Being an actor / becoming a trainer: the embodied logos of intersubjective experience in a somatic acting process

This practice-as-research thesis documents a sustained period of research grounded in my experience as an actress who has become an actor-trainer within UK-based actor-training institutions. It explores the development of an original somatic actor-training methodology within different theatre teaching and performing environments. This research concentrates on challenging dualistic binaries of mind-body, inner-outer, self-other and the universalizing of the individual actor's experience as problematic logocentrism in Stanislavski-inspired actor-training traditions. It is informed in practice by Linda Hartley's IBMT (Integrative Bodywork and Movement Therapy) somatic approach, which is based upon Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen's Body-Mind Centering® (BMC®) principles. I suggest the practical modification of Cohen's developmental process of embodiment in the actor-training context through the shaping of contingent, processual and intersubjective/intercorporeal explorations which I coin as *fluid structures.*

Rooted in the interconnection of theory and practice, or praxis, this thesis is based upon the original notion of each actor's *embodied logos.* This term is inspired by Merleau-Ponty's theoretical understanding of *logos as flesh* that allows the perception of logos as an embodied and intersubjective experience. An emergent new somatic actor-training pedagogy contributes to contemporary actor-training practices and languages revisiting the dialogue between the actor and the trainer through the innovative intersubjective role of the *trainer-witness* and the relationally aware *actor-mover/actor-witness.* Following this processual study I articulate and respond to thorny ethical issues in actor training regarding emergent dissonances between therapy and training, training and rehearsal/performance processes, the trainer and the director, the edges of actors' emotional expression and sense of freedom.