real and fictional worlds which *LYSD* lent itself to. Many of the comments in this context reflected the audience's willingness to enter into dialectical thinking, defying Jameson's assertion that positivism and not abstraction is appealing to most (Jameson 2011: 279). The following responses offer a flavour of the readiness of the audience to engage with the process/product dialect for a performance they had paid to see at a professional theatre venue:

> "Getting a small insight into the context of the process made it quite a unique experience"

> "I got carried away by the story and didn't know the difference between theatre and reality"

> "In order to understand how collaboration took place, I'd like to see more of both the fictional (5 Day Theatre) and the actual (BloodWater) process"

Many respondents referred to the participatory aspect of the performance but did not necessarily assess the value of participation in relation to quality. Only eight respondents did this, and of these only one said s/he "disliked the audience interaction". Two enjoyed this section but said that it needed to be more structured and developed and the rest were wholly positive in affirming this section as contributing to the overall quality of *LYSD*. The comments of those who enjoyed this section included:

> "I rather enjoyed this opportunity to play a part at the end"

> "I liked the interaction with the audience because it was sensitive and non-threatening"

> "I enjoyed being part of the performance – made me feel like part of the journey"

> "The decision to have the actors interact with the audience in such a manner was a bold one. It was a reciprocal challenge."

The fact that the majority of audience members felt "like part of the journey" suggests that this aspect of the performance succeeded in inviting the audience to own a small section of the performance enabling audiences to be active/passive or both in this theatre consumption context. Considering the varying levels of ease/unease BWT artists had with this aspect of *LYSD*, these results are particularly gratifying. As artists we needed to gain more experience with Heathcote's process drama and become more confident about bestowing the mantle of

the expert to audiences in conventional theatre spaces. We were reserved about investing fully in giving the audience the status of CCA patrons who could influence the venue's programming.

The feedback on the participatory section and the improvements on the staging made me think ahead about how the actual physical space of the theatre could be developed dialectically. The CCA technician commented that the furniture "could have been more inviting" and the stage "less bare" and two members of the audience pointed out that their view was restricted. Perhaps in the future, Badiou's ideas on "assemblage" should not be limited to developing the performance text dialectically but also applied to the physical space of the theatre (Badiou: 2005: 72). Perhaps a study of McAuley's analysis of Henri Lefebvre' space (as the social morphology of the lived experience) could start to transform the theatre space into an "active agent" and a "continually evolving social entity". These theories could have given BWT more confidence to develop the aesthetics of the seating area and allowed us to redefine the ownership of props, costume and furniture during the course of the performance (McAuley 2000: 41). The idea of the characters' props being left at the tables where the audience were seated was a good one but not sufficiently thought through dialectically. Investing in the aesthetics of the seating area as much as in the aesthetics of the stage area would allow us to develop the physical space of theatre venues as a dialectical one. This type of investment could potentially alter power relations between audience and performer in flexible seating auditoriums in a more accessible way than Boal had intended with the development of spect-actor in forum theatre. This approach has a place in theatre buildings because of its agency for enabling audiences to grow their stake in the product, while remaining accessible to audiences who enter the commodified theatre with no expectations other than passive consumption of the product.

It was also important to consider the audience's comments on non-hierarchical production, in order to determine if the quality of *LYSD* had been adversely affected by BWT's rejection of the conventional model, where a director or writer is responsible for the overall coherence of the piece. Of the twenty-two comments on non-hierarchical collaboration, three were sceptical about its value and viability, and two supported the ethos underpinning it, but qualified this by saying that collaboration had been undermined by the show's reliance on

monologues. Seventy-seven percent of respondents identified a clear value for equality within collaboration without noting any adverse effects on the quality of the work. The comments below represent the range of feedback:

"It was amazing this was achieved with no hierarchy"

"This piece was united by the commitment of the performers to the process"

"The collaborative process didn't seem to dilute the overall vision of the piece"

"I enjoyed that it was democratic and about process"

"I think collaboration as a form of making a play is very difficult. Ego has no place and that is difficult for an artist"

"It needed some editing – how easy are these kind of difficult choices with a totally shared artistic vision?"

"… not sure that hierarchy can be done away with as natural leaders obviously emerge"

"… collaboration without hierarchy – human nature dictates the opposite but humanity can change this, if we try we can collaborate and *Leave Your Shoes at the Door*"

The feedback suggests that while there is some scepticism about DCT, the majority of respondents affirm its value and believe, or at least want to believe, that non-hierarchical production is possible. For the majority the artistic vision was enhanced rather than compromised through this way of working. The CCA technician who worked with us during the three production days we had at the venue was initially sceptical, telling us it would be impossible to complete the plotting of cues if different artists were in the control room with him at different times. He was patient and persevered with our unconventional approach to a technical rehearsal. In his feedback he says that non-hierarchical production is "clearly" possible and states that BWT's collaboration "was approached with a great deal of consideration and candour from all involved". In working with DCT, the technician was empowered with a design role out with his designated technician role, helping us create lighting states in keeping with our collective/individual artistic visions. The last comment cited above, which referred to the title, *LYSD* seemed to be a refrain of the time when BWT came up with the title and I referred to our reaction as a "wonderful moment, a collective feeling of hitting something raw and deep about our work". Perhaps performance made out with hierarchical roles invites audiences to have a stake in the work more readily and audiences accept this invitation to enter into a different type of exchange relations.

Finally, there were two comments relating to ethics,

> "Thanks for introducing your real self at the end. It helped me a lot to get back to reality. It was too easy to believe everything you said
>
> "It would have been useful to know about audience involvement prior to the beginning of the performance"

The issue of whether we should have warned the audience about the participatory element in advance had been discussed and we had collectively agreed that it was an unnecessary ethical consideration. This was vindicated by the audience member who said that the interaction with the audience "was sensitive and non-threatening". We believed it was a small step in challenging passive consumption and it did not need to be sign posted. From the time we decided that the collision of the fictional and real worlds would be key to our aesthetic strategy, we were mindful of the ethics of representation and used SCV's practice of revealing offstage identities to address the ethical implications of this strategy. Thus in *WSA* the video diaries were part of the performance and there was a post- show discussion. For *LYSD*, at the end of the performance, we each introduced ourselves to the audience. I removed Fatima's headscarf as I introduced myself and shared a little about the PhD. All of us mingled with the audience as they filled in the feedback forms.

Summary

This chapter described and analysed DCT as a holistic concept and practice expressed through its three faces (commodity, means of production and pedagogy), born out of the three laws of the dialectic and the primary process/product dialectic. Chapter three was the necessary precursor to chapter four because while tackling the primary dialectic in part, its focus was largely on the analysis of the tensions within cooperation (collaboration) in BWT's processes. This enabled interrogations of use value in its own right (where the collective ownership of artistic vision was identified as the key indicator of use value and the determiner of equality) which in turn laid the ground for chapter four, where use value had to be assessed in the larger context of its relationship to exchange value - where ways of uniting the contradictions of capital/cooperation had to be discovered. The theoretical construction of the concept of DCT and the practice of it by BWT showed us how capital and cooperation could be united in their opposition. In essence, DCT when all its constituents parts are

brought together, is a process/product dialectic methodology developed by BWT, made possible only because we found ways of reconciling the tensions of our labour power expressed as commodity and expressed as means of production, which in turn showed us how to unite the conflicts of capital and cooperation in determining the collective ownership of the processes and products of our labour power. Thus this chapter began by interrogating the premise of the experiment where monetary capital was initially defined as a condition for the production of *LYSD* and developed from the abandonment of this condition. This led to BWT's practice of DCT where process and product could be united in their opposition in providing BWT artists with use value while we made a product which had commodity value (and perhaps even use value for an audience). Below I summarise the key findings and analysis of DCT in determining ownership, initially from the perspective of the capital/commodity but then naturally morphed into the process/product central lens of DCT as the chapter progressed and concluded.

The practice of DCT requires that artists have a belief in utopia not as a "representation but an operation" and have the stamina to turn losses into gains (Jameson 2010: 410-413). The failure to secure (or the loss of the perceived ideal of a funded second stage of development) led to many gains only because BWT artists had the tenacity to persist with the dialectic in achieving collectively set goals. I believed it was my experiment and it was my responsibility to secure funds for the work of BWT as this work was inextricably linked to the experiment. If I had succeeded we would have been collective beneficiaries of the funding and accordingly this loss enabled BWT to articulate their gains in being part of BWT. In keeping with the principles of collective ownership, BWT artists wanted to collectively own this failure and exercise their/our belief that we could find a way of making *LYSD* for an audience without funding. The loss of economic monetary capital attuned us more with the opportunities for using social capital to produce *LYSD*. It led us to develop ethical practice by normalising constant assessments of socially necessary labour time, which was not normal for common place cultural production, thereby guarding against the reification of our labour power. This in turn allowed us to dwell in the richness of the space between amateur and professional cultural production where perhaps new definitions for performance as a commodity can emerge. In this space, possible shifts in audiences' taste and judgment of the experience of politicised processes as part of the commodified theatre experience can occur.

In the future, if BWT continues to develop future projects together, it is evident that our practice of DCT will include developing our relationship with exchange value and social capital. We may seek monetary capital to produce future work but this would be to cover wages and production costs but not for profit. If for some reason profits are made, BWT will discuss and agree on ethical ways of using it. The practice of audiences determining price and the option to pay nothing for a ticket are ideas we would like to continue experimenting with as part of DCT. This will allow us to investigate fairer access and how audiences can put value to a performance commodity enabling an engagement with the quantity/quality dialectic (where audiences would have the opportunity to work with the tensions of what they can afford; the quality of the performance; and the quantity of the labour power evidenced in the performance). DCT has shown BWT that it is also possible to derive gains when not funded so we might also continue to make future work with no funding. Whether funded or not, BWT's relationship with social capital will not to perpetuate inequality (as Bourdieu cautions) but used as a means to grow our collective stake and the stake of those who support us in some way. Through social capital we were able to navigate through the tensions of professional/amateur, established/emerging, commodified/experimental, private rehearsal space/professional rehearsal space and individual resources/collective resources in determining how we could make a performance that we could collectively own.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the core of DCT is process/product dialectic methodology developed to advance the collective ownership of collaborative theatre practice. In the second half of this chapter I make a case for how the tensions of process/product enabled BWT artists, the focus group and the audience to develop their own stake in *LYSD*. For BWT our investment in developing processes which had value to us as artists alongside considering what might appeal to an audience, allowed us to own what we made for them. For the focus group their investment grew because they redefined their role from feedback provider for BWT's performance product to feed forward provider on the processes of BWT in creating a quality product. For the audience their participation in processes that BWT used to create our *LYSD* process/product allowed them entry to private spaces in theatre-making thereby increasing their stake in the performance. Ownership of BWT's processes could also be extended to those who gave BWT access to their social capital. Friends and family wanted to invest in the processes of BWT so that they could offer their expertise and support to us as we developed our product. The valorisation of BWT's labour power was achieved not only by how we built on each other's labour power in BWT but also how the labour

power of our family and friends contributed to this process. Finally, the academy in providing us with resources which helped us to produce *WSA* and *LYSD* grew its stake by investing in the processes of the experiment which enabled new knowledge to materialise for collaborative theatre production facilitating possible shifts in the cultural economy.

The diagram below captures the layers of ownership developed through DCT. Ownership begins with BWT represented at the centre of the concentric circles because of how use value was developed dialectically. By using a variety of creative techniques, developing constructions of utopia as an operation and working with the dialectic of economic/social capital we were able to disrupt the binary of use and exchange value. Unlike the use of the term, 'stakeholder' in the context of a corporation where the primary goal is to maximise profits in order to increase the monetary value of shareholders, stakes in BWT's practice mean to be able to individually/collaboratively direct the production process so as to ensure our collective ownership of the performances we make. DCT enables not only ownership within BWT but opens up possibilities for other interest groups to have a stake in our work because of their different levels of engagement with our processes.

Figure 3: Concentric Layers of Ownership
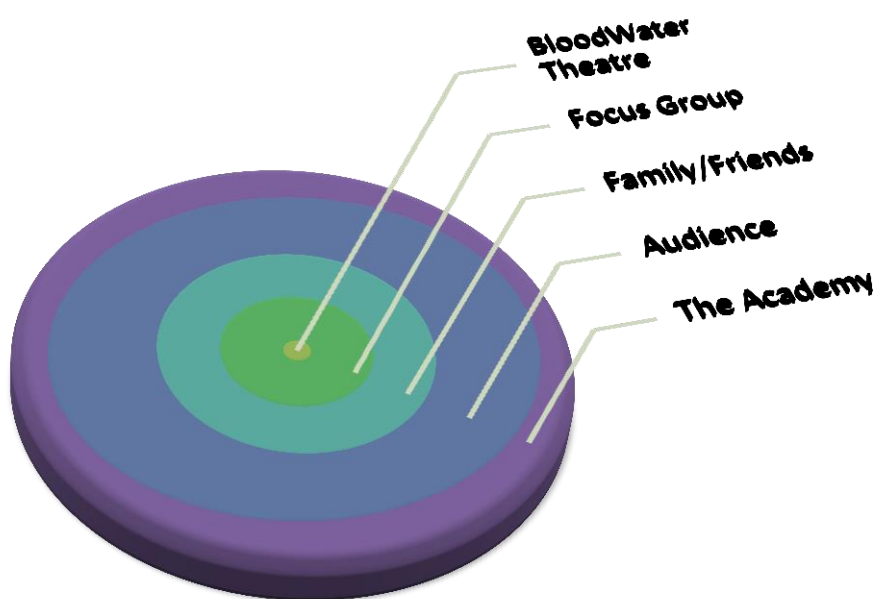
Conclusion

My work with 7: 84 Scotland (2004-2008) and TNS (1987-2008) and my analysis of left-wing theatre provided me with a wealth of inspiring collaborative artistic practice but also made me question why political theatre was mostly defined in terms of a performance's content rather than by its processes of production. This question troubled me for many years because I believed that as a theatre director I had become complicit in hierarchical processes of production, where only one or a few individuals owned the outputs of collective creation. The other artists involved in the collaborative process did not own the processes or products of their labour power and perhaps also felt alienated or disempowered. As a result I designed and conducted an experiment which allowed me to put collective ownership at the heart of collaborative theatre practice, enabling definitions of political theatre to include non-hierarchical production.

The experiment was developed from four concurrent and interrelated processes

- The examination of the field (lavender)
- The intellectual engagement with concept (lilac)
- The formation and development of a collective (violet)
- The praxis (purple)

I named the processes with shades of purple to signify their interrelatedness with the colour purple signifying the synthesis of the lilac and violet processes. The use of colours also guards against chronological readings of the processes.

The lavender process established that collaborative theatre practice, although premised on equality and ownership, was becoming increasingly removed from its radical roots in the 1950s and 1960s. In its place utility-led theatre collaborations emerged, reflecting capitalist economic models of production where managerial and hierarchical structures predominate. McGinley (2010: 13) and other academics who studied different forms of collaborative practice concurred that present day companies collaborate "out of utility" rather than because of a "political commitment or a determined rejection of authoritarian models". It became essential for UK theatre companies to comply with capitalist modes of production to secure

funding or to survive the cycles of public funding cuts which began in the 1980s. My specific experiences of hierarchical theatre collaboration at 7: 84 Scotland and TNS were evidenced in the wider field of collaborative theatre practice and the experiment was necessary to challenge this increasingly hegemonic model of collaborative theatre production.

> [Utopia] is not a representation but an operation calculated to disclose the limits of our own imagination of the future, the lines beyond which we do not seem able to go in imagining changes in our society and world

> Jameson 2010: 413

As discussed as a concept in chapter two and evidenced in practice in chapter three, utopian ideals of equality and common good became integral to BWT's construction of ideology informed by Jameson's utopia as an operation and Althusser's dialectical ideology where it can exist both in the imagination and materially. The purpose of this research was to explore whether a genuinely democratised form of collaborative theatre making was possible in the context of the prevailing capitalist cultural economy. To test this it was necessary to combine academic research with actual theatre practice. As part of the lilac, violet and purple processes of the experiment I convened a multi-disciplinary community of artists. By working together both an unconventional rehearsal method and a new way of producing collaborative theatre emerged simultaneously from both my academic research into the field of dialectics and our practice. I named this way of rehearsing and producing to advance collective ownership, DCT and we used it to develop and deliver shows at the Tron Theatre and the CCA in Glasgow. Through our practice of DCT, we transcended some of the economic and philosophical obstacles and contradictions which have prevented collaborative theatre from delivering its former radical promise. DCT, though by no means fixed or monolithic, could provide a template for adoption by future theatre practitioners who are genuinely committed to democratising their theatre-making processes.

Intentions and Outcomes

The key outcomes of the research need to be considered alongside its primary intentions in determining whether the experiment has been successful and the argument of the thesis has been concluded.

> A Marxist politics is a Utopian project or programme for transforming the world, and replacing a capitalist mode of production with a radically different one.

While I hope for a more equal society and world, the purpose of the experiment was to explore equality and ownership within the specific context of collaborative theatre, produced for performances housed in conventional theatre buildings. While Marxist theory was instrumental in the design of the experiment, my intention was not to overthrow hierarchical capitalist theatre production (or be under any illusion that I could) but to develop a non-hierarchical model of collaborative theatre within the prevailing capitalist cultural economy. I used "Marxist politics" to help me ignite utopian ideals of equality and collective ownership within the BWT collective. The purpose of the thesis was to challenge hegemonic collaborative theatre production through BWT's practice-led dialogue with and against capitalism in order to discover an alternative to utility-led collaboration.

> I'm glad that the BloodWater exploration has occurred, and for me the beauty of it is that it sits within a wider context of theatre … the BloodWater process has meaning due to its proximity and distance from conventional processes of theatre…
>
> Quinn 2014, Appendix 22

The lavender process revealed that the "wider context of theatre" was becoming increasingly homogenised in terms of how and what was produced. Quinn's reflection suggests that BWT has managed to diversify what is on offer for audiences to consume in arts/theatre buildings while our different type of performance is able to take its place alongside more conventional, commodified theatre products. His comment about the processes of BWT having meaning for an audience because of its "proximity and distance from conventional processes of theatre" synthesises the intentions and outcomes of the research. I/BWT succeeded in challenging utility-led collaborative theatre practice through my/our discovery and practice of DCT. We put equality and ownership at the centre of our practice of DCT and in doing so we defied capitalist modes of production premised on hierarchical cooperation, distinguishing our collaborative practice from the models which have emerged since the 1970s and prevail today. Through our practice of DCT, we empowered ourselves with the ownership of artistic processes and avoided alienating audiences through our dialectical approach to collaboration by developing processes of production which have "proximity and distance from conventional processes of theatre". We succeeded in engaging the audiences emotionally and intellectually while foregrounding the politics of the production process and keeping them entertained.

The discussions from the focus group attest to the success of the artistic strategies we developed. The overall feedback from the audience on the quality of *LYSD* demonstrates the appeal of DCT and our use of conventional and unconventional aesthetics. Through DCT strategies we empowered the audience to rethink the conventional terms for the composition of performance, in the Badiouian sense, where the interplay of consistent and inconsistent multiplicity allowed for dialectical relationships to thrive. Audiences for *LYSD* invested in the unconventional 'pre count-as-one inconsistent multiplicity' where the terms of the composition were not clear initially, with a view to journeying to the conventional 'count-as-one consistent multiplicity' where the terms of composition became clearer. The audiences valued both the traditional aesthetics, the quality of acting, writing and staging, and the more radical aesthetics like the opportunity for dialectical engagement with process/product which were expressed through the secondary dialectics of reality/fiction, accessibility/inaccessibility and intervention/non-intervention. The feedback suggests an active engagement with the dialectic is appealing and that audiences who have paid to see a show are not necessarily passive consumers. More opportunities need to be created for active, critical spectatorship in theatre auditoriums.

The experiment also set out to test whether BWT could collectively own the processes and products of our labour power. We succeeded in achieving this through the pedagogical innovations of DCT and our interrogations of socially necessary time during the experiment. There were many arguments about how we made the work and, exhausting as these were, they helped us arrive at consensus, paving the way for our collective ownership of the production process. There were no arguments about intellectual property or the ownership of the performance of *LYSD* because at the outset of the formation of our collective we agreed on developing utopian ideals of equality. As we worked with no remuneration and our contributions to the production process varied between individuals and over time, our constant review of socially necessary labour time ensured that everyone in BWT was satisfied with their stake in *WSA* and *LYSD* in relation to the terms we set out at the formation of our collective. Accordingly no individuals in the collective were singled out and BWT as a whole was credited with the creation and performance of these performances. We made a distinction between private and public ownership. We individually owned certain aspects of the performance, for example certain screen elements or the characters we developed, because of our added investment in these, but saw no need to be credited for these publically.

If royalties become an issue in future we will look again to socially necessary labour time to guide us determining ethical ownership.

This practice as research thesis opens up possibilities for other theatre practitioners and producers to develop and innovate on the DCT template and to interrupt hegemonic utility-led collaborations should they choose to. For BWT, DCT has empowered us in ways we thought would not be possible. Through our practice of DCT, we have begun a conversation about the purpose of collaborative theatre within the wider context of cultural production in society. We/I hope others join in this either through discussion or practice. With this in mind, I now summarise the key features of DCT and how the argument for ownership in collaborative theatre was developed in the course of the thesis.

Dialectical Collaborative Theatre

DCT is a holistic concept and practice. It can be conceptualised as having three faces (commodity, means of production and pedagogy) nourished by the roots of the three laws of the dialectic (the transformation of quantity into quality and vice-versa, interpenetration of opposites, and the negation of the negation):

Figure 4: Opening up the Faces of DCT
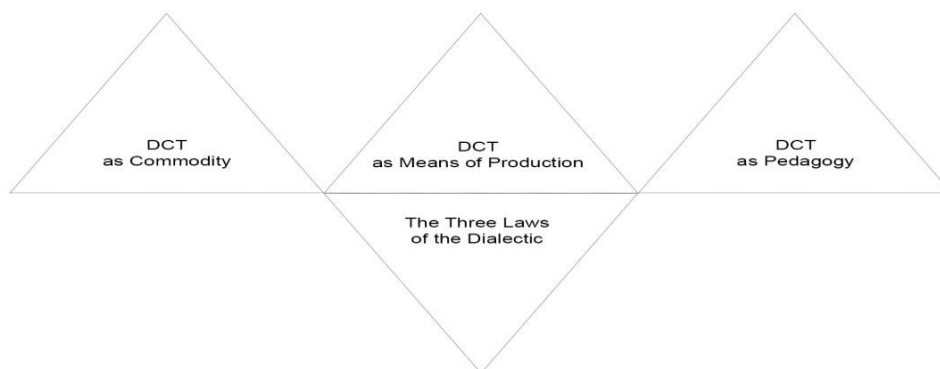
Building on Levins and Lewontin's ideas in the *Dialectical Biologist* (1985) Rosser Jr makes a case for a holistic approach to dialectics as discussed in Chapter two. Similarly the three faces of DCT are in fact the one, much like the oneness of the triumvirate of the Holy Trinity in Christianity, the three headed Shiva in Hinduism and the three laws of the dialectic

predicated on the single concept of dialectical materialism. The oneness of the primary product/process dialectic concept/methodology unites the three Faces of DCT because of its shared roots in the laws of the dialectic. Rosser Jr suggests that contradictions must be seen as interdependent processes in opposition, but all of which are necessary and devoid of hierarchy. Thus DCT is the totality of the constituent parts of the three Faces brought together as process/product dialectic methodology, conceptualised by me and developed in practice by BWT, through our reconciliation of the tensions of our labour power (expressed as commodity and as means of production). DCT works best to facilitate ownership when BWT works with the dual functions of our labour power in uniting the conflicts of process/product. When this happens, all the three Faces of DCT work together as one to facilitate collective ownership. However, it is also possible to develop pockets of ownership of collaborative processes/products if one or two Faces are operative. As such I summarise key findings/analysis of DCT in the following way:

- *Face A* – The practice of resolving contradictions that arise from BWT's labour as a commodity in facilitating the ownership of our labour power and the products that result from this
- *Face B and Face C* – The practice of resolving contradictions that arise from within the performance process and our labour power as a means of production, inextricably linked to performance pedagogy developed by BWT
- *Face A, Face B and Face C* – The practice of resolving contradictions that arise from the primary process/product dialectic

Face A

While the three laws of the dialectic support Face A, the third law (where the negation of monetary economic capital brought about unforeseen gains for BWT) foregrounds the other two laws. In the absence of monetary capital, economic capital was provided by BWT's labour power (as a commodity) which we chose to gift rather than sell. The absence of funding led us to be more innovative with our use of and access to social capital, which was essential for the production of our performances. To reconcile the tensions arising from being unpaid we regularly reviewed our socially necessary labour time to safeguard against the reification of our labour power. Not selling our labour power allowed us to produce performance on our own terms rather than the terms of funders, giving us autonomy with

when, where, what and how we produced.   By gifting rather than selling our labour power to make a performance for a paying audience, we had the potential to radicalise the commodified theatre experience because we were not accountable to funders, only to ourselves as artists and the BWT collective. Also by not being funded, full ownership of scripts and rights to future performances lie solely with BWT. In exercising full ownership of the products of our labour power, we developed equality dialectically.   Our contributions to product development varied between each other and over time but we agreed that this did not mean an unequal stake in the performance outputs. We agreed that we collectively owned these in spite of the variations of our contributions.

Our labour power in itself was not sufficient to produce our performances. We had to use our economic capital (expressed through our labour power as commodity) dialectically with social capital in order to have the resources to make a performance for an audience at a theatre venue.   We used social capital in the form of support networks like the Tron, the CCA, UWS, the focus group, artists-friends and family to help us produce *WSA* and *LYSD*. These networks did not expect to influence what we produced and had no expectation of any reciprocal gain. The focus group was initially convened with the intention of using it to make the work of BWT more attractive to potential funders. However, the decision to abandon the pursuit of funding for *LYSD* allowed us to redefine the focus group's role to the extent that that they too could have a stake in our performance. Finally, as we were unfunded, our use of social capital did not in any way perpetuate inequality in terms of securing support for unfair advantage as Bourdieu suggests. Our access to social capital and our unremunerated labour power made it possible for us to produce *LYSD,* which was able to enter into the exchange relationship of capitalism in a small way and we donated the small profit we made to the CCA.

Face B and Face C
Face B and Face C are inextricably linked in advancing BWT's ownership of our labour processes. While all the three laws were operative, the second one (the interpenetration of opposites) was most visible. Contradictions in how we made our work were tackled head on and our performance pedagogy (premised on equality, truth and collective ownership of ethics and aesthetics) helped us resolve tensions within the labour process. The negation of funding made me/us aware of how ownership of artistic vision had to become the currency of capital in the rehearsal room if we were to be empowered with artistic agency. However to

achieve artistic empowerment we had to address numerous tensions in the production process. The two key challenges were firstly, the other BWT artists (apart from me) were not confident in taking responsibility for artistic vision and secondly, at times our personal ethics and aesthetics conflicted. The 'sharing of practice' stage was instrumental in developing a shared vocabulary between BWT artists and ensured that personal aesthetics influenced the creative whole. The tensions between personal and collective aesthetics were mediated through devising practice developed from Badiou's 'event' where 'truth' could materialise. I designed a fictional theatre residency which became our rehearsal methodology. The challenges of devising in the real world were tackled in the fictional world and vice-versa. When devising from scratch became too tough for us we worked with the dialectic of text-based and devising practices to help us develop our performance. The event of the fictional artists' residency enabled us to debate each other's aesthetics in the safety of fiction and simultaneously, in the real world, to challenge each other on the ethics of our aesthetics in the fictional world. We found interesting spaces in between autobiography and fiction. We came to own the collective aesthetics of our performance because of our individual contributions to the overall aesthetics, our dialectical relationship with ethics/aesthetics in developing artistic vision, and our investment in ethics throughout the creative processes of our labour. We grew our stake in the production processes through the performance pedagogy we developed (premised on our commitment to discovering truth through the vehicle of the fictional residency (developed from Badiou's event), and our strategies to make us grow in confidence to take responsibility for the artistic vision of our performance.

A further challenge which arose from our labour as a means of production was the reticence of BWT artists about the practice of equality being fundamental to our performance pedagogy. Everyone in the collective was committed to the principle of equality but in practice many found it difficult to produce work without hierarchical direction. I had tutored or directed many of the BWT artists in the past and they looked to me for direction. From the outset of our processes I took on the role of facilitator of equality where I developed strategies for the collective ownership of artistic vision. When tensions occurred in leadership and facilitation, I relied on Jameson's guidance on identity/non-identity, Badiou's 'event', and Heathcote's 'mantle of the expert'. My former hierarchical relationships with some BWT artists were reconfigured to promote equality. BWT's artists could develop the performance in fictional identities which allowed us/them to not be concerned about the status of the artists within the fictional world. This in turn repositioned our artists'

relationships in the real world, where equality (premised on dialogic pedagogy) could thrive. Our applications of Heathcote's techniques of process drama (where we adopted fictional roles) enabled us to face the responsibilities that come with being experts. By practising dialogic pedagogy we were able to work through non-hierarchical collaborative processes as a way of resolving contradictions in individual/collective practice. By doing so we reconciled idealist/materialist tensions in developing equality in BWT.

Face A, Face B and Face C

As mentioned earlier, DCT works best in advancing collective ownership when all of its three faces, based on the laws of the dialectic, cooperate with each other to resolve the conflicts arising from the primary process/product dialectic. The three laws, in particular the first law (the transformation of quantity into quality and vice-versa) enable cooperation between the three faces of DCT, allowing us to own our artistic products and processes. Jameson's suggestion that this dialectic can be developed more constructively if time is identified with quantity and space with quality, and Ollman's definition of the quality/quantity dialectic as a "relation between two temporally differentiated moments within the same process", both helped BWT to develop collective ownership of the collaborative theatre we made (Jameson 2011: 111; Ollman 1993: 15). We recognised that use value and exchange value could be developed dialectically to reconcile process/product tensions, thereby furthering BWT's ownership of both processes and products. The artists were initially interested in participating in the experiment because of the chance it offered to explore non-hierarchical artistic processes and because of the guarantee of a performance at the Tron. In developing *LYSD* we had to unite the tensions of work-in-progress aesthetics and finished product aesthetics while developing aesthetics of personal value which allowed us to grow our stake in the performance. The screen narratives in *LYSD* observed the unities of time and place but also showed the processes the fictional artists went through over the five days rather than the product they developed in that time. We worked with unconventional aspects of our aesthetics like unexpected participatory elements or alienating devices (which each of us at BWT had a particular stake in) and showcased conventional accessible story-telling and good acting (which we had a different sort of stake in) alongside these. We accommodated and challenged the audience with the screen narratives for the five day fictional theatre residency which were coherent, but interrupted by non-linear live performances with unconventional beginnings and endings. We facilitated the audience's engagement with the product/process

dialectic by inviting them to determine value (through their assessments of qualitative aesthetics and their relationship to quantitative labour power). This was achieved by putting in place a flexible pricing system for *LYSD* and building in opportunities for feedback for both *WSA* and *LYSD*. In choosing the Tron as the venue for the performance of *WSA*, I favoured product over process but when we collectively decided on the CCA for *LYSD* we worked with the process/product dialectic and were able to develop the aesthetics of commodified/experimental more fully. This allowed us to take risks with how we showcased *LYSD* as both a product and a process and this in turn enhanced our ownership of it.

The first law of the dialectic was also instrumental in how we were able to challenge Marx's assumption that only capital and not property can be valorised. By working with the primary dialectic of capital/cooperation; product/process we discovered ways of multiplying our labour by developing the role of facilitator/leader and by how we addressed time dialectically within our processes. We began this practice during our development of *WSA* but refined it during the creation of *LYSD* by working with the tensions of the quantity/quality dialectic. This in turn valorised our labour power, resulting in enhanced quality for use value and exchange value. Each of us took responsibility for leading on developing a narrative for the character we invented but we relied on each other to help us realise our artistic vision for this particular character we owned. All of us took collective responsibility for the story of the fictional residency by group/pair/individual scripting, collective rewriting and editing, collective reviewing of film edits with agreed recommendations. We took turns to direct and lead pair, small groups or full ensemble rehearsals. We all had specific responsibilities for publicity, documentation, film editing, continuity and liaising with the venue. We worked dialectically with the specialist/generic skills without ranking them, viewing each skill as equally important to the development of the whole performance. We borrowed from capitalism's divisions of labour as our productivity increased but these divisions valorised our property (labour power) unlike the valorisation of capital for profit. This type of valorisation allowed us to make performance that had both use value and exchange value. It did not alienate us from the products we made, which continued to have use value for us. Our labour power was not reified because of our frequent reviews of socially necessary labour time. Conversely this type of valorisation enhanced rather than restricted the ownership of the processes and products of our labour power.

The quantity/quality dialectic showed us that valorisation was not only possible with how we performed roles and responsibilities but that it was also possible if time were addressed dialectically in our processes. We united the tensions of public/private time by locating BWT within the broader "category of daily life" and by doing so we discovered theatre's "dialectical relationship to the quotidian". (Jameson (2010: 353) (Read 1995: 2). We managed the requirements of daily, routine living while finding time to make the performance. We did this by working with time dialectically in terms of personal/professional, private/public, individual/small group/big group, face-to-face/virtual and stage/screen. These strategies not only facilitated time efficiencies and supported the valorisation process, but also allowed us to own the fruits of our labour power more wholly as we inhabited the space between amateur and professional.

The primary capital/cooperation dialectic (analogous with the process/product dialect)   both facilitated BWT's collective ownership of our artistic processes and performances and allowed those who had provided us with social capital to gain a lesser but nevertheless important stake in the process and product. The longitudinal focus group started off as a feedback forum for BWT's performances but it naturally acquired a deeper function of advising BWT on its non-hierarchical processes and assessing how this affected the quality of the performance. As its investment in our processes grew so did its stake in the performance. Our friends and family gave us their expertise because they believed in our ambition to make work this way and wanted to support us in making quality work for an audience. Their stake grew because they wanted us to succeed. The academy's function in facilitating new knowledge materialised via their investment in me as the researcher and BWT as an integral part of this research, with a view to growing its own stake in generating new knowledge.

To conclude, my singular ownership of the thesis in the context of our collaborative processes and BWT's idealism in persisting with the dialectic must be noted. The ownership of the thesis was discussed at the start of the experiment and the other BWT artists, while being clear that they wanted to own the practice, did not want to contribute to the theoretical arguments of the thesis and wanted to be acknowledged only for the practice. To ensure that I did not short-change my fellow BWT artists or the practice, I developed my artist/researcher role dialectically throughout the experiment. Finally, the success of DCT was most obvious

when I wanted to prematurely end the experiment because I no longer believed it was possible in the real world but the other BWT artists became the "true" materialists able to "push idealism to its limit" because they persisted with the dialectic and because of this *LYSD* materialised for an audience ((Ruda in Žižek: 31)

Specific and Wider Impact

According to the Farlex Financial Dictionary most properties or assets depreciate over time with the exception of real estate and securities because their value is dependent on market fluctuations (Farlex 2017). BWT's asset, *LYSD* as a script and a performance has the potential to appreciate with time because the core product has been developed and far less labour time would be required if rewrites or reproductions are considered. If BWT decided to seek funding for a restaging, we would need to register as a company and move closer towards conventional cultural production. Or perhaps BWT might continue to make performance outside the market, in our leisure time and enter the market on occasion. Or perhaps our partnership with the CCA might open up new ways of seeking funding. In any case there remains the potential to add value to BWT's product.

While it's important to consider potential exchange value, BWT's work and my research can have the most tangible impact in relation to Kershaw's PaR constituent of transmissions, where use value is operative. Kershaw defines PaR's transmission as "the means by which any knowledge/understanding/insight are communicated" in "multi-modal" ways (Kershaw 2011b: 66). The knowledge BWT gained from our practice of DCT was shared with audiences at the Tron and the CCA through the performances and the press coverage enabling possible shifts in taste and patterns for theatre consumption. In keeping with dialogic pedagogy, our knowledge and practice grew as a result of feedback from the focus group and the *WSA* audience which informed the creation of *LYSD*. *LYSD* feedback from the audience and the focus group will inform the future direction of BWT.

All BWT artists concur that their own professional practice has grown as a result of their involvement with BWT with AN, JW and MS continuing with employment for subsistence while producing quality artistic output in their leisure time. AN, who had never written a script prior to BWT, went on to write a play which was selected for the Tron Progressive Playwright award and she is currently producing/directing another of her scripts for the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.   JW continues to work as a photographer and a theatre technician

but like AN, he too directed and performed in an original script at the 2017 Edinburgh Festival Fringe. MS continues to work with the information systems department at UWS but produced a short film after *LYSD* and is currently working on another one which he will be entering for competitions. Both PC and GW continue to work as professional actors but are unequivocal that their work with BWT has had an impact on the risks they have taken with characterisation in their professional work and they look forward to a new phase with BWT. SM has had her second child and is taking some time out but is resolute about continuing her involvement with BWT and developing her own artistic projects. BWT is currently working on a collaborative film project.

DCT has made an impact on curriculum design and delivery within the performance department at UWS. McFarlane, a former student and focus group member, refers to the product/process dialectic in the Theatre Practice module I led on at UWS in session 2011/12 and how it led him to make artistic choices he would not have ordinarily made (Appendix 19). In session 2015/16 as part of the same module, a group of my students performed *Murmurations*, an original performance text developed using the processes of DCT which I guided them through (Appendix 11e). This time, unlike *LYSD* where audiences were aware that there were multiple authors, audiences thought there was a single author, even though this was not the case. I was not only transmitting DCT pedagogy to my students but refining and developing it. The need for greater coherence, pointed out by some *LYSD* audiences, has been worked through in my teaching and learning. For session 2016/17, I designed a new module, Production: Contemporary Theatre where students work collaboratively under the supervision of a director to develop a performance text but also work autonomously to develop a solo piece inspired by their own aesthetics (Appendix 34). My knowledge and practice of DCT provide students with the opportunity to participate in hierarchical collaboration (and grow in confidence about developing their own artistic vision) as well as non-hierarchical production, as part of their training and education, facilitating an engagement with issues of ownership in theatre production. Finally, I intend to publish on the viability of DCT as research methodology as well as rehearsal methodology, and to produce articles on reclaiming the ownership of artistic processes as central to definitions of political theatre. In short, it is clear that DCT can have impact within the academy and beyond in the professional/amateur creative and cultural economy.

Reflecting on the Success of the Experiment

As discussed in chapter two and developed in the course of the thesis, DCT is the praxis of BWT, synonymous with our rehearsal methodology and the choices we made in performing our work. DCT is also the research methodology developed for the experiment. In keeping with Kershaw's PaR dialectic methodology, premised on "generating troublesome contradictions", DCT functions as the analytical tool whereby the success of the experiment is assessed. PaR requires a "tighter focus of analysis" in order to make explicit the new knowledge which has materialised as a result of dialectical thinking, application and analysis (Kershaw 2011b: 64-65). Thus far the conclusion has summarised the merits of the experiment in terms of how dialectical thinking, which materialised in the practice of DCT, led to BWT's collective ownership of the processes and products of our labour power. I now undertake a "tighter focus of analysis" to make explicit possibilities for collective ownership for companies who make theatre within a capitalist cultural economy. I identify how BWT's processes differ from existing models of collaboration in determining my contribution to new knowledge via this PaR thesis.

BWT have survived beyond the three year experiment and are currently developing ideas for a collaborative film-theatre project. In the context of 7: 84's closure (because of its loss of state funding), TNS's continued survival (because of its adaptation to enterprise culture, combining corporate and state funding) and TPS's continued survival since the 1960s (by persisting with a collective organisational structure), BWT claims a unique place in politicised collaborative performance practice in the twenty-first century. Working within a capitalist, neoliberal economy requires the adoption of hierarchical, bureaucratic organisational structures, and business models drawn from the private sector, as a condition of securing state subsidy. 7: 84 complied with this requirement but nevertheless eventually lost its funding because of its contentious status as a political theatre company. Left-wing companies like Monstrous Regiment, Sphinx Theatre, Joint Stock, Welfare State and Red Ladder rejected their earlier collective organisational structures and complied with the requirement for management teams and boards of directors as a condition of receiving state subsidy.

While there are similarities between TPS and BWT because of our persistence with collective approaches to creation, there are clear differences too. The experiment was initially intended

to have two stages, with stage one unfunded and stage two predicated on securing funds from Creative Scotland. I didn't secure funding for stage two but BWT persisted with the experiment. Like TPS, BWT is "non-hierarchical" and "unanchored by traditional theatre structure", meaning both companies survive as collectives, without state or corporate subsidy, with artists having careers outside (TPS 2018). However, unlike TPS, BWT's work is not funded by commissions from European theatres or festivals. It is our access to social capital which enables us to produce small scale work in Scotland while we maintain our careers out-with BWT. This distinguishes BWT from TPS because we remove monetary finance as a pre-requisite condition for the production of our work, negating the requirement for a board of management to oversee the financial security of our company.

In assessing BWT's relationship with economic and social capital, dialectical analysis suggests that BWT is able to work against and within the capitalist system through our employment of social capital. *LYSD* was produced in collaboration with the CCA who took responsibility for producing and ticketing the show but without interfering with the content of our performance or how we developed it. While BWT's work is small scale compared to TPS, through our employment of social capital, we are able to maintain a more radical approach to the production and marketization of our performance. For example opportunities for collective ownership materialised because the CCA, BWT's primary provider of social capital, was able to accommodate ways of working which operated out-with the conventional economic exchange model. BWT artists were invited to production and publicity meetings with the CCA staff (this was not the case with the Tron where I had to represent BWT). We proposed a variable, flexible ticket pricing system (including a zero value ticket) to promote access to our performances. The CCA director and staff developed a system able to accommodate this. This resulted in BWT having a collective stake in the product we developed as were involved in the terms of its sale in the market. The transition from the rehearsal to the performance space is critical because this is when artists are bound by the limited time available for technical and dress rehearsals in commodified, high demand venues. Even in this context, the CCA stage manager and the lighting/sound technician accommodated our unconventional collective approach to decisions on sound, lights and staging.

Similarly, BWT's access to social capital enabled us to secure rehearsal space and contributions from artists, out-with BWT, for the development of our script and staging of

LYSD, with no expectation of remuneration, other than an appropriate acknowledgement of their contributions.

Social capital enabled BWT to develop non-hierarchical collaborative processes in two ways. Firstly, our partnership with the CCA enabled us to enter the cultural market without a pre-requisite for funding. In the future we intend to work in partnership with the CCA to explore more ways whereby social capital can be used to our mutual benefit. The CCA, in receipt of state funding, need to justify its programming and are interested in BWT's research on collaborative practice and our experimentation with ticket pricing. Working in partnership with the CCA offers BWT the opportunity to access economic capital without the bureaucratic, sustained governance of a board of management who would have the power to make strategic decisions for the company. Secondly, building on the idea of patronage that Mnouchkine and TdS relied on for their survival in the 1970s, BWT are able to gain artistic support and critique from academics, practitioners and our focus group who invest their time in helping BWT develop our performances.

My analysis of the field demonstrated that collaborative practice has become utility-driven, and has abandoned its radical, egalitarian roots in the 1960s and 1970s because theatre companies are increasingly required to comply with business models where efficiencies and profits are maximised through divisions of labour and hierarchical production processes. From Piscator to Brecht, Littlewood, Mnouchkine and to more recent companies like Song of the Goat (SoG) and the TEAM, the director-led model of collaboration is prevalent. It is increasingly difficult for non-director led companies or productions to secure any form of funding. Accordingly collaborative and left-wing theatre companies have mostly adopted hierarchical models of production. BWT were able to depart from this by substituting economic with social capital. Approaches such as Brecht's inductive, Littlewood's facilitative or SoG's pedagogically-driven directing methodology, only serve to mitigate the hierarchical nature of the collaborative process and result in the director's singular ownership of artistic vision. Artists within such companies can contribute ideas but it is the director who has a privileged overview of the production process as leader/observer rather than artist/participant. The BWT experiment questioned the singularity of the director's artistic vision and her final say on the aesthetics of collaborative creation. We took inspiration from Bradwell's (Hull Truck) devising practice where he facilitated improvisations with each actor for "the kind of character he wanted" and the story "began to evolve" from this (Itzin 1980:

132). The dialectic of director/facilitator and director/performer was developed as the means by which each of us could influence the narrative and the overall artistic direction of the piece. We developed a system of multiple directors who facilitated the artistic vision of the BWT performers, who had developed individual sections of the script. We created a narrative where we were seldom on stage simultaneously so that different BWT artists could function as director/facilitators at different times. When we were all on stage we used video replays during rehearsals so we could all have an overview and be able to collectively direct these sections. MS, who did the recordings, facilitated the discussions on the sections we were all involved in. Through these means BWT propagated an alternative to the director-led collaborative model.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'utility' as "the state of being useful, profitable, or beneficial". The BWT experiment has shown that the unquestioning acceptance of "profitable" and "beneficial", to defining 'utility' for theatre, can be challenged. The experiment proved that "being useful" can be reclaimed as integral to collaborative theatre practice, and prioritised over profit and economic benefit. The artist's interpretation of her 'usefulness' in society is mediated by state or private funders of the creative and cultural economy who determine economic benefit and profitability. The study of the field in Chapter One confirmed that from the twentieth to the twenty-first century, the state continues to have the power to determine the survival, programming and structure of registered non-profit theatre companies with charitable status.

The Russian Constructivists and the artists from Berliner Ensemble, 7: 84 and Red Ladder subscribed to the aesthetics of agitprop as the means to promote left-wing ideology. In Germany and Russia the state had the power to intervene on how companies interpreted agitprop and ensured that state Communist ideology was promoted. In Britain agitprop oppositional theatre had a better chance of being funded by a Labour government and the survival of left-wing theatre companies depended largely on whether the Conservatives or Labour were in power. The UK proponents of agitprop perceived their contributions as being useful in critiquing society but at the same time their dependence on state funding led to self - censorship and limited their criticism of government policies. Since the 1970s the emphasis has shifted from agitprop to content developed from personal politics, and then postmodernist micro narratives but state interventions and self-censorship persist. Political theatre continues to be defined by what is produced rather than how it is produced. In the twenty-first century

BWT perceive our usefulness to society as being able to reconstruct definitions of political theatre through the processes of our creation rather than political content. We achieved this through our engagement with ideology and our subversion of utility-driven collaboration.

Up until the 1970s expressions of ideology were explicit through the agitprop form. However, with contemporary performance expressions of ideology have become increasingly obscured, reflecting the complexity of the political landscape as evidenced by Reekie's (7: 84), TNS's, the TEAM's etc. programming. Boal's publisher proposed that he write his autobiography because "deed and doer are mixed up together" and that his theatre would be better understood if he did this. She was in fact suggesting that it was important for people to appreciate the origins of his politics and the source of his ideology (Boal 2001: xiii). The BWT experiment acknowledges that the time for agitprop has passed but proposes that to keep oppositional/alternative/fringe theatre alive, it is necessary to foreground discussions on ideology in determining the nature of collaboration.

When I recruited the participants, I outlined that the purpose of the experiment was to explore ownership and equality within collaborative theatre practice, making clear that I had no idea about what we were going to make together. This would enable artists to develop consensus on meanings for non-utility-driven collaboration. From the start of the experiment I shared my understanding of ideology and what led me to this experiment. I shared the Marxist research paradigm I was developing influenced by Althusser's dialectical analysis of ideology as existing both in the imagination and materially. This allowed us to identify collaboration, as the apparatus, through which consensus on the ethics of our relations to each other and the production process, could to be negotiated. This in turn resulted in expressions of different political positions but an agreement that our commitment to the utopian ideal of collectively owning the production process could in fact materialise outside ideology.

Althusser (1970) names politics, education, media and culture, as examples of ideological state apparatuses, describing them as capitalism's exploitative organs of the relations of production. Once we identified collaboration as an apparatus in the Althusserian sense, we were able subvert the profit/productivity motive of collaboration, replacing it with an equal distribution of power in developing the production processes suitable for our utopian ideals. DCT was the means by which we collectively created *LYSD* which had use value to us as

artists, but also exchange value, as audiences were able to consume this performance. We subverted utility-driven collaboration in several ways.

Firstly, we built on the good practice of others and took their methods further. For example, we innovated on the workshopping practice which Joint Stock developed for its production of Hare's *Fanshen* (1974) and SoG's dialectic of teacher and learner. The workshops each of us facilitated in stage one were not about collective interpretation or adaptation (like *Fanshen*) but were the means by which we got each other to invest in the aesthetics which were important to us. While our teacher/learner roles constantly shifted (like SoG), there was no director to lead on these shifts. Instead, I performed the role of the facilitator of equality and by stage two of the experiment others had taken on this role. The practice sharing phase was integral to developing our discussions on ideology. By taking turns to facilitate workshops, premised on aesthetics which were important to us, each of us had the opportunity to share a little about ourselves and the purpose of our art. Once we were familiar with these aesthetics, we acquired a shared vocabulary which in turn facilitated individual and collective creative agency in our later devising process. Even when the devising got very tough we rejected the idea of bringing in a writer, like Hare's earlier scripting role at Joint Stock. Through DCT, we had come to realise that we had committed to the unique position devising occupies between "packaged commodification", and the radicalism and chaos of politicised performance" (Govan's *et. al.* 2007: 193). At every turn of our process, it was not efficiencies in productivity, but creative agency which was privileged.

Secondly, through Badiou's 'event' and Heathcote's 'mantle of the expert' we innovated on a rehearsal methodology, where we devised our performance in character, as a way of subverting existing hierarchies. The characters we brought into the rehearsal room for the event of the fictional theatre residency were far removed from our personal characteristics but were also partly autobiographical. Rehearsals became events where truth was explored through the collision of fiction and reality. We practically discovered that the event (as constructed by Badiou) was indeed unpredictable and had no interest in preserving status quo. We observed that Heathcote's process drama techniques were being spontaneously used as the means to distribute power equitably between the fictional artists during the event. Because of the event, when we stepped out of our characters, we were able to discuss power relations between us as equal artists, who may have been in previous, unequal or privileged

relationships. The BWT experiment proposes that making performance in character not only enables a realignment of power relationships in the rehearsal room but it also provides a platform for personal relationships to be renegotiated in professional collaborative contexts. It is impossible to speculate on how the pre-existing and private personal relationships of Brecht-Weigel, Littlewood-MacColl, John Fox-Sue Gill, McGrath-E MacLennan-D MacLennan and Kuo-Goh affected the other artists in their companies but it is necessary to acknowledge these relationships openly in addressing the distribution of power during collaborative creation. DCT and the aesthetic strategies originating from it enabled BWT to renegotiate our personal relationships in developing our collaborative practice. The investment in Badiou's 'event' also revealed that the search for philosophical truth is a more appropriate alternative to dogmatic ideology in determining ethical collaborative practice. Badiou describes the subject as an "active fidelity to the event of truth" and refers to the "artist-creator" as a rightful subject" (Badiou 2005: xiii). Utility can be appropriated by both the left and the right. Our usefulness as BWT artists was defined in terms of our search for truth which could materialise within or out-with ideology.

Thirdly, by developing a dialectical relationship between our amateur and professional statuses, radical aesthetics, ethical labour relations and a hybrid commodity, materialised. As early as 1945 Glasgow Unity Theatre gained professional status following the amalgamation of five amateur theatre companies but it continued to retain "a parallel amateur company" (Maloney 2011: 62). In the 1970s, 7: 84 was perceived as professional and Red Ladder, the company who worked with amateurs. A long running and ongoing theme on the SCUDD discussion platform is the question of unpaid labour for professional artists. The growth of process orientated drama in 1950s and 60s blurred the distinctions between amateur and professional and what started out as a resistance to the "commodification of performance" did in effect lead to "an increased professionalization of the artist, championing and scrutinising the aesthetics of the labour of the creative artist, rather than simply the product" (Heddon and Milling 2006: 21). More recently in analysing the work of amateur theatre companies, Walcon and Nicholson (2017) suggest that the labelling of work as amateur allows for the "relationship between the materiality of theatre-making and the immateriality of the imagination" to develop. In the contexts of the polarisation of amateur and professional and the blurring of distinctions between amateur and professional, BWT as dialectical beings are neither one, or the other, but both. The written feedback from an audience member at *LYSD*

summed up our status as "semi-professional". We could easily be semi-amateur as well. BWT are a group of professionally trained artists who choose to work collaboratively during their leisure time with no remuneration to make performance for an audience who can choose to pay to see our work. We are not dependant on the income from the performance for our subsistence because we have careers out-with BWT. Accordingly as the work is made in our leisure time, rehearsal schedules have to be developed around our work and family commitments and the work is made over a long period of time (*WSA*-7 months, *LYSD*-15months). We are not bound to funders or boards of management. Thus we are able to develop ethical frameworks, aesthetics and content for our collaborative practice as we wish. Yet our performance is able to enter into the cultural market in a small way because of our partnerships with progressive arts venues like the CCA. We borrow from TPS's (2018) collaborative practice where their shows become "an expression of whatever and whoever arrives at the rehearsal room on day one of the making process", but instead of requiring a commitment to the whole creative process from day one, we begin our process by asking how much time each artist has. The appropriate aesthetics are developed from the time commitment each artist can offer. Thus, complementing screen narratives, work-in-progress features, the NACL method of a single performer being able to express the offstage collaborations onstage and fragmented storytelling are some of the aesthetic strategies we use to develop the performance based on each individual's availability. We each determine our contribution and the degree of our ownership for the production process. Our motivation for participating in an unfunded project is professional development and an opportunity to express our particular usefulness in our societal role as artists. For me this extends to my role as an academic and the contribution I can make to suggest alternatives to the hegemonic models of collaboration so that the purpose of art in society continues to be questioned. The experiment proposes that socially necessary labour time is a useful way of assessing the potential reification/dereification of labour power when artists decide on whether to participate in unfunded projects.

Fourthly, we acknowledged that the audience is paramount to our usefulness as artists. They have an important role to play in helping us deconstruct utility-driven collaboration. We experimented with ticket pricing and participatory aesthetics for *LYSD*. For both, the feedback forms evidenced mostly positive responses but more importantly they reflected a genuine engagement with creative processes (whether they liked them or not) and the characters they encountered in the course of the performance. With the exception of one

member of the audience, no one noted any disappointment about not being a passive consumer in a commodified theatre space. Since 1993 when I facilitated Boal's forum theatre at the Substation in Singapore (a similar type of venue to the CCA in Glasgow), I have believed it is possible to bring into such spaces gentler, but not superficial, forms of audience interaction. The chatting with the audience was successful in part but the knowledge gained from experimenting with this form of participation could lead to experimentations with radical aesthetics in small to medium sized commodified performance spaces with flexible seating. My character, Fatima, a Muslim Egyptian woman with a headscarf, provoked a range of questions and responses suggesting that encounters like these have the potential to politicise audiences in ways that perhaps lie in between Brecht's and Boal's practice where the dialectical relationship between reason and empathy can thrive. The ethics of representation need to be considered in encounters like these. We borrowed from the Sarawak Cultural Village's practice of including off stage identities as part of the performance, developing it both as an aesthetic tool and also as a means of dealing with the ethics of representation. By the end of the performance the audience were clear that we were playing roles. This experiment proposes that aspects of applied theatre, DIE and TIE can be developed in performance venues like these, thereby diversifying programming and reclaiming the civic role of state funded theatre.

In summary, we subverted utility-driven collaboration by using pedagogy as the base on which our collaborative practice grew. We devised our performance in character to realign power relations within the BWT collective and subverted existing hierarchies. The development of a dialectical relationship between our professional and amateur statuses facilitated an unconventional production process where we were able to take risks and experiment with radical aesthetics. The development of a dialectical relationship with the audience challenged the notion of auditorium theatre as a passively consumed product.

My final contribution to new knowledge is not related to the findings and analysis of the experiment itself but the unique methodology of DCT. My ontology cannot be separated from DCT which is both research and rehearsal methodology. The experiential element is fundamental to the research design and this design facilitates a contribution to knowledge that is not dissociated from practice as a critical commentary but also integral to the reshaping of practice though doing. The methodology is developed from a sense of cyclical wholeness, tracing and retracing, ontology, through to resultant and necessary epistemological

considerations. I hope my engagement with the complex interplay of ontology and epistemology encourages others to consider the nature of the dialectic and its relationship to practice as research methodology, perhaps prompting further experiments.

Summary of the Thesis

This thesis covers a wider than expected range of issues and suggests some conclusions. The need for the research was prompted by my growing scepticism over the increasingly ubiquitous use of the term 'collaboration' which it seemed to me had become a buzzword designed to attract funders. My analysis of the history of collaborative political theatre in Europe, the UK and Singapore revealed that it is a highly contested and volatile term. My personal experience of working in 7:84 and TNS, both ostensibly political companies with a collaborative ethos, further inducted me into its ideological complexities. BWT was conceived as an experiment to test whether a more egalitarian model of collaboration was capable of being sustained. The conclusion is that it is possible but that there are multiple and complex obstacles to be overcome. The practical politics of collaboration is increasingly complex. Conscious and continuous efforts need to me made to avoid reverting to hierarchical methods and specialisms. BTW persisted with the dialectic to maintain and develop our own non-hierarchical, non-commodified and collectively owned process and product. The fact that the 'normal' way of doing things presented itself to us so often as an easy 'common sense' option shows the extent to which the ideology of the director led, hierarchically produced and passively consumed product has become entrenched. My hope is that the DCT model can be developed at scale as part of an attempt to deconstruct the hidden and unquestioned ideologies which inhibit the future potential for political theatre to offer a radical challenge to the economic and political status quo.

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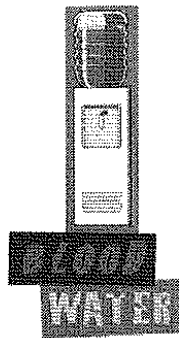
Appendix 1 – *Whose Story Is It Anyway?* **programme**

BloodWater Theatre

PRESENTS

In association with University of the West of Scotland and Central School of Speech & Drama
with support from the Tron Theatre

In February 2011, Jo Ronan currently
pursuing doctoral research on collaborative
theatre-making, brought together artists,
Suzanne Morrison, Paul Chaal, Gavin
Wright, Anna Nierobisz, David Sneddon,
Martin Smith and more recently Jamie
Walker. Although the initiator, she hopes
that through radical processes of creating,
ownership and responsibility can be shared
ethically amongst company members.

Whose Story Is It Anyway tests principles of
production and reception with a view to
exploring egalitarian theatre.

Lucy, Pritam, Gordon, Fatima and Monika have been selected for a week's residency at a theatre in Scotland to develop a performance piece. They have full autonomy in creating this work.

Fatima

Lives between London and Cairo, needs a diversion from her ailing marriage.

Gordon

From Belfast, now living in Glasgow, wants to network to get acting work.

Lucy
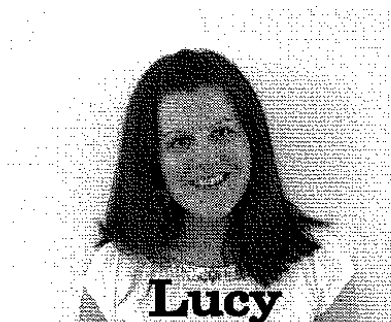
(Moved from Berwickshire to Sydney at 15) blagged her way into this gig because she wanted to see her Granny in Berwickshire.

Pritam

(Originally from Singapore) Londoner, applied for the residency to see if he would be chosen.

Monika

From Torun, currently studying in Glasgow, is uninspired by Scottish theatre and is determined to radicalise it.

In sourcing material for a presentation to mark the end of the week's residency, the group turn to Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors. Whilst rehearsing, veiled aspects of Lucy's, Pritam's, Gordon's, Fatima's and Monika's selves are brought to the surface. Whose Story Is It Anyway tests principles of production and reception.

Gavin Wright is an actor based in Glasgow. He trained under Jo Ronan at Coatbridge College from 1999-2002. Since leaving college he has worked for a variety of different companies in different media forms. His theatre credits include work for Cumbernauld Theatre (Cinderella), macRobert (Wizard of Oz, Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty), Grud Iron (Decky Does A Bronco), Traverse/Grid Iron (Spring Awakening), Oran Mor (The Frock, Babes in the Wood, The Woman from the North, Goldilocks and the Glasgow Fair), Pitlochry Festival Theatre (Whisky Galore! - A Musical, The Servant o Twa Maisters, The Life of Stuff, Cinderella), and Hopscotch Theatre Company where he got his first job after leaving college. Television experience includes Still Game, Taggart, Dear Green Place and Lip Service. He has also appeared in a number of commercials from Irn Bru to STV Jobs. He feels he has invested a whole lot of time and effort in this project and is sorely disappointed he won't be able to witness the results of 7 months hard work on the night. Thankfully he is with us in spirit and, thanks to the wonder of a camera, digitally too at least!

Martin Smith is based in Glasgow and has had a variety of IT related jobs over the years. His main interest has always been audio/video and he would take any opportunity to turn his work in that direction. He has done a few short films and scren related projects over the years. He currently works for ICT at The University of the West of Scotland and has produced training videos and media based projects. He dreams of one day making a proper Godzilla Movie!!

Jamie Walker graduated with an honours degree in Performance from The University West of Scotland in 2010. Jamie wrote *Alexander's Lament* which had its debut at The Arches; this was a mixed multimedia story with comic tones told through original song which he created in its entirety. Jamie's recent acting credits include Billy Bibbit in *One Flew Over the Cuckoos Nest* directed by Walter Paul and staged at Eastwood Park Theatre, Clive in *Clive The Vampire* original comedy by Jennifer MacKenzie and Jamie can currently be seen as a drink driver in hospitals across Ayrshire and the wider area in screenings of a *Road Safety advert* produced by 20/20 Productions. Jamie has operated lighting and sound in a variety of shows and venues, these credits include *Lost in Yonkers* at Eastwood Park Theatre, original work *Cauld Feet* and *Statistics* both staged at The Market Inn in Ayr. These diverse skills of performance and technical support have enabled him to create multi-disciplinary work. Currently working on original material, Jamie is looking forward to creating work integrating music production, film, singing, acting and technical theatre. Examples of this work can be found at http://www.jamie-walker.com

Anna Nierobisz completed an Acting course at Stow College and continued her education at the University of West of Scotland where she graduated from the Performance course with a 1st class honours degree. Her recent acting credits include Anna in *Like this...* by Julie Tsang, directed by Ian Heggie at the Tron Theatre; Iriana in BBC1's *Case Histories* and a cameo role in a short film *Last Orders* produced by GMAC, screened during Glasgow Film Festival. She also worked as an assistant director at Oran Mor, where she assisted Nicola McCartney in directing *Bunnies* by Kieran Lynn and David Overend in *Top Table* by Rob Drummond.

Jo Ronan is currently undertaking PhD studies at Central School of Speech & Drama (CSSD) exploring the nature of collaborative modes of theatre making in a capitalist economy. She comes from an academic and practice-based background with degrees from the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and postgraduate qualifications from NUS and CSSD. She teaches acting/performance and is programme leader for BA (Hons) Performance at the University of the West of Scotland. Jo was Associate Artist with 7:84 (Scotland) directing productions like *The Algebra of Freedom* by Raman Mundair, inspired by the shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes and *Re-Union* by Nicola McCartney, Haresh Sharma, Selma Dimitrevic and Linda McClean, prompted by the Act of Union in 1707. Jo pioneered new writing in Singapore, co-founding The Necessary Stage Theatre Company in 1987 and was its associate director till 1994 when she settled in Scotland.

Paul Chaal began as a model and moved into acting after graduating in Acting and Performance in 2005. Since graduating he has appeared in many productions from stage to radio, Scottish Opera and TV. Credits include 'Hedz' CBBC, 'Single Father' Red Production Co., 'Dear Green Place' Efingee Productions, 'Cosi Fan Tutti' Scottish Opera, 'Eclipse' a one man production for 7:84 Theatre Co, 'Playback' & 'Fewer Emergancies' Ankur Productions, 'Hare & Tortoise' and 'Heelie-go-leerie' Licketyspit Theatre Co, S1play.com Commercial-STV, 'The Short Straw' BBC Scotland Radio drama, 'Mission 2110' BBC to name but a few. Paul has just been cast as the lead in the feature film 'Feast Of Varanasi' directed by the 1st AD of Slumdog Millionaire Raj Acharya who received the American Directors Guild Award.

Suzanne Morrison graduated with a 1st class honours degree in Performance from University of the West of Scotland in 2009. She has worked in various acting roles including a Theatre in Education tour all over the UK, corporate work for *NHS*, television pilot *The Crews*, pantomime in New Lanark and also in theatre and is currently working with Bad Pony Media in crime drama *'Ninety Eight Percent*' to be broadcast online.

Suzanne has also worked in television as both a Stand In and Runner. She has worked with children taking drama workshops, the most recent being with *Love Drama* in Musselburgh.

Suzanne completed her Teaching Qualification in Further Education at University of Stirling this year and undertook a teaching placement at Stow College in their performing arts department.

David Sneddon graduated from Technical and production Arts at the RSAMD in 2000, David pursued a career in Production Management, Stage Management and Design. Since then he has been professionally involved with such companies as Scottish Opera, The Tron Theatre Company, TAG Theatre Company, Vanishing Point, 7:84, The RSAMD, Random Accomplice, East Glasgow Youth Theatre and toured extensively in the UK. His design for "Burying your Brother in the Pavement" appeared at the National Theatre. He has recently staged managed a version of "Carmen" at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. Since 2008, David has been the resident Stage Manager at the Tron.

The running time for *Whose Story Is It Anyway* is 1 hour 30 minutes and includes live performance, interactive media, a talk on new ways of making, spectating and funding theatre and a dialogue with the audience about BloodWater Theatre.

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TRON THEATRE

CENTRAL SCHOOL OF SPEECH & DRAMA
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Appendix 2 – *Leave Your Shoes at the Door* **programme**

BloodWater Theatre

PRESENTS

Leave Your Shoes at the Door

collaboratively created by BloodWater Theatre

2011, five international artists meet at the Tron Theatre for a theatre residency in Glasgow. They form the 5 Day Theatre and share their work with an audience at the end of the residency. They leave not knowing if they will see each other again.

Fatima Rateb, originally from Egypt, lives in London now.

Gordon O'Neill from Northern Ireland, currently lives in Scotland.

Lucy Fitzpatrick originally from Scotland, lives in Sydney now.

Pritam Kapoor originally from Singapore, lives in London now.

**Monika Nawrat** from Poland, currently lives in Scotland.

2014, the determination of a stage manager to get them back leads to a reunion of the artists. He saw something in these artists he had never seen before. He wasn't sure whether he was drawn to their personalities or the work they made together, whatever the case he knew this second encounter was necessary. This time they meet at the CCA and once again they have five days to work together to devise a performance.

Leave Your Shoes at the Door raises questions about how theatre is made and whether the process of making can be synonymous to the product of theatre.

Gavin has been working as professional actor in Scotland for ten years having trained at Coatbridge College, leaving in 2002. Since then he has worked for a variety of Theatre companies across Scotland including macRobert, Hopscotch, Oran Mor, Pitlochry Festival Theatre, Traverse, Grid Iron, Vox Motus, Cumbernauld Theatre, Tron and National Theatre of Scotland. Television experience includes work on *Taggart, Lip Service, Still Game* and *Dear Green Place*. He and the other members of BloodWater have invested a lot of time and energy in creating this piece of theatre and he hopes you enjoy watching.
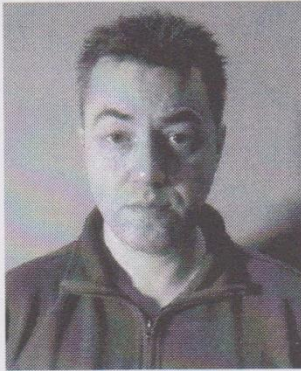
Martin has had a variety of IT related jobs over the years. His main interest has always been audio/video and he has taken advantage of every opportunity to turn his work in this direction. He has done a few short films and screen-related personal projects over the years and he currently works for ICT at UWS, producing training videos and media based projects amongst other things. He dreams of one day making a proper Godzilla movie!!
He has been happy to have had the opportunity to work with BloodWater which has given him new directions to go in and has taken inspiration from the talented members.

Jo is programme leader for Acting and Performance at UWS. She is also a PhD student at RCCSD, researching the relationship between capital and artistic vision. She trained at RCS and NUS (Singapore). She was associate director of The Necessary Stage (Singapore) and 7:84 (Scotland), directing numerous productions for both companies including *Still Building* staged in London, Cairo and Singapore and *Re: Union*, 7:84's 2007 marking of the 300th anniversary of the Act of Union. Few have the good fortune of recruiting collaborators who give time to rediscover the aesthetics of poor theatre at a time when the value of art is primarily determined by its appeal as commodity. Thank you, BloodWater Theatre.
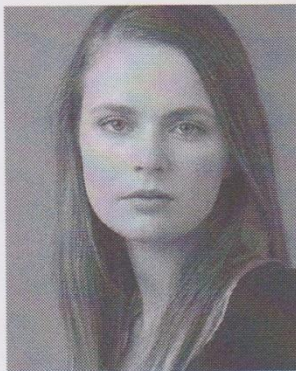
Anna originally from Poland moved to Scotland seven years ago to study Performance and since graduating from UWS has been performing in variety of productions. She appeared in the TV series *Case Histories* and featured in numerous commercials which included advertising for ScotRail, the University of the Highlands and Islands and the anti-drug media campaign. Anna has performed at the Tron, the Arches and the Oran Mor and her theatre credits include *Like this..., Venus Labyrinth* and *Medea*. She gained experience as an assistant director at Oran Mor shadowing playwrights Rob Drummond and Nicola McCartney. For her graduate project at UWS she directed *High Flats*, a documentary about high rise buildings in Glasgow's impoverished, Royston. Two years ago graduated with a Masters in Business Analysis and Consulting. She currently lives in London and works for British Airways as an Operational Researcher. She is interested in the devising process and the tensions between individual and collaborative creativity. Her involvement with BloodWater Theatre has helped her explore these ideas further.

Kirsty graduated from UWS with an honours degree in Performance in 2009. Since then she has taken on various theatre roles, worked as a drama tutor and has recently finished her second panto tour with Shoogalie Road Productions. Most of the year Kirsty can be found working as an entertainer for Haven Holidays. Kirsty is delighted to be working with BloodWater Theatre and would like to thank Suzanne for all her help with the development of her character Aimee.

Jamie Walker graduated with an honours degree in Performance from UWS in 2011. In 2013 Jamie toured Italy extensively performing *Macbeth*, playing the part of Banquo. Recent acting credits include all the prosecuting lawyers in *The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*, Billy Bibbit in *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*, Clive in *Clive the Vampire*. Jamie can currently be seen as a drink driver in hospitals across Ayrshire and the wider area in screenings of a Road Safety advertisement produced by 20/20 Productions. His diverse skills of performance and technical support have enabled him to create multi-disciplinary work. BloodWater allows artists the freedom of multiple roles and Jamie is proud to be a part of the collaborative process.

http://www.jaywalker-actor.com

Suzanne Morrison graduated with a 1st class honours degree in Performance from UWS. She has worked in diverse acting roles which include performances in TIE projects and corporate promotions for the NHS. She featured in the pilot, *The Crews*, the New Lanark pantomime and the online drama, *Ninety-Eight Percent* with Bad Pony Media. Suzanne has worked in television as both a stand in and runner. She is a drama teacher with Helen O'Grady Drama Academy. Suzanne completed her Teaching Qualification in Further Education at the University of Stirling and undertook a teaching placement with Stow College's performing arts department. She has recently started teaching on the Performance programme at UWS.
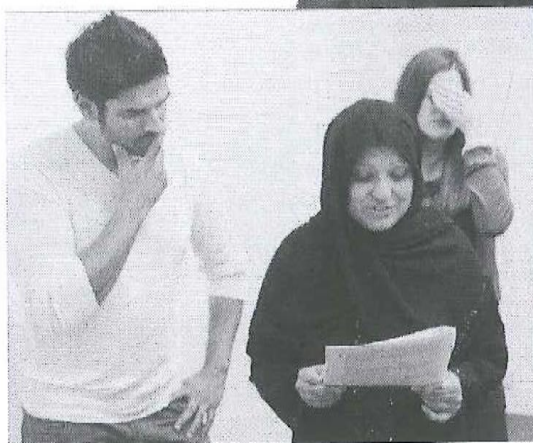BloodWater Theatre has given Suzanne the opportunity to use her creativity and explore ways of making theatre. It has been a great learning experience and Suzanne continues to be inspired by the group.
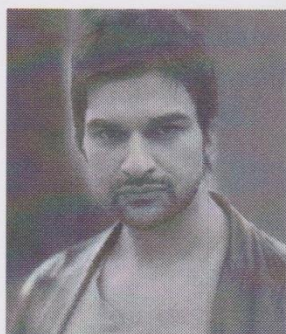
Paul began as a model and moved into acting after graduating in Acting and Performance in 2005. Since graduating he had appeared in many productions from film, TV, stage to radio, and Scottish Opera. Credits include feature film *Life's a Breeze* ,feature film *Tin Holiday*, *Hedz* CBBC, *Single Father* Red Production Co, *Dear Green Place* Efingee Productions, *Cosi Fan Tutti* Scottish Opera, *Eclipse* a one man production for 7:84 Theatre Co, *Playback* & *Fewer Emergancies* Ankur Productions, *Hare & Tortoise* and *Heelie-go-leerie* Licketyspit Theatre Co, *S1play.com* Commercial-STV, *The Short Straw* BBC Scotland Radio drama, *Mission 2110* BBC to name but a few.
I'd like to thank Jo Ronan for the green tea and putting up with lack of attendance. Also Martin, Anna, Suzanne, Gavin and Jamie. Amazing talented artistes who I learned lots from.

Support @BloodWatTheatre on Twitter
Share your feedback

Acknowledgments

Suzanne Morrison, Jamie Walker, Anna Neirobisz, Gavin Wright, Paul Chaal, Martin Smith and Jo Ronan make up BloodWater Theatre. As part of her PhD research, Jo brought these individuals together in February 2011 to test principles of ownership in theatre-making and in July 2011 BloodWater Theatre was launched. BloodWater Theatre collaboratively produced *Whose Story Is It Anyway*, a work in progress staged at the Tron Theatre on the 15th of October 2011. David Sneddon was involved in the development of this work and designed the company's logo. Kirsty Bagan joins BloodWater Theatre for their performance of *Leave Your Shoes at the Door*. The company is not funded and experiments with egalitarian ways of making theatre in the hope of discovering the aesthetics of the collective, enabling the making of moving performances that challenge minds. The company operates without a designated director or writer. Whilst *Leave Your Shoes at the Door* has been produced with labour that has not been remunerated, it is hoped that funders come on board for any further staging of this work.

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WEST *of* SCOTLAND
UWS

BLOOD WATER
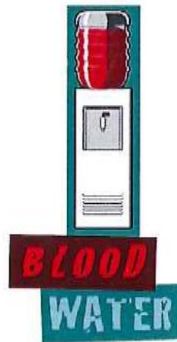
ROYAL CENTRAL
SCHOOL OF SPEECH & DRAMA
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

CCA:

Appendix 3 Instances of 'ownership' and 'collaboration' in abstracts (compiled in November 2013)

Name of Journal	Ownership	Collaboration
Contemporary Theatre Review	1	3
New Theatre Quarterly	1	12
Performance Research	0	9
TDR: The Drama Review	1	7
Text and Performance Quarterly	0	4
Youth Theatre Journal	2	3
Theatre Research International	0	4
Studies in Theatre and Performance	0	11
Theatre Dance and Performance Training	0	2
Theatre Journal	0	7
Journal of Performance Art and Digital Media	0	16
Theatre Survey	1	5
Theatre Topics	1	7
Research in Drama Education	3	8
Journal of Arts and Communities	3	2
Studies in Musical Theatre	2	6
Modern Drama	2	12
Journal of Performance and Art	0	8
Theatre Design & Technology	0	16
Performing Ethos	1	0

Appendix 4

Extract from e-mail response from Alex Norton (11th August 2009) on the creation of
The Cheviot, The Stag and The Black, Black Oil

…You mention that McGrath had said 'It wasn't to be some Utopian fantasy and that I wouldn't expect to play Alan Ross' fiddle.' My recollection is somewhat different. Let me start at the early days of rehearsals. John McGrath outlined the concept of the piece to us. It was to take the form of a ceilidh followed by a dance and was to tour the Highland … For McGrath to claim (as he did in The New Edinburgh Review, much to our jaw dropping surprise) that 'the company had very little to do with the actual writing of the show' is completely erroneous and disappointingly mean spirited for such an extraordinary man. I can assure you that we contributed a whole hell of a lot to the writing of the Cheviot. To set the record straight, without John McGrath there would have been no 'Cheviot'. He was the driving force and inspirational genius behind the entire enterprise, but he was not without his flaws…

How negotiations between Mackenzie and McGrath went over the adaptation (referring to the film version of the play), I have no idea, since, from being the all-inclusive, all-sharing, all of a one company, we found ourselves surprisingly excluded from any decision making processes…

Despite having had an extraordinary career in the business, I still consider The Cheviot as one of my major highlights. Although from a personal point of view, I preferred the following show 'The Game's A Bogey', as it was about my own city of Glasgow and I felt so much more connected with it than I did with The Cheviot. I was more involved in the writing of that than I was with the Cheviot and I was more at the fore in the creation of the piece. (if you still believe the company had little to do with writing the shows, consider this: Despite taking a sizeable handout from the arts council for writing the show over the winter months, McGrath turned up on the first day of rehearsals in January and handed us a bundle of lined A4 writing pads, telling us he hadn't come up with anything other than the subject matter and the title, and that we would all be creating the show from scratch. That was the day 7:84 Scotland came perilously close to mutiny in the ranks. Despite this recurring situation, John still continued to claim he was solely responsible for writing the shows. Handy, I suppose, when it came to collecting the royalties…

…Not long ago, I was talking with Billy Paterson about whether McGrath was genuinely self- deluded or simply an egotistical liar. Bill said that despite McGrath's flaws, he had given him (Bill) more than he could ever have taken. That statement silenced me. It's the absolute truth. Despite any whingeing from me about John McGrath, in the end he showed me the way forward at a crucial point in my artistic life and absolutely gave me much more than he ever took. And for that I'll be eternally grateful.

Appendix 5

Extract from transcript of interview with David MacLennan (3rdAugust 2009) on the creation of *The Cheviot, The Stag and The Black, Black Oil*

David: … how The Cheviot came about...it had two phases of development...there was a long, slow burn before the idea came up in John's mind, he got to know the highlands through my sister...our family became interested in it...we lived in London and moved up to Edinburgh when they started this...that process was going on in a lot of different minds and places...Alan Ross was becoming increasingly passionate about highland fiddle music, Dolina McLennan was passionate about Gaelic song, culture, tradition...I had a long standing affection for the highlands...what was right and wrong about it...that was phase one, everybody bubbling away in their own wee world and then John brought this group of people together and that was when the fireworks started, because he had a clear view, he had mapped out if you like...three great historical moments, the clearances, the Balmorality, and the oil...characters, ideas...we came into the rehearsal room as I recall it, it was a very long time ago, there was not much written, but John being the writer had stockpiled a lot of material, ideas that he had and snatches of lyrics, little bits of dialogue and so on...we had a four week rehearsal period, over the first fortnight it took the form of us debating, talking, cracking jokes, playing bits of fiddle tunes, singing snatches of Gaelic songs and then John would go off at night and write and in that process ideas came from all the contributors, phrases, Andy McChuckemup "picture if yis will...", but John very much held the pen...at the end of the first fortnight we had a draft which McGrath had written out of the discussion, the singing, the dancing...we had an emerging notion of the design which Alan Ross, John and I had mustered up between us and then we got John Byrne in...in the middle of the rehearsal period there was a conference held in Edinburgh called 'What Kind of Scotland' organised by the Scottish International Magazine whose editor was Bob Tate...all the delegates are going to be in the George Square Theatre at 2 o'clock...we turned up, sat round and read the play to the assembled four or five hundred delegates and the effect was electrifying, I have never before or since experienced anything quite like it, the entire audience leapt to their feet shouting, cheering and clapping and we went back to the rehearsal room and thought "Christ, we've got something here"... we started rehearsing in a very disciplined way after...meantime my sister, Liz, was learning to play the accordion...six weeks flat...Alan Ross...putting together a dance set for after the show because we wanted it to be like a night out in the village hall so there would be the play then the celebration dance. I think I tried to play bass and got sacked...and John tried to play the drums and lasted a bit longer but he got sacked as well, we hired in professionals...so the process was three phase, one was the mulling period where John obviously did far more than anybody else...everybody brought something to the table...and the second period the first fortnight of rehearsal and the third period was honing it professionally, and it's important to distinguish how the company was run and how people worked, the company was a collective, we didn't have a board of directors or anything like that, we sat down and we discussed what we were going to do and how we were going to do it, we agreed to do it collectively but there was a director and there was a guy who played the fiddle, the guy who played the fiddle played it better than any of us could...and likewise we recognised that John was the director and we recognised that I did the lights...there was a distinction between the organisational method and the professional method, I think one influenced the other in that if you feel you have collective ownership of a piece of work as a company then your commitment to that product is rather greater perhaps than if you were simply a hired hand...

Appendix 6

Excerpts from BWT's e-mail feedback on *Error of Comedy*

AM (20.3.11)

The Error of Comedy has touched on an important topic of actors' empowerment during the rehearsal process. My understanding was that the actors at first resisted taking responsibility for decisions connected with the piece they were developing. It appears that this attitude could have developed in them during training and then was reinforced when working professionally. When Jo asked Gavin and Paul to take leadership during rehearsals, they didn't seem confident enough. However once they moved to a particular task like working on the script Paul and Gavin started to embrace a more creative approach. The environment where actors are encouraged to express their opinions helps them to develop more confidence. I think that practitioners have to be confident of their skills and experience to be really creative. Actors are in vulnerable position because their practice is judged all the time even at the early stages of the rehearsals. Therefore I think both Gavin and Paul seemed to benefit from working in a different environment where their leadership is enhanced. As a result they felt empowered to make creative decisions. My understanding of Jo's MA research is that existing ways of producing excludes actors from power sharing, however it seems to me that actors might exclude themselves.

I also would like to reflect upon the recorded performance of *The Error of Comedy*. I think that the text that actors were working on, *The Comedy of Errors* was great to explore the status changes which also related to the issue of leadership and empowerment. Looking at the product, it is impossible to say who made the decisions. I think when leadership is shared within the group it doesn't mean that the performances are less competent. I suppose what I mean is that you can share responsibility for the whole thing but still be good in your acting role…

GW (22.3.11)

… Jo's MA research though was possibly a bit of a paradox. The actor should have freedom to take control and feel more empowered in the rehearsal room – to be part of the collaborative process and own the product, i.e. the production/performance, or rather, should at least not be afraid to have more empowerment. Yet one of the issues here is that we were given this empowerment in a protected environment. Almost like a shallow pool to learn in first before going into the deep end (didn't mean to steal the analogy from your dissertation, Jo!). It is probably indicative of the whole training process that we seem to be so tentative and begin all over again when faced with something that is not the norm in the way that theatre tends to be produced, certainly in this country. Indeed perhaps that bit of phrasing ("tends to be produced") alludes to one of the issues that our collaborative process is looking to address. Maybe if it was less produced and more 'created' there would be more of a culture of empowerment… As an actor, taking part in the collaborative process (whilst it has been encouraged by directors I have worked with) to such a degree of creating something from afresh was so alien to me, it took a while to get used to it…

The frustration I would have with it would be that (as with one of the issues of produced 'normal' theatre) when it came to documenting it on video in order to have some kind of product to present, it was not as refined as it could have been, down to the same constraints and problems that most theatres face - time! Therefore, despite the idea to radicalise the process in the rehearsal room, it seems there was still a kind of frustration with the results. Then again, this focus on 'results' and 'productions' is perhaps intrinsically engrained within my mind set…

SM (23.3.11)

Well Jo, I have just read over your MA chapter again and it brought back memories of my dissertation on actor training! Very thought provoking! I can totally relate to how the guys felt during the process. As an actor, I know I can feel self -conscious. We expect that directors are the experts and we do as they say and we bring our acting skills and don't feel able to offer anything more. I feel that studying at UWS gave me so much more confidence in my abilities and made me think that it is possible to create work for ourselves… I think that the push you gave Gavin and Paul is what they needed to believe in their abilities to create something for themselves. They wanted you to initiate things as they were unsure of themselves and they are not used to this way of working… I'm sure there are many directors who feel they must take all the responsibility…

DS (1.4.11)

I read with great interest Jo's MA chapter. It certainly helped me make (or so I think) better sense of what Jo is trying to investigate… I am not an actor, but have in my professional capacity as both a Stage Manager and Stage Designer worked very closely with actors. I had aspirations of acting in my youth, but fell in love with technical theatre and eventually never looked back. In theatre there is often a very US and THEM mentality between actors and technical and production staff. It tends to exist far more prevalently in old school actors/technicians. Today's younger directors seem to be keener to involve all opinions within the company they have gathered and involve everyone in the creative process. I work very hard to dispel this US and THEM… Actors are in a difficult position I think. It's easy to see why so many become insecure and neurotic because with all the reviews, and people telling them they were wonderful when they weren't, and awful when actually were wonderful. Also, with directors' ever able to dangle the carrot i.e. potential work constantly before them, and with so little work, you can see why they are reluctant to rock the boat. It certainly is easier with established friendships and working relationships already in place, at least there is a certain comfort zone when you begin to know what you can say to people and what you can't.

Even the group on this project is only beginning to really open up to one another, greatly in part to the workshops… Can you still be clear in your convictions and allow for creative equality? How do you allow everyone's input and then choose which idea you are going with if someone doesn't take control/lead the group? If nobody takes control at certain points, surely no decisions can be made and the project is destined to go around in circles. Is this where compromise comes in?

... The point Jo makes about Theatre du Soleil working on an even pay scale with and a sort of collective creative ownership of the work got me to thinking about my 7:84 years and their socialist values. When working with 7:84 all the stage management team were on an even pay scale and shared the title of stage manager. A team ethic was very much promoted, the likes of which I have never known elsewhere. I and many of the freelance technical staff employed by 7:84 still all speak very fondly of the way we were treated and valued within the company. This dispelled the usual stage management hierarchy to some extent…

I always liked the fact that at 7:84, I was consulted by directors and designers as to my opinion artistically, despite being the stage manager and that my opinion, although, naturally, not always agreed with, was certainly always listened to, considered and accepted for what it was, without any offence being taken…

My experience of actors is that they generally like to be led by someone that they can believe and trust in. I have often had my ear bent by actors/actresses about the fact that they are getting no direction. I think this is because they feel they are directing the piece and the director is getting the credit for this. They seldom feel able to speak up about it for fear that this will compromise their relationship with the director and consequently, jeopardise their chance of future gainful employment - somewhat of a Catch 22…

I still do not fully understand where this project is going, but it is making me think and question my own practice and the practice of others and this greatly excites me. I'm still dubious that this can work, but I like the idea of it in theory and the socialist in me wants it to fully work…

Appendix 7

Selected notes from each artist's workshop planning for sharing of practice

AN's Workshop (25 March 2011)

My workshop is influenced by Grotowski's work

1. Introduction – explanation of structure of workshop and its characteristics
2. Everybody in circle following the leader, warm up
3. Walk in the space, opening the sight, awareness of the surroundings,
4. Hips and head
5. Group follows the movement of leader, leaders changing in the group
6. Back to the circle, rhythm with the feet
7. Teaching the song
8. Rhythm and song going together
9. Leader singing group responding with the same song and with the same impulse
10. Lie down breath and thank everyone

JR's Workshop (25 March 2011)

Celebrating our bodies? Which part of our body don't we like, let's exaggerate that part and move in the space and later interact with others - inspired by *Ubu Roi* by Alfred Jarry

Humour and Self - Be a stand-up comic

An exercise inspired by my dad's passing – influenced by Deirdre Heddon's *Autobiography and Performance* and Michael Chekhov's psychological gesture

a) Individual time with me as the dying parent
b) Monologue by participant after the dying of the parent
c) Psychological gesture based on monologue

GW's Workshop (2 April 2011)

I would like to make my workshop relaxed and fun and build it around something that doesn't really mean anything but allows the actor/the participant to free themselves up without any fear of making fools of themselves. Certain directors I have worked with have encouraged breaking through the barrier one places on oneself allowing for stupidity and getting out of your comfort zone.

Physical warm-up, Vocal warm-up

Club-singing

Pretend you are singing a well-known, song as a bad club-singer where the audience can't make out the words of your song. We will then guess what each person's song is, after which as a group we will work together and choreograph *Stand By Me* in our own style of club-singing to see if we can make a troupe of club-singers.

Hot Seating
Each member of the group will leave the room one at a time and come in as a character (a role they have played in the past) and will answer 5 minutes of questioning about her/him as that character. Have with you one object that means a lot to this character.

DS's Workshop (2 April 2011)

Actors are so seldom involved in the design process when there are ways in which they could be. Can an all-inclusive design/art work be incorporated into the creative process by actors in ways that can influence the final piece?

Exercise 1: Art/Design

Have the team write a definition of art and a definition of design on separate pieces of paper without using the words art or design. I will write the words art and design on a piece of paper and place on either end of the room. The participants will be asked to exchange definitions and try and work out which ones belong to design and which to art. After this we will discuss the things that influence art and design, what restrictions prevail and whether there is a need to overcome these restrictions

Exercise 2: Shared Creation

Ask each one in the group to place a chair somewhere in the room in whichever way pleases her/him. Choose a colour of ribbon and wind the coloured ribbon through and around the chairs working around each other. At the end, discuss whether this has created a space or structure that actors can devise with/work with, whether it has created any mood or abstract shapes that may inspire movement or text

Exercise 3: Shared Abstract
This exercise is to be done without discussion. Provide the group with a selection of coloured papers, pens and scissors. Ask all involved to tear/cut and draw until they have filled a sheet of white paper with layers of creativity without anyone taking complete control. They can respond to each other's actions and change decisions made. In the end they will have an abstract that they would have all had input into. Does this abstract tell a story? Provide a setting? What emotions does it evoke? Was the team frustrated by changes to decisions made by the other group members?

SM's Workshop (11 April 2011)

Activity 1: Life Story Tableaux
Ask the group to take turns to tell their life story in 5 separate tableaux as if each of the images were a photograph of a particular time in their life. The others in the group will help to create the images. This will be useful for the group to learn a bit more about one another and get them thinking creatively and working together. It will also allow them to bring 'self' into a dramatic activity.

Activity 2: Antiques Road Show
Using a miniature lip gloss in the shape of a tiny boot, pass it around as we are seated in a circle and ask the group to take turns to explain what the object is and how much it is worth as if they were an antique expert. Get the others to ask questions of each expert's opinion. This will be a fun way for the group to use their imagination and see how quickly they can come up with ideas and put these across in a convincing way.

Activity 3: Improvisation using stimulus
I will lay out several old photographs, a few quotes from famous figures and a few world events from recent years. You will have time to look through them and everyone can choose one of each of the three elements. You will then imagine you are being interviewed for a documentary and using your chosen stimulus, you will have to tell us a story. The others can ask questions as if they were documentary makers. This will be a useful exercise to utilise and develop improvisation skills as the time will be limited for each person to create something with the things they have been given.

PC's Workshop as Pritam (16 June 2011)

Hi Lucy, Martin, Gordon, Monica and Fatima,

It was lovely to meet you all yesterday. I have some ideas that I think will be good to get us started. We spoke about coming up with buzz/stimulus words about our journey. Please think of two words each in case we have the same one. With our stimuli we can devise a short piece. I think this will be a good fun ice-breaker and we'll learn how we all work as a group.

Also can you bring in *A Comedy of Errors* from which I'd like you to pick a short section and choose who you'd like to read this scene with (maximum of 4 characters per scene)? The purpose of this exercise is to get to know who we are so no accents, just be yourself. Perhaps pick a scene if possible which means something to you. If you can't find something from this this play please choose any play/character that means something to you but copies will be needed.

Finally please write a six thousand word essay. JUST KIDDING!! Sorry, but can you write down 4 or 5 lines of lyrics from a song that means something to you. Do not show this to anyone or discuss it and please write them on plain white paper. All will be clear on the day.

Big love

Pritam x

Appendix 8   **Selection of edited video diary entries**

Friday 25th March 2011, CCA, UWS room
What do we understand of Anna and Jo's practice?

Saturday 2nd April 2011, CCA, UWS room
What do we understand of Gavin and David's practice?

Monday 11th April 2011, Jo's living room
What do we understand of Suzanne's practice?

Thursday 28th April 2011, CCA, UWS room
What type/form/content of theatre would we like to make?

Thursday 12th May, 2011, CCA, UWS room
Can leadership and collaboration co-exist?

Thursday 9th of June, 2011, CCA, UWS room
Why this character and how did you feel embodying him/her?

Thursday 16th of June, 2011, CCA, UWS room
What two words did our characters bring to the rehearsal room? What did we learn about self?

Sunday 26th of June, 2011, Jo's living room
How can I bring my creativity to the rehearsal room?

Thursday 30th of June 2011, CCA, UWS room
How are we coping with our multiple roles?

Sunday 10th of July, 2011, Jo's living room
Why BloodWater Theatre and what logo?

Thursday 15th of September, **2011**, Jo's kitchen
BloodWater Theatre reflects and looks ahead

Thursday 26th January 2012, Jo's living room
Anna's question: What role can the screen take on in the future development of this work?

Thursday 12th April, 2012, CCA, UWS room
Jamie's question: What is the one thing you would want to get out of the next show?

Friday 21st September 2012, CCA, UWS room
Jamie's question: Which aspect of your character would you like to probe?
Jo's question: Which aspect of the rehearsal did you find useful?

Saturday 3rd November, 2012, CCA, UWS room
Gavin's questions: Has today helped clarify things?
What do you hope to get from the hot seating?

Saturday 2nd February 2013, CCA, UWS Room
Gavin's questions: What was the rehearsal today like for Gordon, Fatima, Monika and Lucy?
What was the rehearsal today like for Gavin, Jo, Anna and Suzanne?

Saturday 9th March 2013, CCA, UWS room
Martin's question: How do we feel about the structure that is emerging?

Monday 8th April 2013, Jo's living room
Gavin: In the light of seeing the beginning of Gordon's journey, how do you feel about constructing your own journey?

Sunday 5th May 2013, Jo's living room
Anna's question: What do you as yourself think about the journey you are creating for your character?

Saturday 20th July 2013, CCA, UWS room
Suzanne's question: How do you feel about today's rehearsal?

Saturday 14th September 2013, CCA, UWS room
Anna's question: How will we manage?

Sunday 29th September 2013, CCA, UWS room
Martin's question: Do you think there is an actual show here that an audience is going to be interested in?

Wednesday 16th November 2013, CCA, UWS room
Suzanne's question: What do you hope to get out of the feedback from the focus group?

Friday 31st January 2014, CCA, dressing room
No question

Saturday 29th November 2014, Jo's home
Jo's questions: What impact has BloodWater Theatre had on your life?
What now for BloodWater?

Sunday 18th October 2015, Jo's home
Jo's question: On completion of my PhD is there a future for BloodWater?

VIDEO DIARIES DVD (attached at the back of the thesis)

Appendix 9   Fictional Letters

Tron Theatre Ltd
Trongate, Glasgow,
G1 5HB,
Scotland,
United Kingdom,

Dear Theatre Practitioner,

Re: International Residency at the Tron, 10-15 October 2011

On behalf of the Tron Theatre, I would like to invite you to apply for the above. We are contacting theatre companies, community groups, actors and artists across the globe to apply for this residency as we feel that the stories from different communities are not heard at the same time in one setting. We are hoping that this encounter of artists from different communities will result in a small performance. The Tron does not have the funds to offer you a fee but will cover all your expenses. Whilst you will be provided with technical and administrative support, the chosen artists will be expected to lead on and develop all the artistic aspects of the residency. At the end of the week, the stories the artists develop together will be shared with an invited audience of Tron attenders, academics and artists. If the feedback from the audience is good, funding will be sought to develop the work over the next three years.

We believe this is an exciting project that will break new ground. If you feel worthy of this residency, please send a short 500 word essay on why your participation is necessary and an accompanying curriculum vitae.

The deadline for applications is the 30th of June 2011. We hope to hear from you soon.

Regards,

J. Peter (on behalf of the Tron)

Tron Theatre Ltd
Trongate, Glasgow,
G1 5HB,
Scotland,
United Kingdom,

Dear Gordon, Pritam, Monika, Lucy and Fatima,

Re: International Residency at the Tron, 10-15 October 2011

We are delighted that you have accepted our offer of a place on the above. Your interesting background and your commitment to theatre made you a very worthy applicant.

You would have been contacted by your mentor who will help you settle in prior to the first meeting of the group on Monday the 10th of October 2011. To enable optimum interaction of the group and the surrounding environment, we think it is best that you do not rely on your mentor once you are settled and make your own way to the first rehearsal.

The Tron stage manager, David Sneddon and the video artist, Martin Smith will be at the CCA to welcome you on Monday but will play an observation and documentation role after the initial introductions. We suggest that a good exercise to get to know each other would be to read the 500 word essay you submitted with your application. After that, the group has full autonomy to work and produce in whichever way they see fit. The next time we will see you will be at the sharing of the work on Saturday the 15th of October 2011 at 2pm. We are looking forward to it.

Hope you have an enjoyable and fruitful time making theatre.

Regards,

J. Peter (on behalf of the Tron)

Appendix 10   Artists' Essays

Essay in Support of the Residency at the Tron by Gordon O'Neill

The possibility of being involved in something so ground-breaking at such a prestigious theatre as the Tron in a very 'theatre busy' city like Glasgow is something that I would dearly like to be involved in and something I feel I can bring a lot to. I realise I don't have much professional acting experience but I am very hungry to learn having come into acting later than some after doing a degree in Business Studies at Strathclyde University. Having realised that path was not what I actually wanted to pursue as a career, I studied for 2 years at Coatbridge College doing an HND in Acting & Performance. Since then I have had a few auditions but without having an agent it has proven difficult.

Nevertheless, as a result of having given up a more 'routine' job and lifestyle, I feel I have shown a real commitment to being an actor even if my professional experience thus far hasn't shown that. I think my hunger to succeed, coupled with my ability would really enhance this project. Having moved to Glasgow from Belfast for University in 2000, I have become ever more attached to this city and of the many interesting theatre productions I have seen, two of my favourites have been at the Tron (The Drawer Boy and The Wonderful World of Dissocia) so to be able to combine an acting job and working there would see me fulfil a long-held ambition.

Without wishing to paint a picture of myself as some kind of unfortunate soul, there are far worse off than me, I believe because of my background and life-experience I can bring a lot to the project. I lost my father when I was 14 as a result of the *troubles* as it is rather 'affectionately' known over there, and the resultant chaos saw my Mum descend into troubles with alcoholism. I had to grow up quickly and perhaps that was why I was so keen to get away to University over here straight from school. I kind of ghosted through my degree and scraped a 2:2, much to the disappointment of my Mum who expected better – probably rightly so.

Since getting my degree and 'fulfilling her ambitions' (to an extent, despite my lowly mark) I have decided I am going to do what I want to do and after having travelled a little around England and France visiting friends from University, I settled on my acting ambitions. I have met some amazing and interesting people since leaving Belfast and they have all helped shape me into the person I am today. I don't have any plans to move from Glasgow and am here (both in the city and in the acting world) to stay. Although I have to say, in a smug way, it would be nice to work as an actor back in Belfast some day and invite my Mum. It'd be interesting to see if she would bother to come along. But that's her choice to be like that. I am happy to be doing what I am and so if I could be considered for this venture I would promise to do all I can to make it a success.

Essay in Support of the Residency at the Tron by Pritam Kapoor

I was born in Singapore in 1982. My mother died when I was 6 and I was looked after by my father who had a traditional upbringing. My father was forced to leave his birthplace as a

result of the partition in 1947. He saw a lot of awful things and was subjected to hate even from old friends.

My parents got married in Mumbai. They were neighbours and they both went to Singapore where my father worked as a salesman. He died a couple of years ago. And now they are together again.

Singapore is a wonderful place to grow up. There are VERY strict laws which are good as it makes it the magnificent place that it is. My upbringing was good. I had what I needed. My father and I never spoke much. He just said what he what had to be said. I never told him I was gay. Not to hurt him but probably to protect myself. I did have a traditional marriage through the will of my father and aunties. It was a good day…..for them.

Now I work and live in London with my new partner. He is Muslim so is going through very similar things I did back home. I work in sales and marketing for a large software company that my father would be proud of. There is a small theatre group that I attend. Nothing special just 'to get my foot in the door' I guess. London is fab. None of the restraints or stringent laws as Singapore (apart from the restraints my Muslim boyfriend has!). Now I pursue a new direction in acting with comments from people who say "Don't be daft you'll never do it, it's too tough". It's these nay Sayers that drive me to do it more. I think my boyfriend also feels a little threatened.

Essay in Support of the Residency at the Tron by Monika Nawrat

She was born in Torun, quite big city in north Poland, which every Pole knows for famous Christmas cakes. If her family was rated in the scale of greyness, they would be somewhere in the middle. Far from exemplary white, as father's drinking habits continuously brought shame upon entire family. Monika the eldest from all siblings, the example, the good student, the hard worker, but she could not be a replacement for her dysfunctional father no matter how hard she tried.

Her family (typical example of prisoners of this country's economic situation) says, she has to obtain quickly qualification which will bring her stable employment, she has to earn, she is an adult she should not consume hard-earned money of her parents. Monika is reasonable, has no choice, goes to nursing school, looking after people, caring for them, that's what she did all her life, looking after her family, that shouldn't be too hard. School finds her work experience, elderly house for the poorest, where the death expectancy is very high. After a while she gets used to wrinkled, clumsy, depressed skeletons. She even starts to make jokes about them with her work mates.

Graduation, she achieved it, she can now be economically independent from her family. She is ambitious - she wants to have another degree, Literature and Theatre studies – so it is. She

moves to Poznan, city in central Poland, wide streets, architectural order like nowhere she has ever been before.

She starts her course, works part-time in elderly home, starts to meet new people, her social live begins to exist. She starts dating, no luck...Her best mate Karolina, pretty girl, ball of energy, head full of ideas. They spend a lot of time together, theatre, galleries, clubs, pubs, Monika starts to wonder, she starts to feel something, something that she finds repulsive, disgusting but irresistible, she is in love, in love with Karolina. It is platonic and never is going to be anything else, Karolina is clearly not that kind of girl.

Monika starts working with acclaimed Polish theatre Biuro Podrozy, she finally finds place for herself, amongst other bruised souls. Her constant struggle to accept herself seems to find an end. She even secretly starts dating but they are all twisted, broken, semi-able to love and lost in their desires.

She is not appreciated as an artist by her family, she's badly paid, it can be better, she's ambitious. She has friends in Aberdeen, she can leave country. She starts to consider going, she would no longer have to care about hiding her sexuality, her family and old friends would be back home, sweetly unaware, happy that she is making a lot of money abroad. She is not persuaded, she knows enough English, scared that again she would not find acceptance and understanding.

Aberdeen

First time on plane, Monika chooses to fly with Ryanair, the cheapest option. It is end of summer, plane is nearly full. She arrives exactly two hours before her plane. Mum and dad are there to say goodbye, it feels like she is never going to see them and it is not very painful. She tries to avoid people. They tend to ask uncomfortable questions, it is better to avoid them. There is no smoking area in departure hall, it is worrying, no space for a quick toxic breath, everyone seems to be nervous, child crying in the corner, his mother cannot calm him down. There are few children on this plane, when one stops crying the other one starts. She tries to understand everything that is being said to her in English, she starts to worry but there is nothing to worry about, they all have funny accents and speak very quickly. Sitting next to window is always great, the earth gets smaller, labyrinths of known cities look exotic, clouds seems to materialise like never and seem to have dangerous powers. Thanks God there was no turbulence. It's only two hours but it feels like entirety for Monica.

Edinburgh Airport is just like Krakow's, modern, not too big, just enough for first time. Luggage picked up, now is the time to start navigation and communication course for beginners. Monika follows the crowd of Poles pouring from arrival hall, exit found and now what? Journey would be long. She finds bus which takes her to Edinburgh. Despite cloudy and a bit rainy weather Edinburgh looks great. From the bus she observes beautiful city, full of historic well-kept buildings, crowded with tourists, where the rhythm of the traffic says

that the streets are more used to nineteenth century carriages than modern means of transport. Finding the bus at the airport was one thing and now finding train station in Edinburgh is the other. She is depending on a few printed out maps of the city. These are not very good guides, there is no way she is going to dare to ask somebody for directions…well she won't understand them anyway. Crushing weight of her luggage stops her from finding enjoyment in discovering streets of Edinburgh. After hour of wondering around she finds the station. It was hiding in the corner of her eye. Captivated by colourful crowd she was lost in new surroundings.

The train station looks great, electronic screens showing direction and times of each train. Train station is clean, it is old but kind of new, with seductively looking coffee and sandwich shops which remind her how hungry she is. She needs to get on the train to Aberdeen. She goes to ticket office. Travelling terminology is totally alien to her and she struggles with understanding what 'Single' and 'Return' mean. Routine consumed middle aged woman who is serving Monika has no understanding of what stress she is going under. Fear that she might buy the wrong ticket, end up in God knows where and spending fortune all these thoughts are consuming the poor girl. Eventually Monika manages to explain: 'Ticket to Aberdeen please, I go to Aberdeen, Aberdeen today'. The woman prints out the ticket, to guess the prize Monika looks at the till screen, thirty eight pounds and fifty pens, two hundred Polish zloty, third of her normal pay. Like for late summer weather is awful. Monika is glad to be foreseeing, her weatherproof clothing seems to be enough to keep her in comfort.

They much better there, not struggling with money, nobody cares that they gay, only weather is bad. So she goes and crosses the sea.

Another challenge: She finds job quickly, in UK they need nurses.

Essay in Support of the Residency at the Tron by Lucy Fitzpatrick

I am Lucy and I am 23. I am originally from a little place called Duns in Berwickshire in the Scottish Borders. When I was 15, my family moved us over to Sydney in Australia where we live in a beautiful big house overlooking Coogee Beach. My father is a property developer and my mother is a midwife. I have a younger sister Emma who is studying at the moment. I was very reluctant to move away from Scotland as a teenager. My grandmother still lives in the Borders and we were always very close. To have the opportunity to come over and spend time in Scotland and spend time with my gran would mean a lot to me.

I have a wonderful lifestyle in Australia, but I have often found it a struggle to find my own voice. I have made sure to keep my accent, though I was teased when I went to school over here. My sister is like a proper Aussie now and can't understand why I haven't adopted the accent. I am proud to be Scottish and feel that I will lose that if I lose my accent.

The only thing that interested me at school was the drama work we got to do with the Sydney Theatre Company and it has been since then that I have stuck with them and I have participated in performances and gone on to help out with their education programme. Drama really helps me to express myself. I think taking part in this project at the Tron would really be good for me as it would allow me to use the skills that I have learned in Sydney and learn loads more about working together with people from different cultural backgrounds. I think it would help me to meet new people from different places and learn about new ways of working. I love an adventure and I am excited just thinking about coming to Scotland and being a part of the culture of where I grew up and maybe this project may help me work out where I belong.

Essay in Support of the Residency at the Tron by Fatima Rateb

I was born in Cairo in 1963. It was a time of national pride because the Suez Canal had been returned to us and the Aswan High Dam was built. I remember witnessing my parents' pride, talking about Egypt's freedom from colonisation. I was too little to understand it all. Both my parents are dead now but I felt and still do feel that same pride when the people's revolution took place, Mubarak stepped down and Egyptians had the courage and determination to return Egypt to the people.

I moved to London as a teenager. My father got a job as a lecturer of Middle Eastern Studies at a London University. My mum was a very clever woman but she never worked. She stayed at home and looked after my brother and me. My parents are Muslims but not traditional. My dad never expected mum to cover her head. I cover my head not because I am Muslim; I am non-religious and believe in the secular state. I wear a scarf because I don't have to work so hard at gaining the trust of the more conservative Muslims. It is important to me that I gain the trust of traditional Muslim women. I have grown used to wearing a scarf all the time now.

I grew up both in Egypt and England and although, I don't travel to Egypt as often as I would like to, I see myself as living in both London and Cairo. I went to Central School of Speech and Drama. In those days it was very odd to see a woman of my colour aspiring to take on the stage even in London. I must confess, I was a rebel then and dressed to provoke much to the distress of my parents. I don't act much now, I write poems, novels and non-fiction. I like to create worlds for the people I know, see and imagine but equally I like to write essays where logic coupled with humanity allows me to express my desire for social transformation.

In 1992, I was invited to review the shows at the Cairo International Experimental Festival for the Egyptian Gazette, the English language Egyptian daily. The participation of Egyptian companies, Syria, Lebanon and a few other Arab countries fascinated me. It opened my eyes to the possibilities of theatre in Islamic regions. I have since always found time to work with Muslim women in London who want to express themselves but not on Western terms. I learn

much from them as my Western theatre training is sometimes an obstacle to finding new ways of telling stories.

I was very upset when I heard about the shooting of Juliano Mer Khamis. I had visited the Freedom Theatre in Jenin last year and was inspired by the work of Juliano, his colleagues and the young people who were expressing anger, loss and hope in highly creative ways. There is no excuse for Hamas' shooting of Juliano. He resurrected his mum's theatre knowing that this maybe his fate one day. I don't think I have the same courage as him but I think what I am learning from working with Muslim women is how to negotiate boundaries. I think *Animal Farm* was a step too far for the community.

I think the Tron residency is a very good way of sharing stories that are not told in enough places. If selected, I will be so excited about meeting theatre folk whose stories I have never heard and creating a performance with them would bring me such joy. I want to discover what boundaries need to be negotiated when working with people who are so different from me.

Appendix 11   Video footage

Appendix 11a: The first meeting of the fictional artists (rehearsal-edited version)

Appendix 11b: Performance of *Whose Story Is It Anyway,* Tron Theatre, 15 October 2011(full production)

Appendix 11c: The fictional artists reunite (rehearsal-edited version)

Appendix 11d: Performance of *Leave Your Shoes at the Door*, CCA, 31 January 2014 (full production)

Appendix 11e: *Murmurations*, developed and performed by Kirsty MacKenzie, Priya Munogee and Poppy Lironi, UWS Performance Showcase, CCA, 25 May 2016 (edited version of student work included with consent)

DVD of PRACTICE (attached at the back of the thesis)

Appendix 12   **Action Plan**

18th July: Finalise publicity material and send to the Tron.   **Jamie** and **Jo** will be responsible. If it cannot be finalised by the 18th, Jamie will liaise with the Tron and keep **Jo** in the loop.   **Jamie** will follow up with **David** any issues arising from the logo, with **Martin** any issues arising from the photographs and with **the rest of us** any issues arising from the text, with Kirsty Shea at the Tron and **Jo**, any issues arising from the publicity.

12th August: All actors to be off the book for Act 1 Scene 1 and Act 2 Scene 1 (**Anna, Suzanne, Paul** and **Jo**)

Anna to direct screen scene, Act 1 Scene 2 (**Anna, Paul** and **Gavin)**

By **12th August**, Act 1 Scene 2, to be filmed and edited (**Anna, Martin, Gavin** and **Paul**)

By **12th August**, a **v**isit to the Tron (**David** to organise, **Jamie** and **Martin** to attend)

On-going: Screen and photographic aspects of Act 1 Scene 1 (**Martin**)

12th August – **15th September**: **Anna**, **Martin**, **David**, **Gavin**, **Paul** and **Jamie** to complete filming for the remaining screen scenes, **Paul, Anna, Suzanne and Jo**, to learn lines for the remaining live scenes, **Jo** to remind everyone of the next big group rehearsal on the 15th of September

SHOOTING PLAN FOR OPENING SCENE
LOCATION: EXT. WATERFRONT
1.1   VERY WIDE ESTABLISHING SHOT
1.2   VERY WIDE AS DS WITH MAP
1.3   WIDE, AS AND DS TOGETHER WITH MAP, PHONE RINGS
1.4   CLOSE UP ON AS, FACE LISTENING TO MERCHANT
1.5   WIDE, AS AND DS TOGETHER, AS GIVES CHEQUE TO DS
1.6   OVER THE SHOULDER, WE SEE DS, DS. LEAVES
1.7   MID SHOT GOING INTO EXTREME WIDE???, AS FINISHES CONVERSATION AND STARTS THINKING
1.8   VERY WIDE SHOT, AS ALONE IN SPACE
1.9   VERY WIDE SHOT, AS ALONE IN SPACE, DS RUNS IN SHOUTING, AS TURNS TO WHERE SOUND COMES FROM
1.10   WIDE, DS WALKS INTO THE SHOT
1.11   WIDE,(ANGLED) DS POINTING FOOD PACKAGE
1.12   OVER THE SHOULDER, WE SEE AS
1.13   OVER THE SHOULDER, WE SEE AS
1.14   OVER THE SHOULDER, WE SEE DE
1.15   WIDE, (STRAIGHT) AS STEPS IN TOWARDS DE
1.16   OVER THE SHOULDER, WE SEE AS
1.17   WIDE, (ANGLED) WE SEE AS AND DS
1.18   WIDE, (STRAIGHT) WE AS AND DS, AS GRABS DS
1.19   OVER THE SHOULDER, TIGHT ON AS, AS ANGRY
1.20   OVER THE SHOULDER, TIGHT ON DE, DE IS HOLDED, GETS AWAY
1.21   VERY WIDE, (ANGLED), DE IS RUNNING AWAY
1.22   WIDE, AS WALKING WITH MAP,
1.23   CUT AND COMMING OUT OF CHARACTERS

SHOOTING PLAN FOR SCENES IN OFFICE LOCATION AND CUTWAYS
LOCATION: INT. OFFICE

2.1. WIDE, MERCHANT SITTING AT THE DESK, WE SEE HIM FROM BEHIND2.2. (EXTREME CLOSE UP) F.M. FACE WITH PHONE

2.3. (EXTREME CLOSE UP) F.M. FACE WITH PHONE SMILLING WHEN HE LISTENS

CUTAWAYS ARE INDICATED BELOW, MARTIN IS FREE TO CHANGE THE IMAGES I SELECTED BUT THE NUMBER OF THEM PROBABLY NEEDS TO BE SIMILAR.

3.1. CUTAWAY: OBJECTS ON HIS DESK; CLOCK, CHEQUE, PHONE

3.2. CUTAWAY: DURING F.M. NEXT LINES CUTS TO PASSPORT, VISA, HANDS CHAINED UP

3.3. CUTAWAY: DURING NEXT A.S. LINES CUTS TO CITY, PEDESTARINS, BANK

3.4. CUTAWAY: CLOCK, DRINKS, MONEY BEING HANDED OVER

3.5. CUTAWAY: DURING NEXT COMING LINES CUTS TO PHOTOS FROM CHILDHOOD

3.6. CUTAWAY: DURING NEXT LINES CUTS TO WAITING ADRIANNA, BROKEN PLATE.

3.7. CUTAWAY: MONEY BEING HANDED OVER AND BILL GIVEN

3.8. CUTAWAY: ANGRY ADRIANNA

3.9. CUTAWAY: DURING NEXT LINE CUT TO OPENING DOOR

3.10 CUTAWAY: ADRIANA SHOUTING AND HITS D.E.

3.10 CUTAWAY: CITY, BEGGAR'S CUP, MONEY THROWN INTO.

Appendix 14   Jamie Walker's Letter

Tron Theatre Ltd
Trongate, Glasgow,
G1 5HB,
Scotland,
United Kingdom,

Dear Fatima, Pritam, Lucy, Monika, Martin and Gordon,

Re: 2ⁿᵈ International Residency at the Tron October 2013?

Hello everyone! It's been awhile! I hope you are doing well. I am up to speed with a few of you but slightly more behind on the more rebellious individuals of the company! How is the secretive film making man? I'm relying on you to make the Tron the place to go for independent film showcases.

Right, the rest of you performers... globe-trotting I expect? Don't forget us!
Down to the nitty gritty - business time...

Feedback from the artistic director and assistants at the Tron to your piece ***Whose Story Is It Anyway*** was certainly intriguing. The artistic director appreciated the video which was passed along to him and apologises to you for not having attended the performance. Questions on process ran rampant both in audience feedback forms and the more creatively distinguished audiences.

From the Tron's perspective we liked what we saw and would like, in an ideal situation, to keep it going. Hopefully have another performance at a similar time in 2013; whatever that may be! ***Whose Story Is It Anyway*** prompted debate here at the Tron and the audience feedback suggests an interest in seeing more devised work from the artists but the question to you guys is, are you up for that?

Would you be keen to accept this invitation and continue with your devising work? Again, at this point we can cover your expenses but are not able to provide you with a fee. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

Jamie Walker, Tron Stage Manager (on behalf of the Tron)

Appendix 15

The Dialectical Self

Monika

Born and grew up in Torun, moved to Poznań in 2010 for two years before settling in Aberdeen

Anna

Born and grew up in Zabrze, moved to Glasgow in 2006, currently living in London

Pritam

Born and grew up in Singapore, moved to London in 1998 and has lived there since

Paul

Born and grew up in Glasgow, continues to live there

Fatima

Born in Cairo, moved to London as a teenager but has lived in both cities all of her life

Jo

Born and grew up in Singapore, moved to Glasgow in 1992 and has lived there since

Gordon

Born and grew up in Belfast before moving to Glasgow in 2000 and continues to live there

Gavin

Born in Glasgow, moved to Penrith in 1986, lived there for 13 years till he returned to Glasgow and settled there

Lucy

Born and grew up in Berwickshire, moved to Sydney in 2005 and has lived there since

Suzanne

Born and grew up in Glasgow, continues to live there

The Dialectical Collective

BLOOD WATER

Appendix 16   **Exemplar Agenda**

Agenda 21st September 2012 – CCA

1.30pm 2.00pm – Jamie and Jo to try out technology for skype, Suzanne and Paul to arrive at 2pm.

2.00pm – 2.15pm – trial run with Anna and Gavin

2.15pm – 3.00pm – Way forward in creating the work (including setting date and time for monthly rehearsal) – Suzanne, Paul, Jamie and Jo

3.00pm – 3.30pm – Jamie (in role), Lucy, Fatima and Pritam in rehearsal

3.30pm – 3.45pm – live rehearsal with Monika on skype

4.00pm- 4.15pm – live rehearsal with Gordon on skype

4.15pm -4.30pm – round up of rehearsal with Fatima, Pritam, Lucy and Jamie (Martin to arrive at the later stage to film rehearsal, Jamie to film skype bits of rehearsal if Martin is not there yet) – video diary entry – Jamie and I to come up with questions for video diary- Gavin and Anna, can you film your entry and send it to Martin. I will e-mail you the question after the rehearsal.

4.30pm – 6.00pm – Evaluation of rehearsal and way forward including setting date and time for monthly rehearsal (know Suzanne and Paul will have to leave but Martin and Jamie it would be could to discuss)

Agenda: Saturday 14th September 2013 1.00pm, CCA

Work through revised prologue (outstanding images, headshots for Martin, Jamie and David, photo of the Tron)

Work through 5 day structure for screen narrative (find ways to make the continuity chart work better)

Develop and rehearse Fatima, Lucy, Jamie and Monika's journey

Take BloodWater Theatre group photo, publicity shots for *Leave Your Shoes at the Door* for CCA website and brochure, and our website, discuss publicity blurb

Complete filming for day 3

Develop Gordon's journey

Rehearsal schedule including open rehearsal for focus group

Video diary

Appendix 17   *Whose Story Is It Anyway* **Invitation and publicity**

BloodWater Theatre presents

(In association with University of the West of Scotland and Central School of Speech & Drama with support from the Tron Theatre)

Whose Story Is It Anyway?

Calling all Theatre-Makers, Funders and Audience,

Jo Ronan, theatre-maker, performance lecturer and PhD student, together with members of the newly created BloodWater Theatre, would like to invite you to a performance of *Whose Story Is It Anyway*, a developing project that challenges assumptions of ways of making theatre.

The two performances at the Tron on the 15th of October at 2.30pm and 8pm respectively are free but ticketed.

Please refer to http://www.jamie-walker.com/BloodWaterTheatre and/or http://www.tron.co.uk/event/whos_story_is_it_anyway/ for more information about the project and ticket reservations.

As there are only two performances, tickets are limited so please let the Tron box office know if you have made a reservation but are unable to attend.

Be the first to catch the nascent stage of this pioneering work!

Dates: 15th Oct @ 20.00
15th Oct @ 14.30
Tickets: Free But Ticketed

WHOSE STORY IS IT ANYWAY?

This event was held in the past and is no longer available for booking.

BloodWater Theatre (*in association with University of the West of Scotland and Central School of Speech & Drama*) presents *Whose Story Is It Anyway?*

Five artists from around the world have been selected for a week's residency here at the Tron by Jo Ronan, a lecturer of performance at UWS and a PhD Student at Central investigating modes of production in the theatre.

In sourcing material for a presentation to mark the end of the week's residency, the group turn to Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors.* Whilst rehearsing, veiled aspects of the actors' selves are brought to the surface to test the possibilities of aesthetic ownership of theatre-making.

Who's Story Is It Anyway includes live performance, interactive media, a talk on new ways of making, spectating and funding theatre and a dialogue with the audience about *BloodWater Theatre* who aspire to make moving performances that challenge minds.

Appendix 18   A selection of e-mail correspondence on seeking funds

Letter of invitation to potential funders sent between 30.09.11 – 02.10.11 (generic letter with some variations depending on who was being invited)

Dear …

Re: Practice-based Research Pitch at the Tron Theatre

Just to introduce myself. I am a Performance lecturer at the University of the West of Scotland, a PhD student at the Central School of Speech and Drama and an artist. I was a founding member of the Necessary Stage Theatre Company in Singapore in 1997 and associate director with 7:84 (Scotland) till the theatre company closed down in 2009. I would be very grateful if you had the time to attend a practice-based pitch of a new work I am producing collaboratively as part of my PhD. I am interrogating egalitarian modes of theatre production in a capitalistic economy and hoping to get investors from both the creative industries and the research communities. I will apply for funds through the conventional application processes but am hoping that potential stakeholders can have access to elements of the live theatre experience before I follow up with formal application procedures. I attach the invitation to the event (the links provide more information). Below is the introductory paragraph of a paper I delivered in May which encapsulates one of my research aims:

Can a Sense of Community be created in Traditional Venue-based Theatre?
What prompts this question? Tim Prentki, Jan Selman, Sheila Preston and many other scholars of applied theatre, write extensively on the development of theatre in community contexts and its potential for social transformation. Radical theatre work tends to take place out with traditional theatre venues. Whilst I believe taking theatre out of traditional venues and creating performance in alternative settings, facilitates the democratisation of the theatre space, my primary aim is to revisit traditional venue-based theatre with a view to exploring it as a site for the making of democratic theatre. This aim is governed by Alain Badiou's writings on the inescapability of theatre from state, the theatre as a dialectic space and the relationship between truth and ethics.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Regards,
Jo

Some Replies:

e-mail sent on 01.10.11:

Dear Jo
Thank you for getting in touch. I'm afraid I am not able to attend the session, but even if I were able, as we must treat all our potential applicants in the same way we would not be able to consider this as part of our investment process.
I wish you the best of luck with both this event and your application.

With good wishes

Venu Dhupa | Director of Creative Development
Creative Scotland

e-mail sent on 12.10.11:

Dear Jo,
I am writing on behalf of Andrew Dixon who would like to thank you for your invitation to attend the 'Whose Story is it anyway' performance on 15 October 2011.
Unfortunately Andrew is unavailable due to another commitment but hopes the event will be a success.
With kind regards
Vickie Ambrose | Senior PA
Creative Scotland

e-mail sent on 01.10.11:

Dear Jo - thank you for your invitation - it sounds a very interesting project but I am afraid my workload commitments don't allow for this kind of involvement. However, I hope it goes well and good luck with your PHD.
Best wishes
Caroline
Caroline Docherty | Portfolio Partnership Manager
Creative Scotland

e-mail sent on 13.10.11:

Hi Jo Thanks for this invitation. Unfortunately the Carnegie UK Trust is no longer a grant-making trust, so we will not be in a position to support your work. I am interested in your ambitions, but am not sure that I will be free to attend this event on Saturday.
Hope it goes well.
Best wishes
Liz
Liz Macdonald
Senior Policy Officer
Carnegie UK Trust

e-mail sent on 13.10.11:

Dear Jo
Thank you for your email to Sir Tom Hunter at the Hunter Foundation, inviting him to attend the show on Saturday 15th October.
Sir Tom is unable to accept your invitation, as he will be on holiday with his family, but hopes that the show is a huge success.
Kind Regards
Jacqueline Lennon
The Hunter Foundation

e-mail sent on 11.10.11:

Hi Jo,
Thanks for the invite but I'm going to be down in Yorkshire this Saturday.
I hope the pitch goes well.
Best wishes,
John
 John Tiffany
 Associate Director

e-mail sent on 14.10.11:

Hi Jo,
Many thanks for your email to Margaret-Anne and apologies for the delay in responding.
Unfortunately on this occasion, no-one from our creative team will be able to attend, but it sounds like an exciting approach to work - please do keep us up to date with any future showings.
All the best with your project,
Dawn
Dawn Taylor
Artistic Assistant
National Theatre of Scotland

Following on from the research pitch of *WSA*

Hi Andy, (artistic director, Tron, e-mail sent on 22.03.12)
Hope you are well and the Tron is continuing to be resilient amidst all these austerity measures.

Sorry I haven't been in touch about BloodWater for a while, it has been very challenging at work.

I am now at the stage when I am seeking one off funding for Whose Story Is It Anyway by BloodWater Theatre. It would be useful to meet when you are not too busy but in the meantime, I need to get cracking with applications so it would be good to run some things past you first. If there are no pledges for funding by September/October 2012, I will not do

the project and rethink my approach to the PhD.

I would like to continue with the 3 partners, the Tron, CSSD and UWS. I am hoping that the Tron can receive and manage all the funding I receive for production/marketing costs (would be useful to go through the budget with a Tron finance person), UWS will receive and manage all the funding I receive for research costs…

…Many, many thanks for the opportunities so far. I hope you will be able to continue to support the work I am doing and I will be able to bring new audiences into the Tron

Regards,

Jo

Dear Andy, (e-mail sent on 23.04.12)
I am so sorry to be bothering you but any chance of a meeting to discuss BloodWater Theatre. I am not looking for money but I am looking for partners who can support this type of work so that I in turn can source funds. The website should be up and running within a week and what the company does will become clearer when you visit the site. The 12 minute video will be loaded unto the site as well. Any chance of a meeting anytime that suits you?

Regards,
Jo

Hi Andy, (e-mail sent on 27.04.12)
Hope you are well.
Just to let you know the website is up and running - bloodwatertheatre.com
It is a one stop shop for giving you all the information you may need.
Regards,
Jo

e-mail sent 27.04.12:

Thanks Jo. Sorry I haven't got back before now to your last email. It's been madness here of late and I've had be out of Glasgow quite a bit concerning plays on the road and future productions. I've just looked at the website and watched some of the video clips and it's very helpful. Thanks for that. See you soon.
Andy

e-mail sent 15.05.12:

Hi Jo, I'm slowly going through emails and have just very belatedly read yours! I hope the focus group sessions went well
Andy

e-mail sent on 19.04.12 in reply to my request for guidance on funding

Dear Jo, Thank you for your enquiry. If you are looking for funding to produce new work as part of your PhD with the University of London, then unfortunately Creative Scotland will

not be able to assist you. According to our Submitting Your Application and Detailed Definitions document, under people who cannot apply; students in full-time formal education (i.e. 16 hours or more per week) at the date of the project start. Applications may be considered from individuals who are working at a professional level within the arts and film sector undertaking a part-time course of study, but this will depend on the nature of your project and how it relates to your course: we cannot fund any activity which is related to courses of formal education or which leads to a formal qualification.

You may wish instead to look at the Turn2us <<<<http://www.turn2us.org.uk/grants_search.aspx>>>> website which has a free searchable database containing details of a large number of charitable funds offering welfare and educational grants to individuals.

 The following schemes and searches are also worth looking into for students:

 BBC: Performing Arts Fund- www.bbc.co.uk/performingartsfund- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/performingartsfund-> Support performing arts individuals and community groups through grants, mentoring and advice.

 Dewar Arts Awards <<<<http://www.dewarawards.org/Home.aspx>>>> - aims to give talented young people some assistance in fulfilling their potential in any branch of the arts.

Student Award Agency Scotland (SAAS): <<<<http://www.student-support-saas.gov.uk/student_support/index.htm>>>>

Art and Humanities Research Council: <<<<<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk>>>>> - The AHRC supports students by providing funding for research within a huge subject domain from traditional humanities subjects, such as history, modern languages and English literature, to the creative and performing arts.

I am sorry that we cannot assist you at this time but please feel free to contact us again if you have any additional questions or concerns.

 Sincerely,

 Nick

 Enquiries

Creative Scotland

e-mail sent on 19.04.12:

Dear Nick, Thank you so much for getting back.

I hope it is ok to clarify a few things and continue to get your advice on this matter as I believe Creative Scotland is the appropriate funder for the costs of production for Whose Story Is It Anyway.

I formed BloodWater Theatre to answer some of the research questions of my PhD which needed to be interrogated via practice. One of the research areas is about the relationship between artists and funders in creating performance in a capitalist economy. The production itself does not lead to a doctoral award. A circa 60,000 word thesis is integral to the award.

I am in fulltime employment, doing a part time PhD seeking to produce professional work collaboratively with artists who are all freelance and based in Scotland. I will be looking to funders like the AHRC to fund my salary for the period whilst I develop this work. However, the funds I seek from Creative Scotland are for the wages of the freelance artists and the production costs for the development of Whose Story Is It Anyway for a run at the Tron Theatre for Mayfesto 2013.

In terms of the funders, you suggest (with the exception of the AHRC for my research time) none of them are suitable for getting funds for the freelance artists I am working with and the costs of production. A website with the artists I am working with will be shortly available and I will forward the link as soon as.

My belief is that the highest level of artistic vision can only be realised when research funders and state funders for the arts come together. I have attached my CV for your attention.

Regards,

Jo

e-mail sent on 26.04.17

Dear Jo, Thank you for clarifying your position. Using the details you have given me I think you are eligible for funding as applications may be considered from individuals who are working at a professional level within the arts and film sector undertaking a part-time course of study, but this will depend on the nature of your project and how it relates to your course: we cannot fund any activity which is related to courses of formal education or which leads to a formal qualification.

Before you apply you should also check whether you are eligible to apply by reading through our 'Submitting your Application and Detailed Definitions Guide' which will explain the types of groups that can and cannot apply to us for funding. You can find this guide here: <<<<<<<http://www.creativescotland.com/investment/investment-overview/definitions-eligibility>>>>>>>.

As our funds are currently divided according to activity rather than art form, what you apply to will depend on the type of activity you wish to undertake. For instance if you the focus of your project is to produce a theatre production, then I suggest that you have a look at our new Quality Production Arts investment programme. This scheme exists to fund high quality new work, and supports the individuals and organisations who want to produce it. For more information please go here: <<<<<<<<http://www.creativescotland.com/investment/investment-programmes/quality-production-%E2%80%93-arts>>>>>>>>. The guidelines for this fund are held within the guidelines for the Quality Production Arts Investment Programme. Please note that in order to apply to us for funding your project must either be a resident of Scotland or your project

must be of benefit to the people of Scotland, meaning your project must take place in Scotland.

The process for application would be for you to identify the scheme that may be appropriate, and for you to then fully appraise yourself of its criteria and requirements. Then you can either make an application, or speak to one of our officers about specific queries around an application at one of our Open Lines or Drop In surgeries (details here - <<<<<<<<<http://www.creativescotland.com/investment/investment-overview/open-line-surgeries>>>>>>>>>).

Please feel free to contact us again if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Nick Wong

Enquiries
Creative Scotland

Appendix 19   Excerpts from focus group, Tuesday 8th May 2012

Present: John Quinn (moderator, academic), Hazel MacDonald (GP), Lorenzo Mele (arts manager), Martin McCardie (scriptwriter/actor/director), Eileen Frater (documentary maker), Ross McFarlane (acting/singing coach), Paula McCann (community artist), Suzanne Morrison (BWT), Martin Smith (BWT) and Jo Ronan (BWT)

(The discussion took place after the group was shown an edited version of *Whose Story Is It Anyway* staged on the 15th of October 2011 to help refresh their memories)

Excerpts from transcript

Quinn: Thoughts and feelings? ...

McCann: … I think it was really nice getting to see little glimpses of the process as well, that made me feel like it was a kind of unified thing…

McCardie: … What interested me was the process. What I think about the product is 'What is the product?' If you were going to another level and if you were going to do this in a theatre where it's reviewed, where tickets are getting sold, it changes what the product becomes…

Mele: …But where the process is one thing, however radical the process, does it then just become this thing that's sold in the marketplace against everything else that's sold in the marketplace…and then you are only as successful as how slick your marketing is and this reviewer and that reviewer liking it or not…

McCardie: … I would try and sell the process as the product… might not have a gigantic wide audience, but it would certainly have a niche audience

Frater: … would somebody be entertained by watching the process as a product and I think some people would be, I think I would be because I think it's different. **(Voices in agreement)**

McCann: … I think sometimes when you go and see something that is...just a finished product, you are completely removed from it and I think that's part of the thing about community theatre is that you're trying to get people involved and I think to reveal a process, something that you can show people, it immediately opens up that line of access …

MacDonald: … it kept you totally in the moment, it was a production that your senses were always alert and you were thinking 'what are you trying to portray here' so that rather than just sitting back and watching a performance and being passive…

McFarlane: … I think it would be quite interesting to actually see the process during the performance like in Theatre Practice (referring to a theatre module that Ronan tutored him on at UWS)…

Quinn: So I think what we really want to do is get your opinion on this notion of sharing the responsibilities within the rehearsal room and not having a fixed responsibility …

Frater: … It obviously worked well with this particular group, but they were kind of specially chosen in a way by you, weren't they, in other groups it might not work at all. Some people might not want to work that way.

Ronan: … I may have the vision of bringing this group of people together, but I'm testing if this vision for what BloodWater makes can be collectively owned even if it is.my PHD, can the community of the artists that make work, own that work?

McCardie: … Your PhD is a product in the end, it's something that you're getting and if you weren't doing the PhD, would this group have been organised and come together? … The PhD is not what everything else is about, but that's how something originated…

Ronan: … BloodWater survives beyond my PhD …

Frater: … I think for any project, there's got to be a driving force, whether it's a personality, which obviously Jo is…

Ronan: I think that is true for now. Right now, I'm the one that's spending the most time trying to get the funds. But that's because in a way, it's my PhD but what I think is that this process tests the making of the work and the decisions to be made with more than one driver…the collective artistic responsibility …

Morrison: … I suppose the pressure was on all of us because we knew it was going to go in front of an audience so I suppose we all had the motivation to be like 'right, we need to really work to get this to something that we're all happy with to be put in front of an audience …

Smith: … it really was an evolving process of starting off with absolutely nothing, with everybody doing one thing that completely turned into something else, which was really interesting and I think we all agreed that what we performed at the Tron was 'this is the idea we want to go down, rather than this is what it is'

Ronan: … But what we know is there is something that all these characters have brought into the space that is worth building a narrative around …

Morrison: I think that was the point in doing the forms as well for the audience to see what was their take on it as an audience and was there a need for a lead character …

Quinn: Lorenzo, how does this sit with your experience as a director?

Mele: ...I said to Jo at the afternoon performance…asked about the film that was shown, 'Who edited the film?' I think she said everyone had some say in it, but in the end I think she said it was her and you (points to Smith) … battled through the final edit to show. Is that fair to say?

Morrison: Well, yeah for the technicality of it. But I think quite late on, we all said it needed to be edited more so we all had a say in what should be included in it …

Mele: And I thought, well that's always going to reflect something about Jo isn't it. That if she is involved in the final process, can you ever really get away from that? Working in a collaborative way, at what point do you say, not everyone's idea is equal? Not everyone's input is equal. Actually that is not always the case. At different times, people would have...I mean, as director, the traditional one… you've seen the big picture then made a judgement on how things fit together and can you ever completely get away from that? However much a collaborative process it is, at some point, do those roles have to tighten into specialisms. That

makes it sound very traditional. At some point does that have to happen? And can you still have a democracy even within that specialism

Frater: Because I'm doing a documentary and you're interviewing people, you've got a 20 minute narrative to cut down to 6 minutes … I don't think it can totally be everybody's because there's got to be somebody that's running the show and if you have got a fully collaborative thing, I don't think it will ever come to an end.

…

Quinn: … I suppose we want to talk about this notion of participation, the audience participation in theatre. Is that something that's comfortable or uncomfortable? What are your thoughts on that?

Frater: If I go to a traditional theatre to see a production, I assume that I'm going to be passive, that I'm not going to be participating, but if you move me into a different sort of environment where I'm not going to sit back then I will look to be more involved …

Quinn: As a writer Martin, how does that sit with you?

McCardie: Well, I think you could all design this project to have more audience participation if you wanted to, but even then that could be a false thing because you might be doing that to tick the box … My big bombshell thing that I'll throw in is what you're now doing with BloodWater is you're now going to try seek funding to take it forward and I think as soon as funding is involved, the whole thing changes, utterly changes. With Wise Guys and Rain Dog, the things we've done unfunded compared to funded are completely different. We did 18 months of doing what you're doing with Tinseltown without any end in sight because we didn't know if there would be or there wouldn't be and then it became a product once it was made into a television series. And that completely changed everything. There was a whole hierarchy of people involved in it. As soon as the money becomes involved, there are deadlines and things that you have to do. There is a definite hierarchy. If you've got Creative Scotland involved in it, no matter how radical it is that you're talking about doing it, they will say 'yeah, but we still need to have A, B or C at the end of it. '…They won't fund you to explore. You can explore when you're doing it for nothing, like you've been doing. That is honestly the best time when you're doing it like that and everybody joins in …

…

Quinn: … Suzanne, what did you feel your role was? Did you have a set role?

Morrison: … I don't know if I like I had a specific role, that I could say right ok, that was my role … I felt that I had a role in the performing side of it and creating and doing a bit of directing as well…so it was a kind of mixture.

Quinn: So what did you feel you owned of that piece then?

Pause

Quinn: That's a hard question.

Morrison: Yeah, I think because of the process and because we did all work together, I think we all felt like we all owned it I think. I wouldn't say 'oh yeah, I owned that bit' I would say that because we all created it together, the way that we worked, that we all had an overall stake in it.

Quinn: Would you have any thoughts to add to that Martin, in terms of ownership?

Smith: … so initially, I was technical support and then my role changed. Like for an example, if you're talking about ownership, the video stuff that ended up on the screen, apart from the sequence that Anna directed … we talked about 'right this is what we want to achieve', but it was up to me to come up with something to reflect that …

Quinn: You said you very much enjoyed the video. Tell us about that.

MacDonald: Maybe it was because it made me feel a bit more relaxed because it was a bit more conventional … like, oh yeah I know what's going on here. **(Laughter)** They are outside, they are by the Clyde. This is ok, I can handle this …

Ronan: Paula, was there any bit that stood out for you?

McCann: I like video stuff. I generally respond quite well to stuff like that ….the bits that are most interesting to me and what drew me to come to see your performance was this question of collaboration and whether it could be shared really …

Quinn: So what do you think of the situation of ownership that we're talking about here? …

McCann: Ideally, you want everyone to feel like they have ownership of it … some people are saying that you need to have a leader… you have to start with a leader … but for more than one person to lead, it needs to be a long process that builds up the structures that enables everybody within that to sort of feel like they can own it and be equally part of it …

McFarlane: I think that so many different ideas can cause so many problems … I think someone needs to have a clear vision to start off with and it is good having other people there to bring ideas and have ownership … I think someone needs to have the first say and then it can evolve.

Frater: But, there are also people who want to be led. It's not always about everyone's got to be involved and everyone's got to have a say …

McCann: I think it's absolutely essential that the opportunity is there, regardless of whether they want to take it or not. What makes it collaborative is the element of choice.

…

Quinn: Could you talk about your experience of the video/video diaries?

Mele: Yeah, the video was filming the rehearsals of the characters rehearsing … I thought they were interesting because it was absolutely about how you guys got your heads round working on two levels, if not more, and how that all jumbled up, that was really interesting.

Morrison: … for the video diaries … I didn't ever think, when we were doing them, they were going to be in the final performance. I was cringing but we collectively decided to go with it… I worried that it was a self-indulgent thing, especially when we came on and watched it, I thought how is this coming across to people…and, I had some friends that came to see it and I said to them, 'oh how did that look?' and they were like 'oh actually, it made a bit more sense of everything' …

Ronan: … There's the self, there's the character, there's the character taking on roles and then there's the live self when we talk in the talk back section. For me, the theatre is interesting when you play with all these multiple roles so we kind of haven't cracked the self … we need to find a way, which we haven't found yet of using elements of self in a less crude way. We may not have found that way yet because the video diaries were used initially for my PhD and the documentation of my work, it only got included in the performance much later on.

MacDonald: I think you've hit it though. I think because we did have five characters and then you were almost running on three because we saw the self, we saw the character, we saw the role. That's fifteen, that's a lot for an audience to take in. I think as a product, you cut it down so that we're maybe dealing with three people so that we could see it at that level rather than being bombarded and that allows us to see what you're actually doing. It is hard for an audience when you're trying to juggle so many characters at the different levels. I don't know does anybody else think this? Yeah, it's a lot to take in. The concept is great - just take it down a wee bit.

McCardie: … If you're putting it on a stage with people paying, you have to take them into consideration.

Quinn: So I just really want to wrap up with one last question … BloodWater is attempting to question ways of working within the theatre through their processes and their products and part of that is this focus group itself and I think the last thing we want to discuss is the effectiveness of forums such as this in relation to the aims of BloodWater to further the notions of producing theatre.

Frater: I think it's very important…in any sort of collaboration…it allows you to just step back from it…it's very important because it's different from being in it and you need to know...

McFarlane: You don't get the opportunity to do this in real theatre …

Morrison: … I really want to hear, I want to know what people's take on it was because, like you're saying, you're so involved in it for such a long time, it has the danger of becoming self- indulgent … there's the worry that it's not pleasing to an audience and you've just done it for your own benefit … moving forward with it, I think it's important to know what an audience takes from it and factor this into the development the work.

MacDonald: I think it's good that you can see common themes among what people are saying. I think when you're just going and you're watching it and you're observing it and you've got your own thoughts and you're thinking 'I wonder what other people are thinking - I wonder if I've got a different experience from everyone else.' But, when you see the common themes that people are talking about, that's quite helpful. And I like what you said about simplifying the characters. That's almost a eureka moment, isn't it… less confusing for your theatre goer, but I think they would still be really interested in the whole process of it and how it all goes on. The video diaries were really good at answering that as well.

Mele: I think it fits absolutely with your ethos of what you're trying to produce, which is about challenging all relationships that exist within the theatre. That includes the relationship with the audience and not just in that theatre space at that moment within the product so it makes absolute sense to do something like this. … There's a lot of lip service paid to audience consultations and questionnaires coming out at the end of the show and all that kind of stuff, but how does it actually impact on the next thing that you make?

Ronan: Oh god, you want me to answer that now...?

Mele: No, and should they? Not all products need that, some work fantastically well with the vision of just one man or woman...it's about understanding this broad oncology, it's about all these things can sit next to each other, knowing that there isn't a hierarchy.

McCann: I just wanted to touch on paying lip service to audiences, I was just thinking before you said it, so often, audiences are asked to fill in a wee card at the end and that's it, you don't feel any part of it… I think stuff like this is necessary in order to at least try to be reaching the public and I would hope it can influence the way BloodWater is looking at collaboration, I think something like this is crucial and. I hope you can do more of it with other people.

Quinn: So we're just about to close. Thank you very much … I'll pass to Jo to close us off and give us a little talk about the future.

 …

(Drinks and Snacks)

Appendix 20   **Excerpts from focus group Saturday 12ᵗʰ May 2012**

Present: John Quinn (moderator, academic), Colin Begg (visual artist), Colin Little (actor), Victoria Price (academic), Jan Warrack (retired classical musician), Suzi Kane (train conductor), Jamie Walker (BWT), Gavin Wright (BWT) and Jo Ronan (BWT)

(The discussion took place after the group was shown an edited version of *Whose Story Is It Anyway* staged on the 15ᵗʰ of October 2011 to help refresh their memories)

Excerpts from transcript

Wright: I think it was really interesting to hear what he (referring to McCardie's comments at the post show discussion at the Tron featured in the edited video of *Whose Story Is It Anyway*) said about how the roles were taken up by us… speaking as somebody who was on the inside of it… eventually the roles have to be given to somebody within the group … ultimately we all ended up taking leads in different parts of things and at different times…

Quinn: Jamie might be a good follow up, how does that reflect on your own experience of the process?

Walker: … I remember Anna at the Tron helping with direction of Fatima because the actor can't see what the audience can see sometimes so I think from that perspective the collaboration helped make actors into artists rather than just actors with a specific role, it's multidisciplinary work really.

Begg: My experience of working collaboratively in theatre is that it comes with a hierarchy and more so than the constraints of working in the visual arts where there are sometimes hierarchies but not as much. I have worked in the visuals arts projects where there are no hierarchies and all the artists have been on the same level and it's a far harder negotiation …

Quinn: How does that sit with you Vicky?

Price: There are several things going through my head, one is that as an audience member, I wanted to hear more about the process because there was a certain kind of contextual and environmental thing that would undoubtedly have impacted on the levels of collaboration so it kind of connects to you and can you ever avoid that kind of hierarchy, so for example what impact did it have knowing that this was part of Jo's PhD for the other members? …

Wright: Sorry I'm butting in here… I don't know if this answers the point but we were all brought together for one reason initially and that's because Jo's doing this PhD, so that was the catalyst for it … I won't mention any names but one person was struggling to make a few meetings and it was Jo who proposed that maybe we should take the decision for that individual but then other members of the group said if this is supposed to be collaborative then let the individual make that decision about this … I think that showed that we were all there because we wanted to be, yes we were all brought together initially for some ultimate goal of doing something but actually as a group we became empowered within that, because we all felt we could say these things like 'You can't do that' otherwise it becomes one person or two people's project …

Quinn: So Colin how does that sit with you, as an actor?

Little: … I felt that the performance, wasn't really the main part of the thing, it was almost as though it was more beneficial the documentary stuff and the scenes within the scenes, the mockumentary bits, the real bits, the diary stuff was more interesting … I felt that the collaborative stuff was quite useful up to an extent but it needed a bit more structure…a central character or some kind of narrative, I found that a bit confusing … these characters were invented but when it comes to the finished product I do think at that point somebody needs to make decisions one way or the other … I'm just thinking if you took that kind of process and put it out there, 9 times out of 10, I think it could be confusing for an audience … What would potentially be quite interesting is if the process got to a certain stage of development and then someone else came in to shape what was potentially already there... there is a need for collaboration for the greater good but somebody needs to take control one way or another. Again there are various levels of control, it can be as simple as someone like a moderator who can come in and get one person to speak, then another or whatever …

Quinn: Suzi, you're not a practitioner but we're really interested to see what you think of all this?

Kane: I went because Gavin couldn't go because he was in Pitlochry (Kane, Wright's partner referring to Wright not being able to perform in the live elements of the production), I was going for him to show my support of what he had been rehearsing for the last few … I didn't see anything in terms of the roles of each actor but I just watched as a full show and I did enjoy it and was interesting to see how it all came together at the end.

John: Same question for you Jan

Warrack: I think if you're going to talk about hierarchy and not wanting it, you have to do without a director and take on this role as a group even if all of you, individually, have an opinion, compromise would be the only way of doing this. I'm talking here from a music point of view, the conductor is the director and we do as we are told, that's roughly what it's about, however, if a principle horn has a solo and he wants to play it his way, he will discuss that with the conductor …

Ronan: Can the conductor override the principle horn?

Warrack: Yes, the performer has to do it, the way the conductor says but even then it will come through his own individuality … it's possible to do it without a conductor but not with a large group of people, like in a band of 80-90 of us, that's not possible but you could do it in chamber works like the number of people you had on the stage, was enough, was enough to be able to do it without a director, so don't have a director if that's what you want, if you want to do away with the hierarchy …

Wright: … if the idea of the collaborative within the group is of paramount importance, then moving forward is it possible to have somebody brought in from outside to mould what is given to them in some dramaturgical way to help develop our performance as a product for an audience …

Ronan: … so that in terms of the idea that we should we bring in a /moderator/dramaturg, that is for the group to decide, within this group do we have enough writing skills to bring this together and I can tell you within the group there is disagreement about this and we have to fight it out … do we have the expertise in the room… this becomes a discussion for BWT … Suzi it is useful for me to know your response to what you saw - is this a play? Is it not?

Kane: … I wasn't quite sure, you had the screen at the back, then you had actors on the stage, having different languages too, the way they were speaking. And then the little part where the actors were down at the Clyde and I remember laughing at the point where the actors were doing a scene and there was a little man on a buggy, who drove right past them... These actors playing actors were caught off guard because this little man oblivious to what was going on, on his little scooter thing. So it's interesting to see actors playing actors

Quinn: So I think we've come to the notion of multiple identities within the characters, Vicky I'm wondering your thoughts on that?

Price: This isn't going to answer your question but it's coming out of what you said, which is to do with the shared language because we're not talking about theatre generally, we're talking about a very particular type of theatre which is devising and so there's something to be said about shared language for audience members and how accessible this is for them, if you're more familiar with this form, then you're going to have a different way into it and for those that don't, it may not be so accessible and as for actors it depends on how you've been trained …

Kane: Gavin and I went to see a play last night at RSC and after the first half we were trying to figure out what was going on because it was an old language but you could still get the gist by the actors, by the show itself, and you might not have understood every word listening to it but by their performances, you could understand what was happening. They didn't use modern language as such.

Walker: … the devising thing, I really liked that about this project … actors in general want to be directed and there's nothing wrong with that and I kind of like that too sometimes, nice to have someone tell you what to do and what their vision is but I think as an artist, you have to do more than that one role … so when I came to this project, you might know that I did publicity, you might not know I am an actor or made films or done sound but it's through collaborative work that you realise these skills exist in these people which all together make the company a lot stronger and I think that's where the collaborate strength comes from, that it drew on these skills because I think sometimes it can be a bit like, you've got your role and maybe you don't have the confidence to speak up and say I can also do a bit of this or a bit of that and what I like about this project is that you can do other roles that you've got experience in and make yourself a better performer as well as helping the company.

Quinn: … Jamie, so what do you feel in relation to ownership to the product or the process with this project?

…

Walker … I think I work better without a director ... it gives me more freedom

…

Little: I think the danger with improvisation is a lot of crap comes out of it … the danger of not having the outside eye is you get 4 or 5 actors in who are so in it and they are all playing a role within a role and improvising and they may think that's great because that's in their head and that worked really well for me, but all the while the audience is sitting there going that's just a whole bunch of actors having a bit of jolly here and I paid money to sit here and watch that.

Price: Just a slight worry about the difference between devising and improvising

Quinn: Yep

Little: Yeah...

Price: I think you're absolutely right in terms of what improvisation can do for devising but devising is more than improvising… I also think it's interesting what you're saying about an outside person coming in, almost like a facilitator...

Little: Almost like a moderator or somebody... instead of putting that one role or title to one person which then instantly gives it a hierarchy but if you bring in a set or a group of people, then that spreads it slightly and it means if you have some sort of hierarchy, it's a collaborative hierarchy...

Ronan: You have just invented a new term, 'a collaborative hierarchy' (**laugh**). I think can we ask Colin about the visual arts community, because we now know what Jan is saying about music but how is it different in the visual arts?

Begg: … I do community based and public art but I mean no two projects are ever the same and quite a different way from theatre ... I did a project for Tramway a couple of years ago and it was myself and two other artists and we had to go out to three different locations, places around Tramway in which young folk hung out and the idea wasn't to come from us… we were to go into the three spaces at regular points once a week for six months and just start making stuff, which is what we did and see who would collaborate with us, so essentially it was three of us, as artists without hierarchy who had to negotiate how we would develop work together with the young people… we had to hold negotiations with all these groups… how we would all work together and we did work together and it all worked really well but the decisions about the work was collaborative, it was a really well funded project, so we had time to have those discussions in a way...

…

Ronan: … I don't know if you want to say anything about when we brought the characters into the room, Gavin?

Wright: I think that was the start of some kind of ownership which is ironic because you're playing somebody else but in order to stop making it about somebody leading the making of the work, then we all have to go on the same platform … it was almost like dipping a toe in and after that people started doing their own workshops and leading things

Ronan: The workshops were an opportunity for us to share our practice …

Little: Who took these, was it the characters who took the workshops?

Ronan: No we were all ourselves … if you politicise the making of the work, does if follow that the content will be political, we have never started out with political content with BloodWater only a politicised process…

Quinn: Do you want to say something about that Colin?

Little: I don't know if it carries on from that but what I did notice and what I felt that I liked was the idea these were actors of varying backgrounds who were then playing non-actors who were then becoming actors so I thought that was quite good but where I thought that fell down slightly was some people's characters were more well-rounded than others … I think if there are 5 people who are completely different from who they are and one person whose not

quite as much, there's going to more of that one person limiting his/her performance than the people who have wiped the slate clean …

Ronan: … I use the dialectical methodological framework for a lot of things and in terms of the creation of character, that is it, it's this tension between the self and actor and character – when is it similar to self? When is it at polar ends with self? Where are the intersections right? … So for me this is very interesting, whether it's better to be a far or very close to who you are when developing these characters, we do not know the answer to this but what we know is firstly, that intersection between self and fictional character is where interesting content can emerge … Equality does not mean equal airtime or how much you're seen in performance but how much investment you have in the work...

Quinn: Vicky did you want to come back on that?

Price: I absolutely agree with what you are saying … it's about how you navigate decision making and workshops, so that everybody's voice is feeding into it so it's about ownership but the other thing that struck me is that you were saying 'cringe', in relation to the diary entries and for me it was the diary entries that were really interesting …

Wright: … what is viewed as professional work? … we are professionals doing it in our own time, though the irony is I couldn't do the actual performance because I had professional work... ... in order make this properly you need to commit to it but you can't commit to it because you've got to eat which sounds a bit melodramatic …

Ronan: …. this is what can happen without funding, so when does funding have to come into it? Research in our area cannot be limited to existing products of theatre we also need to research new ways of making theatre …

Little: … you as the company have a notion of where the fiction starts and stops which is different for us as the audience …

Quinn: I think that's a great point to take us to the final point of this discussion – The notion of you or the audience members or the cast participating in the actual research and the questions it raises …

Little: I guess your inviting us into the process...?

Quinn: Well.... Yes...

Little: … in October what you presented was a work-in-process as opposed to a product and even by asking questions at the end, brings up a route for an the audience to have an input.

Warrack: I think it's important that an audience becomes more educated to the process of what is going on … interaction is vital for a new outlook … a new way of looking at theatre.

…

Kane: I don't feel I can bring anything of any use to be honest … I just go with fresh eyes to see something and you can say what it was you enjoyed or what you didn't and what it makes you feel...

Price: See, I don't see this as audience participation... I think audience participation was connected to the layers of fiction, trying to work out for example the final video entry - was that genuinely her or was this yet another layer of a character and when did it take place …

Quinn: And Jo, I just want to turn back to you for your closing

Ronan: … We will have open rehearsals, there will be specific times when we think that the work should be shared, for you to tell us what you think ... and then for you to see the work again, when it's performed again and to come together again as a group is that ok?

Colin L: Yes

Susie: If you feel... Yes

Vicky: Yes

Jan: Yes

Colin B: Yes

Quinn: Thank you all...

(Drinks and Snacks)

Appendix 21   Excerpts from focus group, Saturday 23rd November 2013

LYSD was performed for focus group members who could attend. As it was late, each member present gave a summary of their feedback and there was no discussion after this but BWT discussed the focus group's feedback at our next rehearsal.

Frater: The characters are developing well…The main issue I have is the portrayal of Jamie's character's past relationship with his grandmother, I think it is becoming too immersed in his actual life, the film footage from his childhood just didn't fit well within the project. The evolving dynamics of the characters is becoming very interesting… I think it is great how BloodWater manages the individual artist's time constraints as you have to look at creative ways of keeping the original characters embedded in the production and the use of media in this respect enhanced rather than detracted from the storyline. I thought it was a real turning point in the performance when the characters came to talk to us which in turn allowed me to engage with the character in a way that I would not have ordinarily been able to do in the theatre. I think this is a very clever process which allows the audience to get involved in the performance in a more personal way

McFarlane: I felt I wanted to follow the journey of some characters more than others…I got a clearer sense of who the characters were, I was a bit loss with *Whose Story Is It Anyway?* There was too much on screen, I think there needs to be more balance between the stage and screen elements…Is Jamie playing Jamie? He does not have a character name like the rest of you

Kane: I think the screen stuff works really well but I would have liked to see more live interaction between the characters. The characters are so interesting

Mele: I like the way BloodWater is continuing to experiment with the tensions of product and process on stage but I feel there are not enough hooks or a clear enough context for an audience, maybe something like the play, *Noises Off*, similar kinds of ideas about off stage processes but clearer in structure … I think the beginning needs to be framed more clearly…the idea of showing the characters rehearse for something is a good one but it is not clear what they are rehearsing for…I am not sure about the trust exercises on screen – very drama school…I think the story needs to be clearer…I like the idea of the characters chatting to the audience at their tables but was uncomfortable, not in a good way, when it was Jamie who came to my table. From the screen footage, it was clear that Jamie's story was autobiographical and I did not want to ask him questions about his personal history…I am not sure about signposting autobiography in this way

Begg: I actually like the lack of structure…things like the trust exercises and Jamie's account of his grandmother make the performance of the process of the product more interesting for me…BloodWater reminds me of Dogme 95's philosophy of filmmaking – sure it was director-led but the company wanted to go back to simpler ways of telling stories, ways that did not require big budgets…Even though I am quite shy, I enjoyed the bit where the characters chatted with us at the table

Quinn: My expectations were being subverted and I enjoyed this process. I found myself following Pritam's story and consuming the other characters through this lens. After *Whose Story Is It Anyway*, where the question of multiple protagonists was raised, I did not expect to be reading the performance text through this lens…I like the way that you guys are not

determining the protagonist through the way you tell the story yet the performance allows the audience to identify a protagonist should they choose to do so…I enjoyed talking with Fatima, you don't get this type of personal encounter in mainstream theatre

Appendix 22   **Excerpts from focus group, Saturday 15th February 2014 and written feedback from those not able to attend**

Quinn moderated this final session but thought it best to offer his feedback in writing so that he could focus primarily on his role as moderator. He was not able to see the live performance but offered his feedback on the recorded version which he viewed in full.

Present: John Quinn (moderator, academic), Colin Begg (visual artist), Colin Little (actor), Hazel MacDonald (GP), Lorenzo Mele (arts manager) Suzanne Morrison (BWT), Gavin Wright (BWT) and Jo Ronan (BWT) – everyone had access to *LYSD* audience feedback forms.

Excerpts from transcript

Mele: … I suppose what I've come away with thinking is that I feel it still feels like a project that is driven very much by the question that you are asking in the PhD.

Ronan: That's good, because then I'll pass my PhD!

Mele **(to the camera)** So it's very much driven!

(laughter)

Mele: So watching it, although you could see all the collaborative balance, it still feels like the driver, is your PhD the question you are trying to address.

Ronan: Okay. Is it possible to just look at it as a piece of theatre?

Mele: Yes of course, it's possible.

Little and MacDonald: Yes.

…

Little: Well, the interesting thing for me is the kind of way it is a play within a play and that's where I'm curious as to what I'm thinking as opposed to … I know we are trying to just go with the actual theatre piece as opposed to the PhD. But what interested me or what I was quite taken aback by watching it, was how much of it was the theatre and the kind of documentary or mockumentary bits as well. Does that count as part of the theatre piece or is it well, obviously, intrinsically, it is all part of the theatre piece, we were all sitting watching it.… the interesting thing for me was how some of the ideas had certainly evolved, how the characters had evolved … I definitely think as a piece of theatre it was interesting, it was engaging, I don't know if I necessarily understood everything, I don't know if anybody would necessarily claim to have understood anything, or everything...

…

MacDonald: Oh! Yeah! It just moved me somehow, just the whole interaction through relationships. The ups and downs of life ... so for me it was a lot better than I suppose I thought it might be, I really enjoyed it, I thought it was really stimulating and made me think and I think you work really well as a team. You just seem to be a more cohesive sort of group than you were the first time. Was there anything else? Oh yes, the part where the actors sat down in the audience was a bit - **(To Wright)** do you want to tell them? **(Ronan laughs)**

Wright: Sorry …

MacDonald: …When you go to theatre you are not expecting that sort of level of interaction, so I think a lot of people on my table were like pretending to uncomfortably look around "What's going on here?", that was a wee bit like that for me as well, it was good though. I could see what you were trying to do. It was good. But I wasn't at all expecting that, unexpected.

Ronan: That's interesting. Colin B?

Begg: I suppose I thought that this version was more balanced in terms of where the drama lay across each of the characters. I also thought it was a more clearly structured piece. And I suppose I made an assumption about that ... the discussions that we'd had in November around kind of product and process. And I suppose for me it seemed the emphasis on this discussion was more around product and I suppose I felt as a consequence of that, some of the playfulness and fluidity that we'd had in November had kind of got lost a bit and **(pause)** I suppose my favourite part in this version was not kind of the sort of the big dramatic scenes the characters had, it was actually towards the end when you **(referring to Wright)** are running through the scenes for the play about to start. And it's actually the moment when your character **(referring to Ronan)** missed the cue to go on stage

Wright: Yes! **(laughing)**

Begg: Which actually that kind of …

Ronan: You have to be a very good actor to pull that off **(laughter***)***

Begg: … actually it's what I kind of really enjoyed about all three versions is that kind of playfulness and where you start ... from what's fiction and I suppose what I thought was in this version there was more of an emphasis on telling stories, actual stories. Whereas I think previous versions had been more of the nature of storytelling, what's true and what's false. I suppose the reason why maybe I enjoyed this version less was because I think I'm kind of more interested in ... playing about with form. But I also have gone away with a question about my objectivity in terms of the focus group and actually the more involved I've been with it, because I've seen the work the whole way through. It just kind of becomes a bit about what I'm putting into it as opposed to what the company wants ... objectivity.

…

Ronan: … your stake in this is quite different from the others who have not seen all the different stages of the work. And their stake is a bit different from yours… and you've **(referring to MacDonald)** have seen two stages. In the audience feedback which I circulated

more than half of them didn't see *Whose Story Is It Anyway?* They are going just seeing this as a one off piece of theatre and it seemed quite positive what they've experienced. Well then your expectations would be quite different, because you've been engaged in the different elements of what this could potentially be and how it could possibly go deeper

Begg: I suppose coming in today… I suppose my biggest question is actually around some of the decision making that you as a company had taken between November and now in terms of working with that material and how decisions were made to choose certain stories …

Ronan: Yes? Lorenzo?

Mele: Yes, similar to Colin I was very clear about that piece and our discussions on the need for product focus. I know that kind of feedback that you were taking on board from November. If I'm looking at this curious piece of theatre, it's quite difficult too, because I'm aware of the journey, I'm aware of the people … I know some of you very well, I know - you know?... it's quite hard to be totally objective and I thought the piece was more coherent as a piece of product for the theatre. And then I also start to ask difficult questions about the content, the choices in that content I suppose and my concern about what I saw was that everyone had to have the same length of time on stage to do a monologue.

Ronan: But we didn't.

Mele: But it felt that way. So I suppose and actually … what would I do if I was in that situation … who's going to address the questions that I had in November, who makes the decision? Who is the objective eye to assess if the piece works this … this bit doesn't work, it has to go … how do you do that? So what do you ... as a piece of theatre, I had certain questions about content and pace. Thinks like that … But what was interesting and what we … from the feedback as well was that there was something fascinating about the process. People liked to see the curtain pulled back and see what's going on behind the scenes and there is something very interesting about that and there's a long tradition of playing with that and I think you did that in a very interesting way ... almost like I wanted more of that and less of the monologues

…

Begg: But I think, in a way, what you have been describing … I think that's why I feel the emphasis should be on the process. Because you started off with a structure and as a group have decided that that structure will accommodate what you are capable of and what everyone's commitment can be and it will accommodate the stop to be able to tell particular stories that people will feel comfortable to tell. I suppose that's different from deciding that you're going to have a product. Because I think the product-structure-structure prevails, like you would then all have to start to accommodate the structure. So actually it's kind of what you are making and what you are seeking to express is process. And I suppose that's why I have more problems with the more recent thing, which perhaps seemed more around creating that product that was maybe easier for an audience to engage with, but I question whether it fully represents what you've been doing.

…

Mele: Yes, I think it's about a sense of coherence through it.

Ronan: That's what we tried to do in this last version. We gave it a sense of coherence, but in doing that we lost things that you (**referring to Begg**) … snippets of process. Because what we do is, we do those kind of things, but without an end in itself, so we actually then curated the end in itself in the final product to help everybody have some kind of access into our work

MacDonald: I was going to say about the feedback comment in that bottom box, where all - well, I didn't read them all - but most of them wrote really positive comments. I don't know if it would have been so positive I suppose if it had just been about the process, I don't know if that's a whole other experiment, isn't it? The mixture was quite a good balance.

…

Begg: … I think it makes more sense to think about the product and I suppose I'm less interested in that as an audience member. But I don't think I'm in the majority of thinking that. So why should we make theatre just for the likes of me.

…

Quinn: … for me the most interesting thing has actually not so much to do with ownership but with stake. It has to do with the stake that each person takes from the process. I think ownership will come into that depending on the nature of the stake you decide to take. For me that's the most interesting process. And what I'm really interested in is how that stake develops. And I think in structuring the agency of the stake, there are also social bonds within the group. And I think that comes from how the group is organised, instead of chosen. Whether that's organic, I'm not sure. But I still think that's the key thing that interests me. It's the nature of the stake we take, how that nature of stake relates to your emotional ownership and then how that is controlled by the social element of this culture that's growing up around the theatre company. For me that's not really a question or resolution, that's just actually what interests me.

…

Mele: For me it has been a really interesting journey. I'm not really involved in theatre anymore on a day to day basis and it's been very interesting being part of this and I feel very grateful for that, to all of you actually, for having that opportunity to be a part of this kind of dialogue, which I don't really have so much anymore. For me what has come out today was really fascinating, what you (**referring to Begg**) said, which is can you make a process that allows different people to enter into it in different ways depending on their life circumstances, find their creative moment or input into the work. That for me has emerged from the discussion today, which is actually quite exciting. And actually sometimes when you do think about product too much, it stifles that.

…

Begg: ... I also think from today what you are describing in terms of creating this model with no funding, for me it sounds like you created this place now for artistic freedom and I kind of worry that to pursue funds to do something whether that actually does compromise you,

because in a away it does bring you to a kind of capitalist model but there is an expectation that you will have a product because you have criteria to meet, to justify receiving those funds. And when you actually remove yourself from that you will have more freedom but it is hard to make work with no funds.

…

Ronan: So, in terms of my PhD, the model that I want to see is it was very good to have unfunded time. But actually we are all clearer about what we like to make. And we weren't influenced by anybody except by our own artistic impulses

Mele: And the focus group!

Ronan: Oh yes sorry **(laughing)**! The focus group is very important**.** You can see the focus group's influence on our work

…

MacDonald: I was just going to say that I hope *BloodWater* theatre does continue, I think it will. And you **(referring to Little)** mentioning the documentary, I think certainly I would watch something like that, it would be really interesting. But another question, did you actually fall out in reality?

Wright: Yes.

Ronan: Yes, we were falling out every time, we were crying and everything. But you know what, it was very good

…

Little: Yes, again, I do hope that *BloodWater* continues, because I think it is a very interesting thing. My concern or my issue is again with the process and stuff like that. It's just how easy it would be to apply in the actual proper theatre world because we know there's very little money, there's very little time, you know.

…

Wright: Okay the last thing is, just kind of comes from - if something does come of it, my hope for it is that beyond, people like us, I'd like to give somebody some employment from it and properly investigate it. Like you're **(referring to Begg**) saying, just like you know, whether it be a performance artist or an actor to come in, who wasn't part of the original, but I'd quite like to test and say "There's a job." And people who are genuinely interested in working that way would apply for it. You would be able to pay somebody for experimenting with you. And I'd like to test whether that corrupts the idea, because somebody is coming in because there's money or they could also be applying for it because they are interested in this way of working. So that's what would be interesting to see what happens.

Ronan: Suzanne?

Morrison: I just think it's just really interesting to see what everyone has got to say about it.

And I think that certainly I would like to continue doing something and I don't really know in which capacity. And what we are doing next. But I just think, we've done so much so far, I think it would be a shame not to continue.

Ronan: So we are bonded for life! (**laughter**) The children, I'll be looking after her baby (**referring to Morrison's child due in a few months**) and everything, ahh! ....there are certain things that have to be beyond the PhD. So when I finish it, I'll be so relieved because I have always thought that for BloodWater to survive, each of us has to have an inquiry … to get fresh air into the process. You (**referring to Morrison**) might have something else, so we would all sit down and then decide, whose inquiry to develop. And it won't be me, because I started it because of the PhD, which has been problematic. But then we'll have a negotiation in terms of how do we want to take forward this inquiry, which I think would be amazing and whether we should get money to develop the inquiry. So I want to say, I think for us it will be very hard to leave BloodWater. But we are going to talk about it and see how we feel in March when we've had a bit of time away from it. It just leaves me to say that it has been really, really good to have all of you here, I can't stress enough how your commitment to this has made all the difference. And I think when you (**referring to Mele**) interjected about the focus group, it's absolutely right … initially my supervisor did not understood the role of the focus group and when he saw all your names written in the programme and I discussed with him your feedback and stuff like that and he was like "Actually I understand what you are doing now." Initially he thought I was being over ambitious, trying to involve too many people. But I think that's how I wanted to start, to include as many people as possible. So I think it was been lovely and I can't thank you enough.

(**Drinks and Snacks**)

Written feedback from the moderator focus group members not able to attend the session:

Quinn (moderator, academic):

- In relation to separating the PhD from BloodWater, yes, I believe it can be, with time probably. True, the PhD seems to be the well spring from which the group emerged, but the natural process of life will no doubt take the company down an unexpected route. As for the shows, then I think the PhD is harder to separate out here. It is a part of the 'living organism' of the show. Perhaps at times overly and perhaps at times subconsciously, but it's there, and why not. It should be. It brought people together and then empowered them to take ownership of the process, or not, if they didn't want to.

- In relation to the question of ownership I'm not sure that everybody does have the same ownership, or investment, in the processes and artefacts, and I think that's just fine. In fact I think that is constructive. Is it not natural for the levels of engagement to vary for each participant based upon their rationale for coming to the process? For me, the team owned different aspects of the process/performance, shared others, and brought to and took from the process according to the strengths of the interpersonal bonds (and I would imagine that those bonds were in flux and at play in relation to the changing dynamic of the group as it progressed through the participants lives.

- In relation to the characters, some choices were safer than others but if there is to be shared ownership of the creative direction of the work, and some members envisioned playing a comfortable or safe role, then that surely this must be accepted? If not, would there not be a directorial structure put in place over the performer's creative agency– even if it were democratic?

- In relation to the application of the BloodWater creative process to established modes of dissemination/hosting/consumption, this is an unconventional process, so why can't it sit outside the boundaries of conventional modes of dissemination and consumption? The shows we watched did (to some extent). I suppose this returns us to the question of why be involved in such a process. Why engage. What's the rationale? If you are invested in the concept of this style of theatre making, then I think the mode is attractive as is, commercial or not.

- On the future of such a process, well I wouldn't want it to replace conventional modes of production, I like them, they serve a purpose and I'm invested in them. They are easy for me as the consumer, and sometimes that's what I want. But I'm glad that the Bloodwater exploration has occurred, and for me the beauty of it is that it sits within a wider context of theatre. For me, the Bloodwater process has meaning due to its proximity and distance from conventional processes of theatre. When I consume Bloodwater, I consume it from within those contexts. I can't separate that out. My understanding of conventional modes give meaning to what I see in Bloodwater.   This makes my experience richer and more enjoyable. It also allows me to understand and empathise with the challenge that Bloodwater presents. I'm not invested in the way I am when I consume my favourite types of text, with strong authorial voices, but I'm engaged in this process in a whole new way. A way I had not imagined that I ever would be. Other texts, conventional texts, stay with me for a long time after I have consumed them, through their aesthetic, or music, or characters or whatever. Sometimes I even like to search the web and explore the process of my favourite texts – I do this a lot. But usually I'm still wholly in the mode of consumption as I do this. I consume information about how the processes worked/work. With Bloodwater, my engagement with the process seems to be fundamentally different. I'm searching almost, searching to understand the processes and the artefacts in their context. I don't seem to just simply accept them as they exist, like I would with my more comfortable texts, but I'm challenging Bloodwater, challenging the text, the process and its place within the wider context of theatre. I'm far more active here. And that surprised me. Am I more engaged or not? Well that's hard to say. For me I'm engaged differently, and that difference is good and right. I'm also engaged with the project though social bonds and those can't be discounted. I don't think I'd be as engaged if Bloodwater had no social connection to me. In fact I'm almost positive of this. But I do have such a connection and that connection has led to a real form of engagement, perhaps initiated by my social bond with Jo and my empathy with her PhD process, a sense of connection I do not have with other texts.

McFarlane (acting/singing coach):

After looking at the feedback sheets it is apparent the project has been successful in many

areas but there are some improvements/recommendations that have been stated.

I enjoyed the overall performance and felt the use of multimedia, song, acting and movement was very effective. My only criticism was that the characters did not encounter each other in the production until the very end. Obviously it was highlighted in the footage as rehearsals took place outside the performance but it would have been good to have some group performance/interaction sections at the start, middle and end.

The monologues and character journeys were very good too but it would have been good to see these characters also interacting. There were some moments where they did this but I felt this could have been developed in other parts of the production.

I felt the character Fatima was portrayed, conceived and written well. I felt all characters were well scripted too but felt Fatima shone. The only character who was slightly lost was Gavin's character as the others had more presence on stage.

I felt the production was of a high standard and a great piece created by BloodWater. I do believe this could be developed further.

I wish you the every success with the final part of your study. It has been a brilliant project and very adventurous.

Frater (documentary maker):

I really enjoyed the performance. I felt that the actors were embracing the concept of Blood Water Theatre and I have really enjoyed being part of the development of this work. It was interesting to watch the audience to see if they grasped the concept and I think it was received well. I was disappointed with my favourite bit in the interim showing where the characters came to talk to the audience. This time round it seemed to happen too quickly and it didn't have the personal feel I experienced the last time. I still think it is a really good idea, worth persevering with and perhaps finding ways to make it work in a theatre space with a lot more people than we had at the interim showing.

Warrack (retired classical musician):

I settled into *Leave Your Shoes at the Door* more quickly than *Whose Story Is It Anyway?* Perhaps because I was more familiar with what BloodWater Theatre were trying to do. At this point, I am not convinced that it is possible for a group of actors to work without a director but I would like to be so I would continue to see the work of the group. Whilst I was drawn to the performance because it was so different, I also felt alienated from the performance but then again when the actress came to the table I was sitting at and chatted to us, I was pleasantly surprised. I liked it that she took time to ask us questions. Maybe if the characters on the stage had interacted more with each other, I would not have felt alienated from the actual show. Why should these characters be together? I think you need to let the audience more into what you are trying to do.

Kane (train conductor):

I enjoyed the show and began to ask myself whether I would have enjoyed it so much had I not seen *Whose Story Is It Anyway?* Having reflected on this, I think it is possible for both *Leave Your Shoes at the Door* and *Whose Story Is It Anyway* to be stand-alone shows but having seen the first one, I felt I had more investment in the characters in a way that maybe new audiences may not have. I like the fact that the actors were out of their comfort zone when they came to talk to us as characters – it made me feel like they were only human like the rest of us. I didn't ask the characters any questions, I tend to shy away into the background when things like this happen but I was glad to be there and observe the interaction between the character and the audience

Appendix 23   Tron Lab letter

Appendix 23 Tron Lab Letter

⊙ TRON
THEATRE

Jo Ronan
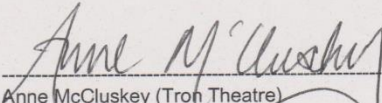University of the West of Scotland
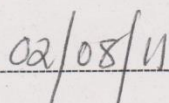(Ayr Campus)
Beechgrove
KA8 0SR

Tuesday 2nd August 2011

This letter is to confirm that you will be using the Tron Theatre's Changing House for your Tron Lab: *BLOOD WATER* development.
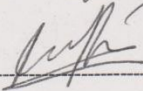
Tron Lab:	*BLOOD WATER*
Dates:	Thur 13th – Sat 15th October 2011
Showing of Work:	Saturday 15th October 2011 at 2:30pm & 8pm
Fee / Expenses Due:	£32+vat 4 hour call Duty FoH Manager (2:30pm showing)
	£22+vat 3 & ½ hour call usher (2:30pm showing)
	£22+vat 3 & ½ hour call usher (2:30pm showing)
	£22+ vat 3 & ½ hour call usher (8pm showing)
	£22+ vat 3 & ½ hour call usher (8pm showing)
	<u>FOH Total = £120+vat</u>
	Technical assistance and costing to be negotiated.
In kind support:	Room hire (£200)
	Front of House Duty Manager (£32 on 15th Oct at 8pm)
	Advertised on Website
	Box office support
Invite List:	Audience to book space through Tron Theatre box office (Capacity 50, end on reserved seating)
Report:	Due by 30th November 2011.
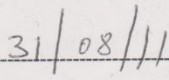
A report about your development period is required from you by 30th November 2011. Should there be a future life to the project we request that the Tron Theatre is credited and has first refusal as potential partners in future project.

If you are in agreement with the above, please sign and return one copy of this letter.

Anne M'Cluskey _____

Anne McCluskey (Tron Theatre)   Date   02/08/11

Jo Ronan signature _____

Jo Ronan   Date   31/08/11

Appendix 24   **Tron Invoice 1**

Appendix 24 Tron Invoice 1

Tron Theatre Limited

TRON THEATRE

63 Trongate
Glasgow, G1 5HB
0141 552 3748 fax 0141 552 6657

Invoice No. 1685

=== INVOICE ===

Customer

Name	Jo Ronan BLOOD WATER (Marie McEwan - Finance Departmer	Date	02/08/2011
Address	University of the West of Scotland, Witherspoon Building	Order No.	
City	Paisley Postcode PA1 2BE		
Phone	01292 886400 Marie.McEwan@uws.ac.uk		

Qty	Description	Unit Price	TOTAL
1	Duty FoH Manager for the 2:30pm showing on 15/09/11	£32.00	£32.00
2	FoH Ushers for the 2:30pm showing on15/09/11	£22.00	£44.00
2	FoH Ushers for the 8pm showing on 15/09/11	£22.00	£44.00

Bacs Details: Sort Code 80-54-01 A/C No. 00888247

Payment Details

- ○ Cash
- ◉ Bank Tranfer (See bank details above)
- ○

Name _____
CC # _____
Expires _____

SubTotal	£120.00
VAT @ 20%	£24.00
TOTAL	£144.00

Office Use Only

VAT Registration No. 353 7004 74
Company Registration 77475

Appendix 25   **Tron Invoice 2**

Appendix 25 Tron Invoice 2

Tron Theatre Limited
63 Trongate
Glasgow, G1 5HB
0141 552 3748 fax 0141 552 6657

Invoice No. 1712

=== **INVOICE** ===

Customer

Name	Jo Ronan
Address	20 Woddlands Drive
City	Glasgow Postcode G4 9EH
Phone	

Date   24/10/2011
Order No.

Qty	Description	Unit Price	TOTAL
1	Hire of projector	£50.00	£50.00
1	Techncian	£50.00	£50.00

Bacs Details: Sort Code 80-54-01 A/C No. 00888247

SubTotal	£100.00
VAT @ 20%	£20.00
TOTAL	£120.00

Payment Details

○ Cash
◉ Bank Tranfer (See bank details above)
○

Name
CC #
        Expires

Office Use Only

VAT Registration No. 353 7004 74
Company Registration 77475

412

Appendix 26   CCA Invoice

CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS						
350 Sauchiehall St						
Glasgow G3 8LD						
Phone 0141 352 4900 Fax 0141 3323226						
Statement To:						
University of West of Scotland						
Finance Department						
Witherspoon Building						
Paisley						
PA1						
Appendix 26	CCA invoice				STATEMENT	
Comments or Special Instructions:				DATE:	03.02.14	
Invoicing for BloodWater / Jo Ronan						
PLEASE USE PURCHSE ORDER NUMBER 1180308 WHEN INVOICING						
DATE			excl vat	vat	incl vat	
31.01.14	Box Sales					
3pm Show	6 @ Free		0	-	0.00	
	11 @ £2		18.33	3.67	22.00	
	18 @ £5		75	15.00	90.00	
	4 @ £8		26.67	5.33	32.00	
	9 @ £10		75	15.00	90.00	

8pm Show	10 @ Free			0	-	0.00	
	9 @ £2			15	3.00	18.00	
	17 @ £5			70.83	14.17	85.00	
	16 @ £8			106.67	21.33	128.00	
	7 @ £10			58.33	11.67	70.00	
				445.83	**89.17**	**535.00**	
	CCA to Pay						
	Room Hire Complimentary			**0**	**-**	**0**	
	Staffing						
29.01.13	1 x CCA technician 9.15am - 1.15pm			44	8.80	52.80	
	1 x CCA technician 10am - 8pm			110	22.00	132.00	
	1 x CCA technician 10am - 10pm			132	26.40	158.40	
	1 x FOH 2.30 pm - 6.30pm			28.52	5.70	34.22	
	1 x FOH 7pm - 10pm			21.39	4.28	25.67	
	UWS to Pay CCA			**335.91**	**67.18**	**403.09**	
					Balance Due	**£ 131.91**	
The above balance will be payable on receipt of an invoice							
				THANK YOU FOR YOUR BUSINESS!			

Appendix 27   Tron audience feedback form

Whose Story Is It Anyway?

Thank you so much for attending this afternoon/evening's performance of the above. In order to develop this work, we would like your feedback on one wee question. We would be very grateful if you could respond.

We hope you found Pritam, Lucy, Monika, Fatima and Gordon interesting characters. We would like to develop all these characters. As an interested theatre goer who has taken the time to attend, we would like your view on the following:

Whilst developing the characters in the next stage of *Whose Story Is It Anyway,* is it necessary for the team to identify a protagonist/main character?

If yes, why and which character should it be?

If no, why is it not necessary?

Name (if you would like to share):

E-mail (if you would like to share):

Which performance did you attend? (Please circle)   2.30pm   8.00pm

Are you a (Please circle one or as many as applicable)?

Theatre audience

Theatre funder

Theatre-maker

Other (please specify)

Appendix 28   **Tron audience feedback data**

Capacity 49

Total attendance 66 (67%)

Total number of feedback forms returned 58 (88%)

Number attending 2.30pm *WSA* – 39

Number of feedback forms returned – 36

Audience who think a protagonist is not necessary – 22

Identified a need for protagonist but did not mention who – 2

Don't know – 2 (one respondent because characters not sufficiently developed, second respondent, because protagonist is a subjective entity)

Gordon – 4 (with one respondent saying Fatima as well)

Fatima – 4 (with one respondent saying Gordon as well)

Lucy – 1

Pritam – 1

Number attending 8pm *WSA* – 27

Number of feedback forms returned – 22

Audience who think a protagonist is not necessary – 17

Don't know – 1 (too early to say)
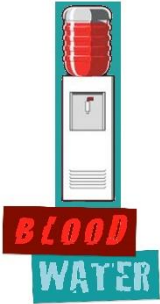
Yes – 1 (does not mention who)

Gordon – 1

Pritam – 1

Fatima – 1

Appendix 29   Centre for Contemporary Arts audience feedback form

LEAVE YOUR SHOES at the DOOR

Follow **@BloodWatTheatre**
Share your feedback!

No need for your name or contact details but it would be great if you could state your gender:

Please circle which show you attended: **3.00pm**   or   **7.30pm**

There was a pay what you choose ticket price (£0, £2, £5, £8 and £10) for this performance. What did you take into consideration when deciding the price of your ticket?

Having seen the performance, would you stick with the price you paid or alter your choice? Why?

Did you see *Whose Story Is It Anyway?* at the Tron Theatre on the 15th of October 2011? **YES** or   **NO**

Your assessment of *Leave Your Shoes at the Door*, however brief or detailed will help BloodWater Theatre decide on its next steps and will support Jo in her reflection on collaborative theatre practice for her PhD. You are the audience and by experiencing this performance with us, your feedback, comments, suggestions etc. become valid whether you seldom attend live performances or are a regular theatre-goer. BloodWater Theatre thanks you for your comments below

Appendix 30   **CCA Audience Feedback Data**

Capacity 59

Matinee attendance 48 = 81% attendance

Evening attendance 59 = 100% attendance

Total attendance 107 (91%)

Total number of responses – 77 + 1 (response from CCA technician who worked with BWT during the 3 days we were at the CCA), Overall response rate 66%

Question 1

There was a pay what you choose ticket price (£0, £2, £5, £8 and £10) for this performance. What did you take into consideration when deciding the price of your ticket?

6 respondents did not answer this question

6 respondents said they did not purchase their tickets and did not suggest what would have influenced their decision had they paid.

Some respondents offered more than one reason for their choice.

The following considerations were the most popular

Determining value by potential quality – 17 responses
Determining value by affordability – 15 responses
Determining value by the labour power of artists – 11 responses
Determining value by applying personal ethics – 10 responses
Determining value by comparable theatre products – 7 responses
Determining value by applying the mean – 6 responses
Determining value by considering personal relationship to BWT - 3

A selection of isolated responses

"Why was it optional?"

"This type of performance research"

 "I paid zero because I thought I had a comp ticket"

"The blurb on the website seemed to suggest that this was an experimental process – so useful for the creators but not likely to be that interesting for the audience"

 "The knowledge provided on the CCA website – semi pro show"

Question 2

Having seen the performance, would you stick with the price you paid or alter your choice? Why?

10 respondents either left the section blank or their response did not answer this question

Some respondents offered more than reason

Reasons for	Same Price	Lower Price	Higher Price
Quality	*16*	0	13
Affordability	8	0	1
Artists' Labour	6	0	8
Comparable Products	3	0	0
No reason offered	9	1	2
Future BWT work	3	0	3
Other reasons	1	1	0
Total	46	2	27

A Selection of Qualifications to Responses Worth Considering

"Assessing value is complex!"

"…putting a value on your work was probably the most important factor so I wouldn't have changed even if I didn't enjoy the show (which I did)"

"I don't think it's possible to put a monetary value on enjoyment"

"My decision to pay was not based on the prospective quality - nor on the ultimate quality or enjoyment of the performance"

"I don't think cost and quality are related"

"I know there is a lot of work behind such a project"

"Would pay more as it was clear to see the amount of hard work and effort that went into making the performance"

"Could have paid more after seeing the amount of work that was put into the performance"

"I would have paid more after seeing how much work has gone into this performance"

"It was clear a lot of time, effort and hard work as well as devotion went into the performance. I would always expect to pay for any live performance"

"I loved the performance! It was really interesting and thought-provoking. I wish I could have paid the highest price of £10. I think it deserves even more"

"Maybe pay higher as it was such a professional piece"

"If I could I would pay £10 to not only help to support the work but to show my enjoyment"

"You should charge because you're worth it! Also because it elevates people's expectations, they might not take it seriously if it is free"

"I thought it was an excellent performance, very interesting"

"I felt the performance was different. However, taking into consideration location, space and the type of show it was, I wouldn't pay much more"

"Alter, great quality and entertainment"

"I liked the piece, it was well worth it"

"I am happy I got value for money"

"I think it was well worth the £10"

"The quality of the work"

"Yes, enjoyed performances, better than paying a fortune at the cinema"

"Too much choice"

"I agree with the price I selected, I would happily pay more for such a collaborative, innovative, fresh and dynamic project"

"…would have paid more if the option was given"

"The work was of tremendous quality - put a £15 option the next time"

"I would have paid £10 if I was earning"

"If I could I would have paid more"

"…the performance was interesting to watch. The actors were strong in their delivery. I enjoyed the topic themes behind the performance"

"I would stick with the same amount although I wouldn't object to £10 either!"

"£5 as that is what I can afford"

"The price I paid was simply for personal financial reasons but can understand why others may pay more"

"…still broke"

"£8, someone else decided, I would have paid £5 as that's what I can afford (financially embarrassed and self-employed"

"…being a student I feel it is hard to budget for stuff so when there is an option you will settle for what suits you"

"I feel I supported the company and spent within my means"

"I would definitely give something! At least £5"

"I agree with having paid money"

"…would like to support future projects"

"…support the work"

"I like to support"

"…more people should see this type of show"

"…the benefit I got from seeing the show was worth more"

"Ethics and hierarchy within performance and within the rehearsal room is something I am interested in"

"…I feel further support is warranted and required"

"Lower, it was indeed a presentation of research – which I see a lot of in an academic context (and am paid to do so, rather than having to pay). This is not to say the worth is not valuable"

"Ask the audience to pay after the performance whatever they wish"

"People could elect to pay after the performance? – not sure how that would work venue wise"

Question 3

Did you see *Whose Story Is It Anyway?* at the Tron Theatre on the 15th of October 2011? **YES** or **NO**

Yes 17, No 53, Did not answer 7

Question 4

Your assessment of *Leave Your Shoes at the Door*, however brief or detailed will help BloodWater Theatre decide on its next steps and will support Jo in her reflection on collaborative theatre practice for her PhD. You are the audience and by experiencing this performance with us, your feedback, comments, suggestions etc. become valid whether you seldom attend live performances or are a regular theatre-goer. BloodWater Theatre thanks you for your comments below

Summary and Selection of Responses

The responses were categorised under the headings of quality, collaboration, support for future work and ethics. A count of the number of comments corresponding to the categories was undertaken. The largest category, 'quality' necessitated further subheadings. A selection of responses is included as well.

Quality [*Aesthetics, Dialectic (process/product; reality/fiction), Innovation, Participation*] = 88

Aesthetics = 48

The feedback was very positive with some constructive suggestions for improvement. The quality of performance and the intermedia aspects was consistently wholly positive. Some

respondents mentioned how much they enjoyed the multi-layered approach, the characterisation, the humour and the writing. A few respondents said the stories could have been connected more fully as did a few others who would have liked to have seen more interaction between the characters on stage. A couple of respondents mentioned restricted viewing because of where they were seated and a couple of respondents mentioned more editing was required.

"The performances were very touching and engaging"

"…more connection between the stories"

"… fly on the wall documentary"

"Each vignette caught my attention for different reasons"

"At first it was difficult to follow what was going on but as the performance progressed so did understanding"

"The multiple perspectives were very effective in illustrating the diversity of the human experience"

Dialectic (process/product; reality/fiction) = 20

The respondents may not have used the term, dialectic in determining quality but their comments relating to process, reality and fiction reflected their engagement with the process/product dialectic which BWT utilised in developing *LYSD*. The feedback ranged from wanting to see more of the process within the product to comments on their navigation through the real and fictional worlds *LYSD* lent itself to.

"Getting a small insight into the context of the process made it quite a unique experience"

"But does this process necessarily produce a different type of theatre?"

"I got carried away by the story and didn't know the difference between theatre and reality"

"I wasn't too sure if they were still acting or whether they were being themselves" referring to the section when the performers chatted with the audience

"… created a feeling of film come to life"

"I enjoyed the overlapping of reality and fantasy"

"In order to understand how collaboration took place, I'd like to see more of both the fictional (5 Day Theatre) and the actual (BloodWater) process"

Innovation = 12

All twelve explicit references to innovation were overwhelmingly positive with the phrase "thought provoking" consistently used.

""This seems to be the future of theatre"

"… refreshing theatre"

"I feel more of this work is important within theatre to make a difference and challenge our culture"

"I liked how the play was purely based on what the performers wanted, out of the ordinary, in a good way"

Participation = 8

In assessing quality a number of respondents made reference to the section when the performers chatted with the audience in relation to their questioning of reality and fiction but did not necessarily assess the value of the participation itself. However, eight respondents assessed the value of participation in itself explicitly with one respondent saying s/he "disliked the audience interaction", two enjoying this section but saying that it needed to be more structured and developed more and the rest wholly positive.

"I rather enjoyed this opportunity to play a part at the end"

"I liked the interaction with the audience because it was sensitive and non-threatening"

"I enjoyed being part of the performance – made me feel like part of the journey"

Collaboration = 22

There were twenty-two respondents who made explicit comment about non-hierarchical theatre production. Of this three were clearly sceptical about its value and viability, two supported the ethos of collaboration but said that collaboration was undermined in the performance as the production relied heavily on solo monologues and all the rest of the seventeen respondents identified clear value for non-hierarchical collaboration.

"I think collaboration as a form of making a play is very difficult. Ego has no place and that is difficult for an artist"

"It needed some editing – how easy are these kind of difficult choices with a totally shared artistic vision?"

"… not sure that hierarchy can be done away with as natural leaders obviously emerge"

"It was amazing this was achieved with no hierarchy"

"… collaborative work…more socially complex and democratic way of working in contrast to director/writer dominance in theatre …the advantages of the social value of being equal, of negotiating power but also the issues and problems which come with it"

"This piece was united by the commitment of the performers to the process"

"The collaborative process didn't seem to dilute the overall vision of the piece"

"I enjoyed that it was democratic and about process"

"This was clearly a multi-effort in all respects"

"A good example of how artistic collaboration is possible"

"… collaboration without hierarchy – hmmm, human nature dictates the opposite but humanity can change this, if we try we can collaborate and "Leave Your Shoes at the Door"

Support for Future Work = 12

There were numerous respondents who said how much they enjoyed the performance, how interesting and thought provoking it was. Twelve respondents stated explicitly that they wanted to see BWT's work continue.

"… keep going"

"Please keep producing challenging work"

"I would like to see what direction BloodWater Theatre takes next"

"… more of the same"

Ethics = 2

"Thanks for introducing your real self at the end. It helped me a lot to get back to reality. It was too easy to believe everything you said"

"It would have been useful to know about audience involvement prior to the beginning of the performance"

Excerpt from CCA technician's feedback

I thought it was a thought-provoking and original play that was well devised. It is evident that it was approached with a great deal of consideration and candour from all involved. . In my opinion, the question of whether or not a production can be created without a hierarchical structure was answered. Clearly this is possible based on the existence of BloodWater Theatre and the way in which the piece was developed and performed. I would like to add that the decision to have the actors interact with the audience in such a manner was a bold one. It was a reciprocal challenge… I would have chosen warmer and more inviting furniture… make the stage less bare and sparse. I think to improve the production value, more effort could have been made on the set and costume design…the lighting was unbelievable…

Appendix 31   *Leave Your Shoes at the Door* **Poster**

Appendix 32 The University of the West of Scotland's corporate marketing

UWS Main website and intranet

- [About UWS](#)
- [News](#)
- Unique production testing ownership in theatre-making

Unique production testing ownership in theatre-making
17 Jan 2014

Jo Ronan of University of the West of Scotland (UWS) is playing a key role in the innovative production, 'Leave Your Shoes at the Door' which is being performed at the Centre for Contemporary Arts (CCA) in Glasgow on Friday 31 January 2014 at 3pm and 7.30pm.

This production builds on research undertaken by Jo Ronan, Programme Leader of the University's BA Performance degree, to investigate modes of production in theatre.

In 2011 as part of Ronan's research she brought together a group of UK artists to test the principles of ownership in theatre-making and in doing so created BloodWater Theatre. BloodWater Theatre, which operates without a designated director or writer, collaboratively produced 'Whose Story Is It Anyway', at the Tron Theatre in 2011. This performance, which is a detailed examination of theatre and the creative forces involved, features fictional artists in a theatre residency trying to create a show with no leader.

In 2014, BloodWater Theatre resurrects these characters in its production of 'Leave Your Shoes at the Door'. This performance will see each character being pushed to the brink whilst developing a show once again within a fictional 5 day period and without a director. The production will explore whether it is possible for these fictional characters to collaborate on equal footing to create a show when their artistic practices are diverse and their temperaments varied.

Jo Ronan said: "The performances of Leave Your Shoes at the Door at the CCA promise to be thought provoking and entertaining at the same time. My time as associate director with the

Necessary Stage (Singapore) and 7:84 (Scotland) prompted this performance-based research."

Leave Your Shoes at the Door has been produced with multiple directors, writers and designers. There is no singular artistic vision for the production but a vision that is collaborated. Choices and decisions have been negotiated through a dialectical process of creation in the hope that each member of the company can own the processes and products of creation. Leave Your Shoes at the Door raises questions about how theatre is made and whether the process of making can be synonymous to the product of theatre.

Anyone wanting to attend one of the performances on Friday 31 January 2014 at the CCA should click here.

NOODLS Site

UWS - University of the West of Scotland

20/01/2014 | Press release
Unique production testing ownership in theatre-making
distributed by noodls on 20/01/2014 13:27

0 0

0

Unique production testing ownership in theatre-making
            20 Jan 2014
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Anyone wanting to attend one of the performances on Friday 31 January 2014 at the CCA should **click here**.

We're trying to make work we all have stake in

Appendix 33

Theatre

NEIL COOPER

ONCE upon a time, fringe theatre was alternative in both form and content. Radical collectives brought together by one form of counter-cultural ideology or another tried to change the world with non-hierarchical structures which they attempted to implement both in the rehearsal room and the office, if they had one. The rise of free-market economics and allure of public funding forced such companies to professionalise in a way that may have allowed them to join the party, but which arguably neutered the whole notion of alternative and fringe theatre.

The contradictions inherent in the system interested theatre-maker Jo Ronan when she worked for various theatre companies in the 1990s, when, despite a seemingly radical agenda in terms of productions, the accepted hierarchies and pecking orders remained in place. Several years on, the ideas

of what it means to make truly collaborative theatre are explored in Leave Your Shoes At The Door, a work which aims to challenge old-fashioned hierarchies in a number of ways.

"When I started my PhD," Ronan explains, "the bee in my bonnet was how the idea of collaboration in theatre is now pervasive. There was a time when some companies' work was all about being political, but the question that needs to be asked is how can you politicise the making of the work, so that the process of making theatre becomes synonymous with the end product? So let's forget about context. Let's try and make the work genuinely collaboratively, so the audiences see how and why we do it, and what pedagogies are required to make that shift – but do it in an entertaining fashion."

The roots of Leave Your Shoes At The Door date back to 2010, when Ronan first began to look into collaborative practice in a way that took it beyond the academic to something that looked more outwards than some research projects. Ronan subsequently gathered around her a group of theatre artists interested in exploring such an approach. As BloodWater Theatre, the group presented Whose Story Is It Anyway?, a work in progress seen at the Tron Theatre in Glasgow.

While the desire to work outwith the normal theatre infrastructure continued, there were also more pragmatic concerns. People in the group needed to earn money, while some of the company moved away from Glasgow. It is for such reasons that it has taken more than two years for Ronan and BloodWater to move things on to the second stage that Leave Your Shoes At The Door effectively forms.

"It's been time consuming," says Ronan, "but we wanted to try to work differently from the models that exist, so we've made

it in our own time and on our own terms, but hopefully in a way that interests the audience."

The conceit of Leave Your Shoes At The Door finds Ronan and the performers from BloodWater playing a fictional theatre company who, like BloodWater, reconvene after some time apart to continue an exploratory way of working.

> **It's been time consuming but we wanted to work differently from models that exist, so we have made it on our own terms**

While the show's mix of filmed and live action sounds self-referential, Ronan and co are actually proposing something that's little short of a revolutionary way of working. This includes the ticketing of the show, with the company asking the audience to pay what they can, from zero upwards.

"What we are trying to do is to make a piece of work that we all

have a stake in," Ronan explains, "and we hope that what we have come up with will interest an audience enough to make them think and feel about the relationship between process and product. Are audiences interested in the process of making a show, or is the end result enough?"

Where all this leads to in the long term remains to be seen. This is something again which will be decided collaboratively.

"Beyond this we have to ask our focus groups and our audience whether there is a point in pursuing all this as a company," Ronan says.

"That's a very difficult question to be answered, but the more important thing is to ask the people in BloodWater what they want to do. Do BloodWater want to stay together and continue working in this way, or have we taken things as far as we can go?"

Leave Your Shoes At The Door, CCA, Glasgow, today, 3pm and 7.30pm,
www.cca-glasgow.com
www.bloodwatertheatre.com

STAGED: Leave Your Shoes At The Door follows a fictional theatre company.

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Title of Module: Production: Contemporary Theatre			
Code: MEDI09091	**SCQF Level: 9** (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework)	**Credit Points: 20**	**ECTS: 10** (European Credit Transfer Scheme)
School:	School of Media, Culture and Society		
Module Co-ordinator:	Jo Ronan		

Summary of Module
Production: Contemporary Theatre builds on students' interest in the devising and writing processes employed to create new and original theatre performance. It allows students to use their observations, experiences and knowledge as the starting point to develop an ensemble and solo-based performance. The balance between collective and individual creation enables the student to exercise their artistic impulses in different contexts whilst innovating on strategies to communicate new work with an audience. The approaches to the teaching and learning on this module will vary from individual to collective creation, tutor-led to autonomous contemporary theatre-making underpinned by research and experimentation throughout. Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of the complexities of the term contemporary in relation to the site of theatre in the context of the politics and aesthetics of performance-making (L1).   • Teaching and learning will take place through lectures on innovations in theatre-making ranging from experimentation in playwriting, devising, physical theatre, intermedia performance, site-specific etc. The assessment will take the form of a circa 1500 word essay where students will undertake a comparative analysis of two contemporary theatre companies underpinned by their understanding of the politics and aesthetics of the work of these companies.   • A tutor/director will lead a rehearsal process where students work together, using appropriate specialist skills to experiment with ideas in order to develop a performance text that will be staged in an appropriate setting (L2). Students will be assessed on their contribution to the development of the performance text and the quality of their performance during the staging of this text.   • Following on from the performance of the group piece, each student will develop a short solo 5minute piece inspired by the group piece demonstrating her/his ability to synthesise and articulate ideas of contemporary theatre (L3). They will be given feedback on their ideas for the solo piece but will take the lead in developing this work. Students will be assessed on the originality of their ideas and the quality of their performance.

- Definitions of contemporary theatre • Politics and aesthetics of contemporary theatre • Experimentation with ideas • Innovations and originality • Professional practice

Module Delivery Method

Face-To-Face	Blended	Fully Online
	✓	

Face-To-Face
Term used to describe the traditional classroom environment where the students and the lecturer meet synchronously in the same room for the whole provision.

Fully Online
Instruction that is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies. This term is used to describe the previously used terms distance learning and e learning.

Blended
A mode of delivery of a module or a programme that involves online and face-to-face delivery of learning, teaching and assessment activities, student support and feedback. A programme may be considered "blended" if it includes a combination of face-to-face, online and blended modules. If an online programme has any compulsory face-to-face and campus elements it must be described as blended with clearly articulated delivery information to manage student expectations

Campus(es) for Module Delivery

The module will **normally** be offered on the following campuses / or by Distance Learning (D/L) (ie.Virtual Campus): (Provided viable student numbers permit)

Paisley:	Ayr:	Dumfries:	Hamilton:	D/L Virtual Campus:	Other:
	✓				

Learning Outcomes: (maximum of 5 statements)

At the end of this module the student will be able to:

L1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the defining features of contemporary theatre in the larger context of the politics and aesthetics of performance-making

L2. Apply a range of appropriate specialist skills under the artistic direction of a tutor to experiment with ideas during rehearsals in order to collaboratively develop together with their peers a text which will be performed to an audience

L3. Synthesise and articulate ideas of contemporary theatre by independently developing a short solo performance inspired by the tutor-led collaborative piece