

‘Insider-other’

Spectator-Dancer Relationships fostered
through Open Rehearsals

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Abstract

Dance performances offer audiences opportunities for intellectual and creative stimulation, social and/or family fulfilment, opportunities to see “great works”, and opportunities to “grow closer to one’s own culture, or to learn about cultures other than [one’s] own” (WolfBrown 2011, 1). However, mainstream ballet and contemporary dance performances, within the traditional presentation paradigm, face challenges regarding audience engagement. Ballet faces challenges in regards to perceived elitism (Harlow 2014, 30), while contemporary dance can be perceived as a “complex” and “difficult” art form (Ann Sholem, personal interview, August 30 2013). Dance and theatre audience researcher Lynne Conner (2013, 3) suggests that current audiences, across performing arts, are not readily equipped with the necessary knowledge and analytical skills to engage deeply in performance meaning-making. In some cases, audience members can feel “intimidated because they don’t think they know enough to appreciate the experience and may even feel stupid” (Harlow 2014, 53).

In cross-disciplinary research, audiences have acknowledged performers as the “most helpful aspects in the shows for creating enjoyment” and, more importantly, the “most helpful aspects for creating understanding” (Scollen 2008, 52). This study examines open rehearsals as a point of meeting between spectators and dancers, that has the potential to support and foster audience engagement during subsequent performances.

Specifically, the study presents and trials an open rehearsal model with Sydney Dance Company and The Australian Ballet (Melbourne). This open rehearsal model invites non-expert dance ‘spectators’ (the term used in this study to refer to the open rehearsal attendees) into regular, traditionally closed rehearsals. This study examines how these open rehearsal interactions impact on subsequent performance experiences; specifically, it focuses on

spectator-dancer relationships during these open rehearsals, and the spectators' subsequent relationships with performers, when they take on their role as 'audiences' (the term used in this study to refer to the performance audience).

Through analysis of participant observation, focus group discussions, and expert interviews, the study shows that audience-performer relationships during performance are generated and influenced by the (former) spectator-dancer relationships fostered through the open rehearsal experience. This study argues that the open rehearsal event offers the possibility of different relationships between spectator and dancer, compared to those between audience and dancer during actual performance.

Keywords

audience, authenticity, ballet, contemporary dance, dance reception, experience, insider, open rehearsal, otherness, performer qualities, rehearsal studies, relationship, sacralisation, spectator

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Statement of Authorship

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

[QUT Verified Signature](#)

Signature:

Date: 04/02/16

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IN THE STUDIO

In the informal space of a rehearsal studio one sees things they cannot see in a more formal setting, such as the theatre, and vice versa. [. . .] One gets to meet the dancers up close, see the sweat fly around the room, witness the day-to-day interactions and workings. (Emily Molnar, personal interview, 28 August 2014)

Nine people sit in Studio 6 at The Australian Ballet. The group consists of a train driver, architect, stay-at-home mum, retired primary school teacher, event coordinator, canine massage therapist, tertiary student, physiotherapist, and dance audience researcher. In front of them, eight principal dancers are paired off into male/female partnerships. Internationally acclaimed choreographer Alexei Ratmansky and ballet mistress Fiona Tonkin are sitting to their right. An accompanist is playing a baby grand piano in the corner.

The dancers' movements include complex and strenuous lifts. Two of the ballerinas are elevated high into the air, while the third is lifted only a foot above the floor. The fourth couple are marking the movements out with their hands instead. Several of the movements within the developing sequence have not yet been perfected. Rather, the dancers appear to be experiencing difficulty in achieving these movements, such as the lift. Ratmansky interrupts the run and gives the dancers feedback, such as, "I want the arm this way." There is a lot of non-verbal communication back and forth between the choreographer and dancers. They negotiate the movements with each other using eye contact and hand movements. Later, when they run it again, all four ballerinas are lifted high in the air.

In this open rehearsal trial, Ratmansky developed a new movement sequence and, therefore, the rehearsal spectators witnessed the dancers' first attempts at this new choreography. The scene described above is probably not surprising to dance practitioners; however, this was the first time these spectators had stepped into a professional dance studio. While these spectators were regular attendees at The Australian Ballet's performances, rehearsals had been a

mystery to them. This open rehearsal was their first opportunity to have an insight into the intimate workings of this dance company, and to be sitting close enough to the dancers to hear them breathing.

1. INTRODUCTION

When audiences are more fluid interpreters, they are more interested in tackling difficult works of art. This should be very good news for arts organizations and artists because it means we can leave the arts event/object alone. (Conner 2013, 171)

This chapter introduces and provides an overview of this study in four sections. First, the research problem and research questions are identified. This study's focus on spectator-dancer relationships during open rehearsals is stated. This section continues with an overview of my motivations to engage in this study, the research methods and findings.

Second, several key terms are defined. 'Audience' and 'spectator' are problematized in relation to the open rehearsal context of this study. 'Otherness' is defined using dance scholar Sondra Fraleigh's (1987) theory of the audience as 'other' within the dance performance relationship. 'Insider' and 'outsider' positionality is considered on a scale, where knowledge and understanding of a particular group shifts an individual's position on this scale. 'Open rehearsals' are discussed in relation to performances and the creative process. This section concludes with a discussion of historian Lawrence Levine's (1988) theory of the "sacralisation of culture", in the context of current ballet and contemporary dance performance.

Third, the scope of this study is outlined. Ballet and contemporary dance are stated as the two dance styles of which this study is scoped to. Specifically, this study focuses on ballet and contemporary dance companies that predominately perform dance work within the 'traditional presentation paradigm'.¹ This study is also scoped to live open rehearsals and

¹ The traditional presentation paradigm is a format in which dance work is "presented to the audience (in a monologic format), irrespective of individual audience characteristics" (Dyson 2015, 2). Dance researcher Clare Dyson identifies five characteristics of this paradigm: the performance site is front-facing, in fixed seating theatres (Dyson 2015, 7); "the expected codes and conventions of performance, inherent in traditional performance venues (theatres), are adhered to" (Dyson 2015, 8); "audience agency is 'restricted' or non-existent" (Dyson 2015, 9); "audience proximity to the stage is fixed" and distant (Dyson 2015, 10); and dancers

non-expert rehearsal spectators. Exclusions from this study's scope, such as audience development research, are also listed in this section. This chapter concludes with a chapter outline of this thesis.

Mainstream ballet and contemporary dance company performances, within the traditional presentation paradigm, can be a challenge for audiences to engage with. Ballet faces challenges in regards to perceived elitism (Harlow 2014, 30), while contemporary dance can be perceived as a “complex” and “difficult” art form for people (Ann Sholem, personal interview, August 30 2013). Conner (2013, 3) suggests that current audiences, generally, are not readily equipped with the necessary knowledge and analytical skills to engage deeply in meaning-making. In some cases, audience members feel “intimated because they don't think they know enough to appreciate the experience and may even feel stupid” (Harlow 2014, 53).

This study examines open rehearsals as a tool to support spectators' (future) audience engagement² during performance. Specifically, it trials an open rehearsal model which invites non-expert dance spectators into regular, closed rehearsals. Choreographers and dancers are not asked to change their rehearsals but, rather, to simply open the studio door to spectators.

Within cross-disciplinary research, performers have been cited, by audiences, as the “most helpful aspects in the shows for creating enjoyment”, and the “most helpful aspects for creating understanding” (Scollen 2008, 52). Therefore, this study focuses on spectator-dancer relationships during open rehearsals, and the subsequent audience-performer relationships during performance. The research questions then become:

employ performer qualities which can include dancing “without personal engagement” (Dyson 2015, 11) through to performing “believable” emotion or character (Dyson 2010, 186). This traditional presentation paradigm was developed in the nineteenth century (Dyson 2015, 3).

² ‘Audience engagement’, according to Conner (2013, 2), is where an audience member “signifies some type of emotional or affective relationship between consumer and arts event and/or arts organization.”

- What is the relationship between spectator and dancer in open rehearsals?
- How can open rehearsals shape (future) performance relationships between audience and performer/dance work?

My interest in audiences stems from personal experiences. The first of these experiences were childhood interactions community dance projects in regional Queensland, Australia.³ These were events where dance was a tool used to bring people together physically, conceptually, and emotionally. Community dance practice, generally, supports values such as accessibility, participation, and inclusivity (Australian Dance Council 2000, 32). These values, experienced through community dance events, formed my initial understanding of, and relationship with dance before I had considered it as a career pathway. My perspective of dance today is intrinsically linked to some of these community dance values. At the core of my thinking about professional dance, are consistent questions of: Who can access this dance work? How is the audience invited to participate? Do I, as an audience member, feel included?

The second of these personal experiences that influenced my interest in audiences was becoming an audience member again. As an emerging dance practitioner, many of my interactions with dance, before commencing a research pathway, were as a dancer-in-training within the Western artistic dance context. During this time, the performances that I attended, as an audience member, functioned as a way for me to contextualise my developing practice. At this time, playing the role of audience member was a secondary relationship to dance, in

³ Community dance is a form dance practice that emerged in the 1970s, and is grounded in process-oriented values (Amans 2008, 10). It encompasses a diverse range of practice due to different geographical areas, funding structures, populations, and practitioner aspirations (Jasper 1997 in Amans 2008, 5). Dance researcher and community dance practitioner Diane Amans (2008, 10) suggests that a variety of definitions that are offered “characterise a profession which creates accessible opportunities for people of diverse backgrounds and abilities to join in dance activities.” Community dance practitioner Janet Donald (1997, 20) asserts that “[t]he community dance experience must be a possibility for all interested people regardless of age, social background, cultural difference, disability or previous experience in the art form.” While community dance influences my personal paradigm, this field is not the practical or theoretical focus of this study. See Poynor and Simmonds (1997) for Australian perspectives on community dance.

terms of time spent in this role; more significantly, it was secondary to my sense of identity. The transition from full-time dance training into research training had a profound impact on my relationship to dance. Playing the role of audience member became a much larger part of my dance interactions, and attending dance performances became a way of staying connected to dance. My identity as an audience member, and the nature of the interactions involved in this role, became more important to me.

The shift from predominately 'doing' to 'watching' also emphasised how much is unknown, or missed, when one's experience of a dance work is restricted to the moment of performance. My knowledge tells me that my reading of the dance work is likely to constitute but a mere fraction of the thought and consideration that has gone into creating it (not to mention the choreographer and broader dance history to which it is linked). The seamless execution by the performers is the result of hours of rehearsal and years (perhaps, even decades) of training. Becoming an audience member again highlighted, for me, the volume of what goes unseen at dance performances.

The third influential experience was my Honours research project (2011) in which I examined audience motivations for attending contemporary dance performances in Brisbane, Australia. One of the project's major findings is the suggestion that tools designed to assist audiences in engaging with dance work, such as program notes, do not reliably foster audience engagement. As a result, further questions emerged in relation to the tools which dance companies are employing to prepare their audiences for performances. For this research project, I chose to focus on open rehearsals, as this is a method that can reveal elements of the creative process that traditionally go unseen.

This is an empirical research project, and employs a qualitative and practice-based methodology. It reports on two action research cycles in which the open rehearsal model was

trilled with Sydney Dance Company and The Australian Ballet (Melbourne). Participant observation, focus group discussions, and expert interviews are the key data collection tools.

The open rehearsal model resulting from this study consists of three components: a pre-rehearsal brief, working rehearsal,⁴ and post-rehearsal spectator discussion. This model is analysed using Dyson's (2015) scales of engagement: variations of site, liminal spaces, audience-performer proximity, audience agency, and performer qualities. The spectators' responses, captured through the post-rehearsal and post-performance discussions, are analysed using a grounded approach. The focus group discussions are a critically important element to this research, as they give the spectators a voice in the study.

This study argues that studio working rehearsals offer possibilities for the establishment of different relationships between rehearsal spectator and dancer, than those between the audience member and performer during performance. Most significantly, the rehearsal spectators stated that they met the real 'face' of the dancer for the first time in rehearsal; during performance, on the other hand, they are accustomed to observing the 'face' of performer qualities. The rehearsal spectators also developed new understandings of the dancer's professional life, in particular, an understanding of the 'humanness' of the dancer, and the labour involved in their work. Where the performance audience can be considered to embody 'otherness' (Fraleigh 1987), the open rehearsal model offers opportunities for the rehearsal spectator to shift into a relationship of 'insider-otherness'.⁵ The 'insider-other' is physically, conceptually, and emotionally positioned *with* the dancers *in* the creative process – somewhere between insider and outsider – while, at the same time, maintaining what can be described as an audience 'otherness'.

⁴ This study proposes 'working' rehearsals to be open rehearsals that are authentic of regular closed rehearsals. This concept is discussed in detail below.

⁵ This study draws on insider/outsider positionality from sociologist Robert Merton (1973). Merton's ideas are discussed in detail below.

Furthermore, this ‘insider-other’ relationship can shift audience-performer relationships at subsequent performances. Here, the ‘insider-other’ relationship offers spectators-turned-audience the possibility of seeing the performers, and the dance work, differently. Most notably, the post-performance discussions reveal that the rehearsal spectators-turned-audience experienced cognitive blending (McConachie 2008), where elements of the dancer’s ‘face’ added another layer to the performer qualities and the dance work they saw on stage. Therefore, the audience ‘insider-other’ at performance is considered to be conceptually and emotionally positioned *between* the performers on stage and the general audience.

1.1 Key Terms

1.1.1 Audience and spectator

This study uses the term ‘audience’ to describe observers of performance, and ‘spectator’ to describe observers of rehearsal. ‘Audience’ is defined as “the assembled spectators or listeners at a public event such as a play, film, concert, or meeting” (“Audience” 2015). In the context of this project, the audience is the group of people that gather to watch public dance performance. In reception studies, other terms used to describe the audience include “observers” (Blau 1990), “witnesses” (Rokem 1997), “onlookers” (Goffman 1959) and “spectators”, each with a different inflection on the act of watching performance. Theatre researcher Dennis Kennedy (2009, 5) reminds us that the English language does not have a word that covers the two main senses involved in “greeting performance”: seeing and hearing: “*Spectators* (those who look) gives us the first, *audience* (those within hearing) the second, both derived from Latin, and arguments have erupted at assorted times over the best usage” (Kennedy 2009, 5).

In this study, the term ‘audience’ is used when referring to receptive participants at performance, as this is most commonly used in the dance industry and dance reception research. This term is used to represent a group, rather than individuals. Each audience member attends the same event individually, or in small groups, and “through the process of responding to the performance they [individuals] become a collectivity, a group with a particular quality” (McAuley 1999, 250). Theatre audience researcher Caroline Heim (2010, 23) agrees:

Rather than focusing on the singularity of the audience member, I consider the plurality of the audience because, as I see it, audience members can *receive* as individuals in the theatrical event, yet they invariably *contribute* as a collective unity. [. . .] an individual audience contributor may laugh during a performance, but other audience readers inevitably respond in some way to that laughter by joining, tittering or expressing annoyance or discomfort.

The architecture of performance sites, as well as socialising elements within the performance experience, can also contribute to this “transformation process” (McAuley 1999, 250) of individual to collective.

Using the term ‘audience’ for rehearsal attendees, however, is problematic, as open rehearsals are not framed as ‘performances’ within this study. The concept of an audience is intrinsically tied to performance. Performance researcher Randy Martin (1998, 38) explains:

The audience is not only part of the event’s reason for being but also its means of becoming, what momentarily embodies the communicative idea of the performance. [. . .] The audience has no identity as audience prior to and apart from the performative agency that has occasioned it. As such, the audience is intrinsically “unstable,” both in terms of its own presence and in its ability to occasion and then disrupt the very anxiety of performance.

The concept of ‘audience’ emerges from the performance event and can be considered an effect of the performance ‘frame’. In addition, what an audience does, relates to the simultaneous real, but not ‘for real’ quality of performance: “audiences maintain dual levels of perception while watching a performance: belief and disbelief; engagement and distance; immersion and reflection” (Reason 2010, 21). While some rehearsals are given the

performance frame by choreographers,⁶ the open rehearsals that this study addresses do not have this framing.⁷ Rather, they are ‘authentic’ rehearsals that present dancers and creative processes that are recognisably ‘for real’. In this way, the rehearsal attendees are not audiences.

This study refers to rehearsal attendees as ‘spectators’, based on theatre and dance audience researcher Matthew Reason’s (2010, 20) concept of what spectators ‘do’:

[. . .] the ‘doing’ of the spectator experience is a perceptual and imaginative doing, a cognitive act which is often accompanied by awareness of the act of cognition. Spectatorship, in other words, is a form of active perception, where we are often (but not always) aware of ourselves looking.

‘Authentic’ rehearsals, such as the open rehearsal models focused on within this study, present a single layer of perception: the ‘real’.⁸ The rehearsal spectators of the Sydney Dance Company and The Australian Ballet open rehearsals also communicated an acute awareness of looking and observing the dancers in rehearsal. Therefore, this study uses the term ‘spectator’ to describe rehearsal attendees, and ‘audience’ to describe performance attendees.

⁶ Dance researcher Johannes Birringer (2005) discusses an example of a rehearsal as performance. Entitled *Choreographus Interruptus* (2004), the performance includes elements of rehearsal, such as movement sequences being run-through and tweaked, with opportunities for the audience to contribute, as rehearsal directors, to this process (Biringner 2005, 13). One audience member, according to Birringer (2005, 13), “objected to the whole procedure, calling it patronizing and fake”, highlighting an audience awareness of dual levels of perception.

⁷ There were moments, however, that the spectators felt were similar to performance. For example, when SDC’s dancers did a run-through of a movement sequence, some spectators said it “felt like they were performing to us” (SDC Participant 5, Appendix 1). Performative elements like this, however, constituted a very small part of the open rehearsals and, overall, the rehearsal spectators framed the open rehearsals as rehearsals. These performative elements are discussed in Chapter Six.

⁸ Open rehearsals are defined below in relation to the concept of the scale of ‘working’ to ‘performed’ rehearsals. This scale acknowledges that all open rehearsals have some element of performance, as the spectator’s gaze inherently influences the rehearsal in some way. This spectator influence brings into question the broader notion of authenticity, in particular, whether a rehearsal with spectators can be authentic. This problem is beyond the scope of this study, however, and is discussed in Chapter 8 as a further research direction.

1.1.2 Audience as ‘other’

First introduced by German philosopher Georg Hegel, the ‘other’ is a concept of identity that highlights difference. Hegel’s concept is that “the experience of self-consciousness results from the reflection of my consciousness in the consciousness of another subject, in a process of mutual recognition” (Frie 1997, 10). In Western artistic dance performance, the audience can be perceived as an ‘other’ to the dancers.

Fraleigh (1987, 65) asserts that a performance relationship constitutes “the dancer, the dance, and the other (for whom the dance is intended)”. Artistic dance “exists” for the audience:

As an aesthetic mode of expression, dance seeks to reach an other [. . .] To express is to exist for the other, to manifest oneself toward an other or others and at the same time to draw others into the orbit of this manifestation. (Fraleigh 1987, 59)

Accompanying the idea of the audience ‘other’, Fraleigh (1987, 58) considers the performance context as communal. She describes a consciousness grounded in an awareness of social dimensions: “not that which establishes my world as mine but rather that which appropriates our world as ours” (Fraleigh 1987, 58). In this way, the “dancer dances for others in context of community” (Fraleigh 1987, 59). While an integral element to this community, the audience is still positioned as ‘other’ to the performer and the dance work.

Fraleigh draws on philosopher Calvin Schrag’s (1972) ideas; in particular, on the notion that being with the ‘other’ is qualified through possibilities of alienation or community (Fraleigh 1987, 59). Alienation is addressed by philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre (1955). He discusses the power that the ‘other’ has to objectify through their gaze, by possessing the body with their “look” (Sartre 1955 quoted in Fraleigh 1987, 60). As Fraleigh (1987, 60) explains:

He [Sartre] sees an unbridgeable gulf between ourselves and others, as we become painfully aware of our essential separation (alienation) from them. Unable to see ourselves as others do, we are powerless against their glance.

This dark outlook on the relationship to the ‘other’, highlights the potential for alienation within the context of dance performance.

In contrast, there is also the potential for community through communion. Philosopher Gabriel Marcel conceives of the body as a place for communion. This is based on the perspective of the body not being something that is possessed and manipulated, but the mystery that an individual is (Marcel 1952 quoted in Fraleigh 1987, 60). Fraleigh (1987, 60) highlights that, through Marcel’s concept, “the other is not objectified but is ultimately acknowledged as a subject, allowing the possibility for communion.”

Fraleigh (1987, 61) discusses a “desire for communion” within the dance performance relationship:

A good dance moves the dancer and the audience toward each other – they find a common ground when the dance is successful. The dancer and audience come together just for this purpose. They seek a common ground of understanding and display a desire for communion, a communion that is tacitly undertaken and lived instantly through the body. (Fraleigh 1987, 61)

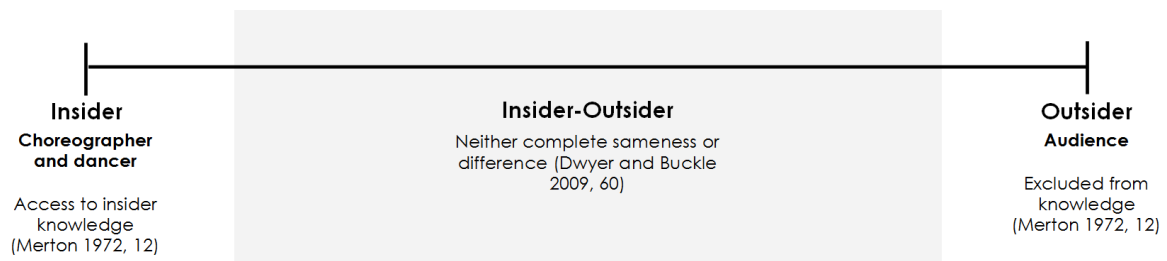
When there is communion, the audience dances the dance work with the performer; the audience enacts the dance work, dissolves it, and brings it within themselves (Fraleigh 1987, 62). In other words, “the dancer’s dance also becomes my dance” (Fraleigh 1987, 62) in a communion between the performer, the dance work, and the audience.

This study works from Fraleigh’s concept of the dance performance relationship, in which the audience is considered an ‘other’ to the performer and the dance work. Furthermore, elements within the spectator/audience discussions also highlight the spectator as ‘other’ to the dancer and creative process during the open rehearsals. This study also considers Fraleigh’s concept of communion, where spectators/audiences might identify “common ground” with dancers/performers.

1.1.3 Insider/outsider

An “insider”, broadly speaking, is someone who belongs to a particular group or community (Merton 1972, 12). An insider has access to knowledge, while an “outsider” is excluded from it (Merton 1972, 12). The insider/outsider concept is often used in ethnographic research, including rehearsal studies, as a way to position the researcher. In the case of theatre rehearsals, insiders are considered to be directors and actors, while outsiders are considered to be academics and reporters (McAuley 2006, 9). In this study, the dancer can be considered an insider to rehearsal, while the non-expert spectator/audience member can be considered an outsider. This concept provides a language which helps to describe the shifting positionality of the spectator/audience in response to experiencing the ‘inside’, behind-the-scenes, of a creative process. In this study, these shifts are mapped on a scale (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Insider to outsider scale



The “insider doctrine”, as sociologist Robert Merton (1973) refers to it, is conceptualised as having varying degrees of intensity. In its strong form, the insider doctrine claims that each group has “monopolistic access” to particular kinds of knowledge that outsiders cannot access because they are not of that particular community (Merton 1973, 11). Merton (1973, 13-15) gives the example of only women being able to understand women and, likewise, only men being able to understand men. In this study, Merton’s argument suggests that only dancers can understand dancers: “You have to be one in order to understand one” (Merton

1973, 15). Furthermore, there is a dichotomy in which one is either an insider, with “monopolistic or privileged access to knowledge”, or an outsider who is “wholly excluded from it, by virtue of one’s group membership or social position” (Merton 1973, 15).

This concept suggests that a dancer’s knowledge cannot, even in part, be understood by a non-dancer. The strong insider doctrine suggests that the non-expert audience, an outsider to the community of dancers, cannot gain access to “the social and cultural truth” (Merton 1972, 15) of the dancers. Merton (1972, 15) explains:

Unlike the Insider, the Outsider has neither been socialized in the group nor has engaged in the run of experience that makes up its life, and therefore cannot have the direct, intuitive sensitivity that alone makes empathic understanding possible.

This represents the strong, “extreme” (Merton 1972, 14) position of the insider doctrine, which is not applied in this study.

In a weaker form, the insider doctrine claims that while some groups have “privileged access” to knowledge, outsiders are required to take risk and outlay cost in order to access the same knowledge (Merton 1973, 11). In other words, it is possible for the knowledge of a particular group to be learned by outsiders. Merton argues that due to unmatched knowledge of a particular group, insiders and outsiders notice and focus on different things (Merton 1972, 16). In the case of social researchers, Merton (1972, 16) suggests that the insider and outsider researchers will naturally deal with different questions and, as a result, “will simply talk past one another”. As Merton (1972, 16-17) clarifies, “one must not only be one in order to understand one; one must be one in order to understand what is most worth understanding.”

This suggests that, in the dance studio, rehearsal spectators appoint significance to, and focus on, different aspects of the rehearsals than dancers do. Therefore, the understandings that rehearsal spectators might develop could reflect pre-existing perspectives or interests. In

other words, access to insider knowledge could also reveal qualities of the spectators. This weaker concept of the insider, however, still retains the notion that the insider and outsider positionalities are opposed.

Psychology researchers Sonya Dwyer and Jennifer Buckle (2009) propose that, at least for qualitative researchers, there is a space between the insider and outsider. Dwyer and Buckle (2009, 60) explain:

Holding membership in a group does not denote complete sameness within that group. Likewise, not being a member of a group does not denote complete difference. It seems paradoxical, then, that we would endorse binary alternatives that unduly narrow the range of understanding and experience.

Dwyer and Buckle (2009, 61) suggest that some elements within certain groups are universal, thus enabling outsiders to have an understanding of some aspects of a group. The example they use pertains to their study of parents who have survived their children: “As a human being faced with mortality, can one ever truly be an outsider when researching death, dying, loss and grieving?” (Dwyer and Buckle 2009, 61).

This consideration of the space between the insider and the outsider moves the insider/outsider concept from a dichotomous one, to include acknowledgement of the understandings and experiences that are not unique to a group. The status of an individual (the outsider member in relation to dancers) is but one status within a “status set” (Merton 1972, 22). While an outsider to dancers, the same audience can be an insider to women, or Australians, for example. In the case of Dwyer and Buckle’s (2009) research, the researcher is an outsider to the group of parents; however, they were also insiders (as we all are) to human mortality. Given that each individual carries a status set, people “confront one another simultaneously as Insiders and Outsiders” (Merton 1972, 22) or “insider-outsiders”, as Dwyer and Buckle (2009) argue.

The hyphen is viewed “not as a path but as a dwelling place for people” (Dwyer and Buckle 2009, 60). Given this, while an audience member might not understand the dancer, they could understand the woman or the Australian, thus creating new connections between individuals. The focus group discussions within this project identify that the professional lives of dancers were largely unknown to the non-experts within the study. In this way, these audience members can be considered, as a starting point, to be outsiders.

This study examines the extent to which the non-expert audience can be positioned as insiders to specific dancer communities. The proposition, here, is that insider knowledge can lead to different kinds of engagement with the performers and dance work during performance.

1.1.4 Open rehearsal

Rehearsals are a part of the creative process that leads to public performance. Throughout this process, an awareness of what the performance will look like develops through feedback cycles that instigate change, both minor and major, in the work (Thom 1993, 163). As the rehearsal process progresses, theatrical elements – such as props, costumes, sets, lighting, and the performance space – are introduced.

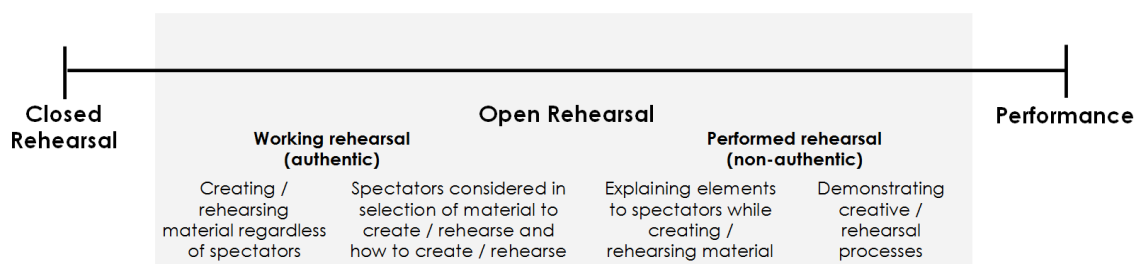
Performance, within the traditional presentation paradigm, is where all elements of the dance work come together in a “multifunctional socio-cultural event”, where the audience member is impacted by elements such as dancers, music, costumes, lighting, sets, and other audience members (Jola, Ehrenberg and Reynolds 2012, 19). At performances, there is a strong social element; this includes anticipation and mingling with other audience members before the

performance, during interval, and after the performance (Jola, Pollick and Grosbras 2011, 382).

The term ‘open rehearsal’ encompasses a range of events in which spectators are given insight into creative and rehearsal processes. Examples of these events include *Open Houses* (Ballet BC, Vancouver), *Open Days* (English National Ballet, London), *Insights* (Royal Ballet, London) and *Inner Workings* (Chunky Move, Melbourne), which all invite spectators into studio rehearsals. Central to this concept, open rehearsals provide spectators with some insight into creative processes. The spaces where open rehearsals take place include the dance studio, theatre, and online videos.

Given the many variations of open rehearsals, it is proposed that this term is best considered on a scale (see Figure 2), where these variations fall somewhere between ‘rehearsal’ and ‘performance’. Situating open rehearsals on a scale acknowledges that open rehearsals, inherently, have aspects of both rehearsal and performance, and that the position of open rehearsals on this scale varies according to the particular open rehearsal model. Examples of open rehearsals positioned towards the ‘performance’ end of the scale are open dress rehearsals in theatres, where the dance work is run through with all the theatrical effects, such as costumes, lighting, sets, and, in some cases, a full orchestral accompaniment. In contrast, the open rehearsals examined in this study are, predominantly, held within a studio site and in ‘working’ form. These open rehearsals are without theatrical effect, where rehearsing a dance work, rather than entertaining spectators, is their primary purpose. On the Rehearsal ‘Authenticity’ Scale, the former open rehearsal sits close to ‘performance’, while the latter is characteristically closer to ‘rehearsal’.

Figure 2: Rehearsal 'authenticity' scale



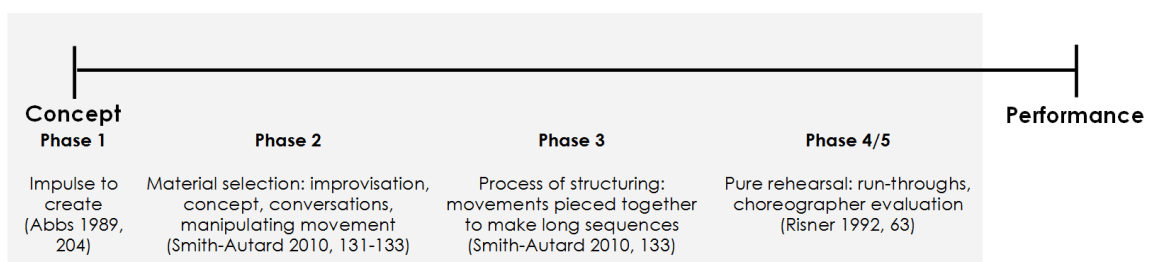
The term 'authenticity' is used tentatively in this study, as the introduction of spectators to rehearsals is fundamentally 'unauthentic' to regular closed rehearsals. Therefore, 'authenticity' is considered in regard to how similar an open rehearsal is to a regular closed rehearsal, generally. A working rehearsal is a rehearsal that operates more or less normally, as if spectators were not present. Characteristics of working rehearsals include their being held during usual rehearsal working hours (often during the day), at the usual working site (often in a dance studio), with the dancers wearing their usual rehearsal attire for that particular phase of the rehearsal process (this can range from old tracksuits through to the elements of the performance costumes). The activities of dancers within normal rehearsals can include social elements, such as chatter between dancers (Risner 1995; Aalton 2004, 265), body care, such as stretching on the floor (Aalton 2004, 265), observing one another to gain knowledge (Risner 2000, 163), and problem-solving, such as finding ways to achieve certain movements (Risner 2000, 159). While working rehearsals can be very different from one another, in all cases, genuine progress in the dance work is made and the rehearsal is not prepared for spectators.

In contrast, a 'performed rehearsal' is one that is adjusted for an audience in some way. This study examines open rehearsals that are held in the studio site. Characteristics of performed rehearsals in studio sites include: theatrical elements such as lighting and costumes;

choreographers or rehearsal directors explaining aspects of the rehearsal or dance work to the audience; or, perhaps, spectators being shown a variety of sections, or multiple dance works, within one rehearsal event. These adjustments for spectators can be subtle or more distinct; however, when rehearsals are adapted for the spectator’s sake, they shift toward ‘performed rehearsals’. While this study does not focus on rehearsals with theatrical elements, these elements can be included in ‘authentic’ working rehearsals. As final rehearsal for a production shifts to the theatre site, elements such as lighting, costumes and props are included, as this is necessary at this late stage in the rehearsal process. This example highlights that this definition is based on ‘authenticity’, as opposed to specific elements that must or must not be included in the rehearsal.

Categorising the creative process is helpful, as different stages of rehearsals offer audiences varying insights. This study uses a creative process scale, from ‘concept’ to ‘performance’, to map the moment in which creative processes are opened to spectators (see Figure 3). This scale is based on the ideas of arts researcher Peter Abbs (1989), and dance researchers Jacqueline Smith-Autard (2010) and Douglas Risner (1992).

Figure 3: Creative process



The creative process has been described as a “dynamical system” (McKechnie and Stevens 2009, 41) constructed of layers of thought, action, and interaction (McKechnie 2005, 87). The creative process across disciplines, according to Abbs (1989, 204), has five phases: 1) the

impulse to create, 2) working with the medium, 3) realising the final form, 4) presentation and performance, and 5) response and evaluation. These phases are often applied in a non-linear way (Smith-Autard 2010, 127), where the creative process consists of moving back and forth between phases in many small cycles.

Smith-Autard (2010) applies Abbs' model to the creative process of dance choreography. She suggests that Phase 2, "working with the medium", involves improvisation, discussions about concepts involved in the piece, and manipulation of movement, all of which form part of "material selection" in which the movements for a dance work are decided (Smith-Autard 2010, 131-133). Risner (1992, 62) refers to this phase as "movement investigation", which is primarily concerned with "the search for and the learning of movement." In simple terms, working with the medium and movement investigations translates into movement-making.

Phase 3, realising the final form, is described as a "process of structuring" (Smith-Autard 2010, 133), where individual movements, or small movement phrases, are pieced together to form longer sequences. Smith-Autard states, however, that this structuring process does not immediately lead to the final form of a dance work. Rather, it is a lengthy process that is repeated many times until it is decided that it is the final form. Risner (1992, 63) describes this phase as a "sketch of the completed dance."

Phase 4, presentation and performance, and Phase 5, response and evaluation, occur together and are also phases that are repeated many times during a creative process; Risner (1992, 63) refers to the combination of these phases as the "pure rehearsal" stage. This phase involves run-throughs of the dance work so that the choreographer can evaluate it. This evaluation is a process of judgements made by the choreographer about what might not be "working well", and this judgement then informs the next steps in the rehearsal process (Smith-Autard 2010,

136). This phase of pure rehearsal includes polishing the dance work, and enabling dancers to develop stamina and dynamic qualities for performance (Risner 1992, 63).

I observed Phases 2, 3, 4, and 5 during the five open rehearsals included in this research project; however, not every rehearsal included each of these phases.⁹ Chunky Move's rehearsal, for example, was very early in the creative process and, therefore, consisted mostly of movement-making (Phase 2). In contrast, English National Ballet's rehearsal was quite late in the creative process where the choreography was known to dancers and, therefore, consisted mainly of run-throughs of sections (Phase 4), and feedback and tweaking movement in response to the feedback (Phase 5).

While both these rehearsals included aspects of other phases in the creative process, the phases stated above dominated the rehearsals. Therefore, when describing and categorising open rehearsals in this study, the 'working' and 'performed' rehearsal terminology is applied, as well as terminology relating to dominant phases within the creative process, such as 'movement-making', 'run-throughs', 'feedback', and 'tweaking'.

1.1.5 Sacralisation of culture

This study considers open rehearsals within a broader context of the "sacralisation of culture" (Levine 1988). This cultural phenomenon emerges as a significant influence within the traditional presentation paradigm, and was evidenced in the focus group discussions in this study. In Levine's theory, the importance of a theatrical event is placed on the art's integrity: the art is more important than any audience or performer (Levine 1988, 120). This paradigm

⁹ The open rehearsals observed as part of this research project are: *Friends Open Day* (English National Ballet), *Open Rehearsal* (National Dance Company Wales), *Inner Workings* (Chunky Move), and the open rehearsal model trialled with Sydney Dance Company and The Australian Ballet.

was championed by cultural gatekeepers of the nineteenth century. Where performing arts previously existed for the good of a whole city, a “few rich men” began to influence performance programming to align it with their own tastes (Levine 1988, 101). In the case of opera, the social elite’s “exotic tastes” left the majority of audiences behind, as they promoted performance atmospheres in which the “normal person finds difficulty in breathing” (Surette 1863 quoted in Levine 1988, 101).

Before the sacralisation of culture pervaded the arts, ballet of the early to mid-1800s was considered a mainstream art form (Au 2002, 59), where some dancers experienced popularity akin to that of modern movie and rock stars (Au 2002, 55). One particularly popular dancer was Viennese ballerina Fanny Ellsler, who incorporated English hornpipes and Spanish folk dances into her performances. This incorporation brought her ballet into a cultural vernacular that “cut through class and income”, and represented the norm of the mid-1800s (Levine 1988, 108). By including aspects of the broader audience’s culture in her performances, Ellsler’s work was accessible to the wider community. The extent of Ellsler’s popularity is highlighted by Levine (1988, 109):

Enthusiastic crowds mobbed her wherever she appeared and she had difficulty making her way through admiring throngs between her hotel and the theaters she performed at. Young men detached the horses from her carriage and pulled it through the streets themselves. Shops peddled Fanny Ellsler brand boots, garters, stockings, corsets, parasols, cigars, shoe polish, shaving soap, and champagne. Boats, horses, and children were named in her honor. Burlesques of her ballets appeared with surprising speed following her first appearances. On the days she performed in Washington, D.C., Congress had difficulty mustering a quorum.

Toward the end of the 1800s, and as the cultural gatekeepers took hold, ballet shifted into a phase of technical virtuosity and visual spectacle (Au 2002, 58). Ballet, at this time, continued in popularity; however, it relied on an audience constructed of the social elite (Koegler 1987 quoted in Wulff 1998b, 39) who bought into competitive subscription programs (Tamara Karsavina 1948 quoted in Anderson 1992, 113).

At the turn of the century, the process of sacralisation endowed many cultural disciplines with spiritual properties, presenting art as pure, exclusive, and eternal (Levine 1988, 132). The precincts of art – symphony halls, museums, and theatres – were considered “temples of culture” (Levine 1988, 167). A concern for entertainment was replaced by striving for aesthetic and spiritual elevation (Levine 1988, 146): art became “serious” and “sacred”. Levine (1988, 146) aptly states the impact for audiences: “audiences were to approach the masters and their works with proper respect and proper seriousness, for aesthetic and spiritual elevation rather than mere entertainment was the goal.”

While current dance audiences might not necessarily attend to performances as spiritual events, the effects of sacralisation as a cultural force persists today. In the theatre, and within the traditional presentation paradigm, sacralisation restrains the audience from the dance work through strict etiquette and conventions:

While the codes and conventions of the theatrical presentation paradigm are often invisible, they are generally understood and accepted by audience members who engage with this presentation format. When a new theatre convert is ushered through the doors into a performance, he or she is invariably coached in the expected behaviour for watching a performance, either by the person who took them or other audience members. This is particularly apparent when the code of silence is breached (Dyson 2010, 90).

For example, bowing at the end of performance is the most common signal that applause is acceptable at that moment. However, to applaud during the middle of a movement sequence in contemporary dance, for example, is generally not permitted. In ballet, the audience applauds when the dancer playing the lead role enters the stage for the first time. While the bow applause is applicable across both ballet and contemporary dance performances, other conventions are specific to the style of dance. Furthermore, audience members are not permitted to communicate with each other during performances. Often during performances, I have wanted to express, to the person next to me, how the dance work was affecting me in that moment, or my appreciation of artistic or technical qualities. In the sacred performance,

the audience must give their attention only to the dance work and, therefore, these conversations are suppressed.

The traditional proscenium arch theatre helps to enforce this audience restraint. Front-facing seating encourages audiences to only connect with the performance and discourages intra-audience communication. The beginning of the performances are signalled by the house lights dimming, so that the audience is in the dark. While this helps the audience to focus on the stage, it also separates the audience from the dance work. The arch itself creates a border (like a television screen), where an audience can gaze upon a world separate from their own. There is separation, distance, quieting, and even guarding (ushers) in the theatre; ultimately, these factors enforce sacralisation. As stated above, the art's integrity is more important than any audience (Levine 1988, 120).

Sacralisation can also apply to rehearsals. The creative process is described by dance researcher Susan Foster (1986, xv) as “an intensely private search for inspiration and appropriate expression”. The notion of the private creative process is discussed by Anouk Van Dijk, Artistic Director of Chunky Move (personal interview, 21 January 2014):

A rehearsal is a very private experience, as is any working circumstances. I don't want to ask a graphic designer, “Can everybody just look over your shoulder while you're working on your web design?” Or any profession in that sense. So to open up a rehearsal is a very intimate and very generous gesture, not just something to do. [. . .] although dance or theatre is a communicative art form and [it] is there to communicate something to the audience, it's still a whole different thing of opening up your studio.

Here, Van Dijk explains the open rehearsal as a “private” and “intimate” practice; indeed, the creative process in dance can be very personal for the choreographer and dancers involved. Furthermore, the sacred rehearsal can also be perpetuated by audience members. Chapter 6 discusses the rehearsal spectators' perspectives, which can be understood through Levine's theory. The perspective of the sacred rehearsal significantly influenced the spectators'

relationship with the dancers during the rehearsals, as they perceived themselves to be peripheral to the creative process: 'other'.

While rehearsals are also endowed with sacralisation, a layer is removed by inviting spectators in to observe the sacred rehearsal. The concept of open rehearsals, especially where non-experts enter the studio, challenges sacralisation, as it asserts that spectators can also have a place in the sacred creative process.

Indeed, an unwilling choreographer stopped a project cycle for this research project. In this example, Queensland Ballet's administration had approved the research project and a suitable dance work/rehearsal period had been selected. Suitability was determined by practical aspects, mainly, the timeframe. The research project was then proposed to the choreographer of this particular dance work, who raised concerns about their choreographic practice being critiqued, and declined to participate. This is an example of the choreographer's authority, and sacralisation.

Another unsuccessful project cycle, with Expressions Dance Company, failed due to logistical issues. The creative process that this company was prepared to open to spectators was in a different geographical region to the where the resulting dance work was performed. This made spectator/audience participation unfeasible and, therefore, the project cycle was cancelled. Coordinating open rehearsals with mainstream dance companies proved to be very difficult in some cases, and as a result, this restricted sample choices for this doctoral project.

For spectators, the open rehearsal is an invitation to observe the thinking, actions, and interactions of the creative process. As discussed above, sacralisation at performance separates and restrains audiences. Open rehearsals, on the other hand, provide the opportunity

for closeness to the dancer and the creative process and, more significantly, present opportunities to meet the ‘human face’ of the dancer that is hidden by performer qualities.

The sacred creative and rehearsal processes are positioned as private events, protecting the notion of serious and elite art. The sacred rehearsal also informs the audience relationship with dancers, choreographers, and dance work, positioning the artist and art work as sacred, spiritual, and meriting respect. Within this construct, the open rehearsal acts as an exclusive ‘sneak peek’ of the sacred rehearsal. In most cases, as discussed in Chapter 4, the studio open rehearsal is exclusively offered to groups that provide financial support to companies: that is, access to the sacred rehearsal becomes a reward. The sacred rehearsal provides a lens that contextualises this study.

1.2 Scope

This study answers the research questions within the scope of: ballet and contemporary dance works; mainstream dance companies that perform within the traditional presentation paradigm; live rehearsals; and non-expert rehearsal spectators. For practical reasons, this research is also scoped to the relevant literature and practice of English-speaking countries.

1.2.1 Ballet and contemporary dance

Ballet and contemporary dance are styles within the broader category of Western artistic dance.¹⁰ Ballet originates from the French court of the late sixteenth century (Pardo 2014,

¹⁰ Artistic dance, also known as theatrical and concert dance, is “designed to provide the observer with an aesthetic experience” (Cohen 1962, 19). It does this in the theatrical context, where dance is considered art (Adshead 1981, 6). Defining artistic dance can be helped by distinguishing it from other dance contexts. The ritual and religion context uses dance as a form of worship, initiation and healing (Adshead 1981, 4-5). In a ritual context, for example, the “first dance” of a newly married couple represents their initiation into marriage.

15).¹¹ Within the genre of ballet, there are several distinct styles that have developed over time: ballet d'action, romantic ballet, classical ballet, and twentieth century ballet.¹²

The history of ballet reveals strong trends. They range from the court dances of the nobility; to ballet d'action where professionalism emerged; to the dominance of female ballet dancers during the romantic ballet period; to classical ballet's focus on technique. In the ballet world today, this homogeneity is replaced by programming that includes dance works from many of these ballet styles. For example, The Australian Ballet's 2015 performance program includes *Giselle* (romantic ballet), *Swan Lake* (classical ballet), and *Symphony in Three Movements* (twentieth century American-style modern ballet).

The connection between these ballet styles is the common ballet technique that emerged during the ballet d'action period. This technique is recognised through the codified steps that

The social context creates popular dances as a way to increase social cohesion, and to reinforce group values (Adshead 1981, 5). These social dances can be structured forms, such as lindy hop or line dancing, or unstructured forms, such as the dancing that takes place in night clubs. For the purpose of this study, artistic dance is defined as dance works which are created for the purpose of providing audiences with an aesthetic experience.

¹¹ The court ballets of this time were performed by members of the nobility, as the performances were displays of power (Pardo 2014, 15). Ballet of this style existed for the ruling class who doubled as both the audience and performers (Au 2002, 11). While ballet of this time does come under the rubric of 'ballet', the movement of court ballet was very different to the ballet that we know today. The audience of court ballet watched from above; thus, court ballets were predominately bodies moving, making patterns with their bodies in space (Au 2002, 11). The seventeenth century saw ballet transform from "the diversion of noble amateurs into a professional art" (Au 2002, 23). At this time, the proscenium arch stage was introduced, positioning the audience in front of the dancers. An increase in technical difficulty developed with the invention of ballet steps that are still used today, such as 'pirouettes' (turns on one foot), 'cabrioles' and 'entrechats' (jumps in which the legs are beaten together in the air) (Au 2002, 23).

¹² Ballet d'action, also known as 'dramatic ballet', emerged in the eighteenth century (Pardo 2014, 16). This period introduced ballets where the dance could "stand on its own, fulfilling in itself the narrative function once taken by poetry or song" (Au 2002, 29). Female ballet dancers were the icons of romantic ballet in the nineteenth century (Pardo 2014, 18). Romantic ballet introduced pointe shoes and, with this invention, the illusion of "conquering gravity" (Pardo 2014, 18). Romantic ballet choreographers were thematically interested in "the exotic, for emotion displayed rather than reined in, for the supernatural and irrational rather than the rational" (Pardo 2014, 17). A dance work of the Romantic ballet style that is still performed today is *La Sylphide*, first choreographed by Filippo Taglioni in 1832 (Au 2002, 49). Classical ballet emerged in the late nineteenth century as a style with values of clarity, harmony, symmetry and order (Au 2002, 62). This is the time when Russia became prominent within the ballet world. The technique of ballet is stressed in the classical ballet style to the point where, while the dance works do have storylines, the 'rules' and techniques, such as the structure of the classical pas de deux, are prioritised (Au 2002, 62). In the twentieth century, the ballet world moved from a centralised geographic hub, which had initially been France and then Russia, to "strong national identities" formed independent of each other; most notably in Britain, France, and the United States (Au 2002, 133).

maintain an upright position and are symmetrical, with features such as the pointe shoes and tutus that are associated with female ballet dancers (Grove 2005a, 10). Stemming from the classical ballet period, ballet has the core value of virtuosity (Au 2002, 45). This is evident in the impressive leaps, turns and balances that ballet dancers perform. For the purpose of this study, ballet is considered to be dance that predominantly utilises the ballet technique, and at least some of the ballet styles discussed above.

‘Contemporary dance’ is a term that is used to describe dance that is happening now, and that has been influenced by the modern and postmodern dance movements.¹³ Dance researcher Shirley McKechnie and cognitive psychologist Catherine Stevens (2009, 38) broadly define contemporary dance as “a work in which the major medium is movement, deliberately and systematically cultivated for its own sake, with the aim of achieving a work of art”. Other definitions describe contemporary dance as “representative of dance in this moment in time” (Long 2002, 21), and “of relevance to society today” (Positive Solutions 2004, 8). These authors provide only vague overarching ideas of contemporary dance. This is a common approach to defining the term, as contemporary dance encompasses very broad possibilities. For example, it promotes the creation of new movement, as opposed to working within a set of existing movements as ballet does. The following quote is a small excerpt of dance researcher Susan Au’s (2002, 195) detailed explanation of contemporary dance:

[. . .] frequently employ[ing] a narrative style that defies conventional story-telling techniques. [. . .] Multiple layers of meaning are often expressed in the dance in an equivalent to a play on words, challenging the viewer to put the pieces together to extract the work’s significance. [. . .] choreography incorporates movements from

¹³ ‘Modern dance’, a term first coined in the 1920s, was a movement that began in the early 1900s in resistance to ballet. Initially, modern dance choreographers sought to create dance work that reflected contemporary concerns and preoccupations (Au 2002, 119). Toward the mid-1900s, however, the term came to represent a broad array of new dance techniques that involved concepts such as “contraction and release” and “fall and recovery” (Au 2002, 119-120). The postmodern dance movement, which began in the 1950s, saw choreographers move away from modern dance – where strict techniques still retained formalistic values of ballet – and begin to question the nature of dance as a form (Au 2002, 155). Choreographers experimented with various approaches to movement, choreographic method, performing style, costume, and performance space (Au 2002, 173).

outside the range of conventional ballet or modern dance techniques. A spoken text may be delivered by a narrator or by the dancers themselves.

Some contemporary dance works can be considered “the blurring of boundaries between artforms”, as contemporary dance choreographers might be influenced by street dance, cross-cultural perspectives and other art forms (Boughen 2014). In this study, contemporary dance is considered to be current choreographic practice where movement, as the dominant medium, is used in order to achieve a work of art that cannot be categorised as any other established style of dance. ‘Contemporary dance’ under this rubric is non-specific in style or approach, and has evolved from modern and postmodern dance.

1.2.2 Traditional presentation paradigm

The second limitation to the scope of this research is that it focuses on mainstream ballet and contemporary dance companies who present dance work in the traditional presentation paradigm. Examples of dance companies within this scope are the Australian dance companies categorised as Major Performing Arts organisations: Bangarra Dance Theatre (Indigenous contemporary dance), Queensland Ballet (ballet), Sydney Dance Company (contemporary dance), The Australian Ballet (ballet), and West Australian Ballet (ballet) (Christofis 2012).

Scoping this study to dance works that are presented in the traditional presentation paradigm, makes it relevant to many audiences and practitioners. As Dyson (2015, 2) points out, the traditional presentation paradigm is the format in which much current Western artistic dance is presented.

1.2.3 Live rehearsals

The third limitation of the scope of this study is that it examines live open rehearsals where spectators are present in the studio. While audience engagement tools do extend to online spaces that are both recorded and live,¹⁴ scoping the study to live open rehearsals is responsive to the ephemeral nature of dance. Letiche (2000, 160) explains: “Dances are actions and process, movement and sound: they are never objects.” As an effect of ephemerality, once the dance is performed, it remains only in the visual memory of the audience and the kinaesthetic memory of the dancer (H'Doubler 1957, 3). This fleeting existence presents a significant challenge when researching dance. Dance researcher Heidi Gilpin (1996, 106) suggests that it is not possible to know what took place – that is, in the dance work itself – because the image that is “etched in memory” is transformed when we re-examine it. The dance simply does not exist anymore (Thom 1993, 6). Existing at a perceptual vanishing point, dance is gone at the moment of its creation (Siegel 1972, 1). This phenomenon is referred to as ‘disappearance’.

Disappearance is considered to be a significant aspect of the live performance event, and is argued to heighten the experience of dance work. Gilpin (1996, 106) considers disappearance to be a “powerful source of compositional and hermeneutical information” that should be celebrated. This suggests that the limitation of having only a single moment with each corporeal idea is an enhancing aspect of live dance performance. Theatre researcher Gay McAuley (1994, 184) suggests that live performance is “fascinating to performers and audience precisely because it is unique and ephemeral”, and that the attraction to live performance is the experience of that which cannot be captured, recorded, or repeated. It is a unique performance for, and with that audience. Reason (2006, 12) states that live

¹⁴ Chapter 4 includes a discussion of online rehearsal videos.

performance is indeed “valued for the transient moment of its creation and for its subsequent, inherent disappearance.”

While online videos can provide insight into rehearsals, the use of video is limiting as it can only be a documentation of a rehearsal. Reason (2006, 27) explains: “A documentation that tells the whole story is not a documentation, but the whole story; not a recording, but the thing itself.” In other words, while online videos can provide insight into rehearsals, online viewers, fundamentally, cannot be considered rehearsal spectators, as they observe a documentation of rehearsal rather than the actual rehearsal. This distinction between rehearsal and documentation affirms that live open rehearsals are the necessary candidates for investigation, as other open rehearsal forms are, at most, fragments of rehearsals.

1.2.4 Non-expert spectators/audiences

This research specifically focuses on non-expert spectators/audiences. Dance researcher Ann Dils (2007, 570) states that being an expert, or “dance literate”, involves reading layered, shifting information that is communicated through body movement and other aspects of dance work, such as music, text, costumes, sets, and video. Dance researcher Susan Melrose (2009, 29) suggests that these expert audience members see the same thing on stage as everyone else, and are then able to “fill in the rest”, usually due to tertiary education. Dance literacy can also include knowledge of verbal and written systems of movement, such as Benesh, Labanotation and Laban Movement Analysis (Hutchinson-Guest 1989). From a sociology perspective, Howard Becker (2008, 53) observes that various dance experts with a physical understanding of dance – such as dancers, dancers-in-training, and people who used

to dance – constitute a significant portion of dance audiences, and that these particular experts can be identified within a crowd:

Look at the audience at any dance event. No equivalent sample of theater- or concertgoers displays such erect carriage, such self-conscious placement of feet and legs, such well-maintained bodies.

If Becker’s observation is correct, it highlights that there is a disproportionate number of expert and non-expert members within dance performance audiences.

The vast literature on dance expertise suggests that, within the categories of ‘expert’ and ‘non-expert’, there are sub-categories, such as the novice audience member, the experienced audience member, and members who are practitioners to varying extents. For example, Reynolds, Jola and Pollick (2011, 266) propose that the experienced audience member, also referred to as an “expert watcher”, is considered an individual who has watched dance extensively and, consequently, goes through different cognitive processes than does a novice audience member. Melrose (2009, 23-24) suggests that both novice and experienced audience members see dance two-dimensionally, as if it were projected on a screen.

In contrast to non-practitioners, Melrose (2009, 23-24) proposes that experienced practitioners are able to see the hidden side of the dancer as well; that they see dance multi-dimensionally.¹⁵ Dance and psychology researchers Kim Vincs, Catherine Stevens and Emery Schubert (2009, 358) state that dance training can affect the way an individual sees, understands, and responds to dance, with some distinction between practitioners who are studying dance and those who are experienced professionals. Dance practitioner and researcher Douglas Rosenberg (2012, 141) suggests that the distinction between the way

¹⁵ Melrose has worked extensively on expertise in dance, its impact on spectatorship and subsequent writing. Topics include: ‘body-knowing’ and embodied knowledge (Melrose 2003), how practitioner expertise can be identified in Performance Studies writing (Melrose 2005), reception processes of expert practitioner-observers (Melrose 2006), and intuitive decision-making and practitioner expertise (Melrose 2009, 2015).

practitioners and non-practitioners understand dance is that practitioners have an embodied knowledge of dance, while non-practitioners are limited to an intellectual knowing.

Dance experts are usually familiar with creative and rehearsal processes – such as improvisation, task work, and learning pre-set sequences – and, therefore, open rehearsals are likely to offer them different insights, and they are likely to have different motivations for attending. Non-experts do not necessarily possess any knowledge of the creative and rehearsal processes involved in making dance work and, therefore, open rehearsals are likely to offer many new insights. To conflate these two audience groups would distort the data and, therefore, this study focuses on one group: the non-expert audience.

1.2.5 Exclusions from scope

This study firmly sits in the field of audience enrichment. Its focus is on exploring spectator relationships during open rehearsals, and the subsequent impact that these rehearsal relationships have on performance relationships. For the purpose of further clarification, several areas that are not within the scope of this study are now outlined.

First, much audience research within industry takes a quantitative approach to surveying audience participation, and their attitudes towards dance. In Australia, Ausdance National and the Australia Council for the Arts are the peak organisations that commission this form of research.¹⁶ A recent finding published by the Australia Council states that, of the 2000 people surveyed nationwide, approximately 11% attended a ballet performance in 2013 (Instinct and Reason 2014, 56). Contemporary dance was attended by 6% of the survey participants in the

¹⁶ See *Arts Nation* (Australia Council for the Arts 2015); *Arts in Daily Life* (Instinct and Reason 2014); *More than Bums on Seats* (Australia Council for the Arts 2010); *Resourcing Dance* (Positive Solutions 2004); *Dance in Australia* (Throsby 2004); and *Securing the Future Final Report* (Nugent et al. 1999).

same year (Instinct and Reason 2014, 56). While this type of research is very important for understanding audience profiling on a national scale, this current study, in contrast, is deeply qualitative and focuses on audience perception of relationships with dancers and dance works.

Second, although the findings of this research can inform audience development, it is purposefully separate from audience development research. Conner (2008, 19) reminds us that it is important to keep audience enrichment and audience development as separate fields, as each has a different focus. Audience development is concerned with quantitative research that seeks to increase the number of people attending each performance and the number of performances each person attends, and to broaden the range of people who are a part of the audience (Scollen 2002, 32).¹⁷ In contrast, audience enrichment is concerned with enriching the existing audiences' experience.

Third, this research is not related to the field of marketing.¹⁸ While the marketing agendas associated with open rehearsals are briefly discussed in this thesis, the study does not engage with marketing theory or methodology.

1.3 Thesis Outline

Chapter 2 discusses the literature pertaining to dance reception, engagement tools for dance audiences, and dance rehearsal studies. The first section discusses dance reception research and focuses on the various physical, emotional, and cognitive activities that audiences engage in while watching dance performance within the traditional presentation paradigm. The

¹⁷ For dance audience development research within Australia, see James and Positive Solutions (2000) and Scollen (2008).

¹⁸ See Australia Council for the Arts (2011a) as an example of arts marketing research.

second section discusses engagement tools for dance, specifically, pre-performance information sessions and post-performance discussions. The third section discusses dance rehearsal studies, with a focus on the literature that addresses rehearsal spectators.

Chapter 3 outlines the research methods used. First, the researcher's post-structuralist paradigm is unpacked. The qualitative and practice-based methods are outlined, and include: participant observation, expert interview, focus groups, and action research cycles of open rehearsal trials. The trialled open rehearsal model and the data analysis methods – Dyson's (2015) scales of engagement, and grounded analysis – are outlined.

Chapter 4 then discusses the context for open rehearsals in mainstream ballet and contemporary dance companies. It begins with an overview of several engagement tools commonly used by dance companies within this scope, including online spaces, and education programs. The chapter then returns to the live open rehearsal context to discuss open dress rehearsals and open studio rehearsals. Analysis of three open rehearsal models concludes the chapter. It is argued that these open rehearsal models – in particular, the elements of non-theatre sites, the 'face' of the dancer, and working rehearsals – open up possibilities for a different engagement to that experienced in the traditional presentation paradigm.

Chapter 5 analyses the trialled open rehearsal model. This analysis determines that, similar to the models analysed in Chapter 4, elements of the trialled open rehearsal present engagement opportunities that are distinctly different to opportunities provided by the traditional presentation paradigm. It also determines that rehearsal spectators are likely to experience different 'faces' of dancers.

Chapter 6 presents the spectator/audience data that was gathered through the focus group discussions. It is argued that open rehearsals can facilitate new understandings and relationships with the dancers, choreographers, and dance work which, for most audience members who participated in the trials, transpired into more meaningful and fulfilling performance experiences. Key elements that emerged from the focus group discussions are qualities of the rehearsal, the spectator/audience ‘face’ and role, the dancer’s ‘face’, and the dancer’s labour.

Chapter 7 discusses the findings of the research, and argues that the spectators developed a relationship to the dancers as ‘insider-others’ in rehearsal. Elements of the open rehearsals, such as the working rehearsal and shared space, are highlighted as critical elements in enabling the ‘insider-other’ relationship to develop. Furthermore, this ‘insider-other’ relationship is argued to affect audience-performer relationships at subsequent performances, as the spectator-turned-audiences experienced cognitive blending (McConachie 2008) of the ‘faces’ of the dancer and performer qualities, and of the rehearsals and performances.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses literature pertaining to dance reception, engagement tools for dance audiences, and dance rehearsal studies. Within the scope outlined in Chapter 1, this chapter concentrates on these research topics within the traditional presentation paradigm of professional ballet and contemporary dance.

First, the field of dance reception research is defined as a field of study dedicated to the way in which audiences experience performance, and their responses to it. The focus is then placed on the various activities that audiences engage in while watching dance performance within the traditional presentation paradigm (that is, silently seated in a front-facing theatre). The audience's relationship to performers is positioned as one of contribution to the performance event through physical, emotional, and cognitive participation.¹⁹

Second, literature that addresses engagement tools for dance audiences is discussed.

Currently, this body of literature is not representative of the breadth and scale of engagement tools that are being used in the mainstream ballet and contemporary dance company context. Thus, the literature discussed in this chapter focuses on talk-based tools, such as pre-performance information sessions (Glass 2005) and post-performance discussions (Conner 2013; Scollen 2008).

Third, this chapter discusses the literature that addresses rehearsal spectators. It is theorised by dance researchers, such as Sarah Whatley (2013), that watching rehearsals has the potential to augment and enrich performance experiences for audiences. There is, however, little empirical research to support such ideas.

¹⁹ Given the traditional presentation paradigm scope of this study, the myriad audience relationships offered in non-traditional performance paradigms are not discussed; for example, audiences as co-performers (Hunter 2011; Rubidge 2009; Stock 2011) and co-creators of dance work (Dyson 2010; Latulipe et al. 2011; Martin 2011; Whatley 2012).

2.1 Dance Reception

Art forms do not give directly; we get their meaning indirectly from the imagery of the creator who embodies the experience. The real pleasure and value of a work of art, such as a painting, a dance, or a symphony, lie not so much in what we actually see or hear as in how we react to all that we perceive. (H'Doubler 2012 1957, 54)

Reception studies “investigate the ways in which spectators experience performances” (Sauter 2002, 118), and seek to “understand the perception and reactions of audience members” (Scollen 2002, 5). This field of reception studies was initiated by theatre studies in the 1980s (Bennett 1997, 9), and was followed by dance studies.²⁰ Before the introduction of reception studies, audience research in dance generally took the form of surveys that assessed attendance and demographics and thus informed arts management practice (Hanna 1983, 12).

This section discusses the ways in which audiences experience, respond, and contribute to dance performances within the traditional presentation paradigm. First, the literature, and historical context that contributes to a paradigm of audience passivity is discussed. Second, it is argued that dance audiences can be active in their reception of dance performances, through kinaesthetic, emotional, and cognitive responses.

Dance is “fundamentally a kinesthetic art” (Daly 1992, 243 quoted in Reason and Reynolds 2010, 49). Reason and Reynolds (2010, 49) propose that audience experience of dance can, therefore, be “conceptualized in terms of responses to movement”. A problem within the literature, however, is the notion of audience passivity. Performance theorist Paul Thom (1993, 12) suggests that the choreographer “makes” dance work, and that the dancers “do” a performance of the dance work “for” the audience.

²⁰ Key audience reception studies researchers include Susan Bennett (1997), Bruce McConachie (2008), Dennis Kennedy (2009), Caroline Heim (2010), Matthew Reason (2010), Gareth White (2013), and Lynne Conner (2013).

In this traditional paradigm, the audience are purely receivers and do not contribute to the dance work's creation or presentation: "The function of the audience, but not of the author or the performer, is to behold the work through its performance: the audience is not any kind of doer" (Thom 1993, 13). This perceived passive audience role is associated with the traditional presentation paradigm, as the codes and conventions of this paradigm restrict the physical agency of audiences (Dyson 2015, 9). As theatre researcher Susan Kattwinkel (2003, ix) points out: "The spectator is generally relegated to 'receiver' status, having little impact on the process of performance except in standard, structured response". This standard response is generally considered to be applause and occasional laughter, which are cited as the "only permissible audience text" in the theatre (Heim 2010, 45). The audience is, otherwise, still and silent in the traditional presentation paradigm.

It is the innovation of electric lighting in the late 1800s, in particular, that is said to have contributed to the "quietening" of the audience (Conner 2013, 59-60). Dance researcher Cynthia Bull (1997, 274) describes this setting: "The proscenium arch stage, the three-sided box in which events unfold, shines brightly in contrast to the darkened space in which the audience sits." Being able to shroud the audience in darkness while highlighting the stage, transformed the audience relationship with the arts event into a secondary one (Conner 2013, 60). Conner (2013, 60) points out that images of proscenium arch theatre performances during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries rarely reference audiences. As she asserts: "Lost in the dark, they became lost from the construct as well" (Conner 2013, 60).

Bull (1997) and Conner (2013) emphasise the separation between audience and dancer within the traditional presentation paradigm; this also highlights the audience's 'otherness'. The audience, in the dark and out of sight, is deliberately positioned to have minimal impact on the performance. Within this paradigm, there can be an understanding that the possibilities of

everyday life are extended, and that the audience is not to interrupt the performance as this “destroys” the performance’s temporal state (Thom 1993, 176). While the conventions of the traditional presentation paradigm places significant physical limitations on audiences, this study does not subscribe to the notion that they are passive.

Audiences can engage with, and respond to dance performance through kinaesthetic, affective, and cognitive means (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 55).²¹ These various responses can also be interrelated. For example, neuroscience and psychology research affirms that emotions support cognitive tasks (Damasio 2003): “the old separations between reason and emotion no longer hold” (McConachie 2008, 3).²² The many ways in which an audience can respond to dance performance is highlighted in the results of one dance reception study:

[. . .] it became clear that audience members responded in a range of manners, many of which could be described as kinesthetic or empathetic, while others related primarily to the social experience, to musical engagement, or to intellectual reflection. Many, of course, expressed responses that crossed over these different areas and were hard to categorize. (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 55)

In addition to the various ways in which an audience might respond, the complexity of reception is increased by considerations of multiple responses. While an audience is considered a collective group in this study, interpretation and response is influenced by the unique combination of cultural reference points, political beliefs, sexual preferences, personal histories, and immediate preoccupations of each individual (Freshwater 2009, 5-6). From the

²¹ Audiences produce outward physical responses to performers on stage through laughter, tears, sighs, gasps, groans, words, whispers, and applause (Heim 2010, 19). Heim (2010, 19) considers these responses to be contributions to performance. The presence of the audience, as a group and individually, affects the performance event. The audience are implicated in the performance and this, Thom (1993, 193) states, is evident to performers.

²² A major dance reception research project that uses neuroscience is the *Watching Dance Project* (2008-2011), which examined the neural processes of dance audiences (The University of Manchester 2012). Using a mixed-methods approach, the researchers apply both neuroscientific technology and qualitative tools to test previous arguments surrounding the theory of kinaesthetic empathy (The University of Manchester 2012). Publications from this and other projects that pertain to dance reception include Bläsing et al. (2012); Brown, Martinez and Parsons (2006); Calvo-Merino (2010); Calvo-Merino et al. (2005, 2008, 2010), Camurri, Lagerlöf and Volpe (2003); Cross (2010); Jola, Ehrenberg and Reynolds (2012); May et al. (2011); and Vincs, Stevens and Schubert (2009).

same study, the researchers report that, “spectators’ responses were often very personal, sometimes idiosyncratic, and influenced by prior experience, expectations, and taste” (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 55).

Bourdieu’s theory of ‘habitus’ explores how past experiences shape people’s perceptions and actions in the present and future. Habitus is described as “embodied history” (Bourdieu 1990, 56), a “processing of structure” (Ball 1998, 3 quoted in Wainwright, Williams and Turner 2006, 537), “the embodiment of social structure” (Sweetman 2003, 532), and “a learned process which effects the ways in which we move, behave and even think” (Morris 2003, 21).

When habitus is applied to ballet dancers, Geraldine Morris (2003, 21) suggests that the nature of ballet training – which begins at an early age and discourages radical thinking – leads to a “subconscious embrace” of the values and aesthetics of ballet culture: dancers become “balletically constructed individuals.” Morris (2003, 21-22) identifies characteristics of the modern balletic habitus as:

[. . .] the disposition to admire discipline with no regard to physical cost, to see excessive thinness in females as an ideal, to value symmetrical geometric shapes above asymmetry, to seek conformity, virtuosity and perfection as opposed to experimentation and idiosyncrasy [. . .]

She also suggests that these values are not necessarily bad; however, they are limiting and restrictive if they are the only set of dance values that a person has (Morris 2003, 22). For a non-ballet dancer, valuing thinness, perfection, and unrelenting discipline could seem unusual; however, through their learned habitus, ballet dancers subconsciously accept them as normal values. Put simply: “When habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it is like a ‘fish in water’ [. . .] it takes the world about itself for granted” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 127). The theory of habitus is often applied to the ballet context, and this is likely due to the enduring rigid nature of ballet training. With that said, values that are

less visible can be just as embedded in an individual's habitus. Ballet is simply the example more commonly studied in the dance context.

When applied to audiencing, habitus is considered as “the process by which social and economic conditions produce (pre)dispositions in taste” (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 55). As Bourdieu (1984, 3) explains:

A work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is, the code, into which it is encoded... A beholder who lacks the specific code feels lost in a chaos of sounds and rhythms, colours and lines, without rhyme or reason.

Therefore, each individual's habitus frames their experience of dance performance through certain preferences, associations, and knowledge. In reporting a dance reception study, Reason and Reynolds (2010, 70) identify two interpretive motivations with considerable links to particular dance histories. Frequent ballet spectators identified the desire for distance and escapism (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 70), while other audience members within the study expressed a desire for a “visceral response to intimacy and intensity” within a range of dance performance, particularly towards certain kinds of contemporary dance (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 70). While the researchers acknowledge that these differences are not absolute (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 74), they do illustrate contrasting perceptions that audience members might bring with them, as part of their habitus, to dance performances. The literature that this study draws from suggests that dance audiences are active in the traditional presentation paradigm. Audience activities, such as physical, emotional, and cognitive responses are now discussed.

2.1.1 Physical response

Applause forms a significant element of the audience's role. Some dancers even guarantee their own applause by bartering for a claque (Conner 2013, 51).²³ The characteristics of applause, within the traditional presentation paradigm, were dictated by theatre managers and producers around 1880 (Conner 2013, 57). At this time, audiences would applaud 'promiscuously' and stamp their feet (Levine 1988, 182).²⁴ Theatre managers and producers enforced new applause guidelines which, for example, prohibited foot stamping in the theatre (Conner 2013, 57). While the conventions of the traditional presentation paradigm present limitations for audience response, applause and laughter are considered in this study as active contributions to performances.

Dance can also provoke physical feelings within its audience. This phenomenon, referred to as 'kinaesthetic empathy', is a rapidly expanding field of dance research that is currently popular with neuroscientific researchers.²⁵ Kinaesthetic empathy is a theory that was initiated by German philosopher Theodor Lipps in the 1920s, and then further developed by American dance critic John Martin in the 1930s. It is described as observers "feeling" the movement that they are watching (Foster 2011, 1). The observed movement evokes associations that would arise if the movement originally belonged to the audience member (Hanna 1983, 35).

An audience participant in a reception study provides a vivid account of one experience of kinaesthetic empathy:

²³ Some dancers of the Bolshoi Ballet have a relationship with ballet fanatic Roman Abramov, who coordinates a claque. In exchange for guaranteed applause, the dancers provide free artist tickets (Barry 2013, para. 14).

²⁴ Other common behaviours of audiences during performances in the 1800s include whispering, talking, laughing, coughing, shouting, arriving late, leaving early, noisily turning program pages, demanding encores, eating, and spitting tobacco (Levine 1988, 182).

²⁵ This theory has drawn neuroscientists to dance research. Promising findings from studies with monkeys indicate that some neurons in the brain activate both when watching and doing a movement (Gallese et al. 1996), thus supporting the kinaesthetic empathy theory. Although it can be considered that these researchers are examining areas previously explored by dance researchers, the positivist approach triangulates existing perspectives and provides new forms of data with which to test and develop the theory.

I suppose [I felt] slightly breathless and tends to respond in your breathing I suppose in a way, that echoes the movement, so, as the position, line is held, you tend to kind of hold yourself as well in that respect, waiting for the next thing to happen almost if you like. It's a sense of anticipation, a sense of expectation, I'm trying to think of words to describe that sense of slightly being suspended but with quite a degree of physical, emotional tautness, not tension, tension's the wrong work 'cuz it suggests stress, but tautness, but with a very, a very kind of breathlessly excited [. . .] (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 65)

This example, and others in the study, present embodied responses that were almost automatic and instinctual (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 65-66).

Martin proposes that an audience member with a “keen kinaesthetic sense” and “empathetic participation” makes an ideal modern dance spectator (Reynolds, Jola and Pollick 2011, 262). Even in ballet, some choreographers, such as Vaslav Nijinsky, intended to create maximum kinaesthetic response in their audience (Hanna 1983, 39).

Furthermore, when audiences speak about the experience of watching dance, they draw a connection to their own bodies. In one study, 70% of the audience participants described their experience of watching a dance work through terminology such as “felt”, “moved”, and “connected” (Knoth 2012, 296), further demonstrating that the body is involved in watching dance. These descriptions of performance experiences, as an embodied experience of the dance work, are possible instances of Fraleigh's (1987) concept of communion between the dance work, performer, and audience ‘other’.

2.1.2 Emotional response

Affective response is another way in which audience reactions can be felt. While kinaesthetic response deals with physical feeling, affective response is concerned with emotional feeling. My own experiences of dance performance have produced emotions such as anxiety, deep sadness, and joy. In the eighteenth century, dance was considered an emotional, but not

intellectual, art form (Turner 2012, 18). The heart was considered the “emblem of the emotions” and, therefore, was the centre of the exchange between performers and audience (Turner 2012, 18).

Recent research connects emotion to cognition: “Emotions aren’t free-floating feelings but rather embodied neural affective processes; that is, they exist empirically as part of our mind/brain” (Conner 2013, 76).²⁶ Emotions experienced during dance performance are often interrelated to kinaesthesia in dance reception scholarship.²⁷

Emotional responses are also theorised to develop through an embodied process. Emotional contagion is “the tendency to automatically mimic and synchronize facial expressions, vocalizations, postures, and movements with those of another person and, consequently, to converge emotionally” (Hatfield, Cacioppo and Rapson 2005, 22). In the context of theatre performances, McConachie (2008, 68) explains that, during performance, most audience members copiously “catch” emotions, and then pass them on. This theory suggests that the audience member directly accesses feelings from the dancer on stage. Emotions can be “caught” through sight and sounds, and, once “caught”, they can influence cognitive processes (McConachie 2008, 67-68). Emotional responses can then develop into cognitive processes. The emotional state “constitutes a retrieval cue of conceptual knowledge [. . .] In turn, other cognitive processes, such as categorization, evaluation, and memory, are affected” (Niedenthal et al. 2005, 40).

A contrasting theory, developed through empirical dance reception research, argues that the combination of watching movement/hearing sound and the audience member’s interpretive strategies (informed by habitus) produces emotional response (Reason and Reynolds 2010,

²⁶ Neuroscience has redefined emotions as biological response patterns that are activated by electrical and chemical stimulation at a precognitive level (see Zull 2002).

²⁷ ‘Kinaesthesia’ refers to “sensations of movement” (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 52). “Sensing body position and muscle tension can be considered as integral to kinesthesia” (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 52).

68). In other words, rather than accessing the feeling directly from the dancer, the audience first experiences cognition, which can then translate to emotion. The consideration of interpretive strategies as a central element that affects audience response suggests that “individuals are motivated by the hopes, rewards, and pleasures they want to find within a work” (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 66). Some audience members might seek pleasure from awareness of the reality of the dancer’s effort, while others might seek pleasure through escapism and watching effortless (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 66). These tastes and expectations, or lack thereof, are drawn from each individual’s habitus.

While habitus develops within individuals, Reason and Reynolds (2010, 67) have identified an interpretive strategy that was common among frequent ballet audience members: “Perceived effortless and beauty of the movement” manifested in a “warm emotional response” (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 66).

While movement, observed by audiences through sight, is a significant element that contributes to emotional response, the aural elements of music and soundscape can also influence emotion responses: “In several cases [within a study] a positive response to the music appeared to facilitate a kinesthetically and/or emotionally empathetic response to the dance, while negative or indifferent reactions to the music were associated with less empathetic responses” (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 63). There are contrasting theories to explain the way in which audiences develop emotional responses, however, experiencing emotion, as a result of watching/hearing a dance work, is a common and complex audience response.

2.1.3 Cognitive response

This section discusses three elements of cognitive response: attention, meaning-making, and influences on meaning-making. “Playful attention” (Thom 1993, 205) is when an individual’s focus ‘plays’ between aspects of performance. In the following excerpts, Thom (1993, 205) explores this notion:

Because performing is a process, an audience’s attention can play between the performers’ present actions and recollected past actions or anticipated future ones.

Because performances normally involve several performers, an audience’s attention can play between one performer and another.

Insofar as various contents are represented by various vehicles in an artistic performance, an audience’s attention can play between content and vehicle.

Because a work can receive several performances, an audience’s attention may play between a particular performance as a whole and another performance of the same work.

Because performance is for an audience, the audience’s attention can play between aspects of the performance and aspects of their own lives.

Because performances are given in performance spaces and such a space has an outside, audience attention can play between what occurs inside the performance space and what has occurred or may occur outside it.

Listing the possible comparisons during performance highlights the variety of ways in which audiences could cognitively attend to performance. This cognitive ‘playing’ between performers, performances, content and spaces identifies several layers of possible meaning-making during performance.

An example of attention ‘playing’ between performance and aspects of the individual’s own life is where audience members, within Reason and Reynold’s study, identified similarities between themselves and the dancer (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 60). This conceptual ‘bridging’ was significantly different for dance expert and non-expert:

The “I wish I could do that again” and the feeling of “reliving” the act of dancing articulated by participants with experience of dancing the style they were watching

are, of course, qualitatively different from the “I wish I could do it” expressed by nondancers. In one case the trained dancers are consciously recalling and/or imaginatively replicating almost exactly the movements and memories of the performance. In the other there is more frequently hesitancy, self-consciousness, hope, and envy. (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 62)

Where audiences ‘play’ between performance and aspects of their own lives, they are conscious of their ‘otherness’. Through this reflective process, there is the potential of identification of “common ground” (Fraleigh 1987, 61) with the performers and/or dance work, or alienation from it.

The cognitive process of meaning-making is part of what an audience ‘does’ during performance. It involves recognising, ascribing, and understanding character, qualities, and meanings within the dance work (Adshead et al. 1988, 1). As humans, we find pleasure in making meaning of an object or experience and sharing our understanding with others, especially when it comes to art (Conner 2013, 15); therefore, meaning-making forms a significant element of what audiences ‘do’. Furthermore, Hanna (1983, 17) posits that watching dance “demands creative participation” through this process of meaning-making. In this sense, the performance is merely stimulus for the audience to create their own interpretation. Meaning-making is also encouraged, as artists want audiences to think and “to consider their work actively” (Kloppenber 2010, 201).

Dance is commonly conceptualised as fostering ‘movement language’. Just like verbal language, dance has vocabulary (steps and gestures), grammar (rules for how dance is constructed), and meaning (ideas, stories, emotions, and moods) (Hanna 2001, 40-41). While movement has been considered to be a universal language that is understood by all humans (Kirstein 1973, 82; Wigman 1933 quoted in Hanna 1983, 183), others argue that understanding dance requires complex tacit and codified knowledge (Bryson 2007, 100). In other words, insider knowledge of this movement language can be important for meaning-

making. Similar to verbal language, dance movement also has many dialects. As Hanna (2001, 41) explains:

Yet it must be remembered that both “dance” and verbal “language” are generic terms. One does not speak “language” but rather English, Igbo, or some other specific tongue. Similarly, one dances, for example, ballet or Bharata Natyam. Contrary to conventional wisdom, dance is not a universal “language”, but many languages and dialects.

The case of an audience member not finding meaning in a dance work is likely to be linked to a lack of familiarity with that particular dialect. While dance work often portrays or comments on everyday life, it is mediated through signs and gestures (Thurner 2012, 25).

This can limit the reception of dance due to a dependence on tacit and codified knowledge.

Anthropologist Adrienne Kaeppler (1999, 22) states that this “movement language” requires knowledge in order to be understood, and that an incompetence in “decoding” the movement language positions the individual as an illiterate audience member; in other words, they are considered an outsider. In Kaeppler’s words (1999, 23):

It is what the beholder brings to the performance that determines how it will be decoded and if he or she will be a ritual supplicant, an engaged audience member or an appreciative spectator.

This suggests that each individual positions themselves through their ability to engage with dance performance, which is influenced by their knowledge, or lack of knowledge, of the code. In this way, expert audiences with formal dance training are well positioned to decode movement language, as developing and decoding movement forms part of dance training and practice. This specific insider knowledge becomes part of their habitus. Human geography researcher John Bryson (2007, 101) proposes that the importance of an understanding of this code to the appreciation of performances can make dance exclusive. As the result, new audiences with outsider habitus – such as no dance training – can find a performance perplexing, alienating, and even intimidating.

Reason and Reynolds (2010) argue that there are many dance codes that highlight genre specificity. Reporting on an empirical study, they state that, even though all the audience participants had expertise in either classical Indian dance or ballet – and, therefore, an established understanding of movement – their experience in watching an unfamiliar genre of dance was “disjointed” (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 57). Some audience participants in their study could not “connect with or even see the movements being performed” (Reason and Reynolds 2010, 57), indicating that specific knowledge of these dance genres is important for a coherent audience experience.

Conner (2013, 110) discusses the concept of “transfer” – the “process by which knowledge, skills, and attitudes learned in one setting can be used in another context.” She states that audiences enter theatres with preconceptions, or “horizons of expectation” (McConachie 2008, 174), about what they will see. If their established understanding of (in this case, the dance) is not transferable, they will fail to connect in a meaningful way with the dance work. This seems to be the case in Reason and Reynold’s (2010) study of classical Indian dance and ballet audiences.

A key distinction that Reason and Reynolds (2010, 58) propose, however, is that knowledgeable audience members (insiders) are able to admire the skill of the dancers, while non-expert audience members (outsiders) are only able to admire their virtuosity. This suggests that the non-expert ballet audience, for example, might be limited to appreciating virtuosic jumps, turns and lifts because that is what they see on stage. Simultaneously, the control required to work legs in an outwardly-rotated position goes unappreciated, as an outsider might not understand the difficulty or significance of this element. However, Reason and Reynolds (2010) do not comment on the ability to understand the movement language or subject matter of dance work, as Kaepler (1999) does. Movement language is not universal,

however, some dance genres are considered to be more accessible to outsider audiences than others; for example, the use of obvious narrative in some ballets is considered to be very accessible (Bryson 2007, 100).

Some authors suggest that dance work has become too cryptic. Dance researcher Jan Van Dyke (2010, 213) considers whether there has been too much of a focus on abstraction, to a point where the audience is not “let into” the work. This view contrasts with Kisselgoff’s (2005) suggestion that the consistent use of movement drawn from technique training, cloaks the narrative or theme within dance work; the audience is aware that the narrative changes between performances, but also observes that the movement used is largely the same.

While meaning-making is not the focus of this research project, it is a significant cognitive element of the audience’s activity during performance that is significantly influenced by insider knowledge, or a lack there of. Movement language can make dance work sacred, as the need to “decode” (Kaepler 1999, 23) this language makes dance work exclusive. Open rehearsals are a tool that open up the possibility of gaining some insight into insider knowledge and, therefore, have the potential to influence audience meaning-making at performance. This study addresses how insider knowledge might influence spectator-dancer rehearsal relationships, and subsequent audience-performer relationships.

2.2 Engagement Tools

Talk-based activities have previously been the focus of research into engagement tools for ballet and contemporary dance performance. Pre-performance information sessions provide insight for audiences prior to their engagement with dance work, offering a frame in which

the audience can view the dance work through. Alternatively, post-performance discussions present opportunities for audiences to reflect on dance work.

A major dance reception research project that addressed pre-performance information sessions is *Conceiving Connections: Increasing Viability through Analysis of Audience Response to Dance Performance (2002-2004)* (hereafter referred to as *Conceiving Connections*), led by dance researchers Shirley McKechnie and Robin Grove.²⁸ *Conceiving Connections* sought to answer three questions:

What elements encourage audiences to respond to dance works with insight, pleasure and understanding? How does previous knowledge, experience and education affect audience responses? How can skills of perception, synthesis and imagination be enhanced? (Grove and McKechnie 2005, 6)

The project trialled pre-performance information sessions as a tool for audience engagement, where audience response was measured during and after contemporary dance performances (Glass 2005, 107).²⁹ Two information sessions, of a lecture-style format, were trialled: a specific-information session about the dance work that was performed, and a generic-information session about contemporary dance (Glass 2005, 114).

The specific-information session included a detailed description of the creative process for the dance work, and provided possible interpretive strategies for the dance work (Glass 2005, 114).³⁰ It also included photographs and video footage from rehearsals, which exhibited dancer-choreographer interaction during several stages of the creative process (Glass 2005,

²⁸ This project followed an equally significant choreography research project, *Unspoken Knowledges: Expanding Industry Productivity and Value through Strategic Research into Choreographic Practice* (1999-2001), which explored the types of creative thought involved in choreography (Grove and McKechnie 2005, 1).

²⁹ This project explores the use of psychology theory to explore interpretive and affective responses experienced by dance audiences (Glass 2005, 107). Audience reception tools that gather both qualitative and quantitative data – such as the portable Audience Response Facility (pARF) (Stevens et al. 2007) and the Audience Response Tool (ART) (Glass 2006) – were devised as part of the project.

³⁰ *Red Rain*, choreographed by Anna Smith, is a 40 minute contemporary dance work performed by a cast of seven female dancers. “The piece incorporates three structural elements: movement (postures, gestures and locomotor movement-patterns, and spatial and dynamic element); visual setting/environment (set-design, lighting, costuming, use of colour and props); and aural elements (music and sound effects).” (Glass 2005, 114)

114). Interpretation strategies were presented in conjunction with physical demonstrations of various motifs within the dance work (Glass 2005, 114).³¹

The generic-information session included general information about contemporary dance, and a comparison between contemporary dance and ballet (Glass 2005, 114). Photographs and video footage were also used; however, there was no movement demonstration in this type of session (Glass 2005, 114). A third audience group did not participate in either of the information sessions.

The information sessions focused on elements of the specific dance work, its interpretation, and dance styles. The study's results show that neither dance expertise, nor participation in a pre-performance information session had a significant impact on the audience participants' understanding of the dance work (Glass 2005, 107).³² Furthermore, the *Conceiving Connections* researchers suggest that there is more value in post-performance methods that allow people to reflect on the performance, than in pre-performance preparation (Glass 2005, 108).

In contrast to the *Conceiving Connections* study, the focus of this current research project is on developing insight to the dancer as a means of fostering performance engagement. It does this through an 'authentic' rehearsal interaction, rather than on the provision of formal dance knowledge conveyed through a student-teacher format. In other words, this study aimed to foster insider knowledge from placing spectators 'inside' the dancer's world. The *Conceiving Connections* findings have influenced the open rehearsal model trialled in this research project. While some open rehearsal models have Q&A components after the rehearsal, the trialled model has a spectator-only discussion as the final component of the open rehearsal

³¹ The specifics of these strategies are not discussed.

³² The research also provides insight into signifiers that shaped the audience's reading; for example, visual elements such as set design, costuming, lighting, and props (Glass and Stevens 2005, 6).

itself. This component seeks to provide an opportunity for reflection on the rehearsal, with the intention that this reflection will enrich the rehearsal experience, and subsequent performance experience.

Research into post-performance discussions suggests that this method leads to considerable growth in the knowledge and confidence of new audiences. Reporting on empirical research of audiences across performing arts disciplines, including ballet and contemporary dance, audience researcher Rebecca Scollen (2008) suggests that post-performance discussions are appealing to inexperienced audience members. Scollen (2008, 53) states that novice audience participants who continually engage in post-performance discussions experience growth in their knowledge and confidence as they build on their prior experiences. This finding supports Glass' (2005) hypothesis that there is value in post-performance reflection.

The post-performance discussion model used by Scollen was predominately audience-led (Scollen 2008, 53). Experts, such as researchers or performers, did not instruct audience participants in ways to understand or react to performance (Scollen 2008, 53).³³ Rather, the post-performance discussions encouraged audience participants “to have faith in their own interpretations and to honestly present them to the group for discussion” (Scollen 2008, 53). Therefore, the audience discussions supported meaning-making from whichever perspective – insider, insider-outsider, or outsider – the audience participants might have; it did not attempt to educate them. Scollen (2008, 53) describes the discussions:

³³ The related practice of post-performance Q&As often adopt an expert-led format. Usually held in the theatre site, the artists are positioned on stage while the audience remain in their seats. Heim (2010, 65) writes, specifically, about the Q&A model in theatre events, and states that this model often transforms into an expert-driven discussion which can be considered an additional performance. In this scenario, the audience is given very little opportunity to contribute to the discussion; usually, they are limited to asking questions after another expert has already set the tone with initial topics. When this expert-driven discussion transpires, the “chasm between stage and audience is widened as the audience role changes from receptor to student” (Heim 2010, 67). This style of discussion, more akin to lecturing, inhibits authentic conversations with audiences and, therefore, the dance industry is “sending the message that we aren't truly interested in audiences' response” (Conner 2013, 159). Conner states that this is a concern for the arts industry in general (Conner 2013, 159). The expert-student relationship between artist and audience is polarising, as the audience is educated by the artist: another one-way monologue.

The free-flowing discussion of ideas, the questions raised in the group for clarification and the confirmation that one's reception was similar to another's, all operated to assist the participants to enhance their understanding and enjoyment of the performances and of the overall theatregoing experience.

Significantly, 76% of the audience participants stated that their perceived understanding of the performances was greater after the audience discussions (Scollen 2008, 53). These discussions emerged as a pleasurable component of the theatregoing experience, which “provided opportunity for the participants to learn through self-reflection and debate with their peers” (Scollen 2008, 53). In a feedback survey, audience participants communicated that they enjoyed elements relating to interpretation more than learning about the theatre:

The participants particularly enjoyed listening to others' ideas (78%); knowing that their thoughts and feelings were valued (62%); thinking about performance (61%); getting to know other people (60%) and learning about theatre (46%). (Scollen 2008, 53)

Scollen's study fostered an interpretive community³⁴ that retrospectively enriched the performance experience. The post-performance discussion emerges as an opportunity for audiences to enhance performance experiences through sharing and discussing their ideas about, and responses to performances.

Conner (2013) asserts that talking plays a significant role in creating pleasure and engagement within an arts experience.³⁵ She uses the term ‘talk’ broadly, to include both live and virtual conversations. Conner theorises that “an arts experience combines with the audience member's pre-existing taste portfolio [habitus] to produce productive talk, which arouses pleasure and thus engenders engagement with the arts” (Conner 2013, 172). In other words, if productive discussion can emerge from the meeting between a dance work and the audience (in which there are many habituses), it can produce pleasure and engagement with the

³⁴ Interpretive communities, first theorised by Stanley Fish (1980), are made up of people who share interpretive strategies. Each interpretive community has its own set of strategies by which interpretations are made. Theatre critics, for example, might use theatre space and types of *mise en scène* as strategies to develop interpretations and, subsequently, evaluations (Bennett 1997, 42).

³⁵ Conner (2013, 2) considers an “arts experience” to include “witnessing an arts event/object and having the opportunity to participate in the articulation of its meaning and value”.

experience as a whole. While Conner focuses on post-performance talk as an element that can support engagement, in this study, open rehearsals (with a discussion component) are examined as another tool to support engagement, potentially through affecting habitus. The importance of reflection through discussion, as emphasised by Scollen (2008) and Conner (2013), is recognised in this research project, with rehearsal spectator discussions being included as a key element in the open rehearsal model.

2.3 Rehearsal Studies

Dance rehearsal studies document the studio process, with the use of text and video assisting in this documentation. Dance rehearsal studies also examine the relationships between choreographer and dancers in the construction of dance work. An extensive example of written documentation is a dedicated chapter in Martin's *Performance as Political Act* (1990) that describes the creative process of a modern dance choreographer from the first rehearsal through to performance.³⁶ Given the technological tools now available to dance, documenting rehearsals through video is another method employed, most often for choreographers' private use. A significant video contribution to dance rehearsal studies is *15 Days of Dance: The Making of "Ghost Light"*, a documentary series which captures the entire creative process for *Ghost Light*.³⁷ This rehearsal process is presented in eighteen hours of footage in a fifteen-part series (see Caplin 2010). This series is particularly significant because it includes lengthy periods of unedited footage, and often offers two camera angles where the viewer can

³⁶ Other (Australian) examples of rehearsal documentation include: Healy's (2005) documentation of rehearsals for the *Niche Series* (2002-2003) choreographed by Sue Healy; and Stevens' (2005) documentation of rehearsals for *Red Rain* (1999) choreographed by Anna Smith.

³⁷ This dance work is a ballet choreographed by American Brian Reeder. The documentary follows Reeder and the American Ballet Theatre II (formerly, American Ballet Theatre Studio Company) during rehearsals on a day-by-day basis. A short sample of the documentary is available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOVc3-zS_5w

simultaneously observe the dancers and choreographer. Much work has been done in dance rehearsal studies, however, most of this research does not address the engagement of audiences in these spaces.³⁸ Therefore, this section explicitly focuses on research that addresses rehearsal spectators.

While research addressing rehearsal spectators is limited, works by dance researchers Sarah Whatley (2013), Sita Popat (2006) and Nia-Amina Minor (2014), and ethnographer Hugo Letiche (2000) offer suggestions regarding the insights and experiences that rehearsals can offer spectators. Whatley (2013) considers spectator-dancer relationships in regard to a specific online repository of rehearsal videos, *Siobhan Davies RePlay*.³⁹ These videos include the “broader activities and operations of the rehearsal”, including dancers warming up, ‘marking’ movement, resting, and observing: “What is commonplace for the dancer becomes, perhaps, a different kind of spectacle for the viewer” (Whatley 2013, 149). Most significantly, the “mystery” of how dance work is made, and even the social aspects of the dance work environment, are revealed (Whatley 2013, 149).

Online viewers are offered the opportunity to develop insider knowledge of Davies’ rehearsals; for example, Whatley (2013, 153) suggests that the repetitive nature of rehearsals opens up the dancer’s “thinking” process to the viewer. Furthermore, she proposes that close proximity of the camera to the dancers provides an intimacy that can enable a “more somatic engagement with the dancer” (Whatley 2013, 152). Davies’ rehearsal videos present an opportunity for viewers to cognitively, and potentially kinaesthetically, connect with her creative and rehearsal processes. Overall, Whatley (2013, 154) asserts that the rehearsal videos subsequently enrich and augment viewer-turned-audience experience of live dance

³⁸ Within dance rehearsal studies specifically, there has been anthropological research into several rehearsal contexts, including ballet (Aalten 2004), contemporary dance (Mokotow 2014), modern dance (Di Leonardo 2003); the broader category of western concert dance (Lakes 2005; Risner 1992), and cultural dances (David 2013).

³⁹ See www.siobhandaviesreplay.com

performances. Perhaps, live rehearsal experiences could also shape audience relationships. While *15 Days of Dance* and *Siobhan Davies RePlay* are examples of raw, minimally edited rehearsal footage, most published rehearsal videos (as discussed further in Chapter 4) are usually highly edited and do not provide the viewer with an accurate representation of the rehearsal. Rather, they show brief moments in the creative process.

The experience of being a rehearsal spectator is addressed by Letiche, who observed Netherlands Dans Theater as part of an ethnographic research project. From his experience as a spectator in the rehearsal setting, he writes:

[. . .] my experience of Otherness varied strongly between when I observed the dancers in the studio and when I saw them perform (even the same works) in the theatre. Observing dance-being-created was very different from sitting (during a performance) in the audience. (Letiche 2000, 157)

Letiche writes that being with the choreographer and dancers in the studio, is comparable to being with the dancers onstage during performance, and suggests that it reinstates the feeling of the postmodern dance works of the 1960s (Letiche 2000, 173). We must remember, however, that these encounters are not performances, or even completed dance works; they are working rehearsals where dance works are being constructed. In reflection of his experience in rehearsals, Letiche (2000, 173) describes the subsequent performances as only a “good portrayal” of the dance work, and emphasises the “there and then” performance mode as opposed to the “here and now” impact and intimacy of rehearsal. Similarly, while researching spectator co-creation through the internet, Popat (2006, 109) reports a distinction between being *with* dancers in live settings, and being *with* dancers in virtual settings:

Even in synchronous communications where they may see each other, speak to each other and dance with each other, the sense of being “with” online is profoundly different to being “with” in the studio. “With” in the studio allows a dancer to control his or her location in space and proximity to the other dancer. It permits the physical sensing of body heat and odours, of skin and surface resistance, of the visceral presence of the other.

Letiche (2000) and Popat's (2006) findings form a critical assumption within this current study: that rehearsals offer a different experience of the dancer and dance work compared to the experience offered by performances within the traditional presentation paradigm.

Interestingly, even though Letiche identified significant and positive experiences as an audience member, he felt that even with the physical boundary to the creative process removed, there were boundaries relating to conceptual inclusivity (Letiche 2000, 178). Even though Letiche was there, he was still 'other'.

A practice-led study by Minor (2014) examined the relationships between choreographers, dancers, and spectators during *The Exchange*, an experimental dance project that invited spectators to contribute to the creative process, and culminated in a participatory performance. Minor (2014, 5) proposes "creative engagement" as a term to describe activity that "reveals and shares some part of the creative process [with future audiences], other than the final performance, either through live experience or technology." Creative engagement (opening up the creative process to spectators) was one key focus within *The Exchange*.⁴⁰

Minor invited spectators into the creative process using three methods. The first method was an invitation to rehearsals that took place outside of the studio.⁴¹ These public rehearsals made aspects of Minor's choreographic process "transparent" (Minor 2014, 33), however the improvisations were unexpected by the spectators (who were passers-by in these public sites), and might have been interpreted as performances. Minor (2014, 31) identifies that framing these improvisations as creative processes and explaining the improvisation tasks is important

⁴⁰ The other two key focuses of *The Exchange* were "experiential engagement", which "focuses on the action or activity of an aesthetic experience", and "perceptual engagement", which "calls attention to the sensorial activity that is experienced despite the primary discipline of a particular artistic medium" (Minor 2014, 5).

⁴¹ Minor used improvisation within the creative process and, on two occasions, moved these improvisation tasks out of the private studio and into a public spaces on the University of California, Irvine campus; the first site was the university's student centre, while the second site was in an operating campus bus (Minor 2014, 31). In these new sites, the dancers worked on these improvisational tasks while passers-by (now rehearsal spectators) looked-on, and, during the bus rehearsal, were invited to actively participate in the improvisation (Minor 2014, 31-32).

for spectators, as this helps to understand the process they are witnessing and participating in. She argues that “For many observers this [framing] made the experience more compelling” (Minor 2014, 39).

The second method of opening the creative process to spectators was through a Facebook group (Minor 2014, 33). Twenty-five guests were invited by the dancers to participate in the creative process by viewing photos and videos, liking content, creating content (writing comments), and were invited to be audience members at the subsequent performance (Minor 2014, 33). Minor (2014, 33) describes the Facebook participants as a “creative intervention”, however, she does not discuss their online interactions and the impact that these interactions had on the creative process or subsequent performance.

The third method used to open the creative process was open rehearsals where spectators were invited to participate in “engagement experiments” (Minor 2014, 34). These rehearsals took place during late phases of the creative process (Minor 2014, 34), and consisted of run-throughs of the emerging dance work that would rely on audience participation during the performance. In other words, the spectator participants were test subjects during Phase 4 of the creative process (run-throughs).⁴² At the conclusion of each experiment, a short spectator participant discussion was held (Minor 2014, 34). The spectator participant comments from these discussions were considered in the continued development of the dance work. After one such experiment, the spectator participants expressed “a level of satisfaction in being a part of the experience and expressed a sense of responsibility to the community” (Minor 2014, 34).

⁴² In these experiments, the spectator participants were given written instructions; for example, “at the 2:00 mark, put 2 fingers in the air for 5 seconds” (Minor 2014, 34). These physical cues, if the spectator participants chose to execute them, prompted the dancers to begin pre-set movement sequences (Minor 2014, 34).

The Exchange shared elements of the creative processes with spectators, however, this mostly occurred towards the end of the creative process. The implication of this delayed approach on spectator-dancer relationships is discussed by Minor (2014, 39):

Although conceptually we considered the audience throughout the creative process, the presence of other people still had significant effects on the dynamic between the dancers. It was my belief that engagement between dancer and dancer, dancer and choreographer, and dancer and self had to be at a high level before extending to the audience, but now I realize that engagement between dancer and audience has to happen earlier in the creative process if the relationship hopes to be reciprocal and involving.

Inviting spectators into early phases of the creative process is a key aspect of this current study. While the premise of rehearsal studies is to understand the creative process, questions about the spectator's relationship and role in rehearsals have emerged.

2.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed dance reception, engagement tools, and dance rehearsal studies. The literature asserts that dance audiences are active contributors to performance events through physical, emotional, and cognitive responses. While there is much research regarding reception during performance, there are significantly fewer studies relating to engagement tools that aim to support this reception. The empirical research that is available on this topic focuses on talk-based tools, and argues the importance of reflection after the arts event.

Conceiving Connections' approach did not lead to significant results in regard to meaning-making and perceived understanding of a dance work. This student-teacher approach, to communication insider information, placed the audiences in a receiving role, where they were expected to learn through listening to experts, and viewing some photographs and video footage.

In contrast, this current study trialled an approach that encouraged spectators to actively make decisions about which elements of rehearsal they would observe. Rather than pre-selecting the exact information that spectators might find useful for performance engagement, the open rehearsal model opened up opportunities for spectators to focus on elements that were most interesting and/or pleasurable to them.

Of significance for this study, much of the literature, especially that relating to rehearsal spectators, is informed by the researcher's (often a dance expert) perspective. Variations of 'otherness' emerge between rehearsal and performance experiences. Letiche's research highlights rehearsal observation as an opportunity for different engagement possibilities than those offered by performance. With individual habitus cited as a significant influence on reception, empirical research is an important contribution to the literature.

3. METHODOLOGY

Chapter 3 outlines the methodological design of the research project. It begins with a discussion of the post-structuralist paradigm applied to this study. As Chapter 2 emphasised, empirical research is needed to support ideas surrounding rehearsal spectators; this project has sought this empirical data through qualitative and practice-based methods.

The qualitative methods consist of participant observation of open rehearsals and expert interviews with practitioners. The observation data has been analysed using Dyson's (2015) scales of audience engagement.⁴³ These scales have been used to map open rehearsals in terms of "variations of site", "liminal spaces", "audience-performer proximity", "audience agency", and "performer qualities". Furthermore, the scales enable open rehearsal engagement to be compared to the engagement possibilities of performances within the traditional presentation paradigm. These methods – participant observation and expert interview – are important in this study, as they enable in-depth insight into the open rehearsal context.

The practice-based methods used in this project consist of action research cycles. Within each cycle, an open rehearsal model was trialled, and the rehearsal spectators also attended a subsequent performance of the dance work. Focus group discussions were included in these cycles as part of the open rehearsal model. This conversational data, with researcher/participant observation, forms the main data within the study. A grounded approach was used for a content analysis of this data.

⁴³ Dyson's scales, like all analysis tools, are open to critique, however, this is not the purpose of this thesis. Therefore, this type of critique is not included in this thesis and, instead, it uses Dyson's scales to inform findings from a new research context.

3.1 Post-structuralism

Working within the qualitative tradition of both dance and audience research, this study employs a post-structuralist paradigm that emphasises the importance of the audience in relation to art work. Post-structuralism shifts the role of “author” from the choreographer to the “reader”, or audience (Mills, Durepos and Wiebe 2010, 704). In theatre studies, the idea of the “death” of the author, sparked by Roland Barthes (1967), places the role of meaning-making between the reader and text: “The traditional triumvirate of playwright-director-actor has been disrupted by the spectator’s insertion into the paradigm as an active participant in the production of meaning” (Dolan 1989, 59). Although the post-structuralist lens frames this study, the topic is not concerned with meaning-making. Rather, this study addresses audience enrichment, with a specific focus on audience relationships.

3.2 Research Methods

The methods used in this study are qualitative and practice-based, and allow the researcher to interpret the activities that will be occurring in the field (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, 3).

Qualitative audience research is concerned with uncovering, analysing, and presenting descriptions of how audiences experience live performances. This is most commonly achieved through talk-based group discussions or interviews (Reason 2010, 15). Interpretive research has been identified as “most helpful” in aiding understanding of how people who participate in dance – whether that be through learning dance, teaching dance, performing dance, or watching dance – make sense of their experiences with the art form (Green and Stinson 1999, 104). Following the qualitative tradition, the data collection is focused on small

sample sizes, in order to produce “in-depth data that gets at real experiences, thoughts and feelings of participants” (Smith and Bowers-Brown 2010, 114).

Practice-based researchers are “concerned with the improvement of practice, and new epistemologies of practice distilled from the insider’s understanding of action in context” (Haseman 2006, 3). This study is dependent on open rehearsal practice, and provides insight into audience experience of practice. While the research is based in practice, it has no practical examinable outputs.

The decision to develop and trial an open rehearsal model for this research project is a direct response to early assumptions; that there is potential for non-expert audience engagement with ‘authentic’ rehearsals that occur early in the creative process. When developing the research methodology, there were no existing open rehearsals that matched the proposed model within the scope of mainstream dance companies in Australia. In order to capture spectator response to this model, it needed to be developed and trialled for the purpose of the research project. To this end, within the project cycles, the researcher designed and co-facilitated the Sydney Dance Company (SDC) and The Australian Ballet’s (TAB) open rehearsals in cooperation with these companies. In this role, the researcher was positioned as a spectator participant/observer during the open rehearsal trials.

The conduct of these open rehearsals was negotiated with SDC and TAB. Details such as the exact rehearsal content and time, and the choice of choreographers and dancers, were decided by the companies. The research requirements, however, were that the rehearsal attendees would be non-experts sought through the companies’ marketing channels; the open rehearsal would be a studio working rehearsal; and it would occur at an early phase in the creative process, so that the spectators could observe dance work being made. The subsequent

performances were part of the companies' regular performance programming, and were not affected by the companies' participation in the research project.

In this research project, I identify as a dance expert, given my extensive dance training and experience. Given this experience, in a very general sense, I consider myself an insider to the community of dancers. By this, I mean that I have insider knowledge relating to dance technique, creative process, theory, and kinaesthesia.

3.3 Action Research

Action research, the main method in this research project, uses a participatory approach to develop "practical knowing" (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 4). Through the "spiral of steps" (Lewin 1946, 206) that create action and reflection, this strategy enables the development of theory that is embedded in layers of understandings.

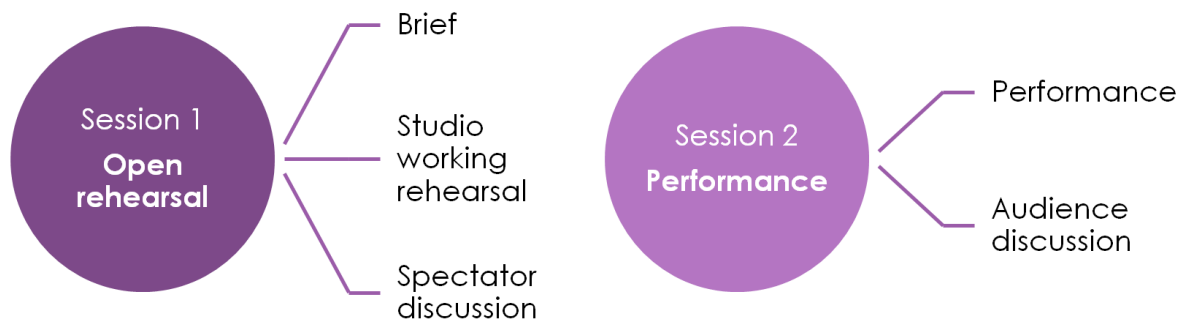
The nature of action research positions the researcher in the field. This is an important aspect for research into audiences, as real-life conditions affect audience response; therefore, the validity of research in controlled laboratory settings is, perhaps, unreliable (Jola, Pollick and Grosbras 2011, 378). While action research is an approach that does not favour or recommend one particular method, there is a trend in the use of interviews in semi-structured and unstructured formats. These formats "allow an opportunity for those being interviewed to describe the problem and situation in their own terms" (Ferne and Smith 2010, 105-106). Most importantly, action research positions reflection as the "key" within this process, as reflection enables informed planning based on experience and observations (Ferne and Smith 2010, 106). This study presents two project cycles where the open rehearsal model was

trialled, adjusted, and then trialled a second time. The first trial was with SDC, and the second was with TAB.

3.3.1 Open rehearsal model

The open rehearsal model developed through this project has three components: a spectator brief or introduction to the open rehearsal; a one hour spectator observation of rehearsal; and a discussion among the spectators (see Figure 4). Also central to the model is the condition that the rehearsal is a working rehearsal. This open rehearsal model was conceived as a tool to assist audience engagement with the subsequent performance; therefore, the open rehearsals within the project cycles were scheduled prior to the subsequent performances of the dance works being developed.

Figure 4: Project cycle design

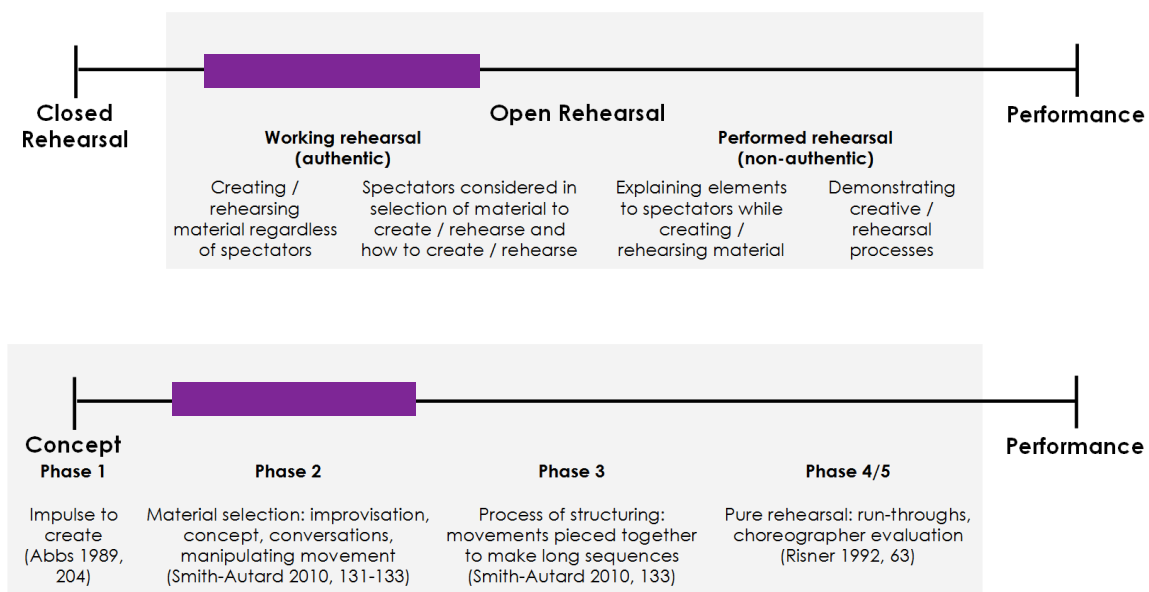


The spectator brief was used as a tool to frame the open rehearsal events. Most significantly, the intention was to clearly frame the events as ‘rehearsals’ so that the spectators were aware that performance etiquette and agency did not necessarily apply in those spaces. Thus, creating a rehearsal frame was important in order to give the spectators choices about how they engaged with the rehearsal. The brief also provided an opportunity to formally introduce

myself, as researcher, and to outline the key elements of the spectators’ participation in the project. Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the challenges associated with providing this frame, and outlines the re-planning and new action associated with this element of the model.

The rehearsal component was a studio working rehearsal, which was intended to be early in the creative process. These elements – the working rehearsal and early timing in the creative process – were central to the design of the model, as the aim was to offer the spectators various engagement opportunities. Research into existing open rehearsal practice revealed that many models bring spectators into rehearsal at very late phases in the creative process; that is, within the ‘pure rehearsal’ phase. Run-throughs of dance work can be very similar to performance, especially when staged in the theatre setting. Therefore, this model was designed to contrast with performance by bringing spectators into rehearsals in the early phases of the creative process (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Open rehearsal design



The emphasis on the working rehearsal is a response to the research into practice. This research revealed that many open rehearsals have performance elements embedded in the

open rehearsal's format. Chapter 4 is dedicated to discussing a variety of open rehearsal models, and discusses how open rehearsals can be performed. The Royal Ballet's model, for example, turns the studio site into a performance space by covering the mirrors and using theatrical lighting; this cloaks the spectators in darkness, while the dancers and choreographers work in the light. These performance conventions could be interpreted as performance frames, potentially signifying to spectators that the rules of performance apply. With an emphasis on different types of engagement, removing these performance frames was important for this project.

In the project cycles, chairs were placed at the front of the studios, and this was where the spectators observed the rehearsals. The chairs were provided for the physical comfort of the spectators. The studios were presented without costumes, lighting, or curtains, and the choreographer and dancers appeared to work as they normally would during a rehearsal. In this model, the spectators shared space with choreographers and dancers. However, they did not actively participate in the creative process: the experience was an observational only.

During the rehearsals, there was no mandatory interaction between the dancers and spectators. The instruction given to the companies was to run rehearsals normally. The purpose of this approach was to further support the goal of the 'authentic' working rehearsal. As a way to try to keep the rehearsal towards the working end of the scale, any direct dancer-spectator interaction was unplanned. In the SDC and TAB open rehearsals, the interactions that emerged were brief moments of acknowledgement by the dancers and/or choreographers, mostly through gaze.

The post-rehearsal spectator discussion was a private conversation among spectators, which included myself as a participant researcher. The decision to make these conversations private – unheard by dancers, choreographers, and company staff – was to encourage the spectators

to speak freely. The discussion provided an opportunity for the spectators to reflect on the experience of the open rehearsals which, as discussed in Chapter 6, can be confronting. The discussion also emerged as a pleasurable component of the open rehearsal model, as it included much laughter and humour, especially in the case of the SDC spectators. Focus groups can be considered “an extension of the artistic event itself because their experience is inherently social” (Johanson 2013, 163). Through the discussion, the groups, which were made up of (initially) complete strangers, appeared to become interpretive communities.⁴⁴ In this research project, the focus group discussions were integrated as an element of the open rehearsal model: not just as a data collection tool. Using action research cycles, the open rehearsal model was adjusted between project cycles in response to reflections on researcher observation and spectator comments.

The subsequent performance experiences involved the rehearsal spectators attending actual company performances. The researcher met the SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators-turned-audiences prior to the commencement of these performances. Here, they were given their tickets and were encouraged to pursue their normal pre-performance and interval rituals, such as enjoying a glass of wine or reading the program.

Both the SDC and TAB performances are firmly positioned within Dyson’s (2010) concept of the traditional presentation paradigm: the performance sites are proscenium arch theatres; they adhere to traditional theatre codes and conventions; audience agency is restricted; audience-performer proximity is fixed; and the dance works do not present the ‘authentic’ dancers on stage.

⁴⁴ Through the focus group discussions, the rehearsal spectators/audiences collectively developed their own set of strategies to interpret elements of the open rehearsals and performances, such as choreography and relationships.

At the conclusion of both performances, the spectators-turned-audiences participated in post-performance focus group discussions. The sites for these were the SDC boardroom, and a quiet area of the State Theatre (Melbourne) foyer. The questions they were posed aligned with those asked in their previous focus group discussions, and covered aspects of their cognitive, affective, and kinaesthetic experiences. The completion of the post-performance focus group discussions also marked the end of the rehearsal spectators' participation in the research project.

3.3.2 Participants

The project cycles each included two categories of participants: the artists (choreographers and dancers), and the rehearsal spectators. The artists who participated in the project were the choreographers and dancers involved with the dance works *Emergence* by Rafael Bonachela (SDC), and *Cinderella* by Alexei Ratmansky (TAB). The presenting companies were chosen for this research project as they are typical examples of the mainstream Western artistic dance company context to which this research is scoped.

The choreographer and dancers' participation in the research project was no different to their participation in their everyday jobs, with the exception that they were under observation. However, both companies stated that they often have observers – such as donors, photographers, or videographers – in rehearsal; thus, the dancers were familiar with being watched in the studio space. Bonachela also participated in an interview, where he provided contextual information about the open rehearsal. This information enabled a better understand the level of 'authenticity' of the SDC open rehearsal. The data collected through the SDC and

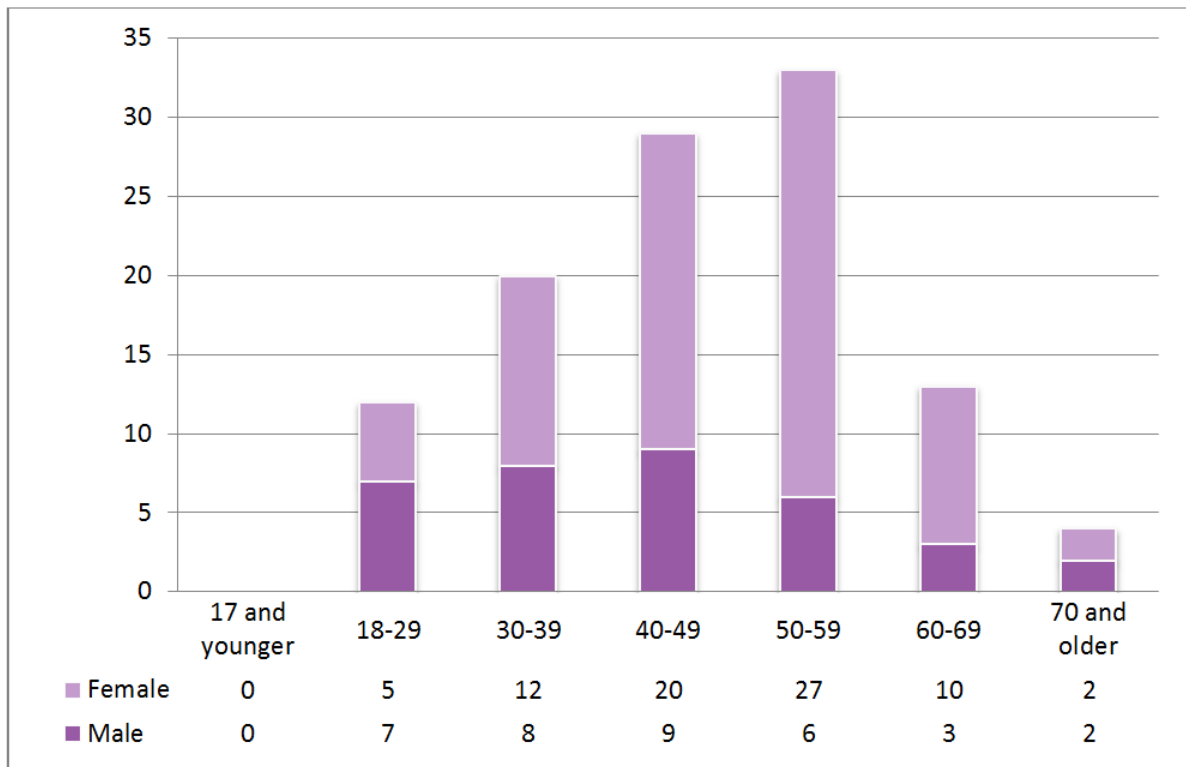
TAB project cycles, particularly through the spectator focus groups, formed the central data for this research.

As this research is focused on non-experts, the spectator participants in this study were existing SDC and TAB audience members who were not considered dance experts. The SDC spectators were recruited through the company's marketing channels. In December 2012, SDC sent a dedicated email to their mailing list to advertise the opportunity to participate in the project (see Appendix 6). There was also a Facebook post published in the same week. Both advertisements linked to a screening questionnaire that served as the mechanism for people to express their interest in participating.

There were a total of 172 respondents, demonstrating that there is significant interest among the SDC audience for behind-the-scenes insight. The screening questionnaire gathered demographic information about each respondent, and this enabled a screening process of the prospective rehearsal spectators to ensure that only non-experts were included in the participant group. As a result, of the 172 respondents, 61 (almost one third) were ineligible, as they had worked with, or trained in dance at some point. Figure 6 illustrates the age and gender distribution of the eligible respondents.

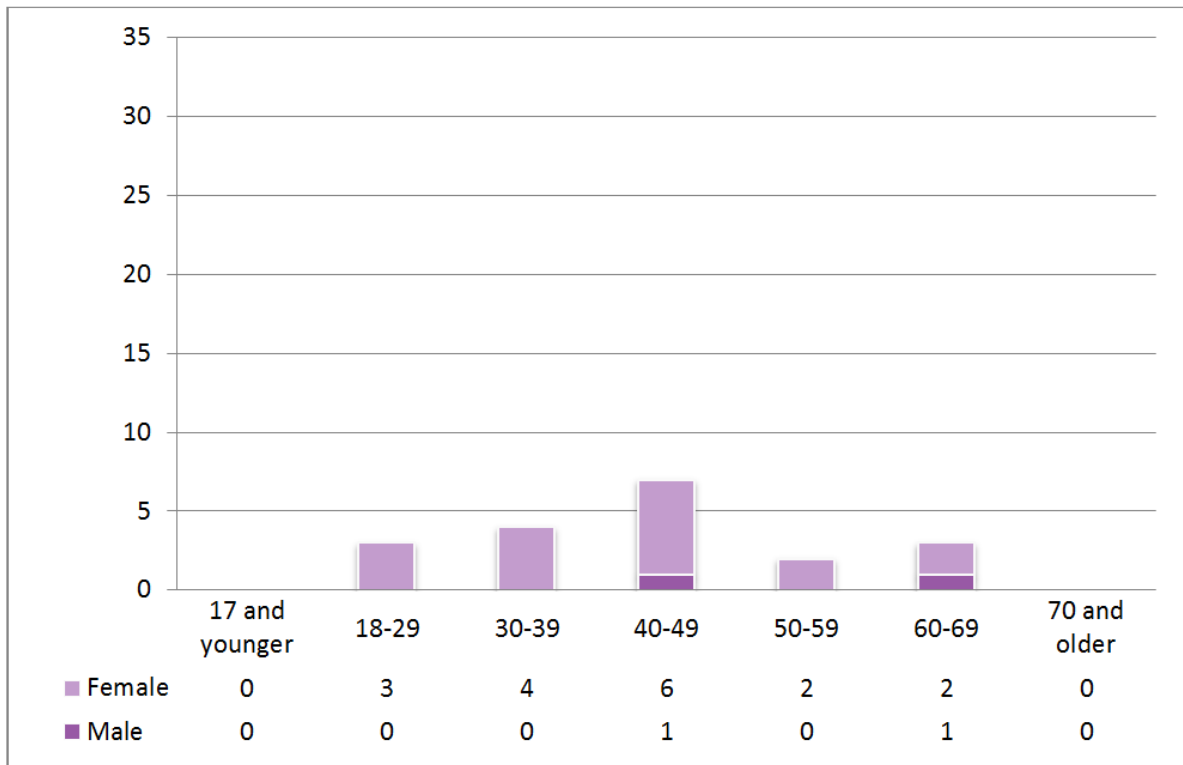
The final SDC spectator group, consisting of 12 participants, was selected to reflect the age and gender distribution of all eligible respondents as accurately as possible. Thus, the group represented all age brackets, with the exception of the '17 and younger' and '70 and older' groups. I personally contacted the participants and, throughout the project, was their point of contact.

Figure 6: Eligible SDC respondents (n=111)



TAB spectator group was recruited through the company’s marketing channels. In July, 2013, TAB published a Facebook post to advertise the opportunity to participate in the project (see Appendix 6). In the TAB cycle, respondents were also directed to use the same screening questionnaire as used in the SDC project cycle, as it had proved to be a valuable tool. There were a total of 58 respondents to the Facebook post, with 39 (two-thirds) being considered ‘expert’. This left 19 respondents who were eligible to participate in the research; their age and gender distribution is displayed in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Eligible TAB respondents (n=19)



Due to restrictions placed on the project by TAB, the final spectator group was a total of 8 people. As in the case of SDC, these 8 people were selected to reflect the age and gender distribution of all the eligible respondents as accurately as possible. Again, consistent with the SDC cohort, this final group of spectators did not include people within the ‘17 and younger’ and ‘70 and older’ age ranges. Again, I was the participants’ point of contact throughout the research project.

While respondents were screened to separate ‘experts’ from ‘non-experts’, there were two spectators in TAB spectator group whom had some degree of expert knowledge, despite their passing the screening process. These spectators highlighted a flaw in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to screen for people who had formal experience with dance (people who had worked with dance, or trained in dance). If the research had continued with

a third project cycle, the screening questionnaire would have been adjusted to identify other, less formal, types of dance expertise.

The first ‘informal expert’ was a parent of young amateur dancers. This spectator had no experience in a professional dance context; however, they had a great deal of experience within the amateur dance studio context, where they had observed dance classes and rehearsals over many years. The second informal expert was a member of The Australian Ballet Society. Through their membership of this society, this person had attended a number of full dress rehearsals of TAB in the theatre context. As is argued in Chapter 4, this model of open rehearsal often offers limited behind-the-scenes exposure. This spectator had developed some expertise as a result of attending dress rehearsals in the past. Although this spectator did not demonstrate as much dance knowledge as the first expert, they asserted themselves as an authority within the group. This could have hindered other group members’ confidence in contributing their own ideas to the discussion, and, therefore, this required monitoring to ensure that these voices did not dominate the discussion.

The SDC and TAB spectator groups participated in two sessions. The first session (open rehearsal) took place at the SDC and TAB studios, the creative process sites for these companies. The second session (performance) took place at Sydney Theatre and the Melbourne Arts Centre. As occurred for the first rehearsal sessions, the groups participated in another focus group discussion after the performances.

3.4 Data Collection

This research project employed three data collection tools: participant observation, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews. The focus groups and interviews captured data after

the event, hence “dealing with memories and reflections, rather than the actual experience itself” (Jola, Ehrenburg and Reynolds 2012, 27). Including participant observation presented an opportunity for data collection during open rehearsals and performances. Using multiple data collection methods strengthens the data’s reliability, as this study includes three perspectives: the spectator/audience perspective, the practitioner perspective, and my perspective as participant researcher.

3.4.1 Participant observation

Observation involves information from sight being supported by information received through sound, smell, touch, and taste (Foster 2006, 57). A method suited for theory development rather than theory testing, participant observation enables the researcher, to a certain extent, to see from the participants’ perspective (Foster 2006, 63). A less-structured approach to participant observation was applied, as a data collection tool during the open rehearsals and performances.

In the open rehearsals and performances, I openly observed the spectators/audiences and, in doing so, needed to consider how I positioned myself, physically and behaviourally (Foster 2006, 69). Within the SDC and TAB project cycles, I was positioned as an “observer as participant” (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983 quoted in Foster 2006, 70). In order to limit my influence on the SDC and TAB spectators’/audiences’ behaviours (Foster 2006, 74), I positioned myself toward the side and back of the spectators during the open rehearsals, so that my attention and activities, such as note-taking, would be less noticeable.

In the existing open rehearsal models that I had observed, I was an unannounced participant observer. Therefore, the rehearsal spectators – of the English National Ballet, National Dance

Company Wales, and Chunky Move open rehearsals – were not aware that I was researching. Therefore, I recorded my observations after the rehearsals.

Given that the research questions pertain to relationships, the field notes were focused on the spectators'/audiences' actions and interactions during open rehearsals and performances, in particular, on interactions with dancers. The field notes recording data that appeared to be relevant or interesting, as opposed to using a theoretical framework (Foster 2006, 78).

Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that field notes are embedded with interpretation, rather than fact, as the interpretive process is naturally instantaneous (Green and Stinson 1999, 101). This embedded interpretation meant that the research required more data sources, such as the focus groups and interviews.

3.4.2 Focus groups

The purpose of the focus group discussions was to discuss the spectator/audience experiences of rehearsal and performance, and how one experience impacted upon the next. The questions proposed to the spectators/audiences related to their experiences of rehearsal and performance; specifically, to their emotional, cognitive and physical reactions. Talking about experiences is also a natural reaction for many dance audience members, who tend to want to talk about dance works after a performance. As Reason (2010, 26) argues: “The factor at play here is the need that many of us feel to share and communicate our experiences of a performance after the event.” As discussed in Chapter 2, the opportunity to reflect on performance is considered to be an important aspect of the experience for dance audiences (Glass 2005, 120). The conversations between audience members form a “trace” of the experience, which then becomes an experience in its own right (Reason 2010, 28).

In this research project, the focus groups were used to gain “insight into a group’s shared understanding” (Smith and Bowers-Brown 2010, 120) of the open rehearsal and performance experiences, with the knowledge that “[i]t is from the interaction of the group that the data emerge” (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000 quoted in Smith and Bowers-Brown 2010, 120). Using focus groups, as opposed to individual interviews, also relates to nature of being an audience member: usually situating one’s self within a group.

There are two main challenges with using focus groups. The first is the potential for a few participants to dominate the discussion, thus, creating data that is not representative of the whole group’s ideas (Smith and Bowers-Brown 2010, 121). Mediating the group was a key responsibility for me, as facilitator, while also making sure the discussion did not become a question and answer format between myself and the spectators/audiences, or that they did not drift into irrelevant conversation (Flick 2009, 204). In order to remain neutral (Krueger and Casey 2009, 87), I refrained from contributing my own ideas to the discussion. As the mediator, I posed questions, and ensured that everyone had opportunities to speak. The conversations with the spectators/audiences were generally well balanced and, as a result, my contribution to the discussion was mainly to ask questions.

The second challenge associated with focus groups is the dependence on talk as the medium. Reason (2010, 15) suggests that “externalising” the experience of watching live performance is not necessarily straightforward. An audience member might not necessarily be able to communicate their kinaesthetic, cognitive, and affective experiences in descriptive words. Specific to dance, dance researcher Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (1979, 65) argues that “the lived experience of dance is ineffable”. As an alternative, Reason (2012) proposes ekphrastic and creative writing as other approaches to uncovering the audience experience. Through the focus group discussions, the spectators/audiences developed meaning and vocabularies within

their groups. There were moments when each group collectively found particular words that most accurately expressed an aspect of their experiences. While conversation can be problematic for conveying specific meaning, allowing the spectator/audience participants to respond as a group led to a crystallisation of particular terms with which they were satisfied.⁴⁵

3.4.3 Semi-structured interviews

Interviews were conducted as part of the contextual research, and the SDC project cycle. The interviewees were experts who provided contextual information about the current or historical open rehearsal practices of a particular company. These interviews were semi-structured in form, where questions were prepared; however, the order of questioning, and the wording of each question, was flexible (Smith and Bowers-Brown 2010, 119).

The main benefit of semi-structured interviews is that there is freedom to ask further questions about something that the interviewee has introduced to the conversation (Smith and Bowers-Brown 2010, 119). Probing – that is, asking for more information on a topic (Smith and Bowers-Brown 2010, 119) – was a technique that was applied in all the interviews. This technique produced detailed information about open rehearsal practices, such as spectator-dancer proximity, and how spectators enter and exit rehearsal sites. The exchange was deliberately one-directional, with the interviewee being the dominant speaker; this meant that time was used effectively (Wellington 2000 quoted in Smith and Bowers-Brown 2010, 120).

⁴⁵ See Appendices 1-4 for transcripts of the focus group discussions.

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Preparing the data

The data in this research project is qualitative (also known as unstructured data). As such, it required preparation before it could be analysed (Boulton and Hammersley 2006, 246). This section outlines the processes – field notes and transcription – used to prepare the data for analysis.

It is common for field notes to initially be written in shorthand, and then expanded at a later time. The aim of adding to the notes is to make them as “concrete” as possible, in order to minimize the amount of questionable inference involved (Boulton and Hammersley 2006, 249). As stated above, in the SDC and TAB project cycles, where my role as researcher was known to the spectators/project audiences, I recorded my observations as field notes during the open rehearsals and subsequent performances, and later expanded them out. Where my role as researcher was unknown to rehearsal spectators, during the English National Ballet, National Dance Company Wales and Chunky Move open rehearsals, I wrote field notes after the open rehearsal events, to avoid distracting the rehearsal spectators. These field notes consisted of the written descriptions of the rehearsal content, and spectator actions and interactions.

The focus group discussions and the expert interviews were recorded and then transcribed. Transcription is a written version of audio or visual material (Smith and Davies 2010, 147). Although this transference from audio to text makes analysis easier, transcription can only partially and selectively transfer the data (Rapley 2007 quoted in Smith and Davies 2010, 147), as only the spoken words are documented; that is, the setting, context, body language, and feel of the conversation are not captured (Arksey and Knight 1999, 141). It is important

to remember that “transcripts are approximations of real life events” (Jenks 2011, 42). In order to minimise the amount of interpretation in the transcripts, verbatim transcriptions of the proceedings were written, including documentation of non-word verbal responses, such as laughter and “mmm”.

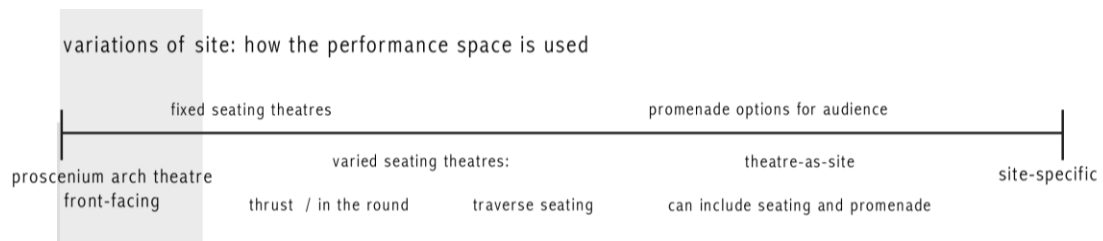
3.5.2 Scales of audience engagement

In Chapters 4 and 5, several open rehearsal models are analysed using Dyson’s (2015) scales of audience engagement. These scales are “variations of site”, “audience-performer proximity”, “audience agency”, “performer qualities”, and “liminal spaces”.⁴⁶ Developed to be used as a choreographic tool, the scales enable choreographers to “map the process of audience engagement” within their work, and they provide a framework to analyse the presentation of their dance work (Dyson, 2010, 210). An important aspect to note about Dyson’s framework is that it is intended to highlight the way in which dance work is presented, as opposed to its content (Dyson, 2010, 216).

This study applies Dyson’s scales from a rehearsal spectator participant perspective, rather than a choreographer perspective (from which the scales were initially developed). The breadth of presentation models that these scales encompass, from the traditional presentation paradigm to non-traditional approaches, presents an array of engagement possibilities. When applied to open rehearsals, these scales provide a new lens in which to view open rehearsals, and can provide insights into possible spectator relationships.

⁴⁶ Dyson (2010, 34) states that there is a sixth scale, “ritual”; however, she does not analyse this potential tool due to its broad scope and, therefore, I have not included it within my analysis.

Figure 8: Variations of site (Dyson 2015)



Dyson (2015, 7) identifies the performance site of dance presentation as a central element of how audiences engage with performance. She draws on McAuley (1999, 275) who states that “space is the condition of the spectator and the performer coming together”. Audiences first experience performance through the space: “space in relation to oneself, of one’s self in the place” (McAuley 1999, 256). Changes to the use of performance spaces impact the way in which audiences perceive dance work (Dyson 2010, 89). Changes to how sites are utilised, and variations of site, inevitably affect other scales such as liminality, audience agency, audience-performer proximity, and performer qualities (Dyson 2015, 7).

Audience expectations of site influence how a performance is experienced (Dyson 2010, 90). These expectations can be driven by the physical architecture of a space, its history, and even by the standard approach to using the space (Dyson 2010, 90). Theatre researcher John O’Toole (1992, 55) suggests that all spaces, whether theatrical or not, have standard usage expectations. Dyson (2010, 90) suggests that varying the use of a space, or using a different space, “challenges these expectations and can change how an audience engages with both the performance and the performance space.” She provides an example through contrasting the proscenium arch theatre to a gallery space. The theatre offers an experience where the performance is watched from a distance, from a front-facing viewpoint, and requires the audience (most likely large) to be seated throughout the performance (Dyson 2010, 91). In contrast, the gallery space accepts an audience walking near performers, as “the expectation within an art gallery is that the viewer or ‘audience’ can choose where to walk in the space”

(Dyson 2010, 92). Dyson (2010, 92) concludes: “Presenting the same performance work in both a gallery and a theatre would therefore alter audience experience by virtue of the space it is performed in.”

On Dyson’s scale, the traditional presentation paradigm is characterised by traditional theatre sites, while the avant-garde is characterised by site-specific environments (Dyson 2015, 7). In traditional theatres, the audience is seated, front-facing, in the dark, and separated from the stage (Dyson 2015, 7). These spaces are intentionally similar, as this makes touring more possible (Dyson 2010, 96). It also “makes the theatre space invisible to the artwork it is presenting” (Dyson 2010, 96). This invisibility supports the conceptual act of suspending disbelief, and encourages immersion in the time, place, and space created by the performance (Dyson 2010, 96). O’Toole (1992, 55) suggests that this “neutralises” the messages of the real context of the theatre through “the concentration of focus upon a specially recreated location, while the rest of the space is temporarily suspended in silence and darkness.” This traditional use of the theatre encourages audiences to ignore the site, and to focus their attention on the stage.

The middle of the scale of site moves to theatres that place audiences in the round, on three sides of the stage, and even facing each other (Dyson 2015, 7). These changes to the use of the theatre site create opportunities for audiences to see and engage with each other (Dyson 2010, 97). This also opens up questions of “who is a performer, for whom the work is performed, and who is part of the experience of that particular performance” (Dyson 2010, 97).

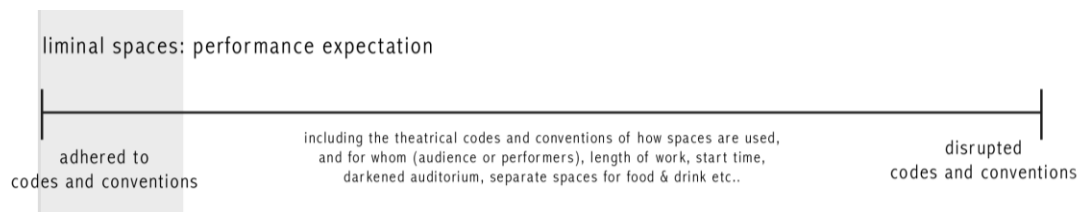
Finally, the non-traditional end of the scale, characterised by site-specific environments, takes dance work out of theatres completely (Dyson 2015, 7). When performance is taken out of

the theatre, the expectations of the theatre are no longer relevant (Dyson 2010, 99). Dyson (2010, 99) explains:

For site-specific work, audience usually come with different expectations of how they might engage with the performance. Often, if the performance site has been advertised, audience expectations of the work can be complex and, as stated, vastly different to the expectations the same audience member would have if seeing the work in a theatre.

A fundamental contrast between site-specific performance and the traditional theatre is that the site is integral to the work (Dyson 2010, 100). As Dyson (2010, 100) explains: “for a site-specific performance, the site is a major part of the performance work and its impact cannot be replaced or removed without changing the work.” In other words, the site is made visible through the performance.

Figure 9: Liminal spaces (Dyson 2015)



Liminality is mainly concerned with audience expectations, and examines the maintenance or disruption of existing performance codes and conventions (Dyson 2015, 8).⁴⁷ Performances that “disrupt” these codes open up possibilities for liminality in space or time (Dyson 2015, 8). Dyson (2010, 115) discusses ‘liminal’ and ‘liminality’ as terms that “specifically denote the in-between spaces: in-between two structures or formal expectations that are temporarily disrupted, thus opening up an uncertain, indeterminate space for those in it.” Liminality is transitory, having two points of reference such as before and after states, places, or times.

⁴⁷ The theory of liminality was first developed by anthropologist Arnold van Gennep in the early 1900s in the context of small-scale society rituals (see 1960). The theory was later extended by Victor Turner to address human reactions to liminal experiences (see 1967; 1982; 1988).

(Dyson 2010, 115). This term is used by Dyson (2010, 115) to signify transition, change, and the unknown.

Liminality is used to “unsettle” audiences, opening up different ways to experience dance work and/or to “form new communities within their audience” (Dyson 2015, 8). Dyson (2015, 8) explains that liminality can be experienced both negatively and positively:

Liminal spaces tend to disorient audience members, but disorientation (depending on how fast you can recover from it) is not always negative. If ‘the rules’ of a performance are discovered quickly and easily then sometimes disorientation can be liberating because it shifts audience from their old self into a new unknown self for the duration of the show.

Liminality can be applied by using the liminality already existing within buildings, times, environments, or people (Dyson 2010, 119). Dyson (2010, 119) explains:

‘In-betweenness’ can be found in a number of areas: spaces (thresholds, doorways, hotels, foyers, borders, cross-roads, deathstrips); people (transgender, transsexual, refugees, stateless people); and times (dawn, dusk).

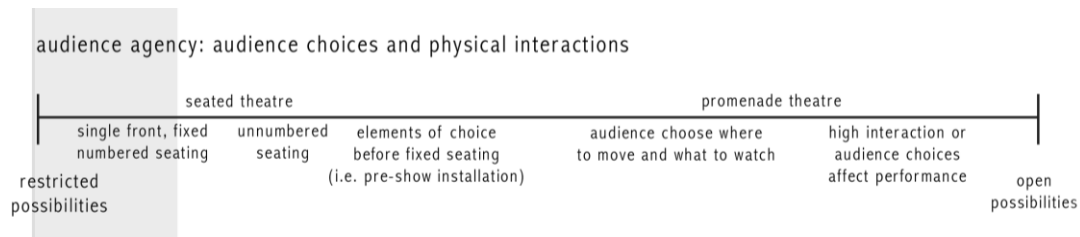
Both time and space can be liminal (Dyson 2010, 119).

On Dyson’s scale, the traditional presentation paradigm is characterised by the expected codes and conventions of performance (Dyson 2015, 8). The avant-garde, on the other hand, is characterised by presentation events that “disrupt” these expected codes, often through variations of site, as well as through audience agency and audience-performer proximity (Dyson 2010, 118). The impact of varying these understood conventions of performances is that it “immediately challenges audience expectations and understandings of how to engage with the performance” (Dyson 2010, 118).

Anthropologist Victor Turner (1982, 46) suggests that there is a sense of community that is created within liminal experience. Turner (1988, 84) refers to this phenomenon where people who might never know each other in daily life connect in a liminal space within performance,

as a “communitas” of spectators. This is a community that is transitory, allowing for unexpected connections between people who might not usually connect (Turner 1982, 46). The roles, expectations, and conditions of everyday life – based on culture, gender, work, class, age, or religion – do not exist within a liminal environment (Dyson 2010, 122).

Figure 10: Audience agency (Dyson 2015)



“Audience agency” (applied as ‘spectator agency’ in this study) relates to the number and type of decisions that are offered to the audience within the performance structure (Dyson 2010, 84). Dyson (2015, 9) asserts the significance of audience agency: “For an individual, agency changes how we connect to the world and to other people.” Being able to make choices can produce feelings of control and meaning in life for individuals (Dyson 2015, 9). Agency connects people with notions such as will and freedom (Moya 1990, 10).

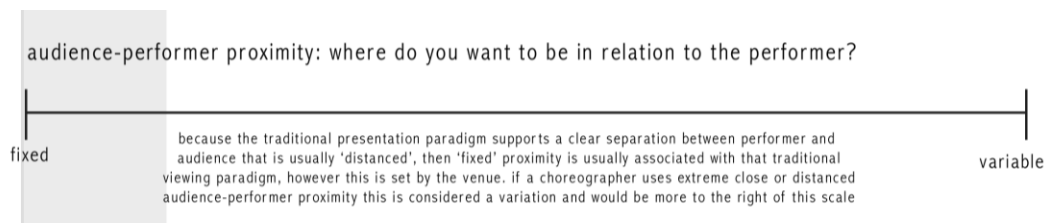
Within the traditional presentation paradigm, the audience’s physical agency is limited (Dyson 2015, 9). As Dyson (2015, 9) points out, “seating is usually numbered, proscenium-arch architecture precludes audience looking anywhere but front and non-participatory engagement is a widely accepted form of spectatorship.” While audiences are active in their choice to attend a performance, once in the auditorium, they are physically passive, with very few choices available to them (Dyson 2010, 136); for example, stay or leave, giggle or remain silent, applaud or not.

The avant-garde within this scale is characterised by “open” possibilities for audience agency, and includes dance works with audience interaction or immersion (Dyson 2015, 9).

Interactive technologies are elements that can be used as methods to provide audiences with more physical choices (Dyson 2010, 137). In the middle of this scale, are many possibilities, including dance works that give audiences the choice of where to sit, or promenade performance where audiences make choices about what competing elements of the dance work they watch (Dyson 2015, 9).

Where options are offered to audiences, some choices are made subconsciously, while others are intentional (Dyson 2010, 137). These possibilities depend on how the choreographer positions an audience within the work (Dyson 2010, 137). Dyson (2010, 137) states that while agency is designed for a whole audience, it is enacted by individuals, as it is individuals who make decisions about how to act on the opportunities that are offered to them, and whether they will take the offer up.

Figure 11: Audience-performer proximity (Dyson 2015)



“Audience-performer proximity” (applied as ‘spectator-dancer proximity’ in this study) concerns the physical distance between audience and performer, which can be fixed or variable (Dyson 2015, 10). McAuley (1999, 276-277) suggests: “spectators are stimulated into beginning to make meaning with what they see due to the separation or demarcation between them and the performance, so distance is the condition not only of sight but of the beginning of understanding.” The post-structuralist paradigm which guides this study – and places meaning-making between art work and audience – further emphasises the importance of considering the space between audience and performer.

Anthropologist Edward Hall (1966, 117-129) identifies distances in conjunction with types of interpersonal relationships:

Intimate-close as the dance of 'love-making and wrestling' and Intimate-far from six to eighteen inches; Personal-close from one and half to two and a half feet and Personal-far from two and a half to four feet; Social-close from four to seven feet and Social-far from seven to twelve feet; Public-close from twelve to twenty-five feet and Public-far twenty-five feet or more.

Dyson (2010, 161) points out that most dance work that is presented in the traditional presentation paradigm has an audience-performer proximity of Hall's (1966) "Public-far". Altering the distance between audience and performer presents opportunities for different engagement (Dyson 2010, 161). Hall's (1966) theory suggests that the closer an audience moves towards the performers, the more social, personal, and even intimate their relationship becomes. Dyson (2010, 162) adjusts Hall's distances according to the dance context, stating that "distant" is often not more than forty metres away, while "close" is usually approximately ten metres away. These are, of course, general estimations based on medium to large theatres; small theatres could position an audience only a few metres away.

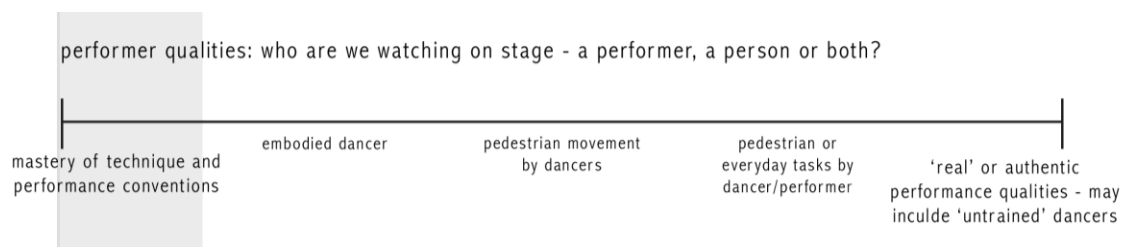
Distance can make it easier to see a performance as a whole, while close proximity can make it easier to "decode" individual movements, emotion and performer 'authenticity' (Dyson 2010, 161-162). Classical and Romantic ballets, for example, are a style of dance that works well when seen from a distance (Dyson 2010, 162). The spatial patterns and geometry which feature in these dance styles are choreographed in this way specifically for a "distant" audience (Dyson 2010, 162).

On Dyson's scale, proximity ranges from "fixed" to "variable" where a fixed proximity, usually between ten to forty metres, denotes the traditional presentation paradigm (Dyson 2010, 163). The predetermined fixed seating within this paradigm often segregates the audience into locations according to ticket price. Furthermore, "the design of the building

makes it very clear who is welcome in which part of the building, the degree of comfort they can expect, and how much of the stage they will be able to see” (McAuley 1999, 58).

The avant-garde gives audiences the agency to choose their own physical distance to the dancers (Dyson 2015, 10). This opens up the opportunity of some audience members being “close” while others are “distant” (Dyson 2010, 163). The middle of the proximity scale includes performances with fixed proximity which is either unusually close or far from the performance (Dyson 2015, 10). While a fixed proximity might be considered a shift toward the traditional presentation paradigm, an unusual fixed proximity challenges this paradigm, where the distance is “specifically connected to the content of the work” (Dyson 2015, 10). If this is the case, then the choreographer has made the decision, rather than the architecture of the venue (Dyson 2015, 10).

Figure 12: Performer qualities (Dyson 2015)



Finally, “performer qualities” addresses the way in which the performer is presented on stage, whether they are performing with personal engagement or not (Dyson 2015, 11). A dancer within the traditional presentation paradigm is characterised by technical skill and virtuosity, however, they perform the dance work “without personal engagement to either the work or the audience” (Dyson 2015, 11).

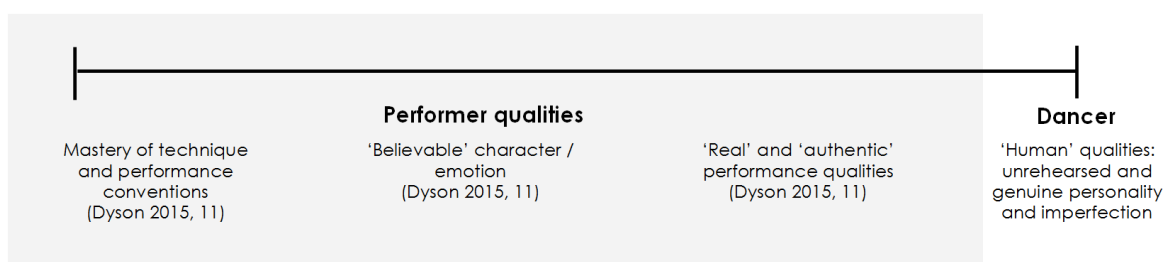
In contrast, the avant-garde end of the scale encompasses qualities where the dancer “performs as a ‘real’ person – as authentically as she can within a performative environment” (Dyson 2015, 11). Dyson (2015, 11) suggests that this end of the scale can include “untrained

dancers” who do not have formal dance training. ‘Authenticity’, according to Heidegger, is “not about how we look in the world, but how we are in the world” (Guignon 1983, 116). The “authentic dancer” is able “to connect via immediacy, engaging audience not by illusion but through a visceral connect of the everyday” (Dyson 2015, 11).

In between these extremes is the “embodied dancer”, who performs virtuosic movement with “believable” emotion and feeling through a character or embodied emotion (Dyson 2010, 186). Performing pedestrian tasks, another step towards the ‘authentic’, is another suggested quality in the middle of the scale (Dyson 2010, 186).

While Dyson’s other scales – variations of site, liminal spaces, audience agency, and audience-performer proximity – translate well to open rehearsal analysis, the scale of performer qualities does not encompass all the possibilities within a rehearsal event. Specifically, Dyson’s scale considers the performer possibilities within the construct of performance, whereas open rehearsals – the main focus of this study – intentionally set out not to be performances.⁴⁸ Therefore, this study extends the performer qualities scale to include qualities of the dancer outside of the performance construct (see Figure 13).

Figure 13: Performer qualities to dancer



⁴⁸ While this study focuses on ‘authentic’ working rehearsals, these open rehearsals can include performer qualities from the performance construct. Furthermore, performed rehearsals also open up greater possibilities of these performance qualities.

The left of this scale retains the performer qualities that Dyson proposes, while the right introduces the ‘dancer’ outside of a performance construct. The qualities of the dancer included in this scale are based on the rehearsal spectators’ responses that are discussed in Chapter 6. Spectators identified a distinct ‘humanness’ that they do not see in performance. This ‘humanness’ was seen through visible dancer personalities and imperfections (such as making mistakes and not yet mastering movement). These scales – site, liminality, spectator agency, spectator-dancer proximity, and performer qualities to dancer – are the framework used to analyse open rehearsals models throughout this study.

3.5.3 Grounded theorising

This study employed a grounded approach to a content analysis of the focus group discussions. In this approach, ideas emerge from the data, rather than theories being applied to it. Grounded theorising is the most commonly used set of procedures in qualitative analysis (Boulton and Hammersley 2006, 246), as researchers in this paradigm tend to use inductive logic to build theory (Smith and Davies 2010, 151). The process of grounded theorising has four general stages: close reading of the data; gathering segments of data that are relevant to some category; comparing and contrasting these grouped data segments; and comparing cases (Boulton and Hammersley 2006, 251-255).

The first stage, which involves close reading of the data, is where the researcher identifies aspects that might be significant (Boulton and Hammersley 2006, 251). The segment of data that the researcher begins with can be chosen randomly on the basis of what is handy or what looks most promising (Boulton and Hammersley 2006, 251). As this study’s broader research method is action research, which involves reflection between cycles of fieldwork, the data

was read in the order that it was collected. In this way, the understanding of each data segment was contextualised by the segment before it.

The second stage involves grouping data that are relevant to some category. These categories can come from a number of sources; they might arise from ideas that originally sparked the research, from ideas that set its framework, or from general background knowledge (Boulton and Hammersley 2006, 252). The analysis used categories that emerged from the data, such as spectator/audience role and contribution, and the ‘human face’ of the dancers. The ‘human face’ is a term developed by the SDC spectators/audience and is considered to be an insider term to this group (Boulton and Hammersley 2006, 252). This term is used throughout this study in order to retain the spectators’/audiences’ voices.

The third stage of the analysis process, referred to as the “constant comparative method” (Glaser and Strauss 1967 quoted in Boulton and Hammersley 2006, 253), involves comparing and contrasting all the segments of data that have been assigned to the same category (Boulton and Hammersley 2006, 253). The purpose, here, is to make meaning from the categories that have emerged, and to identify relationships among categories (Boulton and Hammersley 2006, 253).

The final stage, where necessary, is analysis between cases (Boulton and Hammersley 2006, 255). This study contains a grounded analysis of two sets of spectator/audience responses to open rehearsals. Analysis between these cases reveals common elements, such as the sacred rehearsal, which is discussed in the following chapter.

3.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodological approach to this research project. This study takes post-structuralism, particularly the ‘death’ of the author (Barthes 1967), as its interpretive paradigm. The qualitative and practice-based methods outlined, provide empirical data that, of itself, is an important addition to the field. Dyson’s (2015) scales of engagement provide a stimulating framework to help unpack and compare the possibilities of spectator/audience engagement during open rehearsals and performances within the traditional presentation paradigm.

With an underlying motivation to privilege the spectator/audience voice within this research, a grounded analysis of the spectator/audience discussions enables their key ideas to emerge. Before this voice is heard, Chapter 4 discusses the context of open rehearsals, and Chapter 5 analyses the open rehearsal model trialled through the action research cycles.

4. CONTEXT OF OPEN REHEARSALS

The practice of open rehearsals is widespread in mainstream ballet and contemporary dance company practice. Open rehearsals are most commonly offered as a benefit for financial supporters, from high level donors to more modest company ‘friends’. Perhaps the most-watched open rehearsal is the 2014 *World Ballet Day LIVE* online rehearsal. Its streaming was viewed by 195 430 spectators across the world (The Australian Ballet 2014, 3).⁴⁹ The Australian Ballet has published a permanent one hour video of their contribution to the event which, eight months after being published, has attracted over half a million views.⁵⁰ The original live ballet class, streamed by the Royal Ballet in 2012, now has over 2.5 million views.⁵¹

This chapter provides the context for open rehearsals in mainstream ballet and contemporary dance companies. First, several engagement tools used by dance companies, and their general timing in relation to the audience’s experience of a performance are discussed. The chapter then scopes to a discussion of open rehearsals, beginning with their historical applications.

Dance history consists predominantly of repertory, biography, and criticism (Hodes 1989, 10-11); therefore, publications – academic, professional, and personal – that document these

⁴⁹ This open rehearsal event broadcasted five ballet companies from within their studios, while they were engaging in everyday rehearsals and classes. These companies are The Australian Ballet, Bolshoi Ballet, The Royal Ballet, The National Ballet of Canada, and San Francisco Ballet. Online spectators were able to watch the everyday lives of ballet dancers for a 24 hour period. This live rehearsal streaming model was first initiated by the Royal Ballet in 2012; entitled ‘Royal Ballet LIVE’, it broadcasted one day of the company’s regular activities during a creative process. The event included a class, rehearsals, dancer interviews, and short films and trailers that were watched live by 194 000 online viewers (Royal Opera House 2012, 38). Interestingly, the presenter chosen to guide the online spectators through the different aspects of the dancers’ day was not a dance expert. Indeed, British television game show host George Lamb appears to have minimal dance knowledge; however, an online reviewer suggests that having a non-expert present could appeal to new dance spectators who, like Lamb, do not have expert knowledge (Ballet News 2012). While this live broadcast still privileges a particular voice, it was, unusually, a non-expert voice that framed the spectator’s viewing experience.

⁵⁰ *World Ballet Day* is available to watch on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q49pGO08Ko>

⁵¹ *Royal Ballet Daily Class (complete video) Royal Ballet Live* is available to watch on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5EVMjnHFg-w>

creative and rehearsal processes are rare. The “failure” to document studio practices, however, is the result of the fact that rehearsals are most often closed to outsiders (Hodes 1989, 10-11).⁵² Due to the dearth of documentation of rehearsal practices, much anecdotal information informs this chapter. It will be seen that open rehearsals have been utilised in early ballet companies, most commonly, as a way to reward private supporters. Open rehearsals are then discussed in more detail, with a focus on the differences between open rehearsals in theatres and studios.

The final section of this chapter presents an analysis of three current open rehearsal models – by English National Ballet, National Dance Company Wales, and Chunky Move – using Dyson’s (2015) scales of engagement. This analysis reveals distinctions from traditional presentation paradigm performances, such as the spectator’s position *in* rehearsal (rather than looking *at* performance). Being *in* the rehearsal presents different engagement opportunities (compared to the traditional presentation paradigm), such as close spectator-dancer proximity, and meeting the ‘face’ of the dancer (in contrast to the performer qualities on stage).

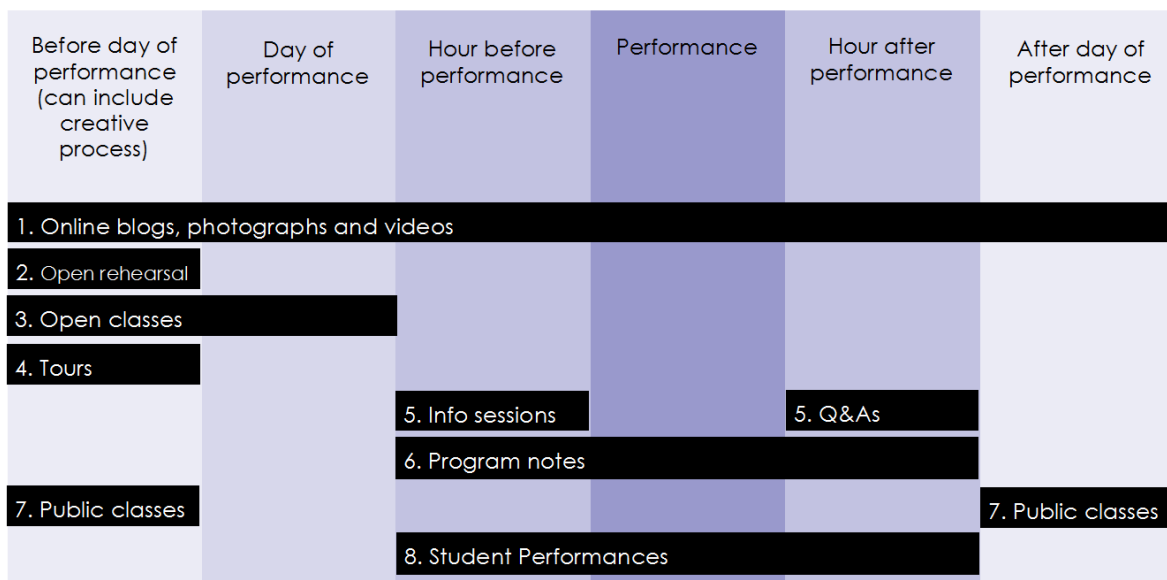
There are three main reasons that companies cite for offering open rehearsals to spectators. The first is to build and strengthen the company’s community, as mentioned above. The second reason is audience development; by inviting spectators in for a ‘sneak peek’ of an upcoming performance, companies hope to encourage them to make the next step of purchasing a ticket for performance. The final reason for offering open rehearsals relates to education. For non-expert spectators, in particular, the process of creating and rehearsing dance work is ‘mysterious’. Attending open rehearsals gives spectators insider insight into “what dancers do” (Anouk Van Dijk, personal interview, 21 January 2014), and offers them a

⁵² Early exceptions to this, as discussed below, are high level donors.

“point of view of dance that they don’t see when they are in a 2700 seat theatre” (Emily Molnar, personal interview, 28 August 2014).

Open rehearsals are but one method within a range of engagement tools that mainstream artistic dance companies employ. This broader engagement context is briefly outlined, before an in-depth discussion of open rehearsal models. These other engagement tools include: online blogs, photographs and videos, open rehearsals, open classes, tours, information sessions and question-and-answer sessions (Q&As), program notes, public classes, and student performances. Figure 14 maps these engagement tools against the time (in relation to the audience’s experience of a dance work) in which they are most commonly used.⁵³

Figure 14: Dance engagement tools



⁵³ There are, of course, applications of these engagement tools (and other engagement tools) that are applied outside of the timeframe stated here. These tools can also be used in multi-layered applications, where more than one tool is used. The outline in this chapter only explores the most common tools, and their applications to provide context for open rehearsal practice.

1. Online blogs, photographs, and videos

Online spaces, particularly company websites, Facebook, and YouTube, are regularly and broadly used by dance companies for marketing purposes. These marketing activities and online spaces can also be used as tools to provide audiences with information and insights that might impact in their performance engagement. These online spaces are managed by marketing departments throughout the year; however, the behind-the-scenes insight for a particular dance work is usually published in the lead up to the event.

Written texts (such as dancer blogs) provide information, while visual mediums (such as photographs and videos) introduce visual and aural elements.⁵⁴ Online videos can range from short marketing advertisements, through to longer rehearsal videos that generally provide more information about a dance work/creative process;⁵⁵ they might even show lengthy excerpts from rehearsals (such as The Australian Ballet's *World Ballet Day LIVE* video previously mentioned).

More often than not, online videos have a marketing element (usually a prompt to book tickets at the end of the video). However, in recent years, longer and less edited videos have entered this virtual space, offering online spectators unprecedented access to classes and rehearsals over extended periods of time. This opens the opportunity for spectators to learn about the dancer's labour, their personality, and the creative process – an opportunity not provided at performances within the traditional presentation paradigm. For example, it is a strategic priority for Pacific Northwest Ballet (Seattle) to publish online videos that show

⁵⁴ Bangarra Dance Theatre's Dancer's Blog is an example of a written text that provides insight to the company and its dancers: <http://bangarra.com.au/category/dancers-blog>. Queensland Ballet has a section on its website dedicated to photos, and some video, of the company behind-the-scenes and on stage: <https://www.queenslandballet.com.au/backstage>

⁵⁵ For an example of a marketing-focused video, see *Cinderella Returns to Melbourne*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u58ZhgVsuTQ>. For an example of a video that offers deeper insight into the creative process, see *Cinderella Mini Series: Episode #2: In the Rehearsal Room*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0GyQG6cSoQ>

“different sides of the company, its repertoire, and its artists” (Harlow 2014, 32). Perhaps the most significant aspect of these online tools is that they bring dancers and rehearsals into everyday life (at home, on the bus, at work), and offer the possibility of behind-the-scenes insight to spectators who might not otherwise be inclined or able to attend an open rehearsal in person.

2. Open rehearsals

Open rehearsals are most commonly held before the performance event. This can occur during the creative process and in the studio, or later in the rehearsal and production phases in the theatre. For example, in 2015, Rambert Dance Company (London) will host a performed rehearsal halfway through a creative process (Rambert 2015a). In contrast, The Australian Ballet hosts performed rehearsals in the theatre, on the same day as performances (The Australian Ballet 2015a). The demographic profile of open rehearsal spectators varies among dance companies. They tend to segment into three groups: students,⁵⁶ private supports,⁵⁷ and the general audience.⁵⁸ (Open rehearsals are discussed in depth later in this chapter.)

3. Open classes

‘Open classes’ refers to the company dancers’ morning technique classes that are open to spectators. The timing and location of open classes varies among companies. For example, the West Australian Ballet invites spectators in to watch the dancers’ morning technique

⁵⁶ Dance companies that open rehearsals to students include: Australian Dance Theatre (Adelaide) (Australian Dance Theatre 2015); Ballet BC (Vancouver) (Emily Molnar, personal interview, 28 August 2014); Hubbard Street Dance Chicago (Meredith Dincolo, personal communication, 30 July 2014); and Sydney Dance Company (Sydney Dance Company 2014).

⁵⁷ American Ballet Theatre (New York) (American Ballet Theatre 2014); Dance Kaleidoscope (Indianapolis) (David Hochoy, personal communication, 25 July 2014); English National Ballet (London) (Linda Darrell, personal interview, 12 September 2013); and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago (Meredith Dincolo, personal communication, 30 July 2014) are just a handful of companies that currently open studio rehearsals to private supporters.

⁵⁸ Since the late 2000s, companies such as Royal Winnipeg Ballet (Royal Winnipeg Ballet 2011); Australian Dance Theatre (Adelaide) (Australian Dance Theatre 2009); Houston Ballet (Houston Ballet 2014); National Dance Company Wales (Cardiff) (Ann Sholem, personal interview, 30 August 2013); and West Australian Ballet (Perth) (West Australian Ballet 2014) have opened their studio doors to general spectators.

classes in the studio on select days throughout the year (West Australian Ballet 2015).⁵⁹

Alternatively, The Australian Ballet opens the theatre doors during performance and touring seasons so that spectators can watch technique classes on stage (The Australian Ballet 2015a). These open classes offer spectators insider insight to the daily training of professional dancers, and the movement techniques that they use.

4. Tours

Guided tours of company buildings is a less common engagement tool, and tends to be offered by larger dance companies. Such tours do, however, provide an opportunity for participants to step into the ‘dancer’s world’ away from the theatre. In these tours, participants experience the spaces where dance work is made and, perhaps, even see glimpses of rehearsals. The Australian Ballet has extended its guided tour offerings to include tours of its production centre, where costumes, props, and sets are built and stored (The Australian Ballet 2015b).

5. Information sessions and Q&As

Expert-led discussion is another method that dance companies use to engage audiences before or after performances. Information sessions tend to be lecture-style presentations, where an expert provides audiences with technical information about the dance work, the creative process, or the music. These sessions are usually scheduled directly before performances. This information opens up the possibility of a different framing, when the audience subsequently enters the performance.

For example, *Pillow Talks* are established pre-performance lecture-discussions that are held during the Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival each year in Becket, Massachusetts. These

⁵⁹ Another example of an open class is offered by National Dance Company Wales (Cardiff) (see National Dance Company Wales 2015c).

information sessions are used as a tool to lessen the number of audience walk-outs during performances that can be difficult for audiences to engage with. An example is Merce Cunningham performances; in 1997, the company's executive director spoke informally about the difficulties associated with John Cage's musical score prior to performances. The impact of this information sharing was reported to be an immediate reduction in walk-outs (Conner 2013, 113-114).⁶⁰

Q&As, on the other hand, tend to be scheduled directly after performances. Many of my own experiences at post-performance Q&As have been in the theatre. Often, there is an interviewer who facilitates the discussion, with at least one member of the creative team and/or dancers in the production as the interviewee/s. Q&As offer audiences the opportunity to see key creatives, such as the choreographer, who do not appear on stage as part of performances, and to hear them speak about their practice. In contrast, post-open rehearsal Q&As present an opportunity for audiences to engage in an informal conversation, of sorts, with choreographers whom they have watched closely during rehearsal. Regardless of the nature of the interaction, Q&A sessions provide a direct line of communication between audience and (usually) choreographer that is not commonly available.

6. Program notes

Program notes are provided for audiences at most performances within the traditional presentation paradigm. When available, they are usually distributed on entry to the theatre or at the box office, and habitually contain biographical information about key creatives and performers, and artistic statements or a synopsis.

⁶⁰ Other examples of information sessions are *Music Talks* with The Australian Ballet (The Australian Ballet 2015c), and *The Artist Salon* with Ballet BC (Ballet BC 2015). An interesting note about *The Artist Salon* is that these information sessions are held in the company's studios. Rather than being an 'add-on' to a performance, the hour-long "intimate conversation" is the focus of the event (Ballet BC 2015).

7. Public classes and workshops

Many major ballet and contemporary dance companies offer public classes, where members of the general public can choose to participate in practical dance classes. These programs often run throughout the year. An example of a particularly active public classes program is Sydney Dance Company Studios, which offers approximately 70 dance and fitness classes each week (Sydney Dance Company 2015a). While the company's artistic staff and dancers are not necessarily involved, the classes are held in the Sydney Dance Company studios. Therefore, class participants experience the company's site.

A second approach to classes is a youth and student focus. Many companies offer workshops where dancers travel to schools or private dance studios,⁶¹ or student participants come to the company.⁶² Some of the content of these workshops can even reflect the company's repertoire, opening up the possibility of enacting physically dance work, and, thus, likely to gain insights about the dance through participation.

8. Student performances

Some companies offer performance experiences that are specifically designed for school audiences. These performances are often matinees, and usually have a combination of engagement tools built into them. For example, National Dance Company Wales' *Interactive Matinee* presents opportunities for students to watch a dance work being performed, participate in exercises with the dancers on stage, ask questions, and (even) to learn repertoire (National Dance Company Wales 2015a, para. 1).⁶³ Multi-modal performances, like this example, offer audiences multiple ways of engaging with the performance: as an audience

⁶¹ See Queensland Ballet (2015), Sydney Dance Company (2015b), Rambert (2015a).

⁶² See American Ballet Theatre (2015), The Australian Ballet (2015d)

⁶³ See also Sydney Dance Company (2015c).

watching the dance work, a dance participant on the stage, and through having a discussion with the dancers through the Q&A format.

4.1 Historical Applications

The earliest references to open rehearsals date back to 1520s Italy, where they were public events used to promote upcoming performances (Nevile 2011, 147). This is a clear marketing agenda that continues today. At this time, artistic dance had yet to establish itself as a discipline in its own right; rather, it formed part of multi-disciplinary performances such as opera. On one occasion, 100 members of the nobility watched a six hour rehearsal and, as a result, government committees had to suspend work for the day due to the high level of absentees (Nevile 2011, 147).

Interestingly, once dance had established itself as a discipline of its own in the seventeenth century, in the form of ballet, rehearsals became more privatised, with only a few invited guests (Nevile 2011, 148). At this time, full dress rehearsals were seen as an opportunity for the nobility to see a ballet if they were not able to attend the actual performance (Nevile 2011, 148). In this way, these open rehearsals were less about providing insight to the creative process, and more about seeing the dance work.

These events can be considered working rehearsals, as the full dress rehearsal is an important process that all dance productions work through. However, the full dress rehearsal is, necessarily, a practice performance and, therefore, the dancers ‘perform’ the dance work, and present the ‘face’ of performer qualities. In this event, the spectator’s experience a relationship with the performer qualities and dance work that are very similar to performance. The few aspects of the dress rehearsal that set it apart from performance are the lack of the

large audience groups that are common with ballet performances; the frame of ‘rehearsal’; and the possibility that the dress rehearsal might be interrupted.

In recent decades, spectators have also been invited into theatre rehearsals by companies such as Mariinsky Ballet (1989) and Buffalo City Ballet (1994). The Mariinsky Ballet, for example, opened a dress rehearsal in Montreal to spectators. This event resulted in headlines, such as *Ballet Crowd Dangerous at Rehearsal* (Malkus 1989, B3), that indicated the popularity of the event, and acknowledged the audience – the “crowd” – as having an identity of its own.

Historically, ballet companies were reliant on private supporters through the establishment of ballet societies and memberships. These organisations built the companies’ initial audiences (Wulff 1998a, 108) that subsequently made financial contributions beyond ticket purchase. For example, the Ballets Russes, a prominent Paris-based ballet company in the early 1900s, was “dependent on ballet lovers among the upper classes” to fund the company’s activities (Koegler 1987 quoted in Wulff 1998b, 39). In Russia, particularly, ballet rapidly grew in popularity during the 1800s (Anderson 1992, 101) to such an extent that, by the 1940s, becoming a subscriber was very fashionable and, therefore, competitive (Tamara Karsavina 1948 quoted in Anderson 1992, 113).

Memberships are still offered today by all major dance companies, with many adopting the ‘friends’ terminology to perpetuate a relationship construct. Some companies emotionally pitch this ‘friendship’ notion to potential members:

Friendship is one of the most rewarding things in life. Good friends help you become the best you can be. By becoming Friends with Northern Ballet you can help secure the future of the Company you love and allow us to share our work with many more people around the UK and overseas. In return gain a unique behind-the-scenes insight into our world. (Northern Ballet 2014, para. 1)

This approach to company membership is typical of major dance companies today. Open rehearsals, for the most part, are a privilege for company ‘friends’, and an enticement to encourage new ‘friends’.

Through this relationship, private supporters have generally gained access to rehearsal much earlier than general audiences. Northern Ballet, for example, began offering open working rehearsals to their ‘friends’ in the early 1970s, a few years after the company was founded in 1969. In the same era, Royal Winnipeg Ballet also invited donors into studio rehearsals to watch run-throughs of completed dance works that were on the verge of performance (Ingrid Kottke, personal communication, 13 August 2014).

The level of support or donation required to access studio rehearsals varies among companies. Rambert Dance Company, for example, opens studio rehearsals to their ‘Artistic Director’s Circle’, which requires a £1000 per annum donation. In comparison, English National Ballet invites their ‘friends’ into their studio rehearsals; these ‘friends’ pay a £50 membership fee each year. This simple comparison highlights the significant variation in exclusivity and level of reward that companies link to open rehearsals. Furthermore, Rambert’s high level donors are gifted admission to open rehearsals; that is, there is no fee for their open rehearsal attendance. In contrast, English National Ballet’s ‘friends’ pay £15 for an open rehearsal ticket; in this case, the process of attending rehearsals is similar to that for performance.⁶⁴

Inviting the general public into studio rehearsals has gained momentum over the past decade; however, there is at least one very rare case where they have been invited into rehearsals much earlier. Royal Winnipeg Ballet has invited the general public into their studio rehearsals

⁶⁴ Another group that is favoured in regard to open rehearsal access, are students. Dance education and developing young audiences are priorities for major dance companies (Australia Council for the Arts 2011b, 3-4).

since the 1970s for run-throughs of dance works in the week preceding premieres (Ingrid Kottke, personal communication, 13 August 2014). Since the late 2000s, companies such as American Ballet Theatre (New York), Australian Dance Theatre (Adelaide), Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, Ballet BC (Vancouver), Houston Ballet, National Dance Company Wales (Cardiff), Trisha Brown Dance Company (New York), West Australian Ballet (Perth) and, in 2014, Rambert Dance Company (London), have also opened their studio doors to the general public.⁶⁵ These open rehearsals vary between working and performed rehearsals, as discussed below.

4.2 Current Open Dress Rehearsals

Open dress rehearsals in theatre spaces are events that are commonly offered to private supporters of major dance companies, particularly company ‘friends’. These ‘exclusive’ spectators watch the dance work in its final stages of preparation in the theatre, complete with costumes, props, sets, lighting, and (sometimes) even full orchestral accompaniment. The theatre setting used for open dress rehearsals has the possibility of ‘framing’ the rehearsal event as a performance, potentially resulting in an activation of performance etiquette by rehearsal spectators. An interpretation of elements of traditional performance etiquette are described below:

[. . .] pay attention, don’t talk to the person sitting next to you, don’t think about whipping out something to eat (unless food is served as part of the event). Silence is a premium, so unwrap your candies now before the show starts and be sure to turn your cell phones off. And God forbid you ever talk back to the performers – you will probably be escorted out of the premises for misconduct. (Paulus 2006, 334)

⁶⁵ See: Royal Winnipeg Ballet (2011); Australian Dance Theatre (2009); Houston Ballet (2014); Ann Sholem (personal interview, 30 August 2013); and West Australian Ballet (2014).

This code of behaviour, of course, quietens the spectators. Open dress rehearsals usually appear just like performance; however, as mentioned above, the difference is that there is a possibility that the rehearsal will be interrupted to address any onstage errors. In the event of an interruption, the spectators are witness to the behind-the-scenes dialogue of the production, and an inside perspective of the technical reality behind each performance facade. This exposure potentially adds new meaning to the subsequent performance for the dress rehearsal spectators. It is, however, limited.

Until this point, examples of companies that facilitate behind-the-scenes events have been provided; however, this practice extends beyond the company structure. The appeal of building relationship between spectator and dancer has also spread to major venues. The Kennedy Center in Washington DC, for example, regularly opens rehearsals to the general public. Since 2004, the centre has invited the general public into the theatre while dance companies rehearse onstage. One rehearsal spectator, a dance academic, writes:

This rehearsal ran like the actual show. [. . .] There were no leg warmers or warm-up pants, no waiting dancers stretching, practicing turns or jumps. I really missed that view into their world. That is one of the best parts of the open rehearsal, taking a glimpse of these exceptional dancers walking around in their own skin, not a character or expressing the mood of a dance. (Brown 2009)

This observation highlights the extent to which open dress rehearsals can feel like performances. This spectator's comments suggest that they had previously attended other open rehearsals where more working aspects were observed: that is, more of the 'face' of the dancer and less performer qualities. In recent years, the centre has extended the length of its open rehearsals to three hours, and has introduced expert commentary to the event through the use of wireless headsets. Thus, the spectators' experience of the rehearsal is shaped by the expert dialogue. The headsets also create another boundary between the spectators and dancers, as the commentary demands their attention. In live open rehearsals, then, the direct spectator-dancer relationship is replaced by a spectator-expert-dancer triangle.

Given the theatre setting and performative content of dress rehearsals, open dress rehearsals encourage spectators to engage with the rehearsal in the same manner as a performance audience. There is a clear ‘otherness’ encouraged through the construct of dance performance and, also, through the physical separation caused by the theatre site. There is also limited insider knowledge that can be learned – especially in open dress rehearsals of the type Brown (2009) describes above, which seem to also distance the spectators as ‘outsiders’.

Where dress rehearsals also include an expert voice, the rehearsal spectators are subject to an expert-student relationship. Dress rehearsals can, however, offer the chance for spectators to witness technical errors and the processes involved in finding solutions for such issues, thus providing a new insight into the mechanics of the theatre.

4.3 Current Open Studio Rehearsals

This section only discusses models that invite the general public into what are normally closed rehearsals. Opening studio rehearsals to this general spectator is rare. Reasons for this restriction include tight timelines to produce dance works, space constraints, and the continuing sacralisation of culture. In the last decade, however, there have been several companies that have begun to open their studio rehearsals to general spectators. Two categorisations of open rehearsals – performed rehearsals and working rehearsals – as well as full run-throughs of completed dance works, are the most common open studio rehearsal models currently used.

Performed rehearsals provide spectators with experiences of studio spaces, close observation of the dancers, and a demonstration of creative and/or rehearsal processes. The *Royal Ballet in Rehearsal* program, for example, invites spectators into the Clore Studio, in the Royal Opera

House. The company published a video of one such rehearsal on YouTube in 2012 entitled *Royal Ballet in Rehearsal: The Nutcracker*.⁶⁶ The video shows the Clore Studio in performance mode; the mirrors are hidden behind curtains, stage lighting is used, the space is bare, and no drink bottles or extra clothing (that you would expect in a working rehearsal) are scattered along the perimeter of the room. Although a studio site, it has been prepared for the spectator gaze. Helena Wulff (1998b, 119) suggests that whenever a backstage area is exposed for performance, or performed rehearsal in this case, “everyone knows that they have been cleaned up beforehand, and many of the ordinary activities that would usually go on in the wings have been moved away.” This statement suggests that spectators will never actually see behind-the-scenes, as these areas become an extension of the stage.

In the Clore Studio, there is also tiered seating, where 100 spectators sit in the dark, and theatre lighting separates them from the dancers. This setting mimics that of a theatre and, in doing so, potentially alerts the spectators to certain expectations; most likely, the need to adhere to theatre etiquette, as stated above. Despite the site presenting the event as a performed rehearsal, the rehearsal content can be considered that of a working rehearsal; two dancers are instructed, and consistently corrected, by two rehearsal directors.

Aside from the initial welcome, the rehearsal directors’ comments are not directed to the spectators, and do not appear to be constructed with them in mind. For example, ballet terminology is used without explanation and, at one point, a shortened, slang version (‘dev’) of the word ‘développé’ is used. This untranslated communication is some evidence of an authentic working process, as the rehearsal directors and dancers communicate in a way which appears to be their efficient working manner. By refraining from translating this established language, the spectators are invited to make meaning of the rehearsal and its

⁶⁶ The rehearsal video is available to watch on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TAVd5lsbonE>.

vocabulary on their own, without expert influence. Again, the voice of rehearsal director is privileged through the use of microphones; thus, the spectator-expert-dancer relationship appears once again.

The *Royal Ballet in Rehearsal* events provide an opportunity for spectators to observe a working rehearsal process. Presenting the studio site in a performance mode, however, could encourage a performance relationship between the rehearsal spectators and dancers; this could, as a result, conceptually separate them. This particular example of an open studio rehearsal is one with significant modifications to the site and, therefore, can be considered to have significant performance elements.⁶⁷

Open studio rehearsals that limit adjustments (for spectators) and, therefore, open regular working rehearsals are extremely rare. In these open rehearsals, spectators observe early working rehearsals, during the phases of ‘material selection’ (Phase 2) and the ‘process of structuring’ (Phase 3).

4.4 Analysis of Exemplar Open Rehearsal Models

The remainder of this chapter analyses three current, and contrasting, open rehearsal models: *Friends Open Days* with English National Ballet; *Open Rehearsal* with National Dance Company Wales; and *Inner Workings* with Chunky Move. I experienced these open rehearsals as a spectator participant.⁶⁸ Dyson’s (2015) scales of audience engagement are used as the framework to analyse my observations and experiences. The scales reveal that these open rehearsal models incorporate both traditional and non-traditional engagement

⁶⁷ Other examples of performed studio rehearsals include: Queensland Ballet (Boughen 2013), Rambert Dance Company (Rambert 2015b), and The Royal Ballet (Royal Opera House 2015b).

⁶⁸ During these observations, there was no reliable method of ascertaining if my fellow rehearsal spectators were ‘expert’ or ‘non-expert’ observers.

possibilities, and offer the potential for a different spectator engagement with dancers, compared to the traditional presentation paradigm. This chapter does not aim to assess which open rehearsal model is the best practice; however, it does consider the similarities and differences among them.

4.4.1 *Friends Open Day, English National Ballet*

English National Ballet (ENB) is a touring ballet company based in London. Although the company rehearses all their dance works in their London studios, they have extended absences from London stages. To maintain the company's presence with local audiences throughout the year, the company offers a variety of 'open' events, including open rehearsals. Consistent with the majority of open rehearsal models that are offered by dance companies, ENB's rehearsal spectators consist of company 'friends'. The 'friends' membership scheme is promoted as a "personal" relationship with benefits, such as open rehearsals, that "enhance enjoyment" of the company (English National Ballet 2013). The company has offered open rehearsals to their 'friends' for several decades, with a positive response. As Linda Darrell, ENB Individual Giving Manager, explains:

[. . .] the people that come really value that opportunity. The comment that they all say is that it adds so much to their enjoyment and understanding of the ballet that they then go and see in performance. [. . .] People always enjoy it. Always people depart saying, "That was so interesting." (Linda Darrell, personal interview, 12 September 2013)

The dance work that was being rehearsed on the day I attended, was an existing ballet that was being remounted. Therefore, it was not possible to observe Phases 1-3 of the creative process, as these only occur when a new dance work is being made. The process observed at ENB can be considered a pure rehearsal, where the choreographer and rehearsal director were running and evaluating one section of the choreography.

The dancers knew the choreography and, under the choreographer and rehearsal director's guidance, were going through a process of standardising the way they executed each movement. For example, there was a moment in the choreography where the dancers executed a quick arabesque while positioned in a straight line. The standardisation that developed was that all the dancers lift their leg to the same height. The rehearsal director also worked with the dancers on miming elements, stressing how important these elements were in communicating the narrative of the scene. These movement details were the focus of this rehearsal, and firmly situate it within Phases 4/5 of the creative process.

While this particular model does not provide insight into the early phases of the creative process, it generally offers spectators an 'authentic' rehearsal experience. There was a very clear feeling that it was a regular rehearsal. Darrell (personal interview, 12 September 2013) confirms: "The rehearsal goes on as it would do without us. There's no alteration made to it. There is no special accommodation." The access that ENB spectators are given to 'authentic' rehearsals opens up the possibility of insider insight, as they observe a real rehearsal in action.

The rehearsal director, choreographer, dancer, and spectators' attention was focussed on the running and tweaking of the choreography. Elements of dancer/rehearsal director interactions that indicate a working rehearsal include: several cycles of running and tweaking short movement sequences, dancers running and self-correcting movement individually, and genuine progress being made. There was a noticeable difference in movement uniformity and synchronised timing between the beginning and end of the open rehearsal.

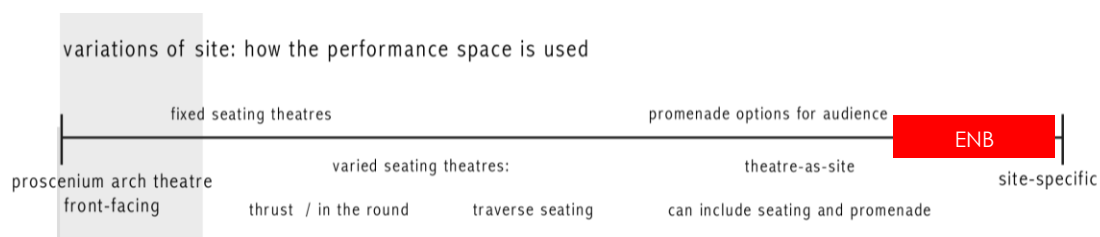
While the rehearsal itself operates as it usually would, regardless of the spectators, there is prior consideration around which rehearsals are appropriate for spectators. This stems from two considerations, as stated below:

The dancers have had their four week summer break, so they're not fit. So we don't invite anybody in until we feel the company are getting back to the full fitness. We're aware of that. And then, also, we don't invite people in at the very start of rehearsals. We allow the artistic team and the dancers to get past those very first sort of learning stages. We only invite people in once we feel that everyone feels more confident about the piece and will not mind having observers. (Linda Darrell, personal interview, 12 September 2013)

Rather than changing the rehearsal to suit a spectator gaze, ENB are selective of which rehearsals invite in this gaze. Darrell's comment highlights a selectivity that maintains a certain level of sacralisation: the image of the dancer as a fit and competent performer of the movement.

In addition to the content of the rehearsal, the choice and use of the studio site also positions this model as a working rehearsal. The studio – the usual site for rehearsal – was presented with only one obvious change from its usual working state: the addition of spectator seats. This is a common example of how spectator consideration can manifest in open rehearsals. It is, however, very minor. In the case of ENB, the chairs were placed along the front of the room (to the side of the rehearsal director and choreographer), and appeared to have little, if any, impact on the rehearsal.

Figure 15: ENB's variations of site



The choice of sites shifts ENB's open rehearsal to the right of Dyson's site scale (see Figure 15). These sites are the studio, dancers' green room, and a staircase between the two. By shifting the location of the experience outside of a theatre setting, perceptions about how one might engage may shift, as spectators are likely to have different expectations of how these

sites are used. For example, my own expectation of the studio site is that it is used for dance training or creating dance work, and that is a more casual atmosphere than the theatre. A non-expert spectator might have different expectations to this.⁶⁹ Learning about the studio site is one aspect of the insight that is offered to spectators through open rehearsals.

The ENB studio can be considered a typical dance studio. It is an unobstructed space, with mirrors, ballet barres, and a piano in the corner. While this type of dance studio is common, and a known site to dancers, it is an unfamiliar site for many non-experts. Most significantly, the studio positioned the spectators and dancers in the same space, as opposed to the separation of the traditional theatre site.

The use of the studio space has elements that are experienced in the traditional presentation paradigm. As stated above, the spectators sat on chairs along the front wall, to the side of the rehearsal director and choreographer. The dancers moved throughout the centre of the space, and used the back and side perimeter of the studio as places to rest. This use of space is reminiscent of fixed seat theatres. Furthermore, the separation that is created by designating a specific space for the spectators also mimics, to a certain extent, the spatial zones in theatres. The separation might also highlight difference between the spectators and dancers, potentially creating a sense of ‘otherness’.

While the studio has elements of both traditional and non-traditional performance sites, the green room and staircase are unquestionably located to the right of the site scale. The dancers’ green room is a relaxation space filled with comfortable couches. This space was also used as a waiting area for the rehearsal spectators.⁷⁰ When I entered the green room, there were already four spectators and approximately ten dancers there. The dancers and

⁶⁹ The comments from the SDC and TAB open rehearsal spectators show that their expectations of the studio were different than their expectations of the theatre. These expectations are discussed in Chapter 6.

⁷⁰ It was explained that rehearsal spectators do not usually enter the dancers’ green room; however, maintenance work being undertaken in the usual spectator space caused this variation on the day I attended.

spectators shared the couches; however, they did not necessarily share conversation. Rather, the dancers were chatting among themselves, eating, reading, using mobile phones, and laptops (one dancer was even sleeping), while the spectators were spread around the room, waiting.

For non-experts, expectations of a green room site could be limited, if they have expectations at all (some people might not be aware of green rooms). This, in itself, presents the possibility of a liminal space, where the rules of the green room are not known. At the very least, the green room site forces spectators to engage with the dancers in a different way: there is a close physical proximity, and the possibility of conversation with a dancer.

The green room presented a space that was generally physically still. In contrast, the narrow staircase was a site of movement. Dancers travelled up and down the stairs, past the spectators, with great haste. A distinction of the staircase site is that it is a mundane site, as opposed to the dance and performance associations with the studio and green room.

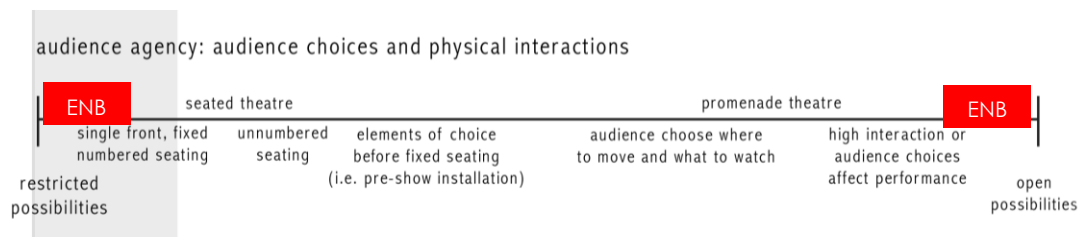
Experiencing dancers within a non-dance site opens up possibilities of different perceptions of and relationships with the dancers.

The spectator-performer proximity throughout the open rehearsal experience as a whole (including the green room and staircase) presents itself as a range from centimetres (sitting next to a dancer in the crowded green room) through to approximately 15 metres (furthest distance in the studio). According to Hall's (1966) categorisations, ENB spectators can be as close as "Intimate-far" and also experience "personal", "social", and "public" distances. The variety of proximities within the open rehearsal experience (beginning at the intimate level), position this model toward the right of the proximity scale.

To a certain extent, however, the proximity is fixed. The spectator must wait in the green room (proximity range: “Intimate-close” to “Personal-close”); must use the staircase (proximity range: “Intimate-close” to “Personal-close”); and must sit on the seat in the studio (proximity range: “Social-close” to “Public-far”) (Hall 1966). The unusually close distances of these spaces, however, shift the open rehearsal towards the middle of the proximity scale.

In the green room, there are open possibilities for spectator agency. This relaxed space offered spectators choices about where and how they would wait: whether they would sit next to a dancer, another spectator, on the floor, or stand; whether they would start a conversation, sit quietly, or do something on their phone. These are just some choices available to the spectators in the green room (see Figure 16).

Figure 16: ENB's spectator agency



Once the rehearsal was ready to begin, the level of spectator agency shifted dramatically. ENB adopts an approach which is somewhat more restrictive than traditional performance models. The spectators are led from the green room, through the space, and into the studio as a group accompanied by a staff member; they sit at the front of the studio to watch the rehearsal, and, at the end, they leave the space together.

This staff member acted as a gatekeeper between spectators and dancers. While standing on the staircase, this gatekeeper emphasised a rehearsal etiquette that is expected by the company: the importance of being quiet during rehearsals. From entry to exiting the studio, the spectators were expected to stay together as a group, and to avoid distracting the dancers:

“The artistic staff, I think, wouldn’t accept people observing in the studio if they were going to be any kind of disruption or distraction” (Linda Darrell, personal interview, 12 September 2013).

Unlike many performances, there does not appear to be an option to momentarily step out of the rehearsal, as the way out is through the dancers. They momentarily are, in terms of agency, physically restrained. ENB offers an intriguing model that offers both open and restricted agency possibilities. Similar to the proximity scale, the spectator first experiences extreme, non-traditional spatial relationships before shifting to the opposite, traditional end of the scale.

The ENB open rehearsal presented very rich opportunities for the spectators to observe and engage with the ‘face’ of the dancer. The ‘humanness’ of the dancers was accentuated in the green room. The mundane, everyday activities mentioned above, such as eating and socialising, are actions and interactions that were not part of the creative process in the studio. These green room interactions reveal ‘human’ qualities of the dancers, presenting them as real people who also must eat, and enjoy talking. The bodies that play characters on stage, such as eccentric pirates, reveal a, perhaps, quiet or serious dancer in the green room. Through unveiling the ‘face’ of the dancers as ‘human’, there is the potential for rehearsal spectators to identify elements of a dancer’s ‘humanness’ that might be similar to their own ‘humanness’; for example, I observed light-hearted and humorous interactions between some dancers which is a personality trait that I identify with. Such alignment presented a communion between these dancers and myself, as a spectator.

Furthermore, the green room interactions opened up the possibility for social insights that would usually only be known within the dancers’ community and their private social circles. I witnessed friendships and relationships in the green room. A moment that stands out in my

mind is seeing a romantic couple kiss each other goodbye as they left for different rehearsals. These ‘human’, and personal, attributes potentially open up very different kinds of engagement with the dancers.

The same ‘human’ qualities were also in the studio; there, however, the dancers presented yet another ‘face’. This was the working ‘face’ of the dancer. The spectators observed bodily elements (reactive facial expressions, sweat); movement elements (repeating movements, stretching); imperfect elements (making mistakes, falling over); communication elements (discussing ways to fix problems); and social elements (jokes). All of these elements contribute to the ‘human face’ of the dancer at work. The presence of the social and working ‘faces’ of the dancer firmly position ENB’s open rehearsal to the right of the ‘performer qualities to dancer’ scale.

ENB brings spectators into its studio spaces, which can be completely unknown environments to spectators without dance backgrounds. Unless communicated to them, the codes and conventions of studios are unknown or, at very best, assumed by new rehearsal spectators.

Conventions that were communicated to the ENB spectators before the open rehearsal were that there would be a very small audience (of 10); the event would take place in the ENB studio; the event would be a working rehearsal; and the open rehearsal would be from 3 p. m. to approximately 6 p. m. on a week day. The prior warning of these conventions meant that the spectators arrived at the rehearsal with these expectations. However, all the conventions mentioned are not typical of the traditional presentation paradigm and, therefore, represent disrupted codes and conventions in relation to that paradigm.

There were also several conventions that were not communicated prior to the open rehearsal. These included: signing in at reception; sharing mundane spaces with the dancers; “Intimate-far” (Hall 1966) spectator-dancer proximity; the choreographer greeting the spectators in the studio; and, most significantly, an unexpected early end to the rehearsal. This latter element of the open rehearsal was particularly important to liminality, as the original expectation given to the spectators (the 6 p. m. finish) was disrupted (by the 4:15 p. m. finish). The length of the open rehearsal was literally halved, with no prior warning.⁷¹ By disrupting this particular duration expectation, the spectators were unsettled and this marked a shift into a noticeably liminal state.

This change was a shock to the spectators and, for some, resulted in negative engagement. One spectator had left work early to be able to come to the open rehearsal. The early finish resulted in disappointment and regret for this particular spectator. They stated that, if they had expected this outcome, they would not have made the same choice. This is an example of how the extreme right of the liminality scale (or any other of Dyson’s scales) can lead to a negative engagement with that element. The liminal possibilities offered in this open rehearsal positions ENB’s model on the right of the liminality scale.

In contrast, there were two conventions within the studio, that are standard to the traditional presentation paradigm: the seated, front-facing spectators, and the expectation that the spectators be quiet. Once these traditional conventions are considered on the liminality scale, the model, once again, includes elements of the extreme right and left. However, ENB’s model offers more liminal, in-between spaces than traditional conventions.

⁷¹ This change to the open rehearsal reflects a last minute scheduling adjustment. The rehearsal that was originally scheduled required the female cast of the dance work. The schedule adjustment meant that the new rehearsal (to commence at 4:30 p. m.) would involve an influential principal dancer, who does not accept spectators into their rehearsals. This event highlights the blurry line of sacralisation within ENB, where a dancer is endowed as more sacred than other dancers they share the stage (and studio) with.

4.4.2 Open Rehearsal, National Dance Company Wales

National Dance Company Wales (NDCW) is the national contemporary dance company, based in Cardiff. Similar to ENB, NDCW regularly tours the United Kingdom, and often engages with international choreographers. The company decided to develop an opportunity for the local community to connect with NDCW's visiting choreographers on a deeper level. In 2010, to facilitate this relationship, the company held open rehearsals for the general public for the first time. The rehearsals fulfilled their objective, and the company continues to schedule them. NDCW ex-Artistic Director Ann Sholem (personal interview, 30 August 2013) states:

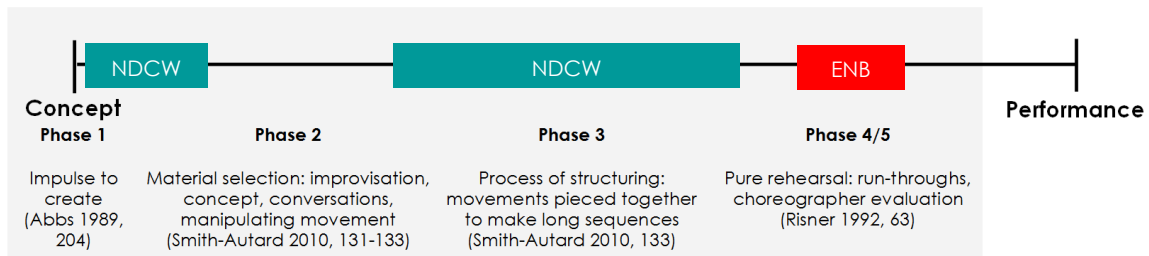
I think that [open rehearsals are] such a great way of demystifying what can be [. . .] perceived as being a very complex art form and a difficult art form. An art form that people find it hard to get in contact with. I think it helps. So for a general public who doesn't know that much about our art form, it's a way of introducing it in a very informal way.

The NDCW open rehearsal model is an emergent model that invites spectators into working rehearsals during early phases of the creative process (Ann Sholem, personal interview, 30 August 2013). The event is free for all spectators, and is ticketed through a box office. While using this ticketing service might be a practical and convenient approach, it also profiles the rehearsal event next to the performance on the performance venue's website; the creative process thus becomes a very public event.

On the day I attended an NDCW open rehearsal, I observed a new contemporary dance work being made. At the beginning of the rehearsal, the dancers were working on, and experimenting with the way in which they did a particular "dissolving" movement. This manipulation of movement places the rehearsal in Phase 2 of the creative process. As the open rehearsal progressed, it became clear that, overall, the dance work was in a process of structuring, as there were some established lengthy movement sequences. Overall, the

elements observed during the rehearsal indicated that the creative process was predominately in Phase 3 – an earlier phase than the ENB open rehearsal (see Figure 17).

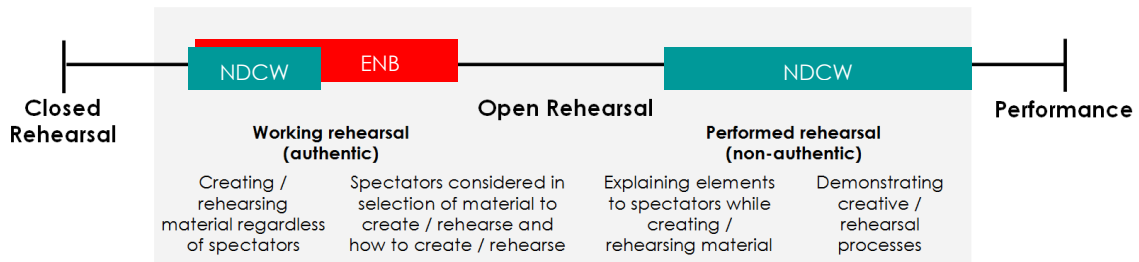
Figure 17: NDCW's creative process



The choreographer also explained elements of the creative process to the spectators. This included information about their impulse to create, and the initial research they undertook before entering the studio. While the open rehearsal did not actually include this initial phase of the creative process, the spectators were able to gain insights, and, therefore, it has been included on the creative process scale. By explaining elements to the spectators, the choreographer shifted the open rehearsal from working to performed.

The open rehearsal had two clear sections: working rehearsal and performed rehearsal (see Figure 18). The first is considered a working rehearsal and took place at the beginning of the event. This was when the choreographer and dancers were experimenting with the “dissolving” movement. This is also the time where the spectators gradually entered the space. I observed the dancers do, reflect on, and re-do this movement (and others) for approximately 20 minutes. The choreographer – sitting, standing, and moving on the floor to the side of them – offered suggestions and directions about how to approach the task in different ways. Their focus was on the task; it seemed as if the spectators were unnoticed by the dancers and choreographer during this time.

Figure 18: NDCW's rehearsal 'authenticity'



The change to the second section occurred at approximately 10 minutes after the open rehearsal was scheduled to officially start. The choreographer checked the time and said something to the effect of, “I guess it’s time to start.” This comment indicated that, to the choreographer, the ‘open rehearsal’ had not yet begun, despite the presence of many spectators. In contrast, the ‘open rehearsal’ had begun 20 minutes earlier for me (the spectator) when I entered the space, and commenced my observation of the choreographer and dancers’ work.

At this point, the ‘authenticity’ of the rehearsal was replaced with explanations of the emerging dance work and creative process. The rehearsal focus shifted from doing the creative process, to explaining the creative process to the spectators. The section began by the choreographer and the dancers introducing themselves to the spectators. This did not necessarily signify a performed element; however, it did create a pause in the rehearsal. It was the explanation that followed which shifted the rehearsal to the performed end of the scale.

The choreographer re-positioned themselves at the front of the spectators. They began by summarising the creative process from the start to the present, and asked the dancers to perform movement sequences to demonstrate some of the elements they were talking about. For example, when explaining how they developed contrasting sequences from the same

stimulus, the choreographer asked the dancers to perform both sequences. This process of explaining and demonstrating was a significant contrast to the repetitious and experimental nature of the movement-making that occurred at the beginning of the rehearsal. Once the choreographer had finished summarising the creative process, they opened the rehearsal up to questions, and this continued until the end of the rehearsal.

Interestingly, when the second, performed section of the rehearsal began, the choreographer instructed the dancers to continue working during the summary and Q&A. Between demonstrating movement sequences, the dancers ran and self-corrected movement sequences among themselves. These characteristics of working rehearsals added a second layer: it was simultaneously a working and performed rehearsal. However, the dancers were frequently asked to perform sequences for the spectators throughout the choreographer's explanation and, therefore, this duality was a minor element of the open rehearsal.

The NDCW open rehearsal was held in the Dance House, a 100-seat theatre that is the home of the company. Given this space, NDCW is able to invite more spectators into rehearsals than ENB can. The front-facing architecture of the theatre places the model on the left of the scale, aligned with the traditional presentation paradigm, and presents strong possibilities of rehearsal spectators feeling like audience 'others'. The theatre site, and potentially performance 'frame' that could be associated with it, could signify a performance-style engagement to rehearsal spectators. However, the use of the space offers different spectator engagement possibilities.

Theatrical elements – such as stage lights, wings, and sound equipment – were deliberately not utilised for the open rehearsals. Ex-Artistic Director Ann Sholem (personal interview, 30 August 2013) explains that they do not show these theatrical elements because they “don't want to give away too much” of the dance work. As a result, rehearsal spectators experience

the site without the mask of performance illusions. Working lights illuminate the fly system, stage lights, sound and lighting boards, and doors leading to other spaces: ‘backstage’ is seen. This use of the theatre presents opportunities “[w]here the invisible theatre becomes visible” (Dyson 2010, 95) to spectators. Thus, the choice to present the theatre in this way shifts the model toward the right of the site scale. The use of site provides spectators with behind-the-scenes insight into the hidden mechanics of theatres, and provides an opportunity for a different spectator engagement with the theatre space.

Similar to ENB, the pathway into the rehearsal also presents different engagement possibilities. First, the entrance to NDCW is located at the rear of a major performing arts centre. Spectators must first find this back entrance, and ring the doorbell for access. Second, they must travel up a flight of stairs, and past the main administrative office to reach the theatre door. This pathway, uncharacteristic of traditional proscenium arch theatres, feeds into the spectator experience, potentially building expectations of the theatre space on the other side.

Like ENB, the spectator-dancer proximity in NDCW’s rehearsal was fixed, to a certain extent. While spectators were able to choose where they sat, they were limited to the tiered seating area. Given the small size of the theatre, compared to large proscenium arch theatres that seat upwards of 1000 audience members, NDCW’s spectators (especially those in the front rows) experienced a spectator-dancer proximity within 3 metres (“Social-far”), and a spectator-choreographer proximity of under 1 metre (“Personal-far”) (Hall 1966). In contrast, spectators towards the back of the seating bank experienced up to an additional 5 metres of distance (“Public-close” to “Public-far”) (Hall 1966). Furthermore, the tier also created a height difference. Within the one group, there were multiple proximities and perspectives: some spectators were up close, while others overlooked the rehearsal from a distance.

The separation between spectator and dancer – like the ENB open rehearsal – emphasises the ‘otherness’ of the spectators. Furthermore, the high perspective from the back of the seating (as I experienced it) heightened my own sense of ‘otherness’ in the NDCW rehearsal. I looked down onto the dancers, while the dancers looked across to each other; my presence as ‘other’ (in the top back row) missed the dancers’ gaze (with the exception of when the dancers introduced themselves to the spectators). In the way, the ‘otherness’ I felt through the distance and height separation alienated me from the creative process. The personally close proximities, along with variable proximities, indicate that the NDCW model is positioned towards the right of the proximity scale.

While ENB’s spectators experienced very restricted agency possibilities in the studio, NDCW’s spectators were able to exercise a greater range of decision-making. As stated above, the spectators entered the rehearsal at varying times. On the day I attended, the open rehearsal was due to start at 5 p. m. I arrived 10 minutes prior to this, to see that approximately 40-50 spectators (most of that rehearsal’s complement of spectators) were already there. While the event is due to start on the hour, spectators are welcome to enter the space prior to this. Sholem (personal interview, 30 August 2013) explains that spectators regularly arrive up to half an hour before the official start time:

As people arrive they dribble in and rehearsal is just continuing. So there’s no kind of start, it’s literally people walking into what’s already happening. (Ann Sholem, personal interview, 30 August 2013)

Sholem highlights that the early and gradual arrival of the spectators means that the open rehearsal does not really have a set ‘start’ time. Instead, each individual’s rehearsal experience begins at a time of their choosing. Even latecomers are welcome. As Sholem (personal interview, 30 August 2013) states: “you can come in at quarter past five and it’s fine. It’s not like it starts at five o’clock, you just wander in when you’re ready”. There is,

however, a definite ‘finish’: “It’s like, “We’ve got to go home now. It’s six o’clock on a Friday night. See ya.”

Along with the freedom to enter the open rehearsal in their own time, these spectators are also given a choice of seating. The tiered seating, again, becomes a significant aspect of the spectator experience, as they must choose where they want to experience the rehearsal from; as discussed above, the variations in distance and height provide significantly different spatial relationships with the dancers and choreographer. Interestingly, throughout the course of the open rehearsal that I observed, there were some spectators that chose to change their position. While they only moved along the row they were in, having the opportunity to do so presents greater physical agency than the traditional presentation paradigm, where seating is numbered, and, therefore, changing seats is frowned upon.

Choices relating to the spectators’ attention is an interesting element of the NDCW open rehearsal, which shifted in response to the two distinct stages. During the first stage (when the dancers and choreographer were experimenting with movement), the atmosphere was casual. Spectators were gradually walking in, the dancers and choreographer were focused on the creative process, and the seated spectators watched the dancers, but also quietly talked among themselves. The spectators demonstrated a sense of agency in that space that was different to the rules of the traditional presentation paradigm: they did not have to be silent.

In contrast, when the rehearsal shifted to the second, performed section, the spectators’ agency also shifted. As soon as the spectators were addressed by the choreographer and dancers, the interaction among spectators reduced significantly. When the dancers performed sections of the dance work for the spectators, they became even more still and silent. As the rehearsal’s ‘authenticity’ shifted towards performance, the spectators demonstrated less agency.

The NDCW open rehearsal presented similar opportunities for the spectators to observe and engage with the ‘face’ of the dancer at work. The same details, such as sweat, mistakes, and joking around, were observed by the spectators. This positions the NDCW rehearsal on the right of the ‘performer qualities to dancer’ scale.

An additional element of the NDCW dancers’ ‘faces’, however, was that they said, “Hello”, and briefly introduced themselves to the spectators. This formed a direct dancer-spectator interaction (which did not form part of the spectator experience in the ENB studio). While this introduction was not insightful beyond the dancers’ names, the contact acknowledged the presence of the spectators. Any possible pretence that the dancers did not notice the spectators is replaced with a social ‘step’ toward the spectators.

NDCW’s open rehearsal model, like ENB’s, both adheres to, and disrupts, traditional presentation paradigm conventions. These conventions within the NDCW model, include ticketing the event, the theatre site (but not the way it is used), and front-facing seating. These conventions might set up certain expectations for rehearsal spectators, especially with regard to the theatre site. Presenting a ‘visible theatre’ potentially disrupts this expectation, and invites spectators to see the mechanics behind the theatrical illusion.

Other elements of the open rehearsal that disrupt traditional conventions include: entering through a back door; being buzzed in; choices of when to enter the rehearsal; ability to choose a location from which to observe (and to change this location during the event); seeing the ‘face’ of the working dancer; and having an opportunity to talk directly with the choreographer. While the NDCW open rehearsal was, for the most part, a performed rehearsal, many conventions of the traditional presentation paradigm were challenged. This positions NDCW’s model towards the middle of the liminality scale.

4.4.3 *Inner Workings*, Chunky Move

Chunky Move (CM) is a contemporary dance company based in Melbourne. The company began opening rehearsals to the general public in 2013 as part of a city-wide curated program, *Inner Workings*, where several arts companies opened their doors to the public.⁷² While the open rehearsals were initially facilitated upon the request of the *Inner Workings* curator, they proved to be a valuable experience for the company and, therefore, they plan to continue the practice:

I think it's really good to do it once in a while because it really is a way to be more inclusive and to literally open the doors of the studios, and also to give something back to the audience that we have, because Chunky Move has a very loyal audience. And they are very thrilled in being able to see such an intimate moment. (Anouk Van Dijk, personal interview, 21 January 2014)

Like both ENB and NDCW, the CM open rehearsal model is based on the idea that the rehearsal should run as a usual rehearsal. CM's approach, however, is a more unstructured experience, as the spectators are presented with the choice of entering and exiting the rehearsal throughout the working day.

CM was in the early stages of creating a new dance work on the day I attended their open rehearsal. While NDCW's rehearsal included some elements of Phase 2, CM's rehearsal was entirely filled with improvisation, conversations about the concept, and manipulation of movement. Of the three open rehearsals analysed, CM's model invited in spectators earlier than the other models.

The improvisations lasted for approximately 20 minutes. Beforehand, the choreographer gave the dancers instructions (which were not necessarily heard by the spectators) and then videoed the dancers during the improvisation. The choreographer would move the camera

⁷² Lucy Guerin Inc., a smaller contemporary dance company also based in Melbourne, also participated in this program in 2014.

and zoom in on the movements of specific dancers. For spectators sitting beside the choreographer, they could choose to view the dancers through the video camera's screen, following the choreographer's focus.

Like ENB, and the first stage of the NDCW open rehearsals, the CM model presents a working rehearsal; the dancer and choreographer focus was on making genuine developments in the creative process. This was demonstrated through instances such as the repetitious experimenting with a particular movement (similar to NDCW), and the choreographer talking with the dancers about new elements and ideas from the improvisations (ideas that they could explore further in the creative process).

Artistic Director Anouk Van Dijk (personal interview, 21 January 2014) explains the approach to CM's open rehearsals:

We tried to create an atmosphere that, on one hand, we fully ignored the audience because it was not a lecture demonstration, which can also happen in a dance setting, where you talk about things, then you show it. Then you talk about some other things, and then you show it. In that sense it was a setting as if the audience wasn't there, but they were also aware that you wouldn't block the view while you waited on the side. They [the dancers] wouldn't do that. There was some kind of control.

Van Dijk's comments highlight how, even when trying to work as authentically as possible, the dancers had an awareness of the spectators – such as an awareness of blocking – that affects the rehearsal in small ways. While these spatial spectator considerations do have some impact, they do not necessarily affect decisions about how the creative process is directed. Therefore, CM's model is positioned as a working rehearsal.

The CM open rehearsal was held in the company's studio space. This space includes features typical of a dance studio: sprung floor, unobstructed space, portable mirrors, and ballet barres. The space was presented in what could be considered working mode. There were no

theatrical elements such as sets, curtains, or lighting (with the exception of dismantled stage lights that were sitting in one corner).

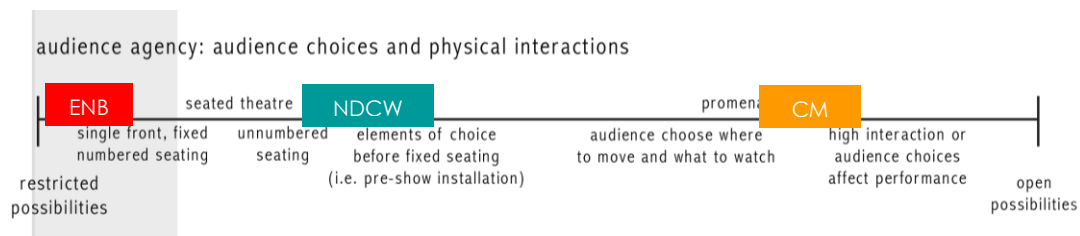
As for ENB's rehearsal, chairs were set along the front wall of the studio. However, where the previous open rehearsals positioned the spectators together, the CM model separated the spectators into two smaller groups. In both the ENB and CM rehearsals, the choreographer or rehearsal director also had a seat along the front wall. This seat was positioned in the centre on both occasions. ENB kept the spectators together by placing their seats all to one side of the rehearsal director's chair, while NDCW kept the spectators together in the tiered seating. In contrast, CM separated the spectators by placing chairs on both sides of the choreographer.

Furthermore, the CM choreographer's seat was more like a 'studio office', furnished with the tools to assist them: a table, laptop, video camera, and note-taking materials. This 'studio office' was a sizable barrier between spectator groups. This separation opened up choices for the spectators (Which side to sit on?), and the potential of an altered engagement with other spectators ('this side' and 'that side'). Thus, separating the spectators offered different spatial dis/connections among them.

An element that distinguishes the CM rehearsal from ENB and NDCW is the expertise of their rehearsal spectators. CM's open rehearsal was spectated by many dancers, who had participated in an open class earlier in the day. Their sense of physical agency during the rehearsal appeared to be vastly different to that displayed by the SDC and TAB non-expert spectators. These expert spectators often talked quietly among themselves, and shifted their bodies frequently; some even ignored the rehearsal altogether, at times, in favour of interacting with each other. The expert spectators, therefore, were less inhibited, and appeared to have less concern or, perhaps, less perception of the rehearsal as sacred.

The spectator-dancer proximity in the CM rehearsal was fixed and, generally, there was approximately 5 to 10 metres between spectator and dancer (“Public-close” to “Public-far”) (Hall 1966). However, for spectators next to the choreographer’s ‘studio office’, the spectator-choreographer proximity was within one metre (“Personal-close”) (Hall 1966) at times. While the CM model presented close spectator proximity to the choreographer, their proximity to the dancers was fixed and more distant than the ENB and NDCW models. Therefore, the CM model is positioned toward the left of these models.

Figure 19: CM's spectator agency



Of the three open rehearsals analysed in this chapter, CM offers spectators the most physical agency in the studio space (see Figure 19). It does this by permitting spectators to enter and exit the studio space at any time during a working day.⁷³ This model’s core design is to simply open the studio door and, in doing so, open possibilities for spectators to come and go as they please. As Van Dijk (personal interview, 21 January 2014) states: “you can be a fly on the wall and watch rehearsal all day or just a moment.”

Most spectators only stayed for short 20-60 minute blocks, while others stayed for a number of hours. Interestingly, no spectators, aside from myself, stayed for a whole day. This indicates that spectators were either coming in to watch rehearsal during breaks in their day, or they felt they had reached their desired level of pleasure or engagement in a relatively

⁷³ The studio door was open from 9:30 a. m. to 2:00 p. m. each day. The last rehearsal session for the day remained private.

short period. Either way, CM's rehearsal spectators experienced significant physical agency in regards to when they watched rehearsal, and for how long.

The CM spectators were also, generally, more physically active in the rehearsal. I observed spectators sitting or stretching on the floor, talking to each other, moving in time with the music, drawing, and writing. Many spectators were doing something physical in the rehearsal. Each CM spectator had the opportunity to make several choices about what their individual rehearsal experience would entail. While many spectators did something during the rehearsal, this activity was quiet and did not stretch beyond the vicinity of the front wall. My feeling, as a spectator, was that it was okay to act upon this agency, as long as it did not disrupt the rehearsal. While there were many choices available to the spectators, there were still, however, potential social limitations.

The 'face' of the working dancer is the one element that was consistent across the three open rehearsals. In CM's rehearsal, the dancer's voice is heard. The use of language such as "ass", "shit", and even gossiping, contributed to the 'face' of the dancer that is not present during performances. Furthermore, the 'authenticity' of the working rehearsals also highlights the 'humanness' of the dancers, as spectators witnessed mistakes, falls, and even minor injuries.

Van Dijk (in Daily Review AU 2013) explains:

[In m]y experience, myself as an audience member, if you see people on stage they can almost look like untouchable gods, and when you see them at work in the studio you realise they're human beings, and that they eat and that they might have a bit of a hard time starting the day [. . .]

Indeed, the CM spectators saw the choreographer and dancers eating as they entered the studio. The choreographer even continued to eat and drink during the rehearsal. A head collision, resulting in a bloody nose, was one example from the CM rehearsal which demonstrates the extent to which a spectator might see the dancers' 'humanness'.

The dancers' personalities also show through in the CM rehearsal. In the rehearsal I observed, the dancers and choreographer socialised, to a certain extent, and spoke about mundane topics. For example, one conversation was about where one could source a real Christmas tree. The spectators were even brought into this conversation. Not only was the 'humanness' of the dancers (and choreographer) seen, but the spectators, in some moments, were brought into this 'human' interaction. Interestingly, only the choreographer brought the spectators into these interactions. This was usually by talking to the spectators. The dancers did not do this, and the spectators did not invite themselves into their conversations (or any other part of the rehearsal); rather, the choreographer was the bridge between spectator and dancer.

Overall, the CM open rehearsal model disrupts many conventions of the traditional presentation paradigm. Of the three models analysed, CM's rehearsal was the earliest in the creative process. Seeing dancers improvise, or knowing that it is improvisation, is not common in the traditional presentation paradigm (where usually each movement is set).

There is a heightened sense of possibility during improvisation; no one, not even the dancers, know what is about to happen (good, bad or painful). Similarly, the early phase in the creative process involved the choreographer and dancers talking about the work. At times, this conversation was hard to hear from the spectators' seats and, therefore, the rehearsal offered very little physical or aural activity in those moments.

One of the most significant elements that contribute to liminality in this model is the physical agency offered to spectators. Entering/exiting at will, drawing, writing, stretching, and even talking, were all spectator actions in the rehearsal and were, presumably, acceptable; there was no indication otherwise. Where there are clear etiquette conventions in the traditional presentation paradigm, CM's model placed very few limitations on the spectators.

Additionally, without an explicit explanation of appropriate behaviour, there is the possibility

that the spectators' could take advantage of even more behavioural options than those exhibited in the rehearsal I attended.

Interestingly, while many elements of the CM model disrupt traditional presentation paradigm conventions, the use of program notes was an element that adheres to these conventions. This program document had three sections: information about the open rehearsal, information about Countertechnique (used in the technique class part of the event), and information about CM's artistic vision and mission.

The information about the open rehearsal sets up expectations of the rehearsal. In this case, the expectation was that the spectators would see early phases of the creative process, where the choreographer would "begin to develop the very first elements of movement material" (*Welcome to Inner Workings at Chunky Move 2013*). While this description of the open rehearsal content is vague, it does indicate that the rehearsal content will be different to performance content. These program notes were placed on the chairs in the studio. Therefore, the open rehearsal content was unknown, to a certain extent, until the spectators entered the studio.

4.4.4 Rehearsal spectator relationships

Through using Dyson's scales as a lens to examine the ENB, NDCW and CM open rehearsal models, various levels of spectator engagement opportunities emerge. Aspects such as fixed seating, facing dancers from the front, and very little physical agency (in the case of ENB) present traditional modes of engagement. Nevertheless, by using dance studios as presentation sites, close spectator-dancer proximity, and presenting the 'face' of the dancer

contribute to different engagement possibilities for rehearsal spectators, that can be considered personal.

As stated in Chapter 1, this study is concerned with spectator-dancer relationships during open rehearsals. The open rehearsal models analysed above suggest that spectators engage differently during open rehearsals than they do during performances within the traditional presentation paradigm; thus, open rehearsals open up the possibility of different relationships. Specifically, different spectator-dancer relationships emerge in response to sharing space, close proximity, and dancer ‘authenticity’.

A significant aspect of bringing spectators into studio spaces is that they share the same space as the dancers and choreographers. They are no longer separated by the proscenium arch theatre site. They are positioned *in* the rehearsal, rather than looking *at* the performance; they inherently become part of the rehearsal, ever so subtly. Furthermore, spectators share space with choreographers, people that they might never have encountered before, as choreographers do not necessarily present themselves to audiences at performances, and can even go unrecognised within a crowd if they are lesser-known. Open rehearsals become an introduction of the choreographer to the spectators away from performance events.

The sites used for open rehearsals – studio and ‘visible theatre’ – are contrasting sites to the traditional presentation paradigm. Where usually audience interaction takes place within the traditional theatre construct, these alternative sites, and the cultural influences of these sites, present more relaxed and informal engagement possibilities for spectators. These sites bring spectators and dancers together in one space, and do not necessarily dictate specific points of focus through theatrical elements. The studio site literally brings the spectator inside the ‘dancer’s world’.

The close spectator-dancer proximity within studio spaces enables a close-up view of the dancers at work. Aspects that are hidden by distance in traditional theatres, such as subtle facial expressions, sweat, and nuances of movement, are all visible when dancers are only a few metres away. Details of dancers, choreographers, and dance work are *seen* and, as such, these details may inform spectator perceptions; they come to know, to a certain extent, insider information about the dancers and the creative process. Concurrently, spectators also become known to dancers. Where usually they would be hidden in a sea of darkness during performances, open rehearsals illuminate spectators, making each individual visible.

Finally, the spectators meet the ‘face’ of the dancer during open rehearsals, as opposed to a set of performer qualities that they see on stage. Unlike rehearsed performer qualities, dancers appear ‘human’ during working rehearsals as spectators can witness mistakes, accidents, and even injuries. Likewise, spectators can also learn about dancers’ personalities. While spectators have established relationships with the performer qualities they see on stage, open rehearsals offer the opportunity for them to meet the dancers that play these characters. The ‘humanness’ of dancers presents opportunities for spectators to cognitively ‘play between’ the ‘face’ of the dancers and themselves. This “playful attention” (Thom 1993) could identify physical or behavioural characteristics that are shared between spectator and dancer, which might lead to changes in spectator ‘otherness’.

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has situated open rehearsals within a broader group of engagement tools. It has discussed their historical and current applications, highlighting that, over time, ballet and contemporary dance companies have gradually opened their doors to private supporters, then

to students, and then to the general public. The content of open rehearsals has also changed, with ‘authentic’ working rehearsals slowly increasing in number.

ENB, NDCW, and CM each apply a different open rehearsal model. The nature of each model is largely dependent on the dance company’s facilities, opportunities, and choreographers. The variations between these models offer the potential for contrasting spectator experiences and relationships. However, these companies share an understanding of the potential of open rehearsals, with all continuing to program these events (and some even looking to develop their models further).

As spectators step into rehearsals, they step into the ‘dancer’s world’ and, with this, there is the potential to develop insider knowledge of dancers and the creative process. Through the open rehearsals that I attended, the insights offered to spectators included: romantic relationships between dancers (ENB); seeing what dancers eat (ENB and CM); hearing how dancers are instructed before improvisations (CM); and watching one movement be repeatedly rehearsed (NDCW). Open rehearsals provide opportunities to remove the constructs that dictate performances; in opening doors, we are also opening the possibility for new relationships.

5. OPEN REHEARSAL TRIALS

You're seeing two different types of magic in one. You're seeing the magic of the creation and the other, the magic of the performance. (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 4)

The previous chapter provided a context for open rehearsals. The models analysed included elements of the traditional presentation paradigm, such as performance etiquette (English National Ballet), the theatre site (National Dance Company Wales), and program notes (Chunky Move). This research sought to study open rehearsals that have little connection to performance. Therefore, it required an open rehearsal model to be developed and trialled in order to facilitate the study. In partnership with Sydney Dance Company and The Australian Ballet, trials of this newly developed open rehearsal model occurred over two project cycles.

While studio working rehearsals are prepared and delivered like regular rehearsals, the presence of spectators inevitably affects the choreographer and dancers in some way; for example, the dancers might have varying degrees of desire to perform for these spectators. As Fraleigh (1987, 59) reminds us, “we are constantly influenced by the otherness of objects and other people as we interact with them.” In an effort to minimise ‘performance’ by the dancers, the choreographers were encouraged to run their rehearsals as they normally would, as if the spectators were not there. Spectator comments indicate that the trialled open rehearsal felt ‘authentic’ and, therefore, the open rehearsal model was successful in relation to this core element: “It’s not like they’re putting on a rehearsal for us. It’s the real thing and that’s really authentic and that’s really valuable” (SDC Participant 2, Appendix 1).

This chapter analyses the trialled open rehearsal model using Dyson’s (2015) scales of audience engagement, alongside the creative process and rehearsal ‘authenticity’ scales introduced in this study.

5.1 Introduction to Sydney Dance Company and The Australian Ballet

Sydney Dance Company (SDC) is a major contemporary dance company based in Sydney, Australia. It opens studio rehearsals to its patrons as a way of connecting them to the company. Student spectators who participate in holiday dance programs at SDC, are also invited to attend short open rehearsals:

We invite them [students] to come for fifteen minutes in their lunch break and to watch a little bit of rehearsal. [. . .] it really enlightens them and this [open rehearsals] is a missed opportunity on letting people know what we do. (Rafael Bonachela, personal interview, 23 January 2013)

In theatre spaces, SDC offers performed rehearsals to the general public, entitled *Work in Progress*. The event involves Bonachela discussing aspects of dance works, such as inspiration and concept. This discussion is accompanied by sections of dance works being performed for the spectators. There is also a lengthy (up to 45 minute) Q&A session with Bonachela and the SDC dancers that follows this presentation.

Bonachela (personal interview, 23 January 2013) describes the *Work in Progress* program as being “overly successful” in terms of its popularity, demonstrating that SDC’s performance audience is interested in engaging with the company outside of performances. In online spaces, SDC regularly publishes behind-the-scenes photographs and videos that are authored by a combination of professional photographers, film makers, and company dancers. These videos, which use footage from studio rehearsals, can be considered new works, as the rehearsal footage is edited into short films that are layered with interviews, text, and images.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ *Emergence Chapter One (Order/Chaos)* is one example. This video includes aspects of the creative process of the dance work that the SDC rehearsal audience observed in rehearsal. The video is available to watch on

Since participating in this research project, SDC has expanded its open rehearsal offerings, with studio open rehearsals for schools becoming an official program for the company. These open rehearsals provide an opportunity for students “to gain an insight into professional practice during the rehearsal period” (Sydney Dance Company 2014, para. 1). The gradual opening of the studio door is evident at SDC; however, the general public at this time are still limited to rehearsal photographs, videos, and the *Works in Progress* presentations in theatres.

The SDC open rehearsal for this research project was held on Tuesday 22 January 2013 at SDC’s studios. The SDC rehearsal spectators attended one hour of a regular rehearsal (5:00 p. m. to 6:00 p. m), the last hour of rehearsal for that day. The duration of the rehearsal was part of the open rehearsal model, while the time of day was at SDC’s discretion. The subsequent performance of this dance work was at Sydney Theatre, with the rehearsal spectators attending on Tuesday, 5 March 2013. Entitled *De Novo*, the performance was a triple-bill program.⁷⁵

The Australian Ballet (TAB) is Australia’s national ballet company based in Melbourne. TAB offers a variety of programs that provide behind-the-scenes insights for various groups. When the company is in the theatre, there are pre-performance backstage tours, open classes that spectators can observe, and Q&A opportunities with dancers and creative staff. Away from the theatre, the general public are able to book for the *Ballet Centre Tour*, where participants are able to see dancers taking their morning technique class through the studio windows. These tour participants, however, do not enter the studio. TAB also publishes

YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYSNYHk1hDU&list=PLqtEEMWKb4Jygmn9wwkwNt8HP9T7-sJqE>

⁷⁵ The first dance work – which had been observed in rehearsal – was *Emergence* by Rafael Bonachela; the second dance work was *Fanatic* by Larissa McGowan; and the final dance work was *Cacti*, by Alexander Ekman.

rehearsal photographs and videos. Like SDC, these videos are highly edited, with the rehearsal footage being but one component.⁷⁶

In 2015, TAB expanded its behind-the-scenes programs to offer the general public, for the first time, the opportunity to watch coaching sessions with principal dancers on stage. Designed as one element of a larger event, entitled *Behind the Scenes*, these rehearsal demonstrations provide new insight into how dancers develop their technical abilities in order to fulfil the physical demands of performing a particular character (The Australian Ballet 2015a, para. 1).

The TAB open rehearsal within this research project was held on Monday, 5 August 2013 at TAB's studios. Like the SDC rehearsal, the spectators attended one hour of a regular rehearsal (3:45 p. m. to 4:45 p. m.). Again, the time of the open rehearsal was at the company's discretion. TAB rehearsal spectators attended the subsequent performance of *Cinderella* on Monday, 23 September 2013 at the State Theatre in Melbourne. As a full length ballet, this was the only dance work performed in the program.

Prior to the start of the SDC and TAB open rehearsals, the rehearsal spectators were met by the researcher at the respective building's entry . For SDC, this was the Sydney Dance Lounge, a café in the SDC building; for TAB, this meeting point was the company's reception area. The spectators were led further into the buildings and given a short briefing about the open rehearsals. This brief included a statement about the research and logistical aspects of the sessions, such as how long they would observe the rehearsals, and participation in a post-rehearsal focus group discussion. A company staff member (SDC's marketing

⁷⁶ *Cinderella Mini Series: Episode #2: In the Rehearsal Room* is one such video that is derived from the rehearsals of the dance work that TAB rehearsal spectators observed. The video is available to watch on YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0GyQG6cSoQ&list=PL8BxrjTBdgGkBTFTzMI9v3oCsGUI7AjuO&index=5>

assistant, and TAB's ballet mistress) escorted the spectators and researcher to the studios.

Immediately following the open rehearsals, I engaged the spectators in focus group discussions, where they spoke about their experiences of the open rehearsals.

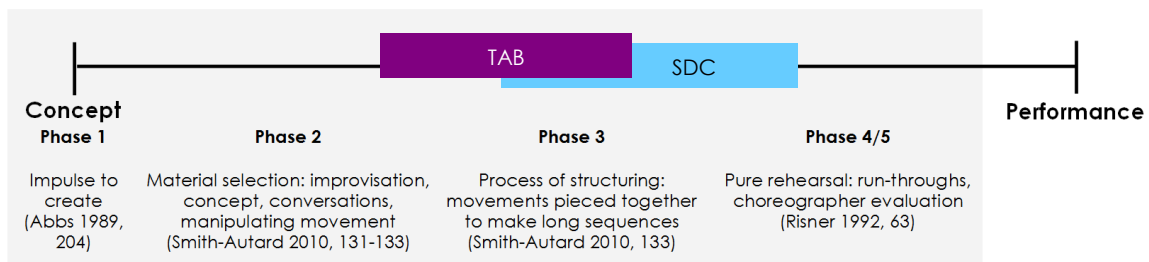
While the SDC and TAB open rehearsals employed the same model – briefing, studio working rehearsal, post-rehearsal discussion – there were elements that differed between these open rehearsals due to the different company contexts. One of these significant differences was the group of dancers that the rehearsal spectators observed. At SDC, the whole company of dancers were participating in the rehearsal, whereas only a selection of TAB's principal and soloist dancers were present at their rehearsal. This distinction between the rehearsals is noteworthy, as the ratio of spectators to dancers was an aspect raised by some TAB spectators. Where SDC dancers far outnumbered their rehearsal spectators, TAB's dancers almost matched the number of spectators: 8 dancers to 9 spectators, including the researcher. Interestingly, being “almost one on one” made TAB's open rehearsal feel more intimate, and like a “privilege” (TAB Participant 1, Appendix 4). Where TAB spectators were accustomed to being part of an audience of 2000, the rehearsal presented a very different relationship. As Participant 5 (Appendix 4) pointed out: “There was just them and us.” This observation is one example of how the rehearsal audience identified as separate to the dancers, as an ‘other’ in the rehearsal.

5.2 Creative Process

The SDC open rehearsal was in the third week of a short four-week rehearsal period. Given that this rehearsal was towards the end of the creative process, its content consisted of tweaking movement sequences, and setting the movement to the sound score. In other words,

the movement material had been selected, and the dance work was in the process of structuring. Some sections were more complete than others and, therefore, there were also times in the rehearsal where the dancers would run a sequence. Therefore, the SDC rehearsal is positioned on the creative process scale between Phases 3 and 4/5 (see Figure 20).

Figure 20: SDC & TAB's creative process



The full company of dancers (16 in total) were working in this rehearsal. While some stages of the rehearsal required all the dancers, most of the time they simultaneously worked in groups of two or three on various sections. In this way, many of the dancers were self-directing, as the choreographer would focus on one group at a time. The result of this self-direction was that the dancers were doing a variety of activities, such as going through and tweaking movement sequences in the centre of the room, stretching on the floor to the side, and even socialising with each other at times.

In contrast, TAB's rehearsal was in the first half of the rehearsal period (week 3 of 8). The rehearsal content mainly consisted of the choreographer introducing and developing one new movement sequence with the dancers (8 in total). The choreographer would propose movement and then, with the dancers, they would work out the technical aspects of the movement, as well as set smaller details, such as hand movements, or a tilt of the head. While the movements had been pre-planned by the choreographer, the negotiation and

experimentation of the finer details shifts this rehearsal earlier in the creative process than the SDC rehearsal.

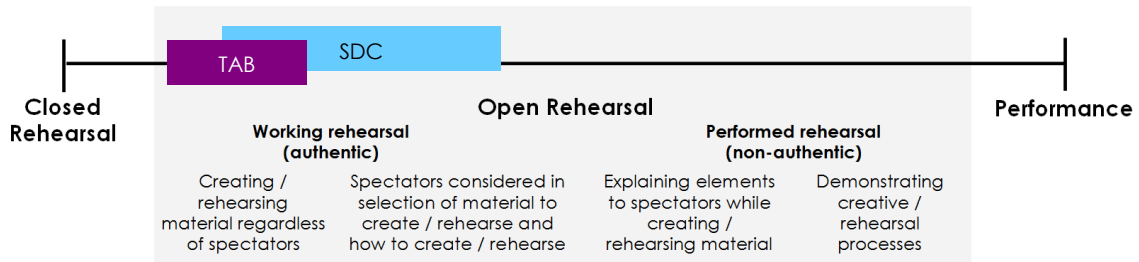
5.3 Rehearsal ‘Authenticity’

The SDC and TAB open rehearsals are positioned towards the working rehearsal end of the rehearsal ‘authenticity’ scale (see Figure 21). They are classified this way because, overall, they operate like regular rehearsals, with a focus on the creative process. This is demonstrated through the observable developments that emerged. For example, some of the partner work in SDC’s rehearsal became smoother, while the length of the movement sequence in TAB’s rehearsal was extended. In an interview following the SDC open rehearsal, Bonachela expresses his surprise at how efficiently he was able to work with the spectators present:

I got a lot sorted yesterday [open rehearsal]. It was like, for some reason, “Oh, let’s try that, let’s try that, what about this?” And none of it was rehearsed. [. . .] That whole thing was separate bits and I actually put it together. I was quite shocked that I managed to put that much together and was able to make that many decisions with an audience. (personal interview, 23 January 2013)

Bonachela also highlights that there was a certain degree of spectator consideration, on his part, during the rehearsal. The result of this consideration was a modification in the usual rehearsal structure. Where usually Bonachela would use one hour to rehearse one section, he chose instead to work on four different sections. While he made the decision to include more sections in the single rehearsal, Bonachela states that his approach to working with the dancers on these sections was characteristic of his normal practice.

Figure 21: SDC & TAB's rehearsal 'authenticity'



In both rehearsals, the dancers and choreographers used an established language that was a combination of everyday English and specific terminology that was not necessarily understood by the rehearsal spectators. TAB's specific terminology was predominately ballet terminology that is used globally by dancers (such as 'arabesque' and 'pirouette') as well as theatre terminology (such as 'upstage' and 'downstage'). This is language that, as a dance expert, I easily understand; however, it is likely that the terminology is less familiar to non-experts. This is an example where the expert spectator is an 'insider', as they understand the dancers' vernacular, while the non-expert spectator may be an 'outsider'.

In contrast, SDC's terminology was more specific to that particular creative process. For example, one movement section was referred to as the 'fight duet'. This term's meaning and corresponding movement is unknown to both the expert and non-expert spectators until it is demonstrated. The use of established terminology, that is not necessarily understood by the spectators, is another aspect of 'authenticity' during the open rehearsals.

Furthermore, during the SDC open rehearsal, the spectators did not hear all of the verbal communications between choreographer and dancer. This was because, when he provided feedback to a few dancers rather than the whole company, Bonachela stood very close to the dancers with his back to the spectators. This is another example of how the open rehearsal can be considered a working rehearsal, as it was conducted with the creative process, rather

than the spectators, as the priority. Interestingly, not all spectators wanted to be able to hear these comments. Participant 5 (Appendix 1) suggested that the established language was beyond their knowledge, and that they did not think that they would understand these conversations if they did hear them. While some spectators sought to hear this aspect of the rehearsal, others perceived it as a code that they would not necessarily understand.

An element of the traditional presentation paradigm that emerged during the open rehearsals was the fourth wall, created by the dancers' gaze. In the SDC rehearsal particularly, the dancers consistently avoided looking at the rehearsal spectators; when facing the spectators' direction, they looked beyond them. Similarly, when dancers walked along the front of the spectators towards the studio door, they kept their focus facing forward. Avoiding the spectators might contribute to a more 'authentic' working process, as they are not usually part of the rehearsal, however, it also was an element of separation in the rehearsal that placed 'otherness' on the spectators.

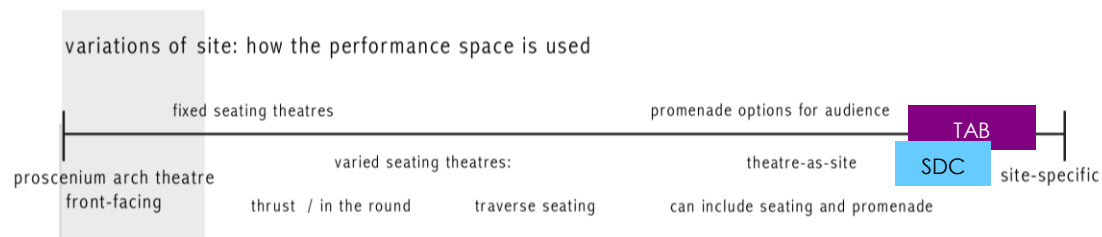
Alternatively, this performative element could be said to hinder the 'authenticity' of the open rehearsal, as the spectators' presence is a part of that particular rehearsal. This highlights a dilemma: spectators can never truly observe a regular working rehearsal because they will naturally impact on that rehearsal. Therefore 'authenticity' in open rehearsals must be considered different to 'authenticity' in closed rehearsals.

5.4 Variations of Site

Similar to the English National Ballet and Chunky Move open rehearsals, the trialled open rehearsal model is predominately located within the studio site, which is characterised by elements such as unobstructed space, mirrors, ballet barres, and pianos. Within the SDC and

TAB open rehearsals, the sites were not prepared for the rehearsal spectators, with the only exception being that the companies placed chairs at the front of the rooms. Therefore, the SDC and TAB open rehearsals are positioned on the right of the site scale (see Figure 22).

Figure 22: SDC & TAB's variations of site



The chairs were placed in the studio sites for the comfort of the audience members. This aspect of the open rehearsal model is reminiscent of the fixed seating in the proscenium arch theatres, in which the dance works were later performed. For the studio site to be completely in working mode – that is, an ‘authentic’ site – the spectators would not be provided with seating. This is because it is unusual for chairs, especially in that quantity, to be available at these particular studio sites. Removing the spectators’ chairs presents an opportunity to experience the studio site as the dancers do; for instance, during the SDC and TAB rehearsals, the dancers predominately stood or danced, with some SDC dancers sitting and stretching on the floor. These ways of physically being *in* the studio are ‘authentic’ to the site itself. By introducing chairs to the studio site, an aspect of the theatre – and, with it, a similar sitting kinaesthesia – is also introduced. This reference to the theatre relationship also references the audience ‘other’ in dance performance.⁷⁷

There were several other sites included in the SDC and TAB open rehearsals. In the case of SDC, these were the Sydney Dance Lounge, the SDC boardroom, and the corridor that runs

⁷⁷ However, some people require seating in order to observe for long periods of time and, therefore, chairs are necessary in some cases. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight the impact that the addition of these chairs has on the studio site and, potentially, on spectator relationships.

from the Lounge to the back of the building. In the TAB open rehearsal, these other sites were the reception area, the corridors, a meeting room, and the Dancer's Deli. These locations were the sites for meeting and greeting the spectators, the pre-rehearsal briefings, and the post-rehearsal focus group discussions. While Dyson's framework is designed to analyse performance events – which these briefings and spectator discussions are clearly not – these aspects are significant parts of the open rehearsal model. For these reasons, a consideration of the sites can contextualise the open rehearsal experience.

The SDC spectators received their briefing and participated in their focus group discussion in the boardroom, a site associated with high level administration within the organisation. This particular site was a formal business space, with luxurious features such as water views, a large boardroom table, and large office chairs. In comparison, TAB spectators received their briefing in a small meeting room, which appeared to also be used as a storage space at the time. The meeting room is a more practical, and smaller space than the SDC boardroom, with boxes of pointe shoes in one corner, and chairs stacked in another. Their focus group discussion was held in the Dancer's Deli, which is, as the name suggests, an internal café for TAB employees. This particular site is casual: an open space with drink fridges, the deli counter, and aluminium tables and chairs. It is a site for rest, rejuvenation, and socialising.

During the spectator focus group discussions, the SDC boardroom and TAB Dancer's Deli were empty. Therefore, these sites provided privacy that was essential to the focus group discussions, as their comments were not heard by the artists or company administrators, and this encouraged the spectators to speak freely.

This discussion of site has, thus far, been scoped to the specific rooms that the spectators occupied. While the SDC and TAB studios are similar, the broader sites – the buildings – are considerably different with respect to openness and sacralisation. The SDC building can be

considered a public site, where the creative process is not concealed from outsiders, and, therefore, not sacred. In contrast, TAB's building is private, enforcing sacralisation of the creative process. The opportunity to 'peek' into SDC rehearsals is enhanced by the openness of its building. This is exemplified by the fact that there are no closed doors between the street outside and the rehearsals that take place in the company's studios.

On entry to the SDC building, there is the Sydney Dance Lounge. This is a public café that is open from breakfast until dinner. The café potentially adds another reason for the public to enter the SDC building; that is, for its hospitality, as well as its dance activities. This was the location where I met the SDC spectators. On the far end of the café is a corridor that leads to the dance studios. Rehearsal sounds, such as fingers clicking, music, or talking can sometimes be heard from the café. The corridor itself can also be considered public as it is the access to the bathrooms for café patrons. Therefore, the only barrier between the public space within the building and the private studio is the studio door. This door, as Bonachela (personal interview, 23 January 2013) explains, is often left wide open, providing the opportunity for anybody that passes by to "peek" into the rehearsal and, more significantly, into the creative process.

The blurred line of public and private areas within the SDC building also blurs the boundary of the rehearsal itself. Although concentrated in the studio, and under the direction of the choreographer, the rehearsal in this case filters out beyond the studio walls and, in response, draws in external elements such as unexpected spectators in the form of passers-by. While most passers-by might not linger, a glance or a quick 'peek' is likely, especially when rehearsals are particularly loud or physical.

Furthermore, the SDC studios are used for public dance classes in the evenings, and this transforms the studio sites into public spaces. Most of the ground floor of the SDC building is

part of this public space. SDC's creative and rehearsal processes can, to a certain extent, be considered public events, as they regularly experience unexpected spectators; in other words, SDC's rehearsals are open to outsiders.

In contrast to the openness of the SDC building, TAB's studios are closed to the public. On entry, TAB spectators were required to sign into the visitor register at reception, an area that is consistently monitored during business hours. Access beyond reception required a security pass. The need to be accompanied by a staff member closes the opportunity for the general public to access rehearsals. TAB rehearsals are sacralised through this exclusivity, and it is only through insiders that access is granted. However, once behind the locked door, visitors can move throughout the corridors that connect the Dancer's Deli, studios, offices, and bathrooms. These corridors are filled by the sounds of dancers talking, and by music coming from studios. The studios are open to onlookers through small windows, however, they are also fitted with blinds so that the room can be closed off completely. TAB's studios can be considered private and sacred spaces for insiders of the TAB community, whether they be administrative, technical, or creative staff.

This discussion of the public/private site introduces an unforeseen aspect of both the SDC and TAB open rehearsals: unexpected spectators. In the case of SDC, there were a small group, consisting of adults and children, that sat at the studio door. At TAB, on the other hand, several people 'peeked' through the studio windows (see Figure 23).

Figure 23: TAB studio windows



Bonachela (personal interview, 23 January 2013) explains that unexpected spectators are a regular aspect of everyday rehearsals at SDC, suggesting that sacralisation might not pervade the studio as deeply as others:

We have the doors open all the time because it is so hot here, and unless there are screaming people, because there's auditions or something, we keep the doors open. People will always have a look [at rehearsals], you know, peeking around. [. . .] I didn't even realise that happened because it's part of it, and it just doesn't even bother me. I don't even notice it anymore.

In comparison, TAB's unexpected spectators were likely to be members of the company (insiders). The presence of these unexpected spectators, especially the general public at SDC, brings into question whether regular rehearsals are already open rehearsals to a certain extent. The concept of open rehearsals proposed in this study is based on the notion that companies provide spectators with some insight into creative and/or rehearsal processes. SDC's

unexpected spectators are, to a certain extent, gaining this type of insight. It is, however, limited.

Interestingly, TAB window onlookers played into spectators' experience. The latter were aware of the onlookers, at times gazing toward them while they 'peeked' into the rehearsal. An onlooker-spectator-dancer triangle emerged as the spectators negotiated the relationship between themselves, the dancers, and the onlookers. Some spectators reported that this made their experience of the rehearsal more exclusive: "Well it made me feel pretty special that I had the good seat" (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 3).

The sites of SDC and TAB are both similar and contrasting; both present working studio sites as well as social sites. SDC's building and rehearsals are public, to a certain extent, and invite onlookers to peek into the creative process. TAB's building is a private site that is normally occupied only by insiders to this community. While the SDC spectators merely took one step further into the studio itself, TAB spectators took a considerable leap from outside the building into the studio, and into the sacred rehearsal.

5.5 Spectator-Dancer Proximity

The proximity of the SDC and TAB open rehearsals was similar to that of English National Ballet and Chunky Move, in that the SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators were positioned at a fixed proximity at the perimeter of the studio site, only a few metres from the dancers ("Social-far" to "Public-far") (Hall 1966). There was, however, a distinct difference between SDC and TAB in regard to the physical relationships between spectator and dancer.

In the SDC open rehearsal, the choreographer was positioned between the spectators and the dancers; that is, when Bonachela observed the whole rehearsal he would stand or sit in front of the rehearsal spectators, creating a barrier (between them and the dancers) that they would look through. Just as the tiered seating in the National Dance Company Wales open rehearsal physically distanced the spectators from the dancers through depth and height, Bonachela, perhaps unintentionally, separated the spectators by putting himself between them and the dancers. Likewise, when in this position (with his back to the spectators), Bonachela placed the spectators outside of the web of spoken interaction with, and instruction to the dancers. In doing so, Bonachela added a layer of ‘otherness’ onto the spectators.

In contrast, during TAB’s open rehearsal, Ratmansky sat next to the spectators and, like Bonachela, would also step into the centre of the studio to work with the dancers. However, Ratmansky was not ever between the spectators and dancers, rather, he was either next to the spectators or with the dancers; therefore, the choreographer barrier between spectator and dancer did not occur. The Ratmansky’s position beside the spectators also opened up opportunities to see his face, and to follow his gaze throughout the rehearsal. Therefore, while one group predominately saw Bonachela’s back, the other had opportunities to see Ratmansky’s face.

Furthermore, TAB spectators also experienced a closer, more “personal” (Hall 1966) proximity to dancers before entering the rehearsal. While walking through the corridors, the spectator-dancer proximity was within a metre at times (“Personal-far”) (Hall 1966). At this distance, not only were the details of the dancers’ physicality (for example, eye colour) visible, but their conversations were within hearing range. I could even smell their deodorant or perfume. Seeing/hearing/smelling these elements of the dancers, as ‘humans’, was possible through the “personal” (Hall 1966) proximity experienced in the corridor. It is important to

Good afternoon and thank you for taking the time to participate in this study. My name is Anja Ali-Haapala and I am a PhD Candidate at Queensland University of Technology and the Principal Researcher in the study that you are participating in. The purpose of today's rehearsal and focus group is to provide an opportunity for you to see how dance work is made as well as to share your thoughts, ideas and feelings about this experience. We will be in the studio space for approximately one hour and then we will move into another room for the focus group which will take approximately half an hour.

This part of the brief contextualised the open rehearsal within a research project, and provided expectations around the pragmatic aspects of the model. The second section, below, was only given to the SDC spectators. It provided some expectation of agency:

Generally in rehearsals it is expected that everyone is quiet so that the people who are working can concentrate. With that said, rehearsals generally have a more relaxed atmosphere than performances. As a courtesy to Rafael and the dancers, please make sure your mobile phones are switched off before we enter the studio space. Does anyone have any questions at this point?

In the SDC post-rehearsal discussion, it emerged that the expectation of quiet had a significant impact on the spectators' sense of agency. At one point in the SDC open rehearsal, there was a run-through of a solo where, on its completion, the dancers applauded their colleague, momentarily shifting into audience-like behaviour.⁷⁸ The spectators, however, remained very still and quiet: suppressed by their 'otherness'. SDC Participant 10 (Appendix 1) explained:

And at the end she [SDC Participant 1] said, "Oh, I wanted to applaud," but obviously didn't because, and I guess this is one of the things, we knew we had to be quiet. So even though we may have wanted to [. . .] I think we felt that we couldn't do anything in joining in because we had specifically been told to be quiet.

The SDC spectators were very still for the duration of the open rehearsal, demonstrating a constricted physical agency. On reflection, it was clear that setting limitations in the briefing, suppressed their agency. Thus, the briefing, which was intended to assist the spectators to feel

⁷⁸ This small part of the SDC rehearsal content was significantly different to the rest of the rehearsal. For the most part, the studio space was filled with dancers working in their small groups. There was chatter, there was music that was played and re-played, and many different focuses. This changed when Bonachela asked to see a solo section run without any other dancers in the space. All except one dancer moved to the sides of the studio, with most deciding to sit, facing this dancer. While the solo was run, the dancers on the side were focused on the dancer, watching as rehearsal spectators. In this way, the role of spectator was shared between spectator and dancer. This role of dancer-as-spectator was particularly interesting when they responded to the solo with applause.

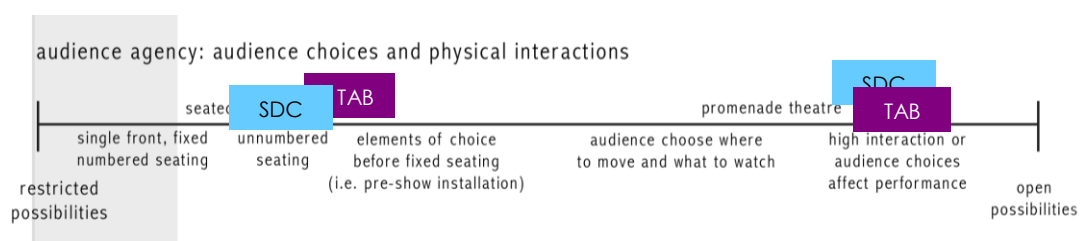
comfortable in the new situation of an open rehearsal, increased the spectators' 'otherness' instead. Therefore, the SDC rehearsal is positioned towards the left of the agency scale. The only choice offered to the spectators was which pre-positioned seat to occupy.

As part of the action research approach of reflection on action, the second briefing for TAB spectators was altered. Rather than imposing limitations on the spectators, especially the expectation of quiet, TAB spectators were invited to experience the open rehearsal in the way they found most pleasurable. The end of the revised briefing was as follows:

Once we are in there [studio site] please feel free to stand, sit on the chairs or floor, or move around: whatever is comfortable for you. Does anyone have any questions at this point?

By providing options, rather than a single instruction, TAB spectators were prompted to make choices about how they wished to participate in the rehearsal. This shifts the TAB rehearsal slightly to the right on the agency scale, as the spectators were provided a broader range of physical possibilities (see Figure 25). While the briefing prompted these choices, TAB spectators decided to sit in the seats. This raises the possibility that while SDC spectators attributed their limited sense of agency to the briefing, the rehearsal itself might have also restricted them. Offering the spectators the option to "move around" also presented possibilities of removing layers of 'otherness'. While movement was a fundamental element of the rehearsal, the spectators were visibly 'other' through their stillness.

Figure 25: SDC & TAB's spectator agency



TAB spectators, although mostly still, did outwardly respond to the rehearsal more than the SDC spectators. For example, at times, some spectators smiled or laughed independently in response to the unexpected actions of the dancers, such as when they pulled faces or shared a humorous moment. These outward responses, however, did not begin until approximately 20 minutes into the rehearsal.

The rehearsal itself offered limited physical agency. Similar to English National Ballet, the spectators were led in and out of the studio sites at predetermined times as a group. The freedom to come and go, that is utilised in the Chunky Move model, was not available to the SDC and TAB spectators. In this way, the trialled open rehearsal was similar to performance, with its designated start and finish times, and restricted access to the site. In this designated start/finish approach, each spectator forgoes their agency to choose the duration of their own open rehearsal experience.

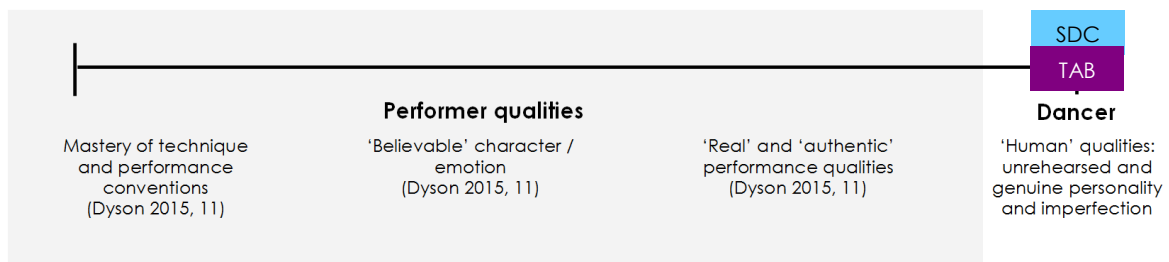
The post-rehearsal discussion, however, opened up agency possibilities. It is included in this analysis because, like the brief, it is a component of the open rehearsal experience.⁷⁹ In the discussion, the spectators were the sole contributors to this component of the open rehearsal; they influenced the open rehearsal experience as active contributors in joint reflection and meaning-making. The spectators' discussion component of the open rehearsal is, therefore, positioned on the right of the agency scale.

⁷⁹ In the open rehearsal trials, the 'audience' discussions were predominately focused on questions that were important for the research project. However, if this open rehearsal model was to be used outside of a research context, the discussion component would still be incorporated. The conversation, however, would be focused around the first question: What thoughts were going through your mind, and/or what feelings did you experience while we were in the rehearsal space?

5.7 Performer Qualities to Dancer

Like the open rehearsal models discussed in Chapter 4, the rehearsal spectators experienced the ‘face’ of the dancers at work. The SDC and TAB dancers appeared to work and act ‘authentically’ as the interactions between artists appeared unrehearsed. In other words, for the most part, the dancers did not appear to ‘perform’ to the rehearsal spectators and, therefore, the open rehearsals are positioned on the right of the ‘performer qualities to dancer’ scale (see Figure 26).

Figure 26: SDC & TAB's performer qualities to dancer



The dancers were wearing what appeared to be regular rehearsal attire. The SDC dancers wore very casual clothing such as shorts, singlets, and socks, and did not wear stage hair or makeup. This attire was very unlike the costumes that they wore during the subsequent performance, which were uniform, tidy, and figure-hugging. They did not appear as they do onstage; they were not confined by any particular ‘costume’ and, as a result, their individuality was displayed.

The same contrast between rehearsal and performance attire occurred with the TAB rehearsal. There, the female dancers wore leotards, rehearsal tutus, and pointe shoes, while the male dancers wore leotards, tights, and flat ballet shoes. Their attire was casual and unique to the individual. The rehearsal tutus were particularly different from the performance tutus as, while they were the approximate shape and style of tutu used on stage, they were not

decorated, and appeared to be very worn. One tutu had a piece of loose tulle; that dancer's partner proceeded to tear this piece off and play with it mid-rehearsal. By doing so, this dancer revealed a playful 'face'.

The SDC and TAB spectators saw different dancer 'faces'. This contrast is linked to the point at which the spectators entered the rehearsals. The SDC spectators entered after the rehearsal had already begun (a closed rehearsal became an open rehearsal), whereas TAB spectators entered before the rehearsal had begun and exited before it finished (that is, the open rehearsal became a closed rehearsal). This difference led to the spectators observing a distinct variation in the dancer 'faces'. TAB rehearsal spectators saw dancers outside of the studio site prior to the rehearsal, as many of the company's dancers occupied the corridors that link the various studios, offices, and resting spaces that make up the building. The corridor site, in this instance, was used by the dancers as a site for socialising, and preparation for their next session that day. It was in this social site, as opposed to the working studio site, that TAB spectators first 'met' the 'face' of the social dancer. Previous encounters were performances, where the dancer presented the 'face' of performer qualities.

In contrast, SDC spectators first 'met' the dancers in the studio site where, even though there was some socialising, there was a work focus on the rehearsal; in other words, spectators only encountered the 'face' of the dancer at work during the open rehearsal event. During the TAB project cycle, TAB spectators encountered three 'faces' of the dancer: the dancer socialising in the corridor, the dancer working in the studio, and the performer qualities on stage. While TAB spectators engaged with three dancer 'faces', SDC spectators observed the latter two only.

Some TAB spectators appeared to instinctually respond to the 'face' of the working dancer in the studio. Towards the end of TAB's rehearsal, one of the dance partnerships had a moment

where they missed a grip and the female dancer almost fell. As an immediate, instinctual response to this incident, two of the spectators lurched forward in their seats, as if to try to catch her. The ‘authentic’ rehearsal and dancer at work, in this case, highlighted genuine risk. This specific moment illuminates an activated kinaesthetic connection and interaction of the spectator within the rehearsal; a response, and also a contribution, to the actions and interactions of that particular creative process. It also demonstrates how the ‘humanness’ of this ‘face’ of the dancer led to a spectator response that is less likely to occur during performance.

5.8 Liminal Spaces

The open rehearsal sites and the ‘face’ of the dancer emerge as key aspects that might contribute to liminal experiences for spectators. As discussed in Chapter 4, non-expert spectators might have little expectations, no expectations, or incorrect expectations of the studio site; therefore, the site presents the possibility for a liminal experience. Furthermore, corridors – as non-traditional sites offering close proximity to the ‘face’ of the social dancer – present further, multi-layered liminality possibilities as well.

As discussed in Chapter 4, Dyson (2010, 117) considers the transitional environment as a space where the expectations are “relaxed”, and new experiences become possible. The corridors of SDC and TAB can be considered both literally and theoretically transitional. As discussed above, these sites exist for the movement of people – in these cases, predominantly dancers – from one site to another. At SDC, the spectators observed the dancers leave the studio through the corridor, while at TAB, the spectators transitioned into the studio site through a pathway filled by dancers. As stated above, TAB’s corridors were populated with

dancers – some in transit, some static – who used this space as a social site. It is in this site where TAB's rehearsal audience first 'met' the dancers.

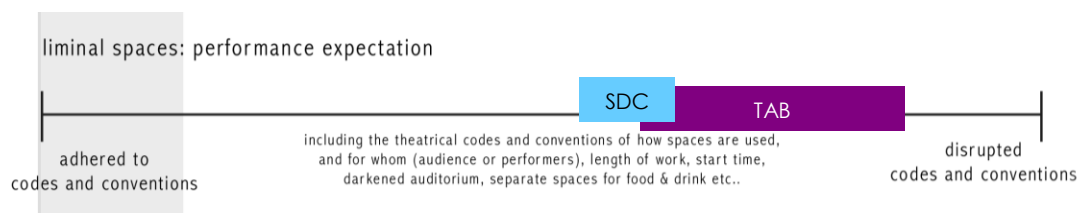
The spectators' previous relationship with these dancers had been in the proscenium arch construct where they experienced an audience-performer qualities relationship. Furthermore, in this performance relationship, the audience are physically restricted to their seat. They are expected to be sitting there before the performance begins, throughout the dance work, and – unless they offer a standing ovation – until the final curtain falls. In that traditional presentation paradigm, the performers approach and reveal themselves to the audience.

In contrast, the transitional and social corridor presented a different relationship where the spectators could, and were required to, move through the dancers in order to reach the studio site. The transitional corridor, then, became a site for several potential 'introductions' to the dancers: being in the corridor –the home – of TAB; meeting the 'dancer' socialising in the corridor; and closing the proximity between spectator and dancer. Within TAB's open rehearsal, two 'curtains' were pulled back: the performance curtain that revealed the rehearsal, and the rehearsal curtain that revealed the more personal elements of the dancer 'face'.

TAB's open rehearsal provided a second element that presented great liminality potential. The spectators left before the rehearsal had finished, with their exit point being on the other side of the dancers; therefore, the ballet mistress stopped the rehearsal in order for the spectators to leave. Where in the traditional presentation paradigm, performances are very rarely stopped mid-event, the open rehearsal presented a different convention: pausing the creative process for the spectators.

Furthermore, once the rehearsal was halted, TAB spectators then walked through the dancers while exiting. During the rehearsal, the space in the centre of the studio had been layered by the presence of the dancers, their communication, and the movements that they repeated. McKechnie (2005, 87) refers to layers of thought, action and interaction on which creative processes rely. When exiting the studio, TAB spectators moved through this invisible web, opening up possibilities of an embodied engagement in the traces of this web of the creative process. Perhaps, the spectators left their own small trace when moving through the centre of this web. This unplanned element of TAB's open rehearsal shifts the model further towards the right on the liminality scale (see Figure 27).

Figure 27: SDC & TAB's liminal spaces



5.9 Subsequent Performance Events

Both the SDC and TAB performances are firmly positioned within the traditional presentation paradigm: the performance sites are proscenium arch theatres; they adhere to performance codes and conventions; audience agency is restricted; performer-audience proximity is distanced and fixed; and the dancers present characters (TAB) and mastery of technique (SDC) on stage.

Prior to the performances, the rehearsal spectators-turned-audiences (which are referred to as the 'project audiences') met me at the box offices to collect their tickets. Many of the project

audience members chose to interact with each other: it appeared that the interpretive community that had formed during the post-rehearsal discussions developed into a social community. Interestingly, some TAB project audience members were also interested in interacting with me, suggesting that I was considered part of this community. In this instance, questions directed to me tended to relate to the research project. Other conversation topics mostly related to aspects of TAB performances they had attended in the past: narratives, choreographers, performers, and evaluations of these elements.

In Sydney Theatre, the SDC project audience were positioned toward the front of the stalls. Before the first dance work began, Bonachela welcomed the entire audience to performance. In this address, he listed the performance's dance works and encouraged the audience to stay afterwards for a post-show talk, where members of the *Emergence* creative team shared more about the dance work. Bonachela was very warm, friendly and welcoming in his address. For this welcome, Bonachela stood in front of the stage, walking through the fourth wall and into the audience's space.

During the performance there were (what I refer to as) 'waves of restlessness' throughout the audience (that is, including, but not limited to the project audience). Many audience members would re-adjust the way they sat on their seat, or cough. Once one audience member began to move or cough, others joined in this action; hence, the 'waves'. These waves started very early in the evening, approximately 15 minutes into the first dance work, and intermittently throughout the performance. This observation is interesting, because such waves of restlessness did not appear during the rehearsal. In the rehearsal, individual spectators displayed moments of restlessness, such as shifting in their seat; one spectator even checked their phone. However, these behaviours did not transpire into waves within the group during rehearsal. This might relate to the very small number of spectators in the rehearsal; perhaps

waves might have developed if they had been a bigger group. The spectators' limited sense of agency might also relate to this absence of 'waves' in the rehearsals. The project audience laughed and applauded at this performance: responses that they did not display as spectators during the rehearsal.

In the State Theatre, TAB project audience was seated at the rear of the stalls, 20 rows from the stage. Unlike the SDC performance, there was no personal introduction; however, coincidentally, TAB also held a post-show talk following the performance that featured members of the *Cinderella* creative team. Similarly, TAB project audience also laughed and applauded more at the performance, acting with greater agency at performance.

5.10 Chapter Summary

The analysis of the trialled open rehearsal model highlights elements of traditional and non-traditional engagement possibilities. Overall, the model shifts engagement possibilities towards the right of Dyson's scales. The open rehearsal's scales of site, 'performer qualities to dancer', and liminality, in particular, are the elements that offer the greatest possibilities for a rehearsal spectator experience that contrasts the traditional performance audience experience. These scales influence each other, with the studio site being the element that grounds these diverse engagement possibilities. It is the studio and its surrounds (such as the corridors) that influence other shifts on these scales.

For example, the 'face' of the working dancer can be considered an extension of the studio site, as this site's purpose is to foster this labour. The architecture of the SDC and TAB buildings presents smaller spaces, compared with the theatres, automatically reducing spectator-dancer proximity. The perceptions or expectations spectators might have of these

sites, especially those that are kept sacred (such as TAB studio), have the potential to be significantly disrupted, opening possibilities of liminal experience.

This analysis determines that several elements of the trialled open rehearsal present engagement opportunities that are distinctly different to those offered by the subsequent traditional performance experiences; that is, the rehearsal spectators are likely to experience the dancers differently. The following chapter examines spectator responses to the open rehearsals. While it is important to identify the possibilities through an analysis of the model, the spectator perspective is crucial to this study.

6. REHEARSAL SPECTATOR/PROJECT AUDIENCE RESPONSE

This chapter is dedicated to presenting the rehearsal spectators'/project audiences' voice that was offered during the focus group discussions. These discussions included a wide range of topics, including: spectator expectations of the rehearsals and performances, and their changed perceptions of the dancers. The focus group questions were open-ended so that the spectators had the freedom to discuss what was important to them. Therefore, the Sydney Dance Company (SDC) and The Australian Ballet (TAB) focus groups covered different sets of topics.

Table 1 lists all the topics discussed by the rehearsal spectators/project audiences. These topics were identified through the grounded analysis approach outlined in Chapter 3. The topics are divided into four broad categories: relationships (46.2%), experience (29.2%), meaning-making (13.5%), and the dance work/creative process (11.2%). The percentages listed in Table 1 are calculated from the total number of comments (n=349).

While the SDC and TAB spectators were provided the same number of opportunities to contribute comments (two focus group discussions per group), there is an imbalance in the number of comments. The SDC spectators represents 57.6% of the data set, while TAB spectators represents 42.4%.

Table 1*Spectator/audience comments by topic*

n=349 (SDC=201, TAB=148)

TOPIC	SDC Total (%)	TAB Total (%)	TOTAL (%)
RELATIONSHIPS			46.2
Spectator/audience role & contribution	8.3	3.7	12.0
Dancer's 'face'	8.0	4.0	12.0
Spectator/audience 'face'	1.1	6.6	7.7
Etiquette / rules	2.9	3.4	6.3
Privilege	0.9	3.2	4.0
Empathy and intimacy	0.9	1.7	2.6
Choreographer's 'face'	0.9	0.6	1.4
EXPERIENCE			29.2
Comparing work in progress to final performance	5.7	3.7	9.5
Performance qualities	4.3	3.7	8.0
Cognitive "interruptions" during performance	3.4	1.4	4.9
Wide lens view	1.7	0.6	2.3
Rehearsal qualities	2.3	0.0	2.3
Greater anticipation & appreciation	0.0	1.1	1.1
Preference of rehearsal over performance	0.9	0.3	1.1
MEANING-MAKING			13.5
Meaning-making & evaluation	11.7	1.7	13.5
DANCE WORK / CREATIVE PROCESS			11.2
Dancer's labour	2.0	4.0	6.0
Choreographic/rehearsal direction	2.6	2.6	5.2

This chapter discusses the major topics, according to total percentage.⁸⁰ The first section discusses the spectators' ideas about rehearsal qualities: the elements that felt like rehearsal, and the elements that felt like performance. Significantly, the spectators' comments, particularly those in the TAB spectator discussions, indicate an understanding of the rehearsal and dancers as sacred. Furthermore, both spectator groups communicated a perception of rehearsals being *for* dancers, and positioned themselves as unnecessary attendees.

⁸⁰ While meaning-making represents a significant portion of the total focus group discussions (13.5%), however, it is not discussed, as this area of audience reception is beyond the scope of this study.

The second section discusses the ‘face’ of the spectator/project audience, and the role that they perceived their ‘face’ to have played in the rehearsals and performances, respectively. Key elements that emerge through this section are the contrast of the anonymous audience ‘face’ and the visible rehearsal spectator: the conceptual distancing; suppressed physical agency; and, for some spectators, feelings of intrusion.

The third section discusses the dancer’s ‘face’. The spectators spoke about seeing the individuality and ‘humanness’ of the dancers in rehearsal. At the subsequent performances, the project audiences spoke about layering elements of the dancer’s ‘face’ onto the performer qualities they were observing on stage.

The final section of this chapter discusses the dancer’s labour. Like the dancer’s ‘face’, the spectators developed new understandings of the dancer’s work. While the performer qualities on stage presented highly rehearsed and polished movement sequences, the spectators developed understandings of the great amount of time and physical effort required to develop dance work. For many, these new understandings led to a new appreciation of the dancer’s labour. Through this chapter, the spectator/audience response conveys the rehearsal relationship as uncomfortable (for some spectators), pleasurable, and insightful.

6.1 Rehearsal Qualities

The open rehearsals were perceived by the spectators to be ‘authentic’ rehearsals. Therefore, the model was successful to the extent that it felt ‘authentic’. As one spectator stated:

It felt like a really authentic insight, like we’re in a movie almost. This is really what the real rehearsal would be like. It’s not like they’re putting on a rehearsal for us. It’s the real thing and that’s really authentic and that’s really valuable. (SDC Participant 2, Appendix 1)

‘Authenticity’ was perceived and valued by the spectators. This comment also draws attention to the feeling of being “in a movie”, where the rehearsal experience draws the spectator into the ‘world’ of the dancers. These experiential elements of the rehearsals, especially the reading of the ‘authentic’, and the value placed on this, highlights particular perceptions.

During the spectator discussions, the rehearsals very quickly emerged as sacred events.

Spectators expressed perceptions of the rehearsals as “private” (SDC Participant 1, Appendix 1; TAB Participant 3, Appendix 3), and “exclusive” (TAB Participant 8, Appendix 3).

According to social anthropologist Helena Wulff (2000, 150), perceiving rehearsals in this way is not unreasonable. She points out that the “ballet world is fenced with security”, where backstage areas are closely monitored (Wulff 2000, 150). This might also apply to mainstream contemporary dance companies as they perform in similar, if not the same, theatrical venues and, thus, are also closely guarded at performance.⁸¹ Some spectators furthered this perception by stating that they considered the rehearsals to be spiritual: “the spirituality between the dancers, is that almost unspoken. They hone in on each other and that’s what I mean by spirituality, it’s between them” (TAB Participant 4, Appendix 3). These private, exclusive, and spiritual perceptions of the creative process present sacred rehearsals, according to the spectators.

The spectators discussed the purpose of the rehearsals. One perception, in particular, was shared by all spectators: “For me I think the difference was the rehearsal was about them and the performance isn’t about us, but for us. Whereas the rehearsal is just for them” (TAB Participant 5, Appendix 4). This comment highlights a core perception that rehearsals are *for*

⁸¹ However, the site of rehearsals presents varying degrees of openness. As discussed in Chapter 5, SDC’s studios and closed rehearsals can be considered public to a certain extent, given the public access to the building. In contrast, TAB’s studios are closed to the public, guarded by locked doors. While a ‘fence’/sacralisation exists for both companies at theatres, sacralisation at studio sites varies.

dancers. Unlike performances, where the dancers are “performing for the audience” (SDC Participant 2, Appendix 2), the rehearsal was perceived to have a different purpose that did not necessarily include spectators.

While the rehearsal was seen to be distinctly different to performance (that is, sacred and *for* the dancers), the spectators discussed moments of rehearsal that felt like performance;⁸² for example, the solo run-through in SDC’s rehearsal (SDC Participant 11, Appendix 1). These sections appeared to be close to their final form. This completeness was attributed as a key element to the moments that felt like performance:

[. . .] some bits did seem more complete and that completion made it feel like a performance because there was no input from Rafael. There was no input from anyone else. They went, “Da da da.” They knew all the moves, everyone’s happy with the end product, “Let’s move onto the next step,” and that was very much a performance. (SDC Participant 9, Appendix 1)

The use of music emerged as an indicator that a particular movement sequence was nearing completion. As one spectator explained, the music indicates that “it’s heading towards the end product and a lot of dancing around” (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 3). However, it was pointed out that the rehearsal’s performance qualities are “not necessarily tied to the music being on because sometimes they’d [SDC dancers] have music on and they were still very much rehearsing” (SDC Participant 11, Appendix 1).

Perhaps, a more significant element that contributed to a feeling of performance was the dancers. SDC spectators discussed what they referred to as the dancers’ ‘show face’. One spectator explained:

And it’s like that’s what was happening in those sections, everyone’s switched on to, “Okay, so what we’re doing now, I know exactly what I’m doing.” And that’s when it felt like a performance, when they switched into that, you know, “Now I’m doing it right,” mode. And then it was back to that tweaking. You could see them switch on and off, particularly when the music was on you could see them switch over into

⁸² The SDC spectators discussed performance qualities more so than TAB spectators; this might have been a reflection of the different phases of the creative process.

a different mode and that's when it felt more like a performance. (SDC Participant 3, Appendix 1)

The dancers' 'show face' emerged as a significant element of the performance qualities within the rehearsal. The 'faces' of the dancers are discussed in detail below; however, it is introduced here as it is important to the spectators' perceptions of performance qualities during the rehearsals.

While these elements created the feeling of performance, at times (especially at SDC) the rehearsals, overall, felt like rehearsals. At TAB, the sound of pointe shoes, unheard in the theatre, was one element cited as a strong indicator of rehearsal: "all we could hear is the domp domp domp domp of the floor, it doesn't feel quite like a finished performance" (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 3). At SDC, while there were sections that looked close to completion and, at times, run-throughs that felt like performance, overall, "it wasn't anything finished" (SDC Participant 10, Appendix 2).

The rehearsals were perceived by the spectators as 'authentic', sacred, and *for* the dancers; at times, they also felt like performance. Without detailed knowledge of each spectator's habitus, it is not possible to identify why they experienced the rehearsals in these ways. However, similarities in their perceptions suggest that each spectator's habitus has common elements. The known shared element was their previous experiences of watching SDC or TAB performances in traditional proscenium arch theatres (over many years, for some spectators). The spectators often framed the rehearsals as a comparison to performances within the traditional presentation paradigm; this suggests that these previous performance experiences were a significant influence on their perceptions of the open rehearsals.

6.2 Spectator/Project Audience 'Face'

Entering the rehearsals emerged as a conceptual threshold where many of the spectators experienced self-consciousness. Being visible to the dancers was an unfamiliar experience for them. One spectator explained the moment their 'face' was seen by the dancers: "When we walked in the room [. . .] I recognised most of them and I thought, 'Is that a bit weird?' Because I'm used to seeing them, but not used to them seeing my face" (SDC Participant 11, Appendix 1). This comment highlights how quickly their own visibility came to the fore of the spectators' attention.

To a certain extent, audiences are anonymous in proscenium arch theatres, as the theatre's lighting, distance, and large audience size can hide an individual from the gaze of the performers. As one spectator explained; "You're just in the dark [. . .] you don't feel conspicuous or noticed in any way" (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 4). The studio presented a stark contrast. The spectator groups (made up of 9 and 13 people) sat in, comparatively, much smaller and well-lit rooms, where physical elements of their individual identity were revealed to the dancers for the first time.

While the spectators were visible to the dancers throughout the rehearsals, the TAB spectators explained that the feeling of being visible and noticed lessened as the rehearsal progressed:

I felt more noticeable in the beginning and very much less at end [. . .] So it just got more comfortable. [. . .] I definitely felt a shift that went from feeling like I was intruding to, "I am completely a part of the wallpaper now." (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 3)

Feeling invisible emerged as an important element for several TAB spectators. Being visible was linked to feelings of discomfort, while feeling invisible was more comfortable:

[. . .] when you realise that they weren't even looking at you that was about the point when you started to settle in comfortably. [. . .] you can sort of settle into your own space, sort of merge into the background. (Participant 2, Appendix 3)

Not all of TAB spectators felt that they were conceptually visible to the dancers. Rather, they perceived the dancers' focus to be absorbed by their work, by the creative process: "No, I don't think that they see you. They are just so into their zone, I don't think they see us. They don't know that we're there" (TAB Participant 5, Appendix 3).

While the dancers did notice the 'other' in the rehearsal, some spectators sensed a conceptual detachment. Overall, the 'face' of the spectators was physically visible to the dancers in rehearsal; however, the spectators' perceptions were that, conceptually, they merged into the background. However, the physically visible 'face' of the spectators was significant to the role that they played in the rehearsals. Like the qualities of the rehearsal itself, the spectators' perceptions of their role was inherently shaped by their habitus and, likely, by previous performance experiences with these companies.

The spectators were very definite about their role as audience in performance. Most significantly, they believed that the performance needed someone to play the role of audience:

I think with the performance you know you're meant to be there, the whole place is there to watch them [. . .] (SDC Participant 1, Appendix 2)

You know you're supposed to be here [in the theatre]. The show is being put on for the audience. (TAB Participant 8, Appendix 4)

A sense of belonging to the performance, and having importance in this construct, emerged as significant elements that contrasted the spectators' perceptions of their role in the rehearsals. This perception is supported by Conner's (2013, 37) assertion that feeling needed is important for audiences, as "[e]motionally and intellectually, people engage [. . .] when they have the sense that they, too, are an element of what makes the gears work".

In contrast, the spectators placed themselves as an unnecessary 'other' in the rehearsals. The clarity of purpose and role that they experienced during performances prior to the research

project did not carry over to rehearsals, suggesting that the ‘otherness’ that they experienced changed between rehearsal and performance. The following excerpt from the SDC post-performance discussion highlights this distinction:

- P2 [. . .] they need an audience for a performance. They didn’t need us the other day, a few weeks ago, but for a performance it’s a lot better if there’s an audience.
- I And do you think it’s important to feel needed?
- P4 [. . .] Yeah, I suppose in the rehearsal I felt like a bit in their space and I’m not sure whether we were following the right protocol and were they really entirely happy with us being there. This is just speculation. And then in the performance there is none of that that enters your mind. You’ve got your role as the audience and you see what they do.
- I Thanks Participant 4.
- P8 They kind of shine in the show and you’re just there. It’s not your time to shine. It’s their job. (Appendix 2)

The spectators described that their role in the rehearsals was to be a “fly on the wall” (SDC Participant 2, Appendix 1), “to observe” (SDC Participant 7, Appendix 1), and to take a conceptually removed ‘peek’ into the creative process. This conceptual distance, jarred with the close physical proximity of the rehearsal; several spectators reported feeling as though they were “intruding” on the rehearsals (TAB Participant 4, Appendix 3; TAB Participant 3, Appendix 3; SDC Participant 5, Appendix 1). This feeling of intrusion, however, was much stronger among TAB spectators. These spectators had very clear perceptions that they were intruding:

We’re intruding in their space. (TAB Participant 4, Appendix 3)

Because I think it’s like what you said with hallowed ground, it’s just not done in a rehearsal studio [spectators observing]. It’s just tradition, I don’t know what it is but that’s the way it is. (TAB Participant 5, Appendix 4)

The conviction in these comments indicates strong influences on habitus. In this case, TAB Participant 5 confirmed their perception of the studio as sacred and “hallowed ground”.

TAB spectators stated that their feeling of intrusion was linked to being visible, being seen by the dancers:

- P2 Can I just say very quickly, I wouldn't feel that intrusive if I was watching them rehearse through a one way mirror, where they couldn't see me. That was it. If they couldn't see me.
- P3 Or even the kids that were looking through the window. That's just a step more anonymous.
- I So there was something about being in the same four walls?
- P2 In the space, yeah. Seeing them see us so visibly. (Appendix 4)

According to these spectators, their own visibility caused intrusion. This link is, perhaps, explained by a fear of interrupting or distracting the dancers. When discussing their in/actions, TAB spectators explained that rehearsals call for different conventions because the dance work is in development:

- I Why did you feel like you couldn't applaud or giggle?
- P3 Because you don't want to interrupt their process.
Some audience members speak simultaneously.
- P6 You don't want to be distracting, that's it exactly.
- I And is that the general consensus? About not wanting to distract?
"Yeah" from some participants. Some participants speak simultaneously.
- P5 Respect for their talents.
- P1 And you don't want to distract them because it is a rehearsal.
Some participants speak simultaneously.
- P1 It is the rehearsal. [. . .] when you're in that process, even very, very early on, they're still finding out and developing the character and developing how they want to express themselves. You don't want to, I won't say not show appreciation, but that is a very personal and intimate thing that we got to witness.
- P4 And he was creating a new ballet.
- P1 Yeah, so you feel like you want to take that one step back, remove yourself. [. . .] I'm not going to draw any further attention to myself.

P3 As well that they were having a lot of non-verbal communication, so to suddenly interrupt with sound and noise would have been just breaking what seemed to be some sort of telepathy that's going on. (Appendix 4)

This excerpt from TAB's post-performance discussion highlights that these spectators perceived a clear distinction between rehearsal and performance conventions. Their conversation portrays a fear of "interrupting" the creative process. Taking a conceptual step back, therefore, became a core element of the spectators' interaction with the rehearsal.

While most TAB spectators experienced this feeling of intrusion, there were a few who did not: "I don't feel like I was intruding either. These are people that have probably been looked at a lot while dancing over the years and critiqued and all of that" (TAB Participant 7, Appendix 3). Spectators who felt this way, rationalised the situation and concluded that their presence in the rehearsals was not unusual for the dancers.

In contrast, the SDC spectators momentarily questioned whether they were intruding and, instead, were more focused on not being acknowledged by the dancers. One spectator explained:

I felt we didn't acknowledge them. There was no kind of greeting, so I thought that we were there but I wasn't quite sure if it was okay with everyone. That was just initially and then I relaxed into it. (SDC Participant 4, Appendix 1)

The SDC rehearsal was not perceived as sacred to the significant extent that TAB spectators perceived it to be. While both SDC and TAB spectators felt that their role was as observers at a conceptual distance from the creative process, SDC spectators did not experience the acute feelings of intrusion that many of the TAB spectators did.

Despite contrasting perceptions about whether the spectators were intruding, both groups questioned whether their presence affected the dancers, and, subsequently, the creative process; whether the dancers were behaving normally. The following spectator comments consider whether the dancers were putting on another 'show':

[. . .] but from an observers point of view I felt like I was an observer and I did wonder whether their behaviour was different because we were in the room. And I wondered whether they were on special behaviour or whether they were being as they normally would be. (SDC Participant 11, Appendix 1)

I wonder how often they would have that many people sitting in a row in a practice session. I mean, when they perform on stage I'm sure it's fairly black out there and they're not seeing eight people just right in their faces. So I wonder, if any effect that was. (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 3)

While these comments questioned authenticity, the following comment from a SDC spectator indicates that they perceived a strong sense of performance from the dancers at the beginning of the open rehearsal:

I felt there was a moment in the very first couple of minutes where we had all walked in and they did that first group performance and they were all into it, it wasn't what they would do on the night, but some of them felt like they were performing to us so they were acting up a little bit towards us. It was performing in a way and I found that quite interesting. You know, "We've got these new people in the room," and they were, kind of, doing it to us and then they relaxed back into their rehearsal. (SDC Participant 5, Appendix 1)

These perspectives, and TAB spectators' earlier fears of interrupting the rehearsal, highlight an acknowledgement by the spectators that their position within the rehearsals could be influential; that the presence of spectators could affect which 'face' of the dancers is shown. Given these possibilities of such influence, the spectators' enacted an extremely physically passive role to avoid this.

During the rehearsals, the spectators – particularly the SDC spectators – were, for the most part, still and silent. Although TAB spectators appeared more comfortable in the rehearsal, their kinaesthetic responses, like those of the SDC spectators, were much smaller than those during the performance. One spectator's explanation for this deliberately limited physicality is particularly illuminating:

If I make one flinch they're [dancers] going to pick up on it. Very fine-tuned. (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 3)

I would shudder to think that my presence was in any way going to disturb them. (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 3)

In the performances, the project audiences were observed giggling, laughing, and applauding generously. As rehearsals spectators, however, both TAB and SDC groups appeared to limit their responses to the dancers, and their general rehearsal behaviour was significantly subdued. First, no spectators applauded. Second, when they did smile or giggle, it was often after the dancers had already begun to do so (often in response to a humorous moment). The spectators report that while they were cognitively and emotionally engaged with the rehearsal (as discussed below), they restricted their kinaesthetic responses.

For example, SDC Participant 3 reported: “There was [. . .] an awkward moment when they [the dancers] would clap, I think with Natalie’s [Allen] solo. They clapped and I wanted to do it as well” (SDC Participant 3, Appendix 1). In this particular example, the dancer, Allen, had run a solo for the first time with music, while the rest of the dancers, choreographer, and rehearsal spectators observed. On the completion of her solo the dancers applauded Allen, showing their appreciation; however, despite wanting to join in the applause, at least some spectators refrained. Both rehearsal spectator groups indicated that they experienced moments like this during the rehearsals. This suggests that applause, an established sign of appreciation from audience to performer, is an element of their habitus that emerged during the open rehearsals. Fear of disrupting the sacred rehearsal, however, overpowered the spectators’ desire to show appreciation to the dancers in this way. They limited their interaction with the dancers and, thus, restricted opportunities to directly communicate to them.

Similarly, laughter emerged as another key aspect of the spectators’ habitus, as an action through which they could communicate ‘resonance’ with an aspect of performance:

[. . .] there was certain moments where there was that little snigger from the audience because there was just one slight gesture, one slight movement that was done by one of the performers that resonated with people and they felt like they were in a comfortable space and they could do that. There was a couple of times I would have loved to do that in the rehearsal room but I just don’t think it would have gone down as well. [. . .] it’s almost, I won’t say expected [at performance], but

those little giggles, that applause in certain sections: you can't do that in the rehearsal. (TAB Participant 1, Appendix 4)

Like applause, the rehearsal spectators experienced moments during the rehearsals where they would have enjoyed laughing to some degree. This perception, that laughing would not have “gone down well”, could have been an accurate assumption; however, it remains an assumption as no spectators actually responded in this way.

On the other hand, spectators identified applause and laughter as important kinaesthetic aspects of habitus. These actions provide a kinaesthetic outlet, a “release”, for the project audiences during performance, and affirm their active role as audience:

[. . .] that release of applauding or laughing or whatever it is that you were able to do in the theatre, it's much more satisfying even though, frankly, you're just a sea of clapping hands. It's still something to show your excitement, your appreciation. Whereas you couldn't do that in the rehearsal. (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 4)

When you go and see it, like we did this evening [performance], yes you can have that release, you can have that degree of comfort because it is allowable, it is acceptable. (TAB Participant 1, Appendix 4)

Responding with laughter and applause added to the project audience's performance experiences. It was identified as a means of communicating with the dancers, and as a “satisfying” aspect of performance.

The spectator discussions indicated that, despite this discomfort and, more generally, their suppressed physical and expressive agency, attending the rehearsals was also a privilege.

I think we all appreciated how lucky we were, because we're all fans of the arts in some way so we appreciate how fortunate we were to have this experience today. (TAB Participant 6, Appendix 3)

I just thought, “Oh, I'm so lucky I got to see something developing and then to see this incredible sort of, wow.” Just sort of took you over. Yeah, it was just a sense of, “Aren't I fortunate that I got to do that,” sort of thing. It's very rare to be able to see behind the scenes. (SDC Participant 4, Appendix 2)

Yeah, it was kind of intruding on the process, I think, in that rehearsal part but that was a privilege too, and wonderful to see that side of it. (TAB Participant 4, Appendix 4)

This element of the spectators' response reflects a general excitement about, and interest in the open rehearsals that many felt. Indeed, the word "privilege" was used 19 times throughout the spectator/audience discussions. Terms such as "fortunate" (SDC Participant 4, Appendix 2; TAB Participant 6, Appendix 3; TAB Participant 5, Appendix 4) and "lucky" (SDC Participant 4, Appendix 2; TAB Participant 4, Appendix 3; TAB Participant 7, Appendix 3) were also used to further emphasise this sense of privilege. Discussing privilege was particularly prevalent in TAB spectator discussions; to the extent where they were asked to speak about aspects beyond the privilege of the experience.

By stepping into the rehearsals, the SDC and TAB spectators introduced their physical faces to the dancers for the first time: an uncomfortable role for some. It appears that the rehearsal spectators were considerably more comfortable playing the role of audience during performance. The audience, as 'other', makes itself known to the performer qualities on stage through aural responses, such as laughter and applause; however, the physical face of the audience 'other' is anonymous. The reverse is true for the SDC and TAB open rehearsals; the physical face of the spectator 'other' was their main presence. This 'face' did not enact the same responses of laughter and applause. In other words, the rehearsal spectator 'other' is known by their visible face, not by their physical reactions.

6.3 Dancer's 'Face'

While the project audience had formerly experienced performer qualities at performances, the open rehearsals introduced the 'face' of the dancer:

I think in the rehearsal they seemed like people [. . .] they were much more anonymous in the, I felt, in the performance whereas in the rehearsal you could see

who they were and that they were people and individuals [. . .] (SDC Participant 7, Appendix 2)

The spectators observed that this ‘face’ was distinctly different to the performer qualities they were familiar with. The ‘face’ of the dancer was “normal”:

I was struck by how normal they seemed. [. . .] I thought, “Oh wow. They’re going to be fantastic in their final performance but right now, today, they look very normal.” Their expressions and their interaction to each other and, yeah, a little bit of what Participant 5 was saying that they just seem so normal. I thought, “Oh wow.” (SDC Participant 1, Appendix 1)

And I think when you watch ballet performances, because they get so into their characters, you forget that you know the people playing the part have their own personalities as well. Another thing I found with being so close is that you notice what size they are in real life. Because when they are on stage they have the beautiful lines and everything looks flawless and they just, I don’t know, you just don’t think of them as a normal person. You don’t think to size them up in that sort of way, and just seeing how tiny Madeline [Eastoe] was, probably about my height, they look quite different. (TAB Participant 8, Appendix 3)

Furthermore, the ‘face’ of the dancer experienced “actual emotions”:

I was just going to say, in terms of sitting so close, it was quite enjoyable for the rehearsal to sit so close because they didn’t have their, kind of, show face on. So you actually got to see their actual emotions as they were doing it and when they stuffed something up they laughed and when they, you know, were really getting into it you could see it on their faces. So you’re quite privileged to see the facial expressions that you don’t get to see at the performance. (SDC Participant 5, Appendix 1)

Observing the dancers in the rehearsal context transformed them into dancers with ‘human’ quirks and qualities. Where, before the open rehearsals, the spectators knew the dancers through the performer qualities they observed on stage, the open rehearsals introduced “real” personalities and emotions. This ‘humanness’ can be considered a universal community in which all people are insiders. In the comment above, TAB Participant 8 even likened Principal Dancer Madeline Eastoe to herself. In doing so, this spectator identified an element of sameness between this dancer and themselves. This realisation of sameness inevitably alters the spectator positionality; TAB Participant 8 moved toward communion, but, overall, still retained an ‘otherness’.

Specifically, the close proximity of the rehearsals presented opportunities for the spectators to see the dancers' bodies and facial expressions in detail. While the conceptual 'face' of the dancer was revealed, physical details, unseen in the theatre, were also revealed:

For me it was about the focus on the details. So for example, Charmene [Yap], one of the dancers that I've seen in a number of things and she's an incredible dancer, just to be able to see her close up, see the process she's going through and see how her limbs move and see that intimate detail of all the body movements. It's just an amazing experience that you don't get very often. So while in the theatre when you're seeing the whole thing I think it is maybe a bit better to be further away, but when we're looking at fragments it's just that opportunity we've got. This time is a unique experience. (SDC Participant 7, Appendix 1)

The open rehearsal enabled SDC Participant 7 to get closer to a dancer (Charmene Yap) that they admired. Even though there was no direct interaction between the spectator and the dancer, seeing the finer details of Yap's body, and observing the way that she participated in the rehearsal process was a valuable experience.

After the rehearsals, the spectators discussed emotional connections to the dancers in the form of positive affect toward the 'human face' of the dancer, empathising with this 'face', and expressing further interest in the dancers. While the dancers revealed their 'human face', the spectators developed positive feelings toward this 'humanness':

Something that I really liked from there [the rehearsal] was how they [the dancers] show their appreciation for each other and also, sitting on the end [of the row of seats], you can kind of hear them chatting amongst themselves a bit and hear the nice comments they have. I think even, as they were finishing up, one of them said, "Your last arabesque was fantastic." I thought, "No one says that to me at the end of the day at work." [. . .] It was very nice to see that level of interaction and the nature of that interaction with them as well. [. . .] it raised the enjoyment for me as well, to see how much they enjoy working with each other. (SDC Participant 2, Appendix 1)

This spectator had clearly formed positive feelings for the dancers in response to the interactions that they had witnessed during the rehearsals. These interactions, again, are not seen at performances, as the dancer is concealed on stage by performer qualities.

Emotional responses also emerged. Some spectators spoke about experiencing emotions on behalf of dancers:

[. . .] when it seemed like one of the dancers was cut from the fight scene and told that, “You’re not wanted anymore,” and then responded, you know, “You’re the boss,” or words to that effect [. . .] I felt uncomfortable having watched that and [. . .] sympathetic for him. (SDC Participant 5, Appendix 1).

I couldn’t help feeling how I would feel if that were me. [. . .] I couldn’t help it because you put yourself into it, I don’t know, it crosses your mind, how would I feel if, you know, a group came in. (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 3)

In these examples, the spectators perceived and felt negative experiences on the dancers’ behalf, thus making an empathetic connection with them. In another example, the spectator developed genuine concern that the dancer’s work might be “unravelling” by the changes to choreography:

I actually did start to get a bit worried for them, because, particularly for the trio up in the corner there, they seemed to have it down so perfectly and then they started changing things around and I’m thinking, “What if the whole thing unravels?” [. . .] I really started to get worried that it would all fall to pieces for them with all the different changes that were happening. So that was just how I was getting involved. (SDC Participant 10, Appendix 1)

The rehearsal experience of these spectators developed beyond conceptual engagement and into genuine emotional connections, not with the performer qualities that were being developed, but with the dancers as ‘humans’. SDC Participant 10 (quoted above) even states that this was how they were “getting involved”. An empathetic involvement – that is, feeling for the dancers – became part of some spectators’ rehearsal experience.

Furthermore, this interest in the dancers extended beyond the rehearsal, and the spectators discussed an interest in learning more about their ‘humanness’:

You feel like you kind of want to get to know something about them as people. [. . .] this opens up a whole new avenue of interest in them. (SDC Participant 10, Appendix 1)

I think that, maybe, seeing more of the dancer’s life [would be interesting], because when you go to a show you don’t think, “Oh, that’s real life.” But since you see them, coming in here for one hour, and think, “What do they do for the rest of their life, for the rest of the day?” You want to find out what they’re doing, apart from this [. . .] (SDC Participant 8, Appendix 1)

The latter comment acknowledges that the spectators do not perceive the onstage performer qualities as the ‘real life’ version of the dancers. One aim of performance is to provide opportunities for escapism for audiences (Swanson, Davis and Zhao 2007, 3). Perhaps, the spectators’ lack of consideration for what dancers do off stage (prior to the open rehearsals) is one example of how successfully the theatre site and performance event cognitively separate the audience from the dancers’ everyday lives. This introduction to the ‘face’ of the dancer arose as a significant element of positive interest in the open rehearsals.

The spectators also spoke about developing understandings of the dancers. Some of these understandings were superficial, such as the fact that without matching make-up, hair and costumes, ballerinas do not look identical. Other understandings were more innate, such as learning aspects of each dancer’s individual personality: “I think you got to know them. [. . .] In the rehearsal you feel like you've got a little bit of what their story is” (SDC Participant 4, Appendix 2).

Just as the spectators developed positive feelings toward the dancers, they also began to develop understanding of who they were, as if they began to “get to know” them. The individual personalities of the partners in TAB’s rehearsal are described by one spectator:

One of the couples, they were just really cheeky. They were having such a fun time and very playful. Madeline [Eastoe] and Kevin [Jackson], yeah. And then there was one couple that was very serious, quite studious. They each had their own personalities and I think they were matched up pretty well that way, apart from physicality. Like Participant 8 said, they nearly all had the human quirks and some of them fooled around and having slips and falls and things like that. It was very natural. (TAB Participant 2, Appendix 3)

This spectator came to understand Eastoe and Jackson as “playful”, while they considered some of their colleagues to be “studious”. These, and other, perceived understandings of the ‘face’ of the dancer can be considered insider knowledge, as the dancers’ personalities are a backstage, behind-the-scenes element that does not necessarily appear on stage.

The emotional connection that was developed during the rehearsals continued at performance:

I think I appreciated tonight's performance more having seen those people in the rehearsal because I could recognise them. Because I could identify with them it seemed more personal. "I've seen you working hard and I can really be happy for you and appreciate that you've achieved it." It's to do with their sense of achievement maybe: they pulled it off. (SDC Participant 1, Appendix 2)

These comments highlight a perceived sameness, where the project audience member "identified with" the dancers.

Experiencing the 'face' of the dancer influenced the way in which the rehearsal spectators experienced the performer qualities as audience members at subsequent performances. In the post-performance discussions, the project audiences spoke about remembering elements of the dancer's 'face' while seeing their performer qualities on stage. They saw both the 'face' of the dancer ('human'), and the 'face' of the performer qualities (character or embodied emotion).

Theatre audience researcher Bruce McConachie refers to this phenomenon – an audience's shifting and mixing of states – as "blending", and posits that when the audience is engaged with both the actor and character, they "live in the blend" (McConachie 2008, 43). This concept is drawn from Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner's concept of blending within the actor. Fauconnier and Turner (2002, 265) suggest that the power of dramatic performance is when the actor blends with the character into one identity. McConachie develops this theory by placing the act of blending within the spectator rather than the performer. The audience blends by taking knowledge from three mental concepts: qualities from the "actor" (or dancer); knowledge about the "character"; and the cognitive concept of "identity" (McConachie 2008, 42).

The project audiences experienced multiple ‘faces’ of the dancers at performance, where the ‘face’ of the dancer was blending with the performer qualities on stage. One rehearsal spectator explained:

I think you felt more of a connection, you know, you remember that that person was making a joke or that one smiled a lot or whatever. So yeah, I think it did give you a different kind of connection or, kind of, intimacy with the performers. (TAB Participant 6, Appendix 4)

I felt that it [rehearsal] changed what I was viewing tonight. [. . .] seeing their personalities had carried over a little bit as well. So who I was interested in, who I was paying attention to, who I liked or didn’t like had been changed by seeing them in rehearsal. (SDC Participant 5, Appendix 2)

Even though the dancers presented performer qualities on stage, the rehearsal spectator-turned-audiences’ experience of their performance was affected by the relationships that they had developed during rehearsal. The performer qualities that the project audiences saw on stage were filtered, and changed, by their memories of the dancers they came to know in rehearsal.

Furthermore, one project audience member stated that the dancer’s voice formed part of the blend they experienced during performance: “For some of them I could still hear their voices while they were dancing. So when they spotlight was on them I was hearing what they were saying” in the rehearsal (SDC Participant 5, Appendix 2). This intriguing comment illustrates how the echo of the dancer’s voice added new layers of meaning to the performance. The insider knowledge of the ‘face’ of the dancer changed the way the project audiences read the performance. While these comments do not suggest that the project audiences felt part of the dancers’ community, their new knowledge of this community positioned them somewhere between insiders and outsiders. The open rehearsals provided an opportunity for the spectators to meet the ‘face’ of the dancer. Through this meeting, new understandings of the dancers developed, and, subsequently, these understandings framed the way in which the project audiences viewed the performer qualities on stage.

6.4 Dancer's Labour

While the rehearsal spectators had previous experiences of the dancer's labour on stage, this labour is, like the dancer's 'face', presented with performer qualities. The effort of performing the dance work is hidden. Furthermore, the work of the creative process precedes performance. The rehearsals presented opportunities for the spectators to learn of the dancer's labour during the creative process, and before movement was mastered:

What struck me was just the physicality of the rehearsal. It's one thing to see the finished performance but to see how physically labour intensive it obviously is for the rehearsal process [. . .] they just [go] over and over and over and over again. Whereas if it has of been me I would have gone for about five minutes and said, "Sod this. I'm off to the pub." (TAB Participant 1, Appendix 3)

The focus group discussions highlighted elements of the dancer's labour in which they began to form perceptions and understandings of the role of the dancers in rehearsal; the physical effort required; communication between dancers; and rehearsal politics. The discussions also included positive affect towards these efforts. A greater appreciation of the dancer's labour, and further interest in the dancer's labour developed.

While the rehearsal spectators did not claim to leave the rehearsals with a complete or in-depth understanding of the creative processes they observed, they did discuss new understandings of the dancer's role in this process. One spectator described their understanding of how TAB's dancers contribute to the choreography:

I think it's a collaborative, organic and collaborative, process between the choreographer and the dancers and from my understanding it is because this is a new production. It's almost like he's drafting it out right now and the dancers are helping him. He'll say, "That one's good." The dancers could suggest some movements that he might take on a vice versa. It's not him with just a set manuscript. (TAB Participant 2, Appendix 3)

Similarly, a SDC spectator also discussed the dancer's role as assisting the choreographer:

It's [creative process] clearly not dictatorial, but at some point it's Rafael's choreography so there must be something that is all his and then, you know, then it all comes together with everybody else's input. (SDC Participant 3, Appendix 1)

These new understandings of the creative process provided a different lens for the project audiences to view the resulting dance works:

I would say that seeing that practice session and then seeing it on the stage and seeing just how very tiny a part it was [that we saw being rehearsed], that brought into perspective how much work that they must put in. (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 4)

In the post-rehearsal discussions, some spectators discussed their predictions about how the creative processes might develop:

And between now and when it is actually produced, that could be refined further and further. On the night we might not see anything of what they just did. (TAB Participant 2, Appendix 3)

Prior to the open rehearsals, the creative process was completely unknown to the spectators.

Although the rehearsal content varied between companies, both spectator groups observed the choreographers and dancers work through technical aspects of the movement; aspects such as negotiating the optimum grip to achieve a lift, or discussing nuances of particular movements. As one spectator noted: "I'm quite keen to see how they work out that last lift that they didn't quite have down yet and see how that turns out in the final production" (SDC Participant 5, Appendix 1). In this case, the spectator's interest in the technical elements of the movement was so strong that they indicated that they would look for some of the technical aspects during the performance.

Another spectator was interested in the rehearsal process itself, and in how the dancers worked both separately and collaboratively: "they all just come together in front of you. And that's incredible to see, this random movement all of a sudden become so synchronised. I found it fascinating" (TAB Participant 1, Appendix 3). The seemingly "random" actions in the studio were actually interconnected, and the way these actions came together drew TAB

Participant 1's attention. The open rehearsals provided spectators the opportunity to see and discover the technical aspects of dance work that are concealed by the highly-rehearsed, polished versions that appear on stage; that is, the aspects only known to insiders. Observing and developing understanding of the creative process, and the dancer's labour in it, was a pleasurable element for many of the spectators. Indeed, some spectators were prepared, if necessary, to choose open rehearsals over performances, thus, positioning open rehearsals as a particularly valuable experience.

The dancers' non-verbal communication was another point of interest to the spectators. The dancers studied each other to learn about movement mechanics, dynamics, and sequences:

[. . .] certainly something I picked up, was the amount of eye contact the individual dancers had not just with the choreographer but with the other dancers because even though maybe they've stopped or paused for thirty seconds, they're watching how somebody else is doing it, and they're picking up on that [. . .] they're just grasping every idea almost instantaneously and then translating that back [. . .] (TAB Participant 1, Appendix 3)

[. . .] huge level of unspoken communication that was going on between partners, between the choreographer [and dancers], they just didn't need to speak. (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 3)

It was all done in silence from here, communicating to the other people in here, and I just can't understand how people are capable of doing that. I'm in awe of their talent. (TAB Participant 4, Appendix 4)

Interestingly, the SDC spectators even discussed their perceptions of rehearsal politics:

Especially with the one person that was told, "No, we don't want you. That's it." I know he's a new dancer and, in my mind, I'm going, "Hmm, are they testing you out now to see what you're capable of?" (SDC Participant 9, Appendix 1)

Seeing just the politics [. . .] brutal is not the right word, but it's kind of, "You're not right for this so I'm going to do this [change dancers] and see how it goes." So it's very, kind of, direct. (SDC Participant 5, Appendix 1)

Although the SDC spectators did not know what to expect before entering the rehearsal, this political aspect of the dancer-choreographer relationship was very surprising, and even confronting, for some. Some spectators felt uncomfortable with watching dancers being swapped in and out of particular roles. This aspect presented a dichotomy: the dancer-

choreographer relationship was both uncomfortable and “fascinating” to watch (SDC Participant 5, Appendix 1).

Although there were several aspects of the rehearsal that the spectators developed an understanding of, the SDC spectators, in particular, articulated that the SDC open rehearsal did not reveal elements of the early phases of the creative process that they were interested in:

P3 I think seeing that initial,

P2 The timeline.

P3 that starting point of the creative process.

P10 Exactly, yes.

P3 I think that would be really interesting to see how it’s introduced and, “This is where I want to take it.” You know, does he sit them all down over a big breakfast and talk about it and come back next week and then, you know, “Show us your ideas”, kind of thing? How does that inception actually happen?

P6 [. . .] I was thinking about the initial stage as well, like, for me it felt like you’d show them a video of something similar.

Laughter.

P6 I couldn’t even imagine verbalising those kinds of moves, so I felt like it would have to be something visual, like you’d have to demonstrate or show them a video. Although I can understand, sure there is lingo to explain those moves, but yeah.

I Thank you Participant 6.

P5 I’d have to agree with both of those in the sense of how you, the weeks leading up to this, how you get to the point where you have different groups in the same room, some dancing to music, other people going off their own timing. And it’s interacting, knowing the piece well enough that they don’t need the music and they can count in time. I think it’s just amazing but, I think you mentioned before, wanting to know what’s the daily schedule? How is it, is it a couple of sessions of a day? How is the daily life of the dancer and the dance company? How does that work and that side of things. That’s what I’d like to know about as well. (Appendix 1)

As stated above, the SDC spectators observed established movements being tweaked, whereas TAB spectators observed movement being introduced and developed with the dancers for the first time. Observing the initial introduction of the movement to the dancers

was significant in developing an understanding of the creative process, as this was a significant area of interest and query for the SDC audience. The rehearsal spectators also expressed interest in understanding the purpose of each movement section in the broader dance work, the daily life and schedule of the dancers, and even the choreographic concept.

As a result of this new understanding of the dancer's labour, some project audience members experienced a significant shift in their perception of the subsequent performances, in regards to the labour that is required:

And I don't know if you would automatically think that, if you go to just any performance, whether it would occur to you just how intense, and how many hours and hours and hours, because we sat there for one hour to see that tiny thing, and it wasn't even properly polished or perfected or finished. So I think you gain a huge perspective seeing that. (TAB Participant 3, Appendix 4)

The degree of appreciation I've [now] got for the sheer effort that's obviously gone into being able to keep, you know, and to be able to stay on stage for that period of time [. . .] (TAB Participant 1, Appendix 4)

Developing an understanding of the process involved in creating and rehearsing a dance work emerged as a significant outcome of the open rehearsal for the spectators. This contributed to a greater appreciation of the performance:

And that was the interesting thing. But apart from that I think seeing the rehearsal makes it so much more impressive when you see the final product. To see that in all of its stunning glamour and its professionalism and to have seen, basically, half a dozen people in tracksuits six weeks beforehand. (TAB Participant 1, Appendix 4)

The open rehearsals revealed elements of the creative process that were previously unknown to these non-expert spectators. The 'face' of the performer qualities that is present on stage hides both the 'face' of the dancer and the dancer's labour. Revealing this labour led to insider knowledge of the creative process, which developed into a greater appreciation of the performer qualities.

6.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the voice of the rehearsal spectators/project audiences. Key elements that emerged from the focus group discussions are the qualities of the rehearsal; the spectator/project audience's 'face'; the spectator's role in rehearsal; the dancer's 'face'; and the dancer's labour. The spectators spoke positively about, and some even empathised with, elements relating to the dancers.

The open rehearsals facilitated new spectator understandings and relationships with the dancers and creative processes. These understandings and relationships contributed to more meaningful and fulfilling performance experiences. What emerged as one of the most interesting aspects of the discussions was the tension that the rehearsal spectators felt; while they found pleasure in peeking into the 'dancer's world' and absorbing insider knowledge, for many, the perceived sacredness of the rehearsal inhibited the spectators, and, in many ways, suppressed their outward expression of this pleasure.

7. THE 'INSIDER-OTHER' RELATIONSHIP

Beyond ticket sales and subscription commitments, what is it that we are seeking from the intimate exchange at the core of the artist/arts event/audience triad? For many arts workers, the answer is simple: We want to connect. We want our audiences to respond both emotionally and intellectually to our work. We want our audiences to happily partake in the nuance and complexity of our artistic endeavour. We want them, finally, to revel in this meaningful exchange between one human and another. (Conner 2013, 97)

This study examines the open rehearsal as a point of meeting between spectator and dancer, and how relationships formed through rehearsals can shape audience engagement during performance. The research questions, as stated in Chapter 1, consider: the nature of the relationship between spectator and dancer in open rehearsals; and how open rehearsals can shape subsequent performance relationships between spectators-turned-audience and performer/dance work.

This chapter discusses the research findings and proposes that the trialled open rehearsal model fostered a spectator-dancer relationship, where the spectators' position shifted toward some insider knowledge, while still retaining an 'otherness', alike to performance audiences; that is, 'insider-otherness'. The studio site and rehearsal 'authenticity' are discussed as key elements which fostered this relationship.

The Sydney Dance Company (SDC) and The Australian Ballet (TAB) rehearsal spectators experienced another shift in their engagement when they became an audience at the subsequent performances. Their previous relationship as 'insider-others' in rehearsal added new layers to their performance experiences.

7.1 From *In* and *With* to 'Insider-others'

The creative process for ballet and contemporary dance is inherently quasi-public, as choreographers, more often than not, use dancers in the creation of dance work (Hodes 1989, 13). At its core, the creative process is a “complex dynamic system” (McKechnie 2005, 87) that relies on several layers of thought, action, and interaction between choreographer and dancers which, over time, contribute to the growth of a dance work (McKechnie 2005, 87). While the choreographer ultimately guides rehearsals (McKechnie 2005, 88), the creative process draws on the dancers’ interpretation and transformation of movement as it is performed by their own unique bodies (McKechnie 2002 quoted in McKechnie 2005, 87). What occurs in the rehearsal studio is constant negotiation between choreographer and dancers through the visual, kinaesthetic, auditory, spatial, and temporal memory and judgement (Grove 2005, 44).

Rehearsal spectators are afforded the opportunity to engage with this dynamic system. Where at the SDC and TAB performances the dancers took on performer qualities, and were precisely rehearsed, the creative processes presented the ‘face’ of the dancers in a process of action, interaction and reflection. The spectators were interested in how the dancers communicated through their actions and interactions:

Well just watching his [Ratmansky’s] thought processes as it’s going through and he’s obviously watching the different couples, and their technique, and also putting that all together and how they work together. That’s what I felt anyway. I just found that absolutely amazing to watch that process and you could almost see the thoughts that were happening in his head. (TAB Participant 4, Appendix 3)

Furthermore, through these creative processes, the individuality of each dancer’s ‘face’ and labour was brought to the fore. Prior to the open rehearsals, the SDC and TAB spectators did not necessarily have any knowledge of rehearsals. Not only did they learn about rehearsal qualities and the dancer’s ‘face’ and labour, the ‘humanness’ of the dancers, in particular,

was also recognisable. Thus, the knowledge developed during rehearsal, while limited, shifted the spectators from outsiders (with little or no knowledge of rehearsals) to insider-outsiders, as they developed some knowledge through observing the dancers.⁸³ The ‘humanness’ of the dancers was an element that particularly interested the spectators. It also became a commonality between spectator and dancer, as ‘human’ elements of the dancers highlighted sameness between the spectators and dancers.

The SDC and TAB spectators engaged with the dancers in visceral ways. Some spectators empathised with the dancers, some problem-solved movement issues (SDC Participant 2 and 10, Appendix 1), some even lurched forward in what seemed to be an attempt to catch a dancer. These are examples of the spectators enacting and merging into the creative process to some extent. Fraleigh (1987, 62) conceives such immersion, in performances, as a communion between audience ‘other’ and dancer. While a communion occurs in rehearsal, it is inherently different from the communion that is framed by performance, as it occurs in a real life situation.

In addition to the spectators’ cognitive and affective immersion in the rehearsals, their physicality also drew them into the creative process. Their presence in the studios, and their “social” proximity (Hall 1966) to the dancers presented this opportunity. Kinaesthetic empathy theorists state: “When we watch a sequence of dance, we are, to some extent, dancing the dance as well” (Stevens, Malloch, McKechnie 1999, 61 quoted in Grove 2005, 48). ‘Dancing’, in this sense, is particularly relevant for rehearsal spectators. As Ballet BC (Vancouver) Artistic Director Emily Molnar (personal interview, 28 August 2014) explained:

⁸³ While this study maps the spectators’ relationship shifts as a group, naturally, not every individual experienced the same amount of shift. Further research is required to generate more specific mapping of these shifts on an individual level. This study merely argues that there was a shift towards insider-outsider positionality within the groups.

It's a big rush when you have a dancer running towards you [in the studio] doing enormous turns and jumps. It's a very dynamic experience. You feel you're right in there dancing with them.

In the case of the SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators, they 'danced' early iterations of the dance works. They also 'danced' within "social" proximity (Hall 1966), "enabling them to receive more finely tuned aural and visual stimuli" (Hill and Paris 2014, 10). They 'danced' *with* the imperfect, 'human' dancers.

The nature of being with dancers during working rehearsals is different to being with them during performance. As discussed in Chapter 2, Popat (2006, 109) states that there is a profound difference between being *with* dance through online communication, and being *with* dance in the studio. This difference is centred around the body: "the physical sensing of body heat and odours, of skin and surface resistance, of the visceral presence of the other" (Popat 2006, 109). In this way, rehearsal spectators are *with* the dancers and the creative process through a common physicality in shared time and space. The spectators' physicality, although largely subdued, contributes actions and interactions to the creative process. Their entrances and exits – particularly, TAB spectators' exit through the dancers – are (subtle) physical contributions to this complex web of thought, action, and interaction in which the dance work emerges. While cultural theorists agree that an event is affected by the presence of observers (McAuley 1998, 79), the SDC and TAB spectators sought to limit their influence based on the notion of the rehearsal being *for* the dancers.

Self-identified 'otherness' emerged through the spectators discussions. Letiche (2000, 157) states that, as a rehearsal spectator for Netherlands Dans Theater, he experienced shifting senses of 'otherness'. Being 'other' in the studio, watching the creative process unfold, is a different feeling of 'otherness' than that felt in the theatre, where completed dance work is performed. He suggests that being in the studio feels like being onstage during performance (Letiche 2000, 173), as spectators are positioned *in* the same space as dancers and *in* the

dance work. While Letiche's experience placed him in the rehearsal studio – and, as this argument suggests, within the creative process – he states that there was still a distinct feeling of 'otherness' (Letiche 2000, 178). This study proposes that he became an 'insider-other'.

This feeling of being both insider and 'other' best describes the SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators' relationship to the dancers. They reported a very clear feeling of 'otherness' during rehearsals, particularly due to the studio site and the rehearsal being perceived as *for* the dancers. Despite feeling this conceptual 'otherness', their physicality placed them *in* the creative process, and privy to some insider knowledge. They met and 'got to know' the 'face' of the dancer and the dancer's labour. Nevertheless, while the spectators felt like 'others', they gained particular insights that worked towards closing the conceptual divide between them and the dancers.

The dancers' 'humanness' that was observed by the SDC and TAB spectators, shifted their perception of the dancers as dissociated "super-talented people" (SDC Participant 6, Appendix 1), to a perception of them as everyday people whom they could relate to; in other words, elements of self-recognition and sameness emerged. In this way, the spectators became conceptually, and (for some spectators) emotionally closer to the dancers and entered more deeply into the creative process.

There are three components of the 'insider-other' concept. 'Insider' represents the insider knowledge that the SDC and TAB spectators developed. As Merton (1973, 11) asserts, gaining insider knowledge requires risk-taking. Both the SDC and TAB spectators' comments clearly show that, from their perspective, attending the open rehearsals was, indeed, very risky. The most significant risk was that they might negatively impact the rehearsals.

The use of the hyphen in the 'insider-outsider' expression is significant. Similar to the hyphen's use in insider-outsider theory (Dwyer and Buckle 2009), it is used here to represent the space between insider and outsider. It highlights that the rehearsal spectators are neither one nor the other; rather, they develop a positionality in relation to the dancers that is knowing, to some extent, but, also, liminal.

The 'other' references the difference of rehearsal spectators, in relation to dancers. While the performance audience automatically embodies the role of 'other', the SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators placed this 'otherness' on themselves. While they might have cognitively shifted closer to the dancers, that is, towards insider-outsiders, they still maintained a conceptual 'otherness' that was both similar and different to audience 'otherness' at performance.

7.2 'Authenticity'

As already established, the rehearsal spectator 'insider-other' is positioned within the creative process and, thus, relies on the presence of a creative process for its existence. The working rehearsal, characterised by 'authenticity', is, therefore, crucial for the role of the 'insider-other' to emerge. The significance of the 'authentic' creative process is exemplified by Grove (2005b, 39):

[. . .] in the studio, our research-project saw dance makers thinking not in words but through a language of movement and mass, of pauses in space and time, advances, realignments. As a work of 'bodymind', choreography creates consciousness in forms that can hardly be translated into words [. . .] Sentences can speak about the fact, but that preposition, 'about', already admits that words go round the experience, leaving its reality more or less untouched.

As the creative process cannot be simulated, its 'authenticity' is necessary to create the possibility of 'insider-others'. The open rehearsal revealed new information to the SDC and

TAB spectators. The time required, and the repetition and physical intensity of rehearsals, were some new aspects that they noted.

As stated in Chapter 1, an ‘authentic’ creative process has several rehearsal phases: the impulse to create; movement-making; the process of structuring; run-throughs; feedback and tweaking. In the SDC and TAB project cycles, there were aspects of movement-making, run-throughs, feedback, and tweaking. While both SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators experienced ‘authentic’ working rehearsals, there was disparity between the groups in their satisfaction with the interaction.

The SDC rehearsal spectators – who experienced later phases of run-throughs, feedback, and tweaking – reported that they left the rehearsal with questions about the earlier phase of movement-making; this was an unknown that they were very curious about. In this sense, the later phases of the SDC creative process were less satisfying than earlier phases. TAB spectators experienced movement-making – where the choreographer introduced movement to the dancers for the first time – and, as a result, left the rehearsal satisfied because they had developed an understanding of how movement was developed. A common interest in movement-making shared by both SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators shows that experiencing earlier phases of the creative process leads, overall, to a more fulfilling and insightful encounter.

Through the process of coordinating the project cycles, and through interviewing practitioners, it became clear that the early phases of the creative process – such as movement-making – hold a greater sense of sacredness than the later phases. For example, TAB rehearsal spectators witnessed new movement being introduced to the dancers; however, this was in the third week of the creative process, which was the earliest that the company were prepared to open their doors to a general audience. The contextual research,

discussed in Chapter 4, indicates that this can be considered a very early open rehearsal in comparison to other companies. More commonly, English National Ballet invites rehearsal spectators in for run-throughs and tweaking once “everyone feels more confident about the piece and will not mind having observers” (Linda Darrell, personal interview, 12 September 2013). It appears that there are several levels to the sacred rehearsal, with some companies sharing earlier phases than others. A desire to guard the choreographer and dancers’ confidence and image is one of the reasons companies keep these earlier phases closed. Having the dancers appear at a certain level of technical ability and fitness, for example, is important to English National Ballet (Linda Darrell, personal interview, 12 September 2013).

While rehearsal spectators might gain more fulfilment and insight from early rehearsals, the greater sacredness of these creative processes, and (even) the dancers’ physical virtuosity, present a tension between building spectator relationships and maintaining sacralisation.

Above the rehearsal and dancer, however, is the sacred choreographer. Choreographers make the final decision about whether spectators are invited into rehearsals (Ann Sholem, personal interview, 30 August 2013; Linda Darrell, personal interview, 12 September 2013).

While there is hesitation from some choreographers to allow spectators into open rehearsals, spectators might not necessarily have a significant disruptive effect on the creative process. As discussed in Chapter 5, Bonachela was pleased with the progress he was able to make during the open rehearsal that was part of this research project. This is, however, only one example. The extent to which rehearsal spectators impact on working rehearsals is beyond the scope of this study. While the studio door is opening, it is only very rarely open early in the creative process. Sacralisation encompasses the creative process, dancers and, even more so, choreographers.

As creative processes develop, dancers gradually spend increasing amounts of time in the performer qualities they are developing; what begins as singular movements or short movement phrases eventually becomes run-throughs of larger sections, or whole dance works. Where initially there are fleeting moments of character or embodied emotion, eventually, these performer qualities are ever present as rehearsals turn to run-throughs. As stated above, the ‘insider-other’ depends on a relationship between the spectator and dancer. Therefore, run-throughs where performer qualities dominate the rehearsal challenge the possibility of an ‘insider-other’ relationship. This raises a question of proportions, of how much ‘dancer’ is needed in order to consider their role in rehearsal to be the ‘authentic’ ‘face’ of the dancer.

7.3 Site

As the condition that brings the rehearsal spectators and dancers together physically, the studio site plays a notable role in enabling the ‘insider-other’. Most significantly, the landscape of the studio site – as one flat space – presents a space shared by spectators and dancers, and eliminates a hierarchy: the site does not privilege any particular user. However, as Dyson (2010, 89) suggests, the way a site is used has a considerable impact on the spectator experience.

By seating rehearsal spectators in a designated area, a slight division, reminiscent of the proscenium arch theatre, emerges. This division, however, appears to be counterbalanced by the close proximity of the studio site. Rather than feeling the divide that the seats created, the SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators commented that they felt very close, even too close for some. Overall, the site physically brought the spectators and dancers together.

Experiencing the rehearsal in person is particularly significant to the ‘insider-other’ relationship as the creative process, for dance, requires an engagement of, what Grove (2005b, 39) refers to as, a consciousness of “bodymind”. In this consciousness of “bodymind”, thinking occurs through “a language of movement and mass, of pauses in space and time, advances, realignments” (Grove 2005b, 39). Put simply, the creative process is wrapped up in a duality of the conceptual and the physical that cannot be separated. As being *in* the creative process enables ‘insider-others’, engaging the spectator’s body as well as the mind is crucial for the relationship. To be in the creative process, the spectator must have a bodily presence in the studio site. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, being *with* in the studio is profoundly different to other ways of being *with* dancers; the main difference being the “visceral presence of the other” (Popat 2006, 109). Therefore, the physical co-presence of spectator and dancer is critical to the possibility of the ‘insider-other’ relationship: the body is the gateway.

While bringing the body into the creative process is critical to the ‘insider-other’ relationship, as discussed in earlier chapters, non-experts are not necessarily comfortable with stepping into the dancers’ space. A similar phenomenon occurs during participatory performances. Theatre researcher Gareth White (2013, 168) asserts that space plays a significant role in audience participation during performances:

In many cases the invitation to participate will be an invitation to enter a performance space [stage], and therefore a transgression of the audience/performance distinction. Where this is true the moment of entry into the performance space will be particularly phenomenologically charged, as the re-framing of activity, and the demand upon the choice making of the participant will be so strongly marked by this spatial invasion. (White 2013, 167)

While rehearsal spectators are generally not asked to actively contribute to the creative process – in fact, there is a strong sense (from both spectators and companies) of the need to keep open rehearsals as observation-only experiences – the act of stepping into the studio site

itself is, effectively, a step onto the 'stage' of the rehearsal. Therefore, the moment of entry into the studio site becomes a 'spatial invasion'. This notion of 'invasion' was felt strongly by some spectators who were not entirely sure that they were 'allowed' to be there. While SDC and TAB offered an invitation to the rehearsal spectators, it had come from the researcher. The spectators stated that a direct invitation from the choreographer would have been more reassuring. Even though they were in the room, the spectators felt like they had not been invited into the creative process (even as observers) and that they were invading a sacred space.

Applying White's ideas of participatory performance to open rehearsals, the open rehearsals that did invite spectators into the creative process through acknowledgement (National Dance Company Wales and English National Ballet) effectively offered spectators "an altered social role" (White 2013, 159) where they became the dancers, the creative process, and the spectators. In other words, the National Dance Company Wales and English National Ballet spectators were acknowledged as contributors to these rehearsals. The SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators, who were not explicitly acknowledged by the artists, expressed that they required this acknowledgement to feel comfortable about stepping into the studio site. Without it, they instinctively tried to blend into the background, and physically tried to distance themselves from the creative process. While some spectators felt comfortable in the studio sites as 'insider-others', most expressed that they needed permission, an invitation, to embrace this different relationship; without the invitation, they sought ways to hide.

7.4 Influences on Non-Experts

The SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators shared two key perspectives of professional dance rehearsals: the sacred studio site, and the creative process as being *for* dancers. This understanding of rehearsals as sacred encouraged the SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators to be as invisible and undistruptive as possible: ‘flies on the wall’ that merged into the background. The perception of sacralisation shared by the SDC and TAB spectators is a shared element of each individual’s habitus, which influenced the way in which the spectators perceived the open rehearsal, dancers and choreographers, and, in turn, influenced their kinaesthetic, cognitive, and emotional engagement with the process. This suggests that while the rehearsal spectators might have started to feel aspects of sameness, the companies, through upholding sacralisation, projected labels of ‘otherness’ onto them. One example is the fourth wall created by SDC dancers; not acknowledging the spectators through the dancers’ gaze created a social barrier to the creative process. In contrast, Chunky Move’s expert rehearsal spectators demonstrated a greater sense of physical agency, as discussed in Chapter 4.

My observations of rehearsal spectators at English National Ballet and National Dance Company Wales also displayed relaxed behaviour in the studio. These spectators, however, acted more like the SDC and TAB spectators. Given the SDC and TAB spectator comments about becoming more comfortable over time, repeat attendance (that is, becoming a regular rehearsal spectator) would likely offer a different experience than that offered to the first-timer. In the hour in which the SDC and TAB spectators attended the rehearsals, they reported that they became more comfortable over time, as they realised that it was ‘allowable’ for them to be there. Even with these considerations, the possibility that rehearsal

spectators, particularly first-timers, can be significantly affected by their perceptions of rehearsals calls for specific consideration in practice.

For the SDC and TAB spectators, the open rehearsal was the first time they had entered a studio rehearsal within the professional ballet or contemporary dance company setting. The conventions of this event were unknown to them. With very little information to influence their expectations, they were prompted (through a distinct lack of preparation) for greater possibilities of liminal engagement. In experiencing the open rehearsal, however, their habitus was inevitably influenced by this experience. If these spectators were to attend a second open rehearsal, their prior experience could translate into expectations and, therefore, the same model would not necessarily provide the same liminal possibilities.

The perception of the sacred rehearsal includes notions of privacy and that which is personal. This is the lens through which several SDC and TAB spectators read the rehearsals. The privacy of rehearsals made them exclusive (a “privilege”) for the spectators, and therefore this exclusivity heightened their experience. The significance of how status impacts on the perception of the sacred rehearsal is highlighted in the following rehearsal spectators’ comments:

- P5 I think one thing that made it different for me was when we were in the studio, watching the rehearsal, I didn’t know who the choreographer was. But since I’ve read up about him.
- P4 Yeah, me too.
- P5 Well I’ve been reading the paper and I’ve realised how fortunate we were because he’s a world-renowned choreographer and I didn’t realise.
(Appendix 4)

Witnessing the rehearsal of a world-renowned choreographer emerged as a more sacred experience, perhaps, than witnessing the rehearsal of a lesser known choreographer. One rehearsal spectator stated that being selected to participate in the research project was like

winning the lottery, further emphasising their perception of the rehearsal as exclusive. Thus, sacralisation was a dominant element of SDC and TAB spectator experiences. These spectators brought the idea of the sacred rehearsal with them, as a shared element between their individual habitus. Especially in the case of TAB, the perception of sacralisation was also upheld by the building's privacy. Most of the non-expert spectator agency, especially at the beginning of the open rehearsals, was suppressed by this perception of rehearsals as sacred and exclusive, and this suppression led to discomfort for some.

7.5 'Insider-others' at Performance

Thus far, only spectators as 'insider-other' during rehearsals have been discussed. However, the impact of being in the creative process as 'insider-other' during rehearsals was that this new relationship shifted again at performances. Like Letiche (2000), the SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators experienced a different sense of 'otherness', or 'insider-otherness', during the performances as audience members. This is because, as rehearsal spectators-turned-audiences, the insights developed through this rehearsal experience manifested as insider attributes during subsequent performance. While the broader (non-expert) audience entered the performances with little or no knowledge of the processes leading to performance, the project audiences had developed understandings of aspects of both the creative processes and the dancers: they had insider knowledge. This insider knowledge of the rehearsal added additional layers of meaning to the performances, such as the blending of the 'face' of the dancer and the 'face' of performer qualities. Understandings of inter-dancer relationships and the nuances of particular movements were aspects of the rehearsal that the SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators brought with them to the performances. These understandings engendered a dual interest in the dance work and dancer.

Similarly, the spectators' sense of 'otherness' also changed between rehearsal and performance. While the 'otherness' that they had experienced during rehearsal related to being non-experts who felt like they did not have a purpose (because rehearsals are *for* the dancers) the 'otherness' they experienced during performance related to having a unique insider perspective. This perspective is likely to be distinctly different from the perspective of the performers on stage, and from the way the broader audiences could view the performances. It is possible that the project audiences were more of an 'other' to the broader audience, than they were to the dancers on stage. As a result of their rehearsal experience, the project audiences were cognitively and emotionally closer to the dancers, and were familiar with segments of the dance works. At the same time, however, they were still 'others' to the dancers in their role as audience to the performances: they were *between* the dancers and the broader audiences.

Experiencing the performance from a perspective somewhere *between* the general performance audience and the performers can be considered a liminal positionality. The project audiences arrived at the performances with a new relationship that had personal qualities, such as "personal" proximity (Hall 1966), but was not socially personal with the dancers. The 'face' of the dancer was both known and unknown to them; while, as rehearsal spectators, they developed a connection to the dancers, they understood that this connection was not necessarily reciprocal. In this way, the relationship between audience and the dancer/performer blend was indeterminate, liminal, and distinct from their previous experiences as members of the wider audience. The 'insider-otherness' that emerged during the open rehearsals continued to manifest during performance; however, instead of being *in* the creative process, the project audiences were, conceptually, *between* the dancers/dance work and the wider audience.

While the data for this research is limited to two trials of the open rehearsal model, there are much longer term effects to consider. A performance experience, for example, does not end at the completion of the show, as there is a longer experience of that performance that continues through memory. This longer experience is an “ongoing, limitless and plural process” (Reason 2010, 25). Indeed, as previously discussed, the project audiences brought memories of the open rehearsals to the performances. Given that a single experience can continue through memory, and affect habitus, the impacts of one open rehearsal experience could extend beyond the particular dance work that was being developed in that rehearsal.

7.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the rehearsal spectator relationship as ‘insider-others’, proposing that this role places them *with* dancers during open rehearsal, and *between* dancers and the wider audience during performance. ‘Authentic’ working rehearsals and shared space are highlighted as the critical elements that enable the ‘insider-other’ relationship to develop.

Each spectator’s individual habitus ultimately underpins the nature of the relationship, as sacralisation emerged as a significant influence on the SDC and TAB spectators’ rehearsal experiences. The shared habitus of the SDC and TAB non-expert spectators was a perception of the creative space, process, dancers, and choreographers as sacred, with this perception having positive and negative impacts on their audience experience at subsequent performances. On the one hand, a perception of the open rehearsals as sacred compelled many of the rehearsal spectators to limit their physical presence. On the other, however, the open rehearsals, overall, led to more insightful, engaging, and satisfying experiences of dance performance.

8. CONCLUSION

This research project aimed to develop understanding of spectator-dancer relationships during open rehearsals, and the impact that these relationships have on subsequent audience-performer relationships. Chapter 2 argued that a spectator presence in rehearsals can lead to variations of ‘otherness’ (Letiche 2000), and that stepping into early phases of the creative process may support deeper spectator-dancer relationships (Minor 2014). The analysis of open working rehearsal models, in Chapters 4 and 5, illuminated possibilities for rehearsal spectators to develop insider knowledge of the ‘dancer’s world’, gaining insights through visceral experiences of seeing, hearing, touching, and smelling this ‘world’. Chapter 6 presented the rehearsal spectators/project audiences’ responses to the trialled open rehearsal model. These open rehearsals fostered new understandings and relationships with the ‘face’ of the dancer, and a ‘human’ connection. This contributed to more meaningful and fulfilling performance experiences. Chapter 7 theorised the rehearsal relationship, positing the rehearsal spectator as ‘insider-other’. The spectators developed insider knowledge, yet still retained an ‘otherness’ that was distinct from the ‘otherness’ that they had experienced at performances prior to the trials.

This concluding chapter first discusses this study’s contributions to the field, positing the trialled open rehearsal model as its main contribution. Both successful and problematic elements of this model are outlined, and possible solutions are stated. Several smaller findings, in the form of further research directions, are stated: applications of the ‘working’ and ‘performed’ rehearsal categories, repeat open rehearsal attendance, methods to further extend the spectator-dancer relationship during rehearsals, and spectator interest in dancers’ ‘down time’.

Second, the limitations of the study are stated. Researching in the industry context presented limitations regarding access. The number of rehearsal spectators in the open rehearsal trials, and the timing of the open rehearsals was negotiated with the companies, resulting in inconsistent project cycles.

Third, more general future research directions are proposed. Suggestions include: gaining dancer and choreographer perspectives of open rehearsal experiences, identifying an ideal phase in the creative process for spectators to observe, and how open rehearsals may impact on audience development and marketing for performances.

8.1 Contributions

The main contribution of this study is the new open rehearsal model that has now been trialled. The key components of this model are: non-expert spectators, the studio site, a working rehearsal (that ideally includes movement-making), and a spectator discussion.

This open rehearsal model was specifically designed for existing non-expert audiences of ballet and contemporary dance performances. These audience groups already have, at the very least, an interest in one of these dance styles, with most of the SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators identifying themselves as ‘fans’ of these companies. Existing audiences have a familiarity with the types of dance work that a particular dance company may produce, and the dancers. This familiarity can build expectations of open rehearsals, to some extent, and, therefore, can influence to extent to which liminality is experienced by the spectators. For example, SDC spectators’ familiarity with the ‘face’ of the performer qualities contributed to a liminal experience of the political ‘face’ of the working dancer. In other words, rehearsal spectators that are also existing performance audience members have an awareness of the

context in which open rehearsals occur. Non-expert rehearsal spectators without this context are likely to have contrasting experiences of the same open rehearsal model, as their habitus is not influenced by this context.

The studio site brings spectators physically closer to dancers. An invitation into the studio, as discussed in Chapter 6, is also an invitation into the sacred site and creative process. Close proximity offers rehearsal spectators the chance to see physical aspects of dancers and dance work that are lost in distance at performance. The more “personal” (Hall 1966) spectator-dancer proximity created a fertile environment for spectator experience. These close-up insights developed into insider knowledge; for example, the SDC spectators spoke about subtle physical cues the dancers gave each other, such as when one dancer placed his finger on another dancer’s leg (Appendix 1). Most importantly, the studio presents different ‘frames’, and, therefore, different conventions (for example, the ‘face’ of the dancer) which offers different relationships for spectators.

The working rehearsal is, by far, the most important element of this open rehearsal model. The spectators valued the ‘authenticity’ of the open rehearsals, and found pleasure in observing a genuine creative process. Working rehearsals open up possibilities of meeting the ‘face’ of the dancer, and observing a creative process rather than a demonstration. In The Australian Ballet’s (TAB) open rehearsal, the spectators observed movement being introduced to, and developed with the dancers. As a result, TAB spectators felt that they gained an understanding of how dance work is made. While some spectators stated that they wanted more of an explanation of what the dancers were doing, many were satisfied with simply observing the ‘authentic’ creative process. As discussed in Chapter 7, combining the elements of the studio site and the working rehearsal are essential for the specific ‘insider-

other' relationship to develop, as this relationship is physically positioned *in* the creative process.

Finally, while the incorporation of a post-rehearsal discussion was a useful data collection method for this project, it is also a valuable element of the open rehearsal event in its own right. The discussions provided an opportunity for the spectators to reflect on the rehearsal experiences, which were pleasurable, educational, and even confronting for some spectators. Interpretive communities emerged from the discussions where, as a group, the spectators developed interpretive strategies to understand this unfamiliar event. Discussing the open rehearsals was a pleasurable experience, especially for Sydney Dance Company (SDC) spectators, as their discussion was filled with laughter, as evidenced in the transcripts (see Appendix 1-2).

Problems with the model relate to liminality and the model's initial stages (the brief, and entry to the studio site). The SDC and TAB spectators were not advised of rehearsal conventions, as the study sought to explore their natural responses – informed by non-expert habituses – to the new environment of the dance rehearsal. This led to highly liminal experiences which, for some, developed into what could be perceived as a negative engagement. The creative process was an unfamiliar interaction for the spectators; a concern of 'disrupting' this process quickly became a central element to some spectators', significantly influencing the way they interacted in the rehearsal, and their relationship with the dancers.

Therefore, the way in which open rehearsals are framed is a significant consideration. While the changes to this briefing, as trialled in TAB's open rehearsal, were a distinct improvement, further experimentation on how rehearsals can be framed, and how spectators are brought into the studio site, could have a significant impact on the overall spectator experience and

relationship with dancers. Elements for consideration include: who presents the brief (choreographer, dancer, or a regular rehearsal spectator); where the brief occurs (outside the building, in a corridor, or in the studio); what content is included (information relating to the open rehearsal model, the choreographer, the dancers, or the creative process); and when the brief is given (one minute before rehearsal, the day before, or as part of the open rehearsal advertisement).

This study has also highlighted areas for further investigation. ‘Working’ rehearsals, rather than ‘performed’ rehearsals, offer spectators the opportunity to engage with ‘authentic’ creative processes. The significance of ‘authentic’ rehearsals is that they generate the dynamic web of thought, action, and interaction of the creative process. The creative process is a dense, interactive activity, and it is this complexity that engages spectators. In contrast, the performed rehearsal prepares insights for spectators; it demonstrates the creative process, rather than actually ‘doing’ it. In extreme cases of performed rehearsals, the complexity embedded within the creative process is not present, as the creative process, itself, does not feature.

First, this categorisation of rehearsal models offers dance companies a new lens in which to view their existing, or potential, open rehearsal models. While this study focuses on the working rehearsal, it is not suggesting that this model is better than the performed rehearsal. Rather, the categorisation is intended to draw attention to the varying methods that are grouped together under the rubric of ‘open rehearsals’, and how they may offer different insights and spectator-dancer relationships.

Second, the spectators within the SDC and TAB trials were first-time rehearsal spectators and, therefore, there was an element of newness. Methodologically, it was important for the research to create groups with similar levels of rehearsal experience. The experience of an

open rehearsal can only be completely new once, with any future rehearsal experiences building on the knowledge and relationships developed during the initial experience. For the SDC and TAB rehearsal spectators, open rehearsals can never be completely new again, as their habitus has, naturally, been informed by this rehearsal experience. Therefore, this aspect of spectator interest – the newness of the creative process – raises questions about the longevity of such interest. If novelty were the only point of interest in the creative process, then spectator curiosity is likely to diminish quickly. Further research is required to develop an understanding of repeat attendance spectator relationships.

Third, this study presents several directions for ways in which spectator-dancer relationships might be extended. All five of the open rehearsal models in this study provided limited spectator agency possibilities within the studio site. Chunky Move's model, which offered the most physical agency, still limited the spectators to a designated area within the studio space. Inviting spectators into other spaces within the studio (behind the dancers, next to the dancers, and in-between the dancers, where possible) could provide further insights and, potentially, foster a deeper relationship, especially if spectators were given permission to make choices about how they might position (or move) themselves throughout the space. Another common element to the open rehearsal models is that the spectators are physically grouped together. Decentralising the location of spectators in the studio could open up further possibilities relating to proximity and, potentially, one-on-one interaction (where appropriate) between spectator and dancer.

Finally, the SDC and TAB spectators engaged with the 'face' of the 'human dancer'. In the SDC rehearsal, for example, where the dancers worked in small groups, some spectators consistently focused on non-dancing activities (such as dancers who were stretching on the side, or talking). This interest in the dancers' 'down time' presents an under-explored facet of

the dancer's working 'face' that can engage spectators, and can contribute to building relationship.

8.2 Limitations

Methodologically, the most significant limitation of the project was its limited access to the field. Securing dance companies as participants in the open rehearsal trials was unsuccessful in some cases. The nature of this study required approval and commitment from several key stakeholders working in different departments of each company. As discussed in Chapter 1, a choreographer for Queensland Ballet declined to participate and, therefore, the company, overall, was not able to proceed with participation. In this example, sacralisation was, ultimately, embodied by the choreographer.

Another challenge with securing company participants was working into their existing rehearsal and performance schedules. As this study sought to bring spectators into regular working rehearsals, it was crucially important to schedule the trials in accordance with each company's pre-determined schedule. As discussed in Chapter 1, this was the key limitation for a second unsuccessful company participant, Expressions Dance Company.

The successful company participants (SDC and TAB) also placed restrictions on the project cycles. SDC limited spectator access to the second half of the rehearsal period (in terms of schedule), and TAB limited the number of rehearsal spectators to 8 (compared to the optimum 12 spectators). These limitations created unexpected inconsistencies between the project cycles.

Researching in this field made it difficult to predict the content of the rehearsals observed by the spectators. Through discussions with SDC and TAB, prior to the project cycles, it was anticipated that both open rehearsals would contain some movement-making. The fluid nature of the creative process, however, eventuated into a situation where SDC's rehearsals advanced faster than expected. As stated in Chapter 5, the SDC spectators observed feedback and tweaking, while TAB spectators observed the expected movement-making process. This inconsistency between the open rehearsals can be linked to some identifiable differences between the SDC and TAB spectator responses. One of the most significant contrasts was that SDC spectators left the open rehearsal with questions about earlier phases of the creative process (including movement-making), while TAB spectators had developed a distinct understanding of the movement-making process. The spectator data, however, also has consistent topics between the two spectator groups, including: the dancer's 'face', the dancer's labour, cognitive blending, rules/etiquette of rehearsals and performances, and performance qualities of rehearsals and performances. Therefore, while the variation between the SDC and TAB open rehearsals are a limitation on the reliability of the data, this disparity was small enough for consistencies between data sets to emerge.⁸⁴

8.3 Future Directions

Future research is necessary to further our understanding of spectator-dancer relationships that can be fostered in the studio. In his interview, Bonachela explained that he was successfully able to make genuine progress during the open rehearsal trial. While this is only

⁸⁴ Triangulated perspectives, however, did help to strengthen the research. Three perspectives were sought: the non-expert rehearsal spectator, the open rehearsal practitioner, and my participant researcher perspective. The research project was focused on gaining the spectators' experience and, therefore, the spectator voice was an important part of the study. The expert and participant researcher voices, however, provided a context for the spectators' perspective and, in so doing, strengthened the rigour of this research.

one example, the prospect of choreographers, and perhaps even dancers, being effective during open rehearsals could potentially open up further engagement opportunities. As this research project privileged the spectator's voice, the choreographer and dancer perspectives of the open rehearsal were absent (with the exception of Bonachela). An understanding of the open rehearsal from both of these perspectives is an important and interesting avenue for future research in open rehearsal praxis.

Comparison between the open rehearsal models in this study highlights that each phase in the creative process offers different insights for rehearsal spectators. There might be an ideal phase of the creative process for relationship-building in which to bring spectators into rehearsals. Similarly, there might also be an ideal phase for providing rehearsal insight that will support audience engagement at subsequent performance. Identifying such markers in the creative process could increase the impact of these experiences for spectators.

The purpose of open rehearsals in the context of this study is as a tool to support audience engagement at subsequent performances: the trialled open rehearsal was a supplementary event to the performance. Interestingly, some TAB spectators stated that, given the choice, they would prefer to attend open rehearsals rather than performances. Where open rehearsals become a stand-alone event for spectators, their purpose changes, as they are no longer an engagement tool for performance; rather, they emerge as a central dance event. This interest in open rehearsals as stand-alone events, combined with perceived performance qualities within the open rehearsals (discussed in Chapter 6), raises questions about whether open (working) rehearsals are performances, and the possible implications of this paradigm shift for spectators, dancers, and choreographers.

The dance industry needs more research into open rehearsals and behind-the-scenes events, as these practices are growing in popularity and scope, as demonstrated by events such as

World Ballet Day LIVE. Forming an understanding of how participants in these behind-the-scenes events are experiencing and engaging with them – as well as the subsequent impact on performance engagement – are important steps to ensure that these engagement tools are creating their desired outcomes for audiences.

While this research project did not address how open rehearsals might impact on audience development or arts marketing practices, these are worthwhile areas for future research, as these fields are critically important to the longevity of professional dance company practice.

The purpose of this research project was to begin to look inside the (already opening) studio door to begin to understand the effect that open rehearsals have on audience relationships at performances. What emerged, from only one hour of being a ‘fly on the wall’, was a liminal relationship with the dancers. The spectators met the ‘face’ of the dancer and, through this intimate meeting, they identified common ground with elements of the dancers’ ‘humanness’. According to some spectators, this relationship has permanently shaped their perception of contemporary dance or ballet, as they now possess insider knowledge that provides a new dance ‘frame’. The impact of the open rehearsal experience is best communicated by SDC

Participant 1 (Appendix 2):

[. . .] I really enjoyed seeing the rehearsal, but it didn’t in the slightest degree detract from the performance tonight for me. If anything it assisted me to appreciate it more, that I’d seen those real people in their rehearsal gear learning that, and to see the polished performance, it meant more to me having seen the rehearsal.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: SDC Post-Rehearsal Spectator Discussion

Location: Sydney Dance Company, Walsh Bay NSW

Date: 22 January, 2013

I = Interviewer

P1 = Participant 1 (female, 55-59, registered nurse).

P2 = Participant 2 (female, 45-49, mechanical draftsman).

P3 = Participant 3 (male, 50-54, IT services manager).

P4 = Participant 4 (female, 50-54, research evaluator for government agency).

P5 = Participant 5 (male, 30-34, policy and media officer for community sector).

P6 = Participant 6 (female, 18-24, research assistant).

P7 = Participant 7 (female, 45-49, no occupation).

P8 = Participant 8 (female, 30-34, medical field).

P9 = Participant 9 (male, 25-29, research scientist).

P10 = Participant 10 (female, 60-64, retired primary/special needs learning teacher).

P11 = Participant 11 (male, 35-39, person-centred design specialist).

I As I said before the rehearsal session, the focus group is about sharing your ideas, thoughts and feelings about the experience of being in the rehearsal situation. I am not interested in the dance itself, instead what it is like to attend a rehearsal. I will be posing questions to you and the idea is that, as a group, we talk about each one. Every one of you has completed the online survey so I know that none of you have dance training and probably do not know dance terminology and that is okay. I am interested in hearing from everyone so if you find yourself talking a lot I might ask you to give someone else a go, but at the same time if you are quiet I will call on you to contribute something to the discussion. I am recording this session because I do not want to miss any of your comments, however no names will be included in the transcript. Thinking about the rehearsal we just watched together. What thoughts were going through your mind or feelings did you experience while we were in there?

Comments missing from recording.

P1 Like a private space almost.

I Did anyone else feel similar about it?

P2 Yes, certainly different to a performance. It felt like a really authentic insight, like we're in a movie almost. This is really what the real rehearsal would be like. It's not like they're putting on a rehearsal for us. It's the real thing and that's really authentic and that's really valuable

Comments missing from recording.

P3 It's clearly not dictatorial, but at some point it's Rafael's choreography so there must be something that is all his and then, you know, then it all comes together with everybody else's input.

I And, so Participant 3, you were saying that you were noticing the details and that Rafael was really looking at the details. Do you think that that will then be something that you will look for when we watch it later?

P3 I was wondering that, yeah. "Am I going to notice that when I am watching it at the performance? "Am I going to turn around and go, "Yeah, that was my note."

Laughter

P3 I don't want to annoy the shit out of everybody around me, but I possibly will now. It's something that I know I hadn't thought of before. You tend to sit back, and also a lot further away to be quite frank, and see the whole thing as a great body rather than necessarily picking up the, particularly as a non-dancer, you wouldn't pick up those details that dancers probably do. But yeah, I probably would now.

I Did anyone want to add something to that?

Participant 1 and 4 start speaking at the same time.

P1 I felt similar to that. Oh sorry.

I Go on, Participant 1.

P1 Especially one of the female dancers, more or less, had one of those actions where she tapped the back of her back and that was the cue for others to move in. I thought, "Oh wow, I must look out for that in the show."

I You wanted to say something Participant 4?

P4 I was just going to say that it raised a whole lot questions too, like what does it all mean? You know, all those little actions have got some sort of, there's a whole story behind them. I'm always hungry to know, where does all the choreography come from? What's the story? And each dancer has a story and it's just amazing. But I suppose one thing I was wondering was whether we were meant to be able to hear what Rafael was saying because I couldn't actually hear a lot of what he was saying. It would be really interesting to hear what all those little things he is saying to the dancers is, the essence of the whole thing, that would be interesting to have access to.

I Did anyone else feel similar about being able to hear what Rafael was saying?

P3 I would have liked to been to be able to hear all of what he was saying.

P2 Yeah, it probably would have been good.

P4 And also what the dancers were saying back as well, that dialogue.

I So that conversation?

P4 Yeah, but for me I wondered whether it needed a bit more context for what was happening maybe. Whether it's an explanation at the beginning or a piece of paper that tells me what the purpose of this particular thing is. That may be just me wanting to know more. It was a bit of a vacuum in a sense just in this place which was fantastic but I also wanted to know what it all meant.

I Thanks Participant 4. Did you want to add something in, Participant 5?

P5 I was just following up on Participant 3's point in terms of looking forward to seeing how they work out or work through particular things. So I'm quite keen to see how they work out that last lift that they didn't quite have down yet and see how that turns out in the final production. I'm kind of okay with not having heard a lot of what Rafael was saying because it seemed to be very minimal instruction anyway in the sense that because, as Participant 9 was saying, they're so far down the process of working through it you could just say one or two words and the dancers were already there because they got the solid base. It would be like, "Go to the tango position." "Oh yeah, okay. We'll go straight to that." So it wasn't in the early process, it's quite far down the track so I didn't quite mind not hearing a lot of what he said.

I Thank you. What was it like being quite close to the dancers and also having the choreographer and also Amy, the rehearsal assistant, in there. What was that like as an experience for you?

Many participants start talking. Laughter.

P2 It's great being quite close and whenever you buy your tickets, if you're going to contemporary dance, you always aim for close. I do, because there is often quite a lot of detail that, if you're sitting in the gods, you just miss completely. So yeah it's great sitting front row, two metres away. *Laughs.*

I Thank you Participant 2. Does anybody else prefer to be closer in the theatre?

Many participants respond by saying "yes", "I do" or "mmm".

P6 I don't.

I You don't?

P6 No. Maybe dance is not as bad but in theatre I feel that I don't like it to be too intimate because I feel like, I don't know, I guess I feel a bit awkward being so close, like in the front row, and watching them do their job. Yeah I feel like it's a very separate experience, being onstage and being the audience, and I prefer to keep that separate I guess.

I Thanks Participant 6.

P3 I think, from my experience, it depends sometimes on what the performance is.

"Mmm" from some participants.

P2 Definitely.

P3 I've been very close for some and been overwhelmed. All you can really focus on is what happening right here and there's a whole lot over there that you miss out on because it's so close. So sometimes being back a bit where you can see, some of the works it's all about the relative movement of each other, so seeing it from a bit further back gives you that feeling of what it's supposed to be as a group of people rather than just watching this dancer and having peripheral vision of the other guys.

P2 A good example of that was their last work with the orchestra that was behind the dancers. I was actually up higher for that one, and it was great because you could see all the orchestra really well and all the dancers in the front and, you know, it worked really well from a distance. That one, however, I think we'll have to be a bit closer.

Laughter.

- I Thank you Participant 2 and Participant 3. Being close. Everyone had a response when I asked the question about being close to the choreographer and dancers. So coming back the rehearsal that we just watched, what was it about the closeness that you liked or disliked?
- P7 For me it was about the focus on the details. So for example Charmene, one of the dancers that I've seen in a number of things and she's an incredible dancer, just to be able to see her close up, see the process she's going through and see how her limbs move and see that intimate detail of all the body movements. It's just an amazing experience that you don't get very often. So while in the theatre when you're seeing the whole thing I think it is maybe a bit better to be further away, but when we're looking at fragments it's just that opportunity we've got. This time is a unique experience.
- I Does anyone want to add to that or contribute something different on that topic?
- P3 I think they're in a smaller space here than they would be on the stage. It made it easier to be close to them because you can see everything going on, because they weren't as spread out as they would be on the stage.
- I Thank you Participant 3. I'll just go to Participant 8. What do you think about being close to the dancers and/or choreographer?
- P8 I think that, maybe, seeing more of the dancer's life, because when you go to a show you don't think, "Oh, that's real life." But since you see them, coming in here for one hour, and think, "What do they do for the rest of their life, for the rest of the day?" You want to find out what they're doing, apart from this and what interests. When you watch a show you go for one hour and a half and then you're gone.

P10 Yeah it makes you wonder.

P8 Interaction.

P10 What do they do with their day? They have this rehearsal. You feel like you kind of want to get to know something about them as people.

I On a personal level?

P8 Yeah, on a personal level.

P10 Well, their dance day I guess. You know, how their dance day evolves and this opens up a whole new avenue of interest in them.

“Mmm” from some participants.

I Did you want to say something Participant 5?

P5 I was just going to say, in terms of sitting so close, it was quite enjoyable for the rehearsal to sit so close because they didn't have their, kind of, show face on. So you actually got to see their actual emotions as they were doing it and when they stuffed something up they laughed and when they, you know, were really getting into it you could see it on their faces. So you're quite privileged to see the facial expressions that you don't get to see at the performance.

“Mmm” from a couple of participants.

I Thank you Participant 5. When you saw the dancers stuff something up and pull a face, what was that like for you?

P1 I was struck by how normal they seemed.

Laughter.

P1 I thought, “Oh wow. They’re going to be fantastic in their final performance but right now, today, they look very normal.” Their expressions and their interaction to each other and, yeah, a little bit of what Participant 5 was saying that they just seem so normal. I thought, “Oh wow.”

I Thank you Participant 1.

P6 Yeah, that’s what I felt. You know, when I’ve been to dance, seen performances before, and you just think that these are super-talented people and, you know, like most people you think it’s effortless and they’re just good at what they do. And obviously they are. Watching the rehearsal was incredible as well, but it put more of a human face to the performance and you saw, going back to what Participant 3 said, them adjust their movements and things didn’t come naturally like they obviously do in a performance.

“Mmm” from some participants.

I Did you want to add something Participant 9?

P9 I think when you’re in the context of the performance there is that clear separation between performers and you as the audience. I think that in this case, being so close, contemporary dance is so emotive and, not so much with the trios and those bigger groups, but when there’s just two people dancing it’s, I was feeling quite, I don’t know how to describe it, but I was taking in what they would be feeling. Some of the movements were very intimate, they were very, very close, and the way that they were interacting with each other in your mind you’re sort of going, “Are they playing

a love scene, what's happening here?" I was sort of going, "I could really feel that in some places." But when you're in the audience you're a little bit removed from that, or withdrawn so it's not so prominent. But I've found that in this setting it was, for me, I was really noticing it.

I Thank you Participant 9. Would anybody like to comment on that?

P2 It's interesting. I'd probably go the other way and say that I was following it more from a technical point of view because you didn't have that theatre environment. Once you've gone into the theatre, and there's lights and costumes and everything, you do sort of step into a separate world and I guess that sets up the feeling of the piece perhaps. Whereas because they were all in their shorts and singlets and doing it wrong and changing it, you sort of think, "Ah yeah, I can see how that leg doesn't go there."

Laughter.

P2 "We'll have to, you know, we'll have to rethink that." So then I guess that's sort of the opposite take.

I Thank you Participant 2. You used the word "we". Do you mean "we" as in, are we, the audience, part of it?

P2 Nah, I'm sort of sitting there thinking, "Hmm." It's me, yeah right, telling them how to do it.

Laughter.

P2 Yeah, you think, “Ah, maybe if they, you know, went the other way.” So yes, I did feel a part of it, yeah.

P10 It’s funny you say that. I had exactly the same feeling when that boy was trying to get his leg above the other boy.

P2 Yes. I’m sure we could have fixed that.

P10 And in my mind I’m thinking, “Now I bet there’s a much better way to do that.”

Laughter.

P10 I think they could, “Maybe if they tried this.” And something else that I was worried about, I actually did start to get a bit worried for them, because, particularly for the trio up in the corner there, they seemed to have it down so perfectly and then they started changing things around and I’m thinking, “What if the whole thing unravels?” And suddenly you know, because they obviously have a cue to get from this movement to that movement and they changed the movements around and they’d lose their cues. I really started to get worried that it would all fall to pieces for them with all the different changes that were happening. So that was just how I was getting involved.

I Thank you Participant 10. It sounds like you wanted to, sort of, help problem-solve?

P10 I am. That is one of my failings.

Laughter.

P9 I think it is a very good failing.

Laughter.

I Did anyone else find themselves taking on that technical eye, looking at the movement and how they were doing it, or were you looking at it in a more artistic way?

P9 I think with a different dance I would be seeing it in a more technical way, but I think contemporary is such a fluid thing. The way they move, it's meant to grow organically and I think to be a good contemporary dancer, at least in my mind, you have to let it evolve organically. If you're a very good technical dancer I think that could interfere with that process. I mean some of them were very precise with their movements but at the same time you can see that they're not thinking too much about it. They just doing what works in that moment so I wasn't seeing it so technically but I was seeing it more artistically.

I Thank you Participant 9. Did you feel at ease or comfortable in that setting, in the studio? Was it a comfortable or uncomfortable experience for you? Or something else perhaps?

P2 Yeah, I was comfortable.

P4 At first I thought, "Oh, I hope they don't mind us being here. Have they checked out if it's ok?"

Laughter.

P4 We didn't get acknowledged.

"Mmm" from some participants.

P4 And, you know, I felt we didn't acknowledge them. There was no kind of greeting, so I thought that we were there but I wasn't quite sure if it was okay with everyone. That was just initially and then I relaxed into it.

I Thanks Participant 4 and when you say then you relaxed into it, was there something in particular that made you relax?

P4 I think just when they were just doing their thing, you know. I forgot all about that and just immersed into the whole thing. You could obviously see that they were very focused on what they were doing and it didn't really matter that we were there or not and they had their purpose.

I Does anyone else want to comment on being comfortable or uncomfortable?

P3 It was similar. You walk in and there was that no acknowledgement, no introduction. That sort of thing. So it's like just go in quietly and try to stay out of the way kind of thing but I relaxed into it as it went and by kind of not acknowledging us they were happy to have us there. No one was glaring at us. *Laughs.*

I Thank you Participant 3 and did you want to add something Participant 5?

P5 I was just going to say that there were a couple of points that I felt uncomfortable and the first one was where we came in and it did feel like we were intruding a little bit, and that made me feel uncomfortable. And the other one was when it seemed like one of the dancers was cut from the fight scene and told that,

Laughter.

P5 “You’re not wanted anymore,” and then responded, “You know, you’re the boss,” or words to that effect, “You’re running the show.” And then, you know, for a couple of minutes there I felt uncomfortable having watched that and sympathetic for him. And then somehow he was back in the particular piece. So that was fascinating and I loved watching it but it also made me feel uncomfortable.

I Fascinating seeing how a dance, as it evolves, how it changes?

P5 Seeing just the politics of, you know.

“Mmm” from some participants.

P5 It’s, brutal is not the right word, but it’s kind of, “You’re not right for this so I’m going to do this and see how it goes.” So it’s very, kind of, direct.

I Thank you Participant 5.

P11 It did feel a little bit sort of almost like seeing a performance. We were there and they were there but there was no interaction between us. But then there were things that made it a rehearsal like clothes and other things, but it was almost like a different kind of performance.

I Different how?

P11 It was more real life. So you saw people interacting and having conversations with each other rather than just dancing, but from an observers point of view I felt like I was an observer and I did wonder whether their behaviour was different because we were in the room. And I wondered whether they were on special behaviour or whether they were not being as they normally would be.

I Thank you Participant 11. Does anyone want to add something else to that, similar or different?

P11 One thing for me at the start when we walked in the room, because I've been to five or six performances, I recognised most of them and I thought, "Is that a bit weird?" Because I'm used to seeing them but not used to them seeing my face.

Laughter.

P3 "It's that guy from G6. What's he doing here?"

Laughter.

I Did anyone else have the same thought cross their mind?

"Yeah" from most participants.

P9 Very much so. Especially with the one person that was told, "No, we don't want you. That's it." I know he's a new dancer and, in my mind, I'm going, "Hmm, are they testing you out now to see what you're capable of?" I mean, "You've got very established dancers here who have been with the company for a while, you know. You are a very new face to the company. Are they just seeing what we're capable of at the moment in the context of the performance?"

I Does anyone want to add to that?

P2 Yeah, I didn't feel uncomfortable at all there. I thought there was a feeling in that room that all those people are professional dancers there and they know who the boss is. And yes, they can have input and that would be welcomed but everybody knew

their place, and if you change things or move them from one group to another they were all just going to go with it.

I Thank you Participant 2. What you said about everyone in the room knew their place. We were in that room too and, it just makes me wonder, do you feel like you knew what your place was in that room?

P2 Fly on the wall. *Laughs.*

P7 To observe. I felt my place there was to observe and I felt like I knew that's what it was.

I To observe. Thanks Participant 7.

P1 Yeah, same.

P10 I hope you don't mind me saying this Participant 1, but at one point Participant 1 wanted to applaud.

P1 Yes.

Laughter.

P1 But I didn't think I should.

P10 And at the end she said, "Oh, I wanted to applaud," but obviously didn't because, and I guess this is one of the things, we knew we had to be quiet. So even though we may have wanted to, as you asked the question, did we laugh or something, I think we felt that we couldn't do anything in joining in because we had specifically been told to be quiet. And we didn't want to distract anybody, I suppose, was another thing I was

thinking of. So it didn't limit my enjoyment of it at all but you were definitely conscious of the fact that you weren't there to participate or be an active audience, very much a passive observer in that way.

I Thank you Participant 10. Any last takers on the role that we were there for or to do with comfort, discomfort?

P3 I think my perception of it or my experience of it changed during the course of it. I kind of relaxed into it and enjoyed it a bit more. But you were there is an observer sort of. There was an element of it, you know, "Am I here for my own enjoyment or am I here for Anja's study?"

Laughter.

P3 And I think I'm here for my own enjoyment.

Laughter.

P3 But it still was an enjoyable experience and, you know, there was that awkward moment as we came in. There was, similarly, an awkward moment when they would clap, I think with Natalie's solo, they clapped and I wanted to do it as well.

Laughter.

P3 Yeah, I think my perception or my place in there changed during the course of it.

I Thank you Participant 3. Seeing this rehearsal and being in this context, does it make you want to see more?

P11 More rehearsal?

P2 At that time in the rehearsal process?

I Yes, more of that particular rehearsal, it could be more rehearsals on different days, more of the work, more of dance rehearsals in general. Does it make you want to see more of anything to do with the dance work or dance rehearsals?

P3 I'll pick up on Participant 9's earlier point.

P2 Yeah.

P3 I think seeing that initial,

P2 The timeline.

P3 that starting point of the creative process.

P10 Exactly, yes.

P3 I think that would be really interesting to see how it's introduced and, "This is where I want to take it." You know, does he sit them all down over a big breakfast and talk about it and come back next week and then, you know, "Show us your ideas", kind of thing? How does that inception actually happen?

P6 I almost kind of was thinking that, because the moves are so intricate and so detailed, I just couldn't fathom how someone could, obviously these are professional dancers but, do that, remember it, repeat it and know exactly, like, they knew exactly what points to start off from. And it just felt, to me, like it was all one thing and I couldn't differentiate all the different moves because it was seamless. But yeah, I was thinking about the initial stage as well, like, for me it felt like you'd show them a video of something similar.

Laughter.

P6 I couldn't even imagine verbalising those kinds of moves, so I felt like it would have to be something visual, like you'd have to demonstrate or show them a video.

Although I can understand, sure there is lingo to explain those moves, but yeah.

I Thank you Participant 6.

P5 I'd have to agree with both of those in the sense of how you, the weeks leading up to this, how you get to the point where you have different groups in the same room, some dancing to music, other people going off their own timing. And it's interacting, knowing the piece well enough that they don't need the music and they can count in time. I think it's just amazing but, I think you mentioned before, wanting to know what's the daily schedule? How is it, is it a couple of sessions of a day? How is the daily life of the dancer and the dance company? How does that work and that side of things. That's what I'd like to know about as well.

I Thank you Participant 5. We kind of touched on this a little bit earlier, but I just want to discuss it further. Did it feel like a performance?

"No" from some participants.

P11 I'd say part of it did. When Natalie did hers it felt like a finished performance.

"Mmm" from some Participants.

P11 And there were, there were all those different sections and they went through them with music and that felt like it was a finished performance. The actual, whole thing didn't.

I Thanks Participant 11. So when the music was playing, when they were running a section, that's when it felt like a mini performance within a greater non-performance?

P11 Not always. It's not necessarily tied to the music being on because sometimes they'd have music on and they were still very much rehearsing. There were definitely bits that seemed finished and they felt like we were watching a performance.

I Would anyone else like to add something?

P9 I agree with Participant 11. I think it doesn't necessarily need to have music but some bits did seem more complete and that completion made it feel like a performance because there was no input from Rafael. There was no input from anyone else. They went, "Da da da." They knew all the moves, everyone's happy with the end product, "Let's move onto the next step," and that was very much a performance. And they're still tweaking and adding and going, "I'm not sure about this, maybe do it that way," and that's when it stops being like a performance.

I Thanks Participant 9. So it felt like a performance when there was no tweaking going on. Would anyone like to add something about whether it felt like a performance or not?

P3 Participant 5 used a good term before when they had their show face on.

P10 Yes.

P3 And it's like that's what was happening in those sections, everyone's switched on to, "Okay, so what we're doing now, I know exactly what I'm doing." And that's when it felt like a performance, when they switched into that, you know, "Now I'm doing it right," mode. And then it was back to that tweaking. You could see them switch on

and off, particularly when the music was on you could see them switch over into a different mode and that's when it felt more like a performance.

I Thanks Participant 3. And that makes me wonder then, seeing that switch, do others agree that you could see the performance mode come in?

P10 Yes, but from my point of view I have a feeling that nothing is finished. I still feel that even though we saw that girl on her own, in the solo piece which was very good I just don't know why, I feel there's still something that's going to happen to that to change it. I just think that everything we saw, even though some of the pieces looked finished, I am still expecting on the night of the final performance that a lot of those pieces will have changed in some way and that we still saw, sort of, snippets of things that are still not finished. I still just felt that it was just a rehearsal.

I Thank you Participant 10.

P1 It didn't strike me as a performance either. Even when they were doing it smoothly I still thought they were yearning for Rafael's approval. They were rehearsing for him to say it was all okay before they could consider it a performance. I felt that they thought they were still seeking his approval, not performing.

I Thanks Participant 1.

P2 I just don't think that there was the energy level there that you feel in a performance where they press the go button and they just go and they perform whatever it is. You know, they all had about another ten percent I reckon. *Laughs.*

Laughter.

I Thanks Participant 2.

P5 I felt there was a moment in the very first couple of minutes where we had all walked in and they did that first group performance and they were all into it, it wasn't what they would do on the night, but some of them felt like they were performing to us so they were acting up a little bit towards us. It was performing in a way and I found that quite interesting. You know, "We've got these new people in the room," and they were, kind of, doing it to us and then they relaxed back into their rehearsal.

I Thanks Participant 5. For those who felt that there were performance moments in that rehearsal, and thinking about the switch, did that impact on how you watched it? Did you feel or think that they are performing now, so I'm going to watch it the way I would a performance?

P4 For me you could never really quite tell. I always thought it was a rehearsal. I suppose I don't fall into that category. Even when the girl did the really lovely solo, she was smiling halfway through it. I thought, "Does that mean she's caught herself up or,

Laughter from some participants.

P4 is she supposed to smile at the point?" You still couldn't quite tell whether they'd reached performance level. Yeah it probably didn't. You were asking about people who were in the performance camp and I followed with this.

Laughter.

I Thanks Participant 4. So for those in the performance camp?

P7 I did. I felt there were parts where I was absorbed by the performance or what was happening and I wasn't thinking about things, and then there were other parts where I was thinking about the technical questions and the questions about the process. So I definitely shifted between thinking about the process and being absorbed by the performance or the dance.

I Thanks Participant 7.

P11 Yeah, I'd agree with that.

I You'd agree with that Participant 11? Thank you.

P3 I tended to in those moments, because the music was going as well, I engaged more with it when they were working with the music. So that made more it more performance-like for me as well. So my level of engagement with it as a work rose when they were working with the music.

I Thanks Participant 3.

P9 Going back to the performance aspect, I did notice that it felt more performance when everyone's eyes were on the one dancer. Because throughout the piece everyone's doing their own thing and the dancers weren't focused on each other but when the solo happened everyone pulled away and everyone's eyes were on her. Rafael, all of the dancers and all of ours and that, to me, felt like a performance. Suddenly this person is showing, this is a more complete, not completed, but it's a more complete product. Rafael was happy and he moved on, but everyone's eyes were on her at that moment in time.

P11 There were a few moments like that, not just that one, but there were a few where the dancers were, kind of, doing their own thing and then they suddenly stopped and started watching.

I Thank you.

P10 If I could say, just quickly, from my point of view I didn't see it as anything but a rehearsal because I am so looking forward to the final performance because it is so much more involved. There'll be costumes, there's the makeup, there will maybe be some backdrop or something and I always look for a total package of something. So it was very stripped bare, they were in their shorts and singlets and socks with holes in them. I was worried about that.

Laughter.

P10 And so, for me, I just saw it as that and then I'm really looking forward to the final performance. So that's just from my point of view.

I Thank you Participant 10. Finally, is this something you would do again? Where you come watch a rehearsal, nothing's prepared for you specifically as an audience, but you're just in there seeing them do their thing.

P2 Yeah.

P10 Definitely

P2 Sure.

"Mmm" from many participants.

P5 Often.

I Is that unanimous? It seems so.

“Yes” from all participants.

I Okay.

P11 I would have preferred for it to be more unrehearsed, more unfinished and I would rather see that than what I saw today, but I did enjoy today.

I So would you like to get in there earlier in the process?

“Mmm” from some participants.

P11 Totally.

I Thanks Participant 11. Is that something that others are feeling too?

“Mmm” from some participants.

P2 Yeah, that would be interesting.

I No, Participant 7?

P7 I don't know. I was very happy with today's. I mean, yes for a different point of view but not because I didn't like today's.

“Yep” and “Yeah” from some participants.

P7 It's just because it would be a different part of the process. If it was the same period again I would definitely go again to this part of the process.

I Thanks Participant 7. Any final comments? Something that we haven't touched on that you'd like to throw into the mix.

P3 Something that I really liked from there was how they show their appreciation for each other and also too, sitting on the end you can kind of hear them chatting amongst themselves a bit and hear the nice comments they have. I think even, as they were finishing up one of them said your last arabesque was fantastic. I thought no one says that to me at the end of the day at work.

Laughter.

P2 You need to do more arabesques.

Laughter.

P3 But it was very nice to see that level of interaction and the nature of that interaction with them as well. I think that made it, yeah it raised the enjoyment for me as well, to see how much they enjoy working with each other.

I Thank you Participant 3.

P11 I was actually surprised with how they worked with each other. They were pleasant to each other, but I did expect them to be more rowdy-like, more friendly. Friendly is the wrong word, more relaxed.

I Thanks Participant 11.

P4 I just wonder if that's because we were there.

P11 Yeah.

P4 And if not, the fact that they are supporting each other as much as they do, that strikes me as a very supportive environment. But if I was very much having favourites, there wouldn't be as much support because everyone would be trying to get ahead of everyone else. But I think being a supportive environment that's more likely to happen. That struck me as a very supportive environment for the dancers.

I Thank you Participant 9.

P4 One that I would love is to know more about the choreographer. Like, I loved doing it today but I think the choreographer is a fascinating person and their vision and where their ideas come from. I don't know how you would build that into it but some kind of educational thing about it would be nice as another add on to the rehearsal somehow.

I Thank you Participant 4. I'll wrap it up now. Thank you for coming and for sharing your thoughts. I look forward to doing it again in March.

Appendix 2: SDC Post-Performance Audience Discussion

Location: Sydney Dance Company, Walsh Bay NSW

Date: 5 March, 2013

I = Interviewer

P1 = Participant 1 (female, 55-59, registered nurse).

P2 = Participant 2 (female, 45-49, mechanical draftsman).

P3 = Participant 3 was not able to attend performance.

P4 = Participant 4 (female, 50-54, research evaluator for government agency).

P5 = Participant 5 (male, 30-34, policy and media officer for community sector).

P6 = Participant 6 (female, 18-24, research assistant).

P7 = Participant 7 (female, 45-49, no occupation).

P8 = Participant 8 (female, 30-34, medical field).

P9 = Participant 9 (male, 25-29, research scientist).

P10 = Participant 10 (female, 60-64, retired primary/special needs learning teacher).

P11 = Participant 11 (male, 35-39, person-centred design specialist).

I Thank you so much for participating in my research again. I know it's tempting to take a freebie ticket and run.

Laughter.

I I really appreciate your contribution. Since we've done this before I won't give you the full introduction. Just like last time, I'll be asking questions and posing topics which we will be discussing as a group. Something I didn't get the chance to ask you last time is how many Sydney Dance Company performances have each of you been to, say in the last year, and do you consider yourself a fan? So, it's probably best to do this one around the circle. Participant 8, would you like to start?

P8 I've seen a few with Rafael, like the last three maybe four but I don't remember the title.

I And would you consider yourself a fan of Sydney Dance Company?

P8 Ah, I prefer all the choreography of Rafael, but yes, I really like the dance company.

I Thank you. Participant 4?

P4 I'm definitely a fan, but I haven't been to anything in the last few years. We live out of Sydney now so it's too hard to get in now with everything going on.

I And when you were living in Sydney?

P4 It was a long time ago. I used to subscribe. It was like twenty years ago.

I Okay.

P4 But I've always loved it, and then I did The Australian Ballet for many years and then because we moved out of Sydney we stopped doing that.

I Participant 2?

P2 Yes, longstanding. Way back in the eighties. But more recently, taking a little while to get into Rafael's style but I've probably seen two or three times in the last eighteen months and yeah, really enjoyed it.

I And would you consider yourself a fan? You're allowed to say no if it's not the case.

P2 I'd say no. I'm becoming more fussy in my older age. *Laughs.* So I would say no.

I Participant 11.

P11 I've been to, there's one every six months, so seven. Three and a half years and yes, I'm a fan.

Laughter.

I Participant 7.

P7 Yeah, last year I've been to two and yeah, I consider myself a fan.

I Participant 1.

P1 Tonight was the first performance I'd ever been to for the Sydney Dance Company and I would consider myself a fan.

Laughter.

I Participant 6.

P6 This is the second Sydney Dance Company performance I've been to. I enjoy it a lot.
I don't know if fan is the right word, but I did enjoy it.

I Thank you. Participant 9.

P9 I've been to five over the last two years and I would definitely consider myself a fan.

I Participant 5.

P5 I get to one or two every year. I have for the last six or seven years and yeah,
definitely a fan.

I And Participant 10.

P10 This is the third one I've seen and yes I'm a fan.

I Thank you for that. Thinking now about the experience we've just had in the theatre.
What thoughts were going through your mind and/or feelings did you experience
during the performance? Anything that popped into your head while we were in there.

P8 I thought it was spectacular the last part.

I Spectacular?

P8 Yes. It was really refreshing because it was the first time with the voice over and
engaging, much more engaging than just seeing the movements which is beautiful, but
once you've seen some movements in a few shows then that show's emotional but it
doesn't go much further than that. The last one you think, "Wow, I've seen something
really unique," and seeing it was important.

I Thanks Participant 8.

- P1 It was hugely surprising. I got a real shock. Very surprising.
- I Thanks Participant 1.
- P5 I think it confirmed my preference to have more narrative, more story to what I'm watching. Even though I had seen Fanatic back in September I still enjoyed it for that reason. That it was entertaining that way and the last piece wasn't necessarily a story but it was still easier to engage in rather as a narrative work as opposed to the first piece [Emergence] which was movement and feeling.
- I Thanks Participant 5. Any other thoughts that cropped up in your mind?
- P11 I think it took away, the narrative of the last piece, I think that took away from enjoying the movement because I was watching more of how it corresponded with what they were saying. So it was more like a comedy event rather than looking at the physicality. But I enjoyed it, but it was a different experience to just enjoying dance.
- P2 Yeah, I'm a bit like that. I've seen a few things where there's been speaking as well and it just, sort of, jars a bit for me. They're great dancers. Don't speak. *Laughs.* I mean I think that the message is pretty clear generally just with the dance. As you say, the last one was quite funny as they're going through the moves. I thought it was a clear narrative.
- I Thanks Participant 2.
- P9 Well that was very tongue and cheek. I think that was the whole point, it was a collaboration. It was discussed in an article that it is in fact a collaboration. So it is jarring, you sort of go I'm here to focus on dance but I'm focusing on narrative.

P2 Mmm.

P9 But then there's parts when they're not talking and you're so focused on the movement.

P2 Mmm.

P9 I think they actually achieved a very good balance and I think it was a good amount of narration, also a good amount of dance and that fact that it sort of, it flowed. I think it's a testament to the choreographer and the dance director in that case. Because I think sometimes we have too much of one or too much of the other but for this one it seems to balance, at least in my opinion.

I Thank you Participant 9. Focusing on Emergence for a little while which is, obviously, the piece that we saw bits and pieces of in rehearsal. My first question on that is did you feel like this piece was familiar to you or was it still quite new or unexpected?

P2 No, it was familiar and I was looking for bits. I wanted to see how they resolved things.

Laughter.

P2 It's probably the same with anything you've seen more than once, expecting the next bit to happen. If I'd never seen it before I'd just be sitting there watching, enjoying, but I was looking for a couple of bits in particular to see what they'd done.

I And did you recognise these bits when they came?

P2 Yes.

I Thanks Participant 2. Did you want to add something Participant 11?

P11 Yeah. So the whole piece for me was brand new but then there were tiny little bits throughout it that you get a flash of recognition. There was one piece where it was all familiar, the bit where they were struggling to step over him, and it wasn't there and I was looking for that in that seat. I couldn't spot it in performance. So, yeah, it took away from enjoyment because I was looking for that bit.

I Thanks Participant 11.

P10 I found the piece tonight, the actual performance, extremely emotional. I was very, very caught up with it. Where as in the rehearsal I didn't have any emotion about it at all. I know this sounds ridiculous, but this is me. The very first piece with the girl and the two men I was caught. I was feeling upset because of the story in the paper about that girl who was attacked. I felt that it was, to me, a woman being mistreated and yet in the rehearsal and probably because this incident hadn't happened, I don't know, but in the rehearsal I didn't feel anything. It was just people practising something. But because tonight was the final and I knew it was, it's almost like tonight it was for real. And you asked us about the rehearsal before. Rehearsal for me is purely rehearsal, it wasn't anything finished, but tonight I felt uncomfortable and I felt a bit upset because I felt the woman, the way they had the two men with the woman in the middle and she is quite fragile looking, the way she was dressed. Whereas I'd see exactly the same thing in the rehearsal and I didn't think anything of it. But it really upset me to start with and then of course it moved on, but the initial thing just upset me. And then the piece I found really, really beautiful with the two men dancing. And what I thought in the rehearsal, I was just wondering whether in fact that was the piece we saw in the rehearsal, because in the rehearsal it looked like they were

fighting. I was almost thinking it was something out of Hamlet. You can imagine them getting some swords out and going to stab each other but tonight, that dance was very, very moving and I think it was all about love. I didn't think that they were fighting at all and yet when they were in the frantic one when the two men were making, you know, towards the end there they were fighting, that looked more like what we saw in the rehearsal. Even though they weren't as engaged physically as they were in the rehearsal, I just felt that the finished piece of those two, the two men, was quite different. If that's the one we saw in the rehearsal I felt it was quite different from the rehearsal piece. I was very engaged with it, very much so.

I Thank you Participant 10. Going on that point of a rehearsal being one thing and a performance being another, did anyone else feel a distinct difference with how you engaged with what we saw tonight versus what we saw six weeks ago?

P4 I suppose I thought a kind of privilege in a way that I had this inside view of it and I could see how it's been like this embryonic thing. Even though it looked amazing in rehearsal as well, but it had formed into this incredible sort of final piece. It seemed like a tenth of what it had become, you know, in the final work. I just thought, "Oh, I'm so lucky I got to see something developing and then to see this incredible sort of, wow." Just sort of took you over. Yeah, it was just a sense of, "Aren't I fortunate that I got to do that," sort of thing. It's very rare to be able to see behind the scenes.

I Thanks Participant 4. Does anybody else want to comment?

Participant 5 and Participant 7 start talking at the same time.

I Participant 5 we'll go to you and then Participant 7.

P5 I actually found that it made me much more critical of the piece, in terms of critically assessing it while I was viewing it. So because of the bits I'd seen I'd go, "Oh, are they doing it the same? What's changed?" Because of the background knowledge it's made bits of my thinking into assessing rather than enjoying and I'll contrast that with Fanatic. Even though I'd seen it before I haven't seen the rehearsals, it hasn't built me up to anything so I'll sit back and enjoy it. Whereas the way that my mind works is I'm going to criticise it and not just the pieces I'd seen before, but the whole piece.

I Thank you Participant 5. Participant 7.

P7 I was going to say essentially the same thing, but basically we were talking a lot about process in the rehearsals and how it was really interesting to see the process and I found in the performance, having seen the rehearsal, the process impinged on the performance. I found myself being more critical and looking for bits we'd seen and I think it impaired my ability to just enjoy the dance in this particular performance because I don't do that normally when I watch dance.

I It's sounding like it's, going back to what you said earlier, in a way it almost ruined the experience because as Participant 11 was saying you were looking for those bits.

"Mmm" from some participants.

P7 I think ruined is a bit strong.

P2 Yeah that's too strong.

P7 But it definitely impacted it, definitely impacted it.

P5 It made the difference.

P7 Yeah.

I Thank you Audience Member 7. Does anybody else want to add any comments about the dance feeling familiar or unfamiliar?

P6 It didn't feel that familiar to me but that's probably because I have less of a critical eye when it comes to things like music and dance, but also because the performance I was kind of half to three quarters dance and the rest was everything else, the atmosphere of the theatre, the lights, the music. So that was obviously what stood out and what made it a performance for me. And I actually enjoyed watching the rehearsal more than the actual performance.

I Thank you Audience Member 6. Does anybody else feel the same way about enjoying the rehearsal more than the performance?

P8 The performance was more interesting.

I The performance was more interesting?

P8 Yes.

I Thanks Audience Member 8.

P8 The different aspects of the dancing and music and even their expression.

P5 I'd have to agree. I found the rehearsal more enjoyable than the performance.

P6 It's more that, not that I enjoyed, I don't know if I really enjoyed it more but it made an impression on me, watching the rehearsal.

I Did you want to add something in Audience Member 1?

P1 Well what I was just thinking that I really enjoyed seeing the rehearsal but it didn't in the slightest degree detract from the performance tonight for me. If anything it assisted me to appreciate it more that I'd seen those real people in their rehearsal gear learning that and to see the polished performance, it meant more to me having seen the rehearsal.

P10 I agree exactly with you.

I Thank you. So do you think that watching the rehearsal helped or hindered your ability to understand Emergence?

P1 I'm not sure I understand it.

Laughter.

P2 Wasn't that the narrative of the last one?

P1 Isn't that what it's all about?

Laughter.

P1 I was wondering about that. Was I supposed to be understanding this one? I might be failing.

P4 You don't always come away with an understanding,

P2 No.

P5 No.

P4 of what you've seen.

P2 Did you enjoy it?

P4 It's if the experience impacts on you and you take something from it. It's an emotional thing. It's a cerebral thing and you're always wanting to know more, for me anyway. Like, "What did that mean and why did he do it that way?" I suppose it makes me wonder more about it actually than having an understanding.

I Thanks Audience Member 4.

P1 Yeah, I kept wondering whether there was a story that they were trying to tell us that I was meant to be understanding better. Made up a few ideas but I wondered if there was a story they were intending to impart to us.

I Thanks Audience Member 1. So how did you feel as an audience member during the performance compared to in the rehearsal?

P2 I thought in the performance they are performing for the audience where in the rehearsal it was very much a work situation and they're learning it and making it up and just a totally different atmosphere.

I So does that mean that in the performance you felt like you were more a part of it perhaps?

P2 Yes. Yeah definitely.

I Okay. Thanks. Does anyone else feel the same way that the performance was perhaps more inclusive for an audience than the rehearsal?

P11 It was more immersive.

I More immersive.

P11 Definitely more immersive in the performance. In the rehearsal I felt like a fly on the wall just watching it.

I Thank you Participant 11 and that's something that we talked a bit about last time.

P11 Yeah.

P1 I think with the performance you know you're meant to be there, the whole place is there to watch them, in the rehearsal it felt as if it was a privilege,

P11 Yeah.

P1 to be behind the scenes, being allowed to watch them when you wouldn't normally be sitting to watch them. So you did feel a little bit, I felt as if I was imposing whereas tonight we were meant to be there to watch the performance.

I Thanks Participant 1. Did somebody want to add to that?

P5 I was just going to say the same things but with the opposite meanings.

Laughter.

P5 So I felt privileged to be in the rehearsal and that it felt great to be able to see something that not many people get to see in the rehearsal. You're not just one of the crowd and it is special because you're in such a small group.

I Thanks Participant 5. After the rehearsal some of you said that you were noticing the details of the dance and that's what you were focusing on. Did this change when you watched the performance tonight?

P2 I was looking for the finger with the two fellas. *Laughs*. Yeah, where his finger came, I don't know, under the other fellow's leg or something. I thought, "I wonder if that made it this far." *Laughs*. And it did. It did. So I was looking for a few of the very small details.

I And was it just the details that you knew about through the rehearsal or were you looking very closely at how they were doing everything?

P2 Actually I was looking more closely than I had previously.

I Thanks Participant 2. Does anybody else agree with that, that they felt like they were looking closer?

P4 Yeah I was more attune to all the small detail and the intricacies of it that I probably didn't appreciate if I hadn't been to the rehearsal.

I Thanks Participant 4.

P9 I was looking for details that I'd seen in the rehearsal. I think, because I was connecting more with it emotionally with the dancers in the performance, I think I sort of took a step back to see the bigger picture from just looking at the finer details. Like the two male dancers dancing or the three, you know, you try to create a story in your mind and whilst that's happening, for me at least. I wasn't focusing on how they did the leg thing at all but there were some things that I had noticed because of what I had seen. You know, how are they going to do that lift? How did they resolve that move? So I think that for me, having made a more emotional connection with them in the performance, I think instead of looking for little details I stepped back a little bit.

I Thank Participant 9.

P10 Yes, I agree with Participant 9. Although I recognised the patterns that they were making, that they did in the rehearsal, in the performance I was looking at the whole piece rather than individual movements. Yes, I was looking at the entire finished movements rather than individual, what did they do there. And I thought it had changed so much. Just in my mind, I thought some of the finished pieces had changed so much since the rehearsal that it looked new and different to me.

I Thanks Participant 10. Did anyone else experience the same feeling that what you had seen in the rehearsal, and what you had come to expect, didn't happen? That it changed? Or did that final work turn out how you were expecting it to?

P8 The rehearsal was just a fragment of the piece. You can't just extract a little fragment and then you add all the movements, so it changed so much into another new form of dance altogether. It was something that transforms.

I Thanks Participant 8.

P7 Right at the end, it was unexpected in what they were wearing. So seeing them onstage, I hadn't thought at all about what they were going to wear, so it was seeing them there in those costumes I thought, "Ooo, I didn't expect to see them wearing that," although I didn't have a view of what they were going to be wearing. But then after that for me it was familiar, the rest of it.

I Even the bits that we hadn't seen in rehearsal?

P7 Yeah, because I was looking at it more as a big picture so you could see those fragments all worked together but it wasn't, I wouldn't say it was unexpected. I think that as a whole it felt familiar.

I Thanks Participant 7.

P2 Yeah, I'd agree with Participant 7 on that.

I Thanks Participant 2.

P1 I found it really impressive, just how much it developed. It's really only four or five weeks and I could still see some similarity, although it had developed so much more. The thing was there, but it had developed.

I Thanks Participant 1.

P5 I didn't find that except for the bit with the two male dancers. I thought that that had changed,

P1 Yeah.

P5 and was much more impressive than I was expecting, but the other bits,

P1 Flowed.

P5 didn't seem to have changed that much.

I Thanks Participant 5. Another thing that a couple of you mentioned last time was focusing on the mechanical aspects of the dance, how it actually works, rather than the artistic ideas. What were you focusing on tonight?

P2 Same thing. *Laughs.*

P5 Whether they did the lift.

P2 I do love the mechanics of it.

- I So you were looking at the mechanics Participant 2. What were you looking at Participant 5?
- P5 Whether they were going to do the lift on the back. Mechanics.
- I Again, looking at the mechanics. Were you focusing on how they were doing the movement throughout the piece or just the sections that you had seen?
- P2 No, throughout.
- P5 Yeah.
- I Throughout. What about everyone else, what were you focusing on?
- P11 I was focusing on the emotion of the piece and apart from the bits that I had seen and those were the bits that took me out of that.
- I And is that where it broke for you?
- P11 Yeah, I would say broke.
- P2 Interrupted.
- P11 Yeah, it kind of just switched. I don't know whether it's different parts of your brain or whatever, but you kind of go focusing, "Oh yeah, I recognise that," and it does kind of detract you, takes you out of the flow of your experience.
- I Thanks Participant 11. Did anyone experience something similar?
- P7 Yeah, but I think mine was not the level of detail, technical individual moves, but more of the fragments.

“Mmm” from some participants.

P7 As you said I was looking for that three piece part and then that two piece part and then once they happened I was into the sort of the big picture, the emotion. I didn't look at the technical details within those sections.

P11 Yeah, you did get back into it.

P7 Yeah.

P11 I did get back into it very quickly. It was kind of just a flash.

P7 Yeah.

I Thanks Participant 11. Did you want to say something Participant 9?

P9 Just the difference between the rehearsal and the performance. I felt like in the rehearsal I felt more connected with the dancers while in the performance I was connecting with the character in the play. It was a very big distinction in my mind, because I felt that during rehearsals there were three dancing, they pulled the one out saying, “No, you'll probably be better here.” I was thinking, “I wonder how they're feeling right now. I wonder what's going through their brain as they are now dancing with different people,” or “I wonder if they dynamics are different there.” In the performance, for me, it wasn't much about the dancers, it was about the people or the emotion or the characters they are trying to portray and that's what I was looking at this time round.

I Thanks Participant 9. That leads me into another question. Seeing the dancers in a more casual context in rehearsal versus seeing them in their performance mode in that polished state. What are your thoughts on that contrast?

P10 It's a huge contrast. No one had holes in their socks, thank goodness.

Laughter.

P10 It was chalk and cheese to me, it was. In the rehearsal they were in their daggy old clothes. I actually found it very interesting to see what they do wear for a rehearsal. They just wear whatever's the cleanest on the floor I think. And yet for the performance they wore very interesting costumes, they had makeup on, the girls' hair, all their hair was done perfectly and pulled back and beautiful. And the guys had their hair done. I mean, it's just a performance. It's just fabulous and the lighting, just everything was fabulous compared with rehearsal. The rehearsal was a rehearsal.

I Seeing the holey socks and the clothes, did that have an impact on your idea of the dancers in anyway?

P10 No.

I Did you enjoy seeing that aspect?

P10 It was interesting. Yeah it was interesting, and because as I think somebody mentioned here they were at work. This is their job. I mean they look stunning and fabulous and ethereal and other worldly and all these things but they are doing a job, and they were at work in the rehearsal, and this is the pinnacle of their job. The final performance, that's how I felt.

I Thanks Participant 10. The difference between the holey socks and perfect buns.

Laughter.

P2 I agree with Participant 10 that it's two very different looks, experiences, but I love seeing both and one doesn't take away from the other at all. It's just a different show really.

I Does one add something to the other?

P1 Yeah, definitely.

P2 Oh I think so because you can really see how different a performance is to the rehearsal. It's great to see that link from one to the other.

I Thanks Participant 2.

P1 I think I appreciated tonight's performance more having seen those people in the rehearsal because I could recognise them, because I could identify with them it seemed more personal. I've seen you working hard and I can really be happy for you and appreciate that you've achieved it. It's to do with their sense of achievement maybe. They pulled it off.

Laughter.

I Anyone else want to add in something?

P5 I didn't find that it added to it. I felt that it changed what I was viewing tonight. For some of them I could still hear their voices while they were dancing. So when they

spotlight was on them I was hearing what they were saying in the performance and that changed it.

P10 In the rehearsal you mean?

P5 Yeah, so that had carried over and seeing their personalities had carried over a little bit as well. So who I was interested in, who I was paying attention to, who I liked or didn't like had been changed by seeing them in rehearsal.

I Thanks Participant 5. That's an interesting point about who you liked, who you didn't like. In the rehearsal, did you have favourites?

P4 I think you got to know them. The girl that did the solo, you know the short girl with the short hair. It's funny, you sort of feel like you've got to know a bit about them even though you've never met them. In the rehearsal you feel like you've got a little bit of what their story is and in the performance it gives you, it just adds another dimension to the performance.

I Thanks Participant 4. Did you want to say something Participant 11?

P11 Well I can add to that. So I have favourites from seeing previous performances and having seen people in rehearsals and sort of hearing their voices it kind of changed that. So I saw them differently this time than how I have in previous performances.

I Did your favourites change once you saw them in rehearsal?

P11 Well there are new people. There's quite a few new people so I can't really say yet.

Laughter.

P2 For me, because we only saw specific bits in the rehearsal you saw more of some people than you did of others.

P11 Yeah.

P2 And the trio at the beginning of the piece tonight, we didn't see a lot of them in rehearsal. It wasn't one of the pieces they really focused on, but the girl in this piece she was just so good tonight and I think that when we saw them in the rehearsal they were really just running through the piece without really doing it very well. *Laughs.* So for me she was just a much stronger person, character, than what we saw in the rehearsal. That's probably just because it wasn't a focus in the rehearsal.

P11 Is that the girl who did that solo?

P2 With the two fellows, the trio.

P11 Oh okay, yeah.

I At the beginning.

P2 At the beginning, yeah.

I Thanks Participant 3.

P11 So the girl who did the solo, she ran the whole solo in the rehearsal and I was disappointed with her tonight.

P2 Natalie.

P11 Yeah, Natalie.

I You were disappointed. Why?

P11 I don't know, I don't know.

P10 It was different.

P11 Was it different?

P10 I thought it was, I was trying to work out which one she was by her hair.

P2 Yeah, it was different.

P10 Sorry to cut across you there.

P11 That's alright.

P10 In the rehearsal I think she had curly hair.

"Mmm" from some participants.

P10 So her hair, I think, was slicked back because there was another girl, who had had her hair dyed dark red, and that wasn't the same girl. And I feel that the piece that we saw in the rehearsal was much stronger than what we saw tonight of her.

P11 Yeah, I agree.

P10 For that piece. Her specific solo.

P11 Yeah, whereas the girl with the red hair, she was brilliant.

P2 She was excellent tonight.

P10 Yes.

P9 Just speaking about favourites.

Laughter.

P9 Purely by chance I went and saw Giselle the ballet the week after and as I went into the theatre I saw a couple of the Sydney Dance Company dancers. I saw them, they saw me.

Laughter.

P9 And literally I was sitting right next to them and hearing their talks amongst themselves I was just, “Wow.”

Laughter.

P9 “You’re not what I had in my mind.” So I’ve come to the performance not having changed favourites but just going, “I know a little more about you now,

“Mmm” from some participants.

and it has altered my image of who you are. Instead of just being a dancer I see you as a person and I’m not sure if I’d speak to you if I could see you again.” Not that that’s got anything to do with what we’ve done here.

Laughter.

P2 What were they saying?

P9 Well we are just such worlds apart, you know, “I can appreciate what you do but I think on a day to day basis I don’t think we’d get along.” But that’s literally ten minutes conversation between them.

P10 Sounds like the tall poppy syndrome to me.

Laughter.

I Thanks Participant 9. Did you feel more or less comfortable in the theatre compared to the rehearsal?

P11 More comfy in the theatre.

I More comfy in the theatre?

“Yes” from some participants.

I And what is it that makes you comfortable there? Go on Participant 6.

P6 That we’re supposed to be there.

P11 Yeah.

P10 Exactly, I think so too.

“Yeah” from some participants.

P2 And they need an audience for a performance. They didn’t need us the other day, a few weeks ago, but for a performance it’s a lot better if there’s an audience.

I And do you think it’s important to feel needed?

P4 It’s more anonymous for me. Yeah, I suppose in the rehearsal I felt like a bit in their space and I’m not sure whether we were following the right protocol and were they really entirely happy with us being there. This is just speculation. And then in the

performance there is none of that that enters your mind. You've got your role as the audience and you see what they do.

I Thanks Participant 4.

P8 They kind of shine in the show and you're just there. It's not your time to shine. It's their job.

I Thank you. Just quickly, did you feel like you had more of a connection to the dancers in the performance or the rehearsal?

P11 The performance.

"Performance" from most participants.

P2 Yeah, the performance.

P10 Performance.

"Rehearsal" from some participants.

P5 Yeah, I think the rehearsal.

I Okay, so for those who said rehearsal, why?

P7 I think in the rehearsal they seemed like people and in the performance they were dancers. So they were much more anonymous in the, I felt, in the performance whereas in the rehearsal you could see who they were and that they were people and individuals where it is, they were much more a dancer in the performance.

I Would you agree with that Participant 5?

P5 Yeah, I would agree.

I And those who said that they felt more connected in performance, what was it about the performance that made that connection?

P6 It was more that I had seen in the rehearsal rather than anything I had seen in the performance I think. So not that we established a relationship in the rehearsal, or anything like that, but I felt more connected because they were more familiar rather than anything actually in the performance that they did.

I Thanks Participant 6.

P1 Same.

I Thanks Participant 1. I'd like to talk a little bit now about Fanatic and Cacti as well. I'm not trying to figure out which piece is the best. I'm just interested in your ideas and opinions about the experience of watching these pieces and how this compares to your experience of watching Emergence. So first of all, who here has seen Fanatic before? Okay, so Participant 5, Participant 7, Participant 11 for the record. This is to everyone. Do you feel like you understood Cacti or Fanatic more or less than you did with Emergence?

P11 What do you mean by understood?

P2 I feel I understood them all about the same but obviously I may have got this very completely wrong.

I The question is not about figuring out whether you are right or wrong with your understanding but whether you feel like you understood.

P2 Yeah, I felt pretty equal.

P6 Emergence was more abstract than the other two so that's why, I guess, I don't know. I don't usually come into these things really feeling like I need to understand anything, otherwise it's a lost battle sometimes.

Laughter.

P6 Yeah, I guess because the other two had narratives. That doesn't mean that I enjoyed them anymore it was just more of a matter of that kind of work.

I Do you think that because Emergence was abstract, do you think that being in the rehearsal and seeing the process has helped or hindered your understanding?

P2 No, I think I would have had the same understanding anyway and as I say, my level of understanding of these things is probably quite shallow. *Laughs.* So I'm not making any claims there. So no I don't think it, sort of, increased that understanding.

I Thanks Participant 2.

P10 I agree with Participant 2. I don't think, and I agree with Participant 6 as well, I don't go along to watch to actually understand it as much as to engage and enjoy it and I didn't feel that the rehearsal meant that I could understand it any better.

I I'd like to open it up to everyone.

P8 I think the last part was really deep and meaningful much more because it was comparing humans with orchestra and it was like, it was like philosophy in a way. For me it was much more original and sophisticated.

- I So for you it was the subject matter that set it apart?
- P8 Plus the dance, the choreography was really new. At the same time there was new meaning to dance with people being orchestra and people connecting with nature in the cactus. So for me it was like, and at the end when he said it was almost done and it was finished and they keep walking, I think I'm finished there. I think you really connect with this piece much more than the other two pieces because it was much more meaningful.
- I Thanks Participant 8. In talking about understanding someone mentioned enjoyment as being more of a focus going into watching dance. So did you enjoy watching Cacti or Fanatic more or less than Emergence?
- P4 I think they're all so unique and different it's hard to compare them or rate them like one against the other kind of thing. They were complete individual experiences and I suppose that the rehearsal, for me, added more depth. I don't think I'm sophisticated enough, been to enough dance, you know I haven't got the critiquing eye on it. I'm just allowing it to just, sort of, happen and experience it. To me it just added another dimension. I don't know if it helped me understand more because it was abstract but it did give it a bit more colour and light.
- I Thanks Participant 4.
- P10 I think because Fanatic and Cacti were so different and Participant 8 had said that some of the dance moves in Emergence were familiar to her because she had seen them in other pieces and I tend to agree with that. So I feel Emergence was more accessible to me and because I hadn't seen Fanatic and Cacti before I was sort of a bit overwhelmed because I was trying to take it all in and there was a lot happening. So I

would probably like to see those two again and then the next time, because when you know where something's going you can sort relax a bit, knowing where it's going to go and just follow it step by step instead of wondering where it's going. So I think if I saw it again I'd probably get more enjoyment. I really enjoyed them, I thought they were funny and different, but I would probably like to see them again to get more enjoyment and perhaps try to get the philosophical side of it.

Laughter.

I Thanks Participant 10. So now that you've had the chance to experience the rehearsal and then the performance, would you still turn up to an open rehearsal if it was offered again?

P2 For sure.

"Yes" from many participants.

I Even the people who felt it had a disruptive effect?

P7 I don't know how I feel about it.

P11 I'd probably say no. If it was a really early rehearsal where they were explain, where you got more from it, but not the rehearsal we saw.

I Do you think it was too close to the final production?

P11 I don't think I benefited. It was nice to be a fly on the wall and watch them but I don't think I benefited. If anything, it detracted.

I Thanks Participant 11. Did you want to add anything Participant 7?

P7 Yeah. I mean, I loved being at the rehearsal and I loved that performance but I did think that the rehearsal did detract from my ability to enjoy the performance so I didn't like that aspect. So I would think very carefully about going.

P11 If I could see the dancers rehearse something else, then that would be fine.

P7 Yeah.

Laughter.

I So you got something more out of the experience rather than the actual specifics of the dance?

P11 Yeah, I enjoyed being there. It was a privilege to be there, but I felt it disrupted the performance.

I It's too close?

P5 I think even though it detracted from the performance it was so enjoyable as a standalone thing that I would still probably come and see it.

P10 I wouldn't see a rehearsal again because I want to see the finished, polished piece and that's just from my point of view because I like a performance. I like the whole show, the whole thing, so I wouldn't see a rehearsal again.

P1 I would see the rehearsal again.

P2 I find the two to be almost completely separate entities. I guess I'm watching them in different mind space perhaps. So yeah, I would.

I Thanks Participant 2. Is there anything that someone's been dying to say that they haven't had a chance to yet? Now's the time.

P8 I was thinking of the socks, the holey socks. I'm not sure if they were supposed to have socks on as part of the costume.

Laughter.

P2 Yeah, they were a bit woolly-looking.

I Any other last comments?

P11 I'd say one thing. If we'd seen them rehearsing either of the other two performances I think it would have been worse.

I Sorry?

P11 If we'd seen them rehearse Cacti or Fanatic, because they were all about being new, and because it was Emergence and it was much more involved. If I'd seen them rehearse Fanatic or Cacti it would have spoiled it because it was the newness about those pieces that I really enjoyed.

"Mmm" from some participants.

I Thanks Participant 11.

P1 I did think it was lovely that Rafael in person introduced the evening. I thought that was lovely.

P11 I thought he was very different in rehearsal, because I've seen him do that previously and I thought what a lovely guy and then rehearsal I didn't think the same thing.

Laughter.

P11 Because he didn't talk to you, or just a little bit towards the end but I was expecting that guy in the rehearsal and he wasn't that guy.

I Thank you, I'll wrap it up now.

Appendix 3: TAB Post-Rehearsal Spectator Discussion

Location: The Australian Ballet Centre, Southbank VIC

Date: 5 August, 2013

I = Interviewer

P1 = Participant 1 (male, 40-49, train driver).

P2 = Participant 2 (female, 30-39, architect).

P3 = Participant 3 (female, 40-49, home duties).

P4 = Participant 4 (female, 60-69, retired primary teacher).

P5 = Participant 5 (female, 50-59, event coordinator).

P6 = Participant 6 (female, 40-49, canine massage).

P7 = Participant 7 (female, 30-39, student).

P8 = Participant 8 (female, 18-29, physiotherapist).

I The aim of today's focus group is to provide an opportunity for you to share your thoughts, ideas and feelings about the experience of being in a rehearsal. I am not interested in the dance itself, instead what it is like to attend a rehearsal. I will be posing questions to you and the idea is that we talk about each topic as a group. I would like to hear everyone's ideas, so I may call on you to provide a response if you have been quiet, so be prepared for that. On the other hand, I may also ask you to let others have a chance to comment if you are talking a lot. The first question is one that we can go around the table to respond. Do you consider yourself a fan of The Australian Ballet? So yes or no is all that is required. Did you want to go first
Participant 1?

P1 Oh ok. Yes. Yes, I am a fan.

Laughter.

I Thank you. Participant 2?

P2 Yes, I'm a fan as well.

I Thank you. Participant 3?

P3 Well I would definitely say yes now.

I Ok. And beforehand?

P3 Um, it's just that I haven't seen a lot so, you know, I wouldn't classify myself as fanatical. It was great, so yes.

I Thank you. Participant 4?

P4 Most definitely, oh yes.

I Participant 5?

P5 Yes.

I Thanks, Participant 5.

P6 I'd agree with Participant 3, I'd be a new fan.

I After watching rehearsal today?

P6 Yes, I've only seen ballet once before.

I Okay, thanks Participant 6.

P7 Yes, very much so.

I Thanks, Participant 7.

P8 Yes, me too.

I Thank you. Thinking about the rehearsal we just watched together. What thoughts were going through your mind or feelings did you experience while we were in there?
So this is open for anyone to answer now.

P6 I think we all appreciated how lucky we were, because we're all fans of the arts in some way so we appreciate how fortunate we were to have this experience today.

I Thanks, Participant 6.

- P3 I felt it was extremely intimate to be in there. First of all it was just amazing and then to see it all so closely, and so it was just intimate. And then it took a long while for me to realise, to forget, that they could see me. So I then, kind of, felt a lot more comfortable, but in the beginning, “I shouldn’t be here. This feels really close.” Especially because they don’t talk very much and they are taking a lot of cues from the choreographer and it’s just, it seems to be a very small space in a way. That’s just the first thing that struck me. It’s a bit private and I don’t know if I should be here.
- I Thanks, Participant 3.
- P4 I felt very privileged to be able to see the choreographer or the dance person, the leader, and watching him and his emotions that he goes through, trying to get the right positioning of the people. I’ve never experienced that before. And just watching the work they go through to get to that, probably, five minutes of choreography on stage was incredible. So I was so privileged to see the thinking and the workings and the emotions in the background that you don’t realise when you go to an ordinary show.
- I Thanks, Participant 4. Participant 3 said something about it being very intimate, that they could see you and that was something that came into your mind. Is that something that other people thought about, the fact that they you could be seen?
- P5 No, I don’t think that they see you. They are just so into their zone, I don’t think they see us. They don’t know that we’re there.
- P1 I took it from a different viewpoint. I actually found the rehearsal very random initially, in watching the choreographer make subtle suggestions to the individual dancers. Because I come a music background, I played with a youth orchestra for a long time, and for me rehearsal was always a very structured. “We’re going from this

bar to this bar and we want you to play louder and we want you to play softer,” and that was just completely, initially, random. And then the choreographer, whose made these very little, subtle suggestions, then turns to the rehearsal pianist and says, “Right, belt it out from bar six point one,” and they all just come together in front of you. And that’s incredible to see, this random movement all of a sudden become so synchronised. I found it fascinating.

I Thanks, Participant 1. Did anyone want to add to that or something different about the thoughts going through your mind or feelings that you experienced?

P2 I think that initially I felt a bit uneasy in the small space especially because I think the dancers realise that it’s time for rehearsal. They become so focused that they don’t realise, because every time they have to keep watching the mirror behind us to study how they move. I keep thinking that every time they are looking in the mirror they see us looking back at them, so I felt bad that way. But I think that they are all such professionals that they don’t notice us after a while. They just focus on how they move.

I Thanks, Participant 2. You felt bad that they were seeing you? Can you explain that a bit more?

P2 Just on the conscious level. Also coming from a semi-artistic background, you’re putting yourself out there and you feel very conscious of how you receive. And this is almost like their refining their art before it’s released. I think artists are often quite sensitive to critique so it’s almost like they’re displaying something that they is not ready yet sometimes.

I Thank you. Did anybody want to add to that or contribute something different on that point? About being there and being seen.

P3 I wonder how often they would have that many people sitting in a row in a practice session. I mean, when they perform on stage I'm sure it's fairly black out there and they're not seeing eight people just right in their faces. So I wonder, if any effect that was. I mean, clearly they are focused so they are tuning out and looking at themselves in the mirror, but I just wonder how often a troupe of eight people just sit in their practice session seeing their mistakes, seeing their awkward moments and not perfection.

I Thank you Participant 3. Did you want to add something in Participant 5?

P5 I was just going to say that it's not an unusual thing. My daughter's a dancer so I've got a bit of an idea. It's quite common. They'll have people sitting in on class, different choreographers, different teachers. I don't think it's an usual thing for them.

P1 I'm sort of guessing that's why they've got the three windows down the side of the rehearsal room.

Laughter.

P1 And everybody was wondering by, stopping for a couple of minutes, having a look and going. I think that had happened once or twice before.

I Did seeing that there were windows in the rehearsal space and seeing that the dancers were quite comfortable with people stopping and watching them, did that make you feel more at ease about being in there?

“Yes” from some participants.

P4 Most of those people going past down the corridor would have been sort of junior members of the company anyway. So most of those going past, that I could see, would be people who are a part of The Australian Ballet Company anyway. Most of them.

P3 A fair few of them also did look at us.

Laughter.

P3 “How come they get the front row seats?”

I So did that make you feel more or less comfortable?

P3 Well it made me feel pretty special that I had the good seat.

Laughter.

I Thanks Participant 3. Any other takers for thoughts or feelings experienced in the rehearsal?

P8 I thought it was really interesting to see. When you see ballet dancers of such high calibre on stage they’re just always really perfect and everything is so choreographed and everyone runs so smoothly. But here, you know, they don’t have their makeup on, they’re not as graceful as you think they would be in everyday life. So it’s just really nice to see that more human side to them and realising that they’re not always entirely perfect and polished, and it actually takes some work to get there.

“Mmm” from some participants.

I Thanks Participant 8.

P3 That's a good point. You almost always expect them to come out to do the most and you know they're not putting in all the effort because they've got to do it that many times over. So they do it a bit slap dash sometimes. But that's true, you kind of almost expect a huge level of effort. But quite often they'd take it easy or wouldn't jump or whatever.

I Thanks Participant 3. So more specifically now, what was watching the creative process, the act of dance being made, what was that like for you?

P4 Inspiring and amazing.

I In what way?

P4 Well, just watching the leader. Is he the choreographer?

I Yes.

P4 Yeah, okay. Well just watching his thought processes as it's going through and he's obviously watching the different couples, and their technique, and also putting that all together and how they work together. That's what I felt anyway. I just found that absolutely amazing to watch that process and you could almost see the thoughts that were happening in his head.

I Thanks Participant 4. Did anybody want to add to that?

P5 I find it incredible to see how long it takes them to figure out a hand movement or a head movement. That can take fifteen minutes to get that right and yet to the audience, when you're watching the performance, it just happens.

P4 And that's where the professionalism comes in. You know, we are so privileged to see this process and then perhaps see the finished product on the night and know how much work has gone into it to get to that. So lots of people don't understand it or don't get to see it.

P1 What struck me was just the physicality of the rehearsal. It's one thing to see the finished performance but to see how physically labour intensive it obviously is for the rehearsal process and, as you say, privileged to be able to sit there and watch it. That's the thing that really struck me, and they just go over and over and over and over again. Whereas if it had of me I would have gone for about five minutes and said, "Sod this. I'm off to the pub."

Laughter.

P4 And they probably feel like it too, at times.

Laughter.

I Did you feel like that after watching it for five minutes?

Laughter.

P1 No, no. I could watch and watch. It truly was fascinating to see. And just how each individual dancer takes on that one little movement, that one hand gesture, and they all combined it together once again to get the synchronicity when they run through. It's just a really fascinating thing to see. I really am blown away. I want to go back in.

Laughter.

I Thanks Participant 1.

P5 I think also the risk factor that you don't see on stage. The risks involved, particularly for the girls. How easy it is to have an accident.

P5 And you never see, well, hopefully you never see that on stage.

P3 I agree with the amount of work, that was amazing, but what struck me most about the whole relationship between the choreographer and the dancers was how organic it was. I thought he would have everything in his head already, and he's just, "No, how about we try this? How about we try that?" It was so flexible. He was making it up on the spot in a way, you know, or going with the flow. That was really that most surprising thing. I honestly thought the choreographer would come in with already his plan and, "This how it's going to go," but once he saw a certain movement he would change quite a lot. That to me was the most surprising part of it. I didn't realise quite how organic it would be.

I Thanks Participant 3. Anything else about what it's like to watch the creative process?

P6 I thought, sort of following on from what Participant 3 said, that it was amazing how much they remembered everything.

"Mmm" from some participants.

P6 Because I sing in a choir and I have to write everything down when someone makes a change and, you know, every time they change something they were right on it and they remembered it straight away. I just thought that was amazing.

I Thanks Participant 6.

P2 Similarly, I think it's a collaborative, organic and collaborative, process between the choreographer and the dancers and from my understanding it is because this is a new production. It's almost like he's drafting it out right now and the dancers are helping him.

"Mmm" from some participants.

P2 He'll say, "That one's good." The dancers could suggest some movements that he might take on a vice versa. It not him with just a set manuscript. And it's fascinating to see choreography being born, really.

I Thank you Participant 2. So what was it like being very close to the choreographer and dancers?

P3 As I said before, pretty intimate.

P8 I found it a little bit intimidating at the start. Yeah, but again, as the process sort of moved along and everyone felt a bit more comfortable that was okay. Yeah, I find it, like it's an exclusive environment and we are really privileged to be here but just at the start I felt a bit intimidated.

P4 Like we were intruding.

"Mmm" from some participants.

I And what was it that made it feel intimidating?

P8 I suppose because they're some of the best dancers in the country. They're pretty special people. They're really good at what they do.

- P4 It's almost a spiritual thing, I think.
- P3 I agree. When you're in the presence of this level of professionalism, that's the intimidating thing.
- I Thanks Participant 3. Other thoughts about being close to the dancers and choreographer?
- P7 I had a fan type reaction. I saw Madeline in Swan Lake just recently and she was wonderful, and the whole time I just wanted to say, "You're wonderful. Thank you."
- Laughter.*
- P7 And I think also, because ballet, you know these are very disciplined, talented and just kind of hallowed halls in a way. Yeah, and I always have, when I recently saw Swan Lake and this was the same reaction I get, it's a very emotional feeling, very powerful feeling. It's just very beautiful to watch. And I think because we also know about the dedication behind it, it just feels like a real gift. I guess that's what it felt like.
- I Thank you Participant 7.
- P3 Sorry, can I just add two other things about intimacy?
- I Yes, of course.
- P3 One is the shoes. How much we could hear those shoes and every movement that was ever made rustling in the shoes, and that kind of thing, which you don't normally, when you're out in an audience, hear too much of really. And that kind of made it really real. And the other thing about the intimacy, I think the huge level of unspoken communication that was going on between partners, between the choreographer, they

just didn't even need to speak. They didn't sometimes, would use signals and things like that. A lot of unspoken communication, that was the other intimidating thing about being in the rehearsal. If I make one flinch they're going to pick up on it. Very fine-tuned.

P4 That's what I sort of mean about the spirituality between the dancers, is that almost unspoken. They hone in on each other and that's what I mean by spirituality, it's between them. We're intruding in their space.

P2 It's an intimate bond.

P1 You could tell that with, certainly something I picked up, was the amount of eye contact the individual dancers had not just with the choreographer but with the other dancers. Because even though maybe they've stopped or paused for thirty seconds, they're watching how somebody else is doing it and they're picking up on that and there's, as Participant 3 mentioned, almost totally non-verbal communication but they're just grasping every idea almost instantaneously and then translating that back into the performance space. And that for me was really interesting to see because I'm used to having an idiot at the front called a conductor telling me I've got to bash something here, and it was just really fascinating to see that non-verbal communication that everybody picks up. So that's very intimate because you have to know the other individual so well to be able to grasp that level, that detail, and transform it.

I Thank you. I'm going to go back to something Participant 8 said earlier on. You mentioned that you saw a human side to the dancers. Can you elaborate on what you mean by that?

P8 Just them not being perfect all the time and making mistakes and, you know, working things out and thinking things through and fooling around with her partner and having a bit of a giggle. That sort of stuff. Yeah, that was really good to see.

I Opening it up now, is that something that other people were noticing as well?

P2 One of the couples, they were just really cheeky. They were having such a fun time and very playful. Madeline and Kevin, yeah. And then there was one couple that was very serious, quite studious. They each had their own personalities and I think they were matched up pretty well that way, apart from physicality. Like Participant 8 said, they nearly all had the human quirks and some of them fooled around and having slips and falls and things like that. It was very natural.

P8 And I think when you watch ballet performances, because they get so into their characters, you forget that you know the people playing the part have their own personalities as well. Another thing I found with being so close is that you notice what size they are in real life.

Laughter.

P8 Because when they are on stage they have the beautiful lines and everything looks flawless and they just, I don't know, you just don't think of them as a normal person. You don't think to size them up in that sort of way, and just seeing how tiny Madeline was, probably about my height, they look quite different.

P3 Yeah, that's right. When they've got all their makeup the same, their costumes the same, they tend to look all identical to each other, the girls. And seeing them that closely, totally different head shapes and sizes and intense looks.

I Thanks, Participant 3. You touched on this a little bit but I'd like to make it a point of discussion. Did you feel at ease or uncomfortable in that environment and did that change at any point? Go on Participant 6.

P6 I guess initially you felt uncomfortable because you were in their space, but I guess you became comfortable with it as they noticed us less. I think you became more comfortable.

I As they noticed us less. Is that something that other people felt happen?

P3 Totally, I totally agree. I felt more noticeable in the beginning and very much less at the end, except when we trooped out. So it just got more comfortable.

I Participant 5, you are shaking your head.

P5 I just didn't feel uncomfortable at all. Maybe that's because I've spent many hours in dance classes over the many years. To me, I felt quite comfortable being there. I didn't feel like I was intruding at all because that's what they do and they're used to having people there. So for me, no I didn't feel uncomfortable at all.

I You wanted to say something Participant 7?

P7 Yeah I just wanted to say I don't feel like I was intruding either. These are people that have probably been looked at a lot while dancing over the years and critiqued and all of that. I mean while I felt lucky and privileged to be in that space, because it's a rehearsal space, I didn't feel like I was affecting it. That was my impression.

I Thank you.

P1 I'd agree. I didn't feel any discomfort, but purely of the fact that these people are professionals. They've probably had a lot more people looking at them for a lot longer than the small period of time that we had. They are probably used to it. We're just another group of somebody that's probably, I guess, been trooped in or trooped out. They're going to have to deal with that anyway, and they're going to end up doing it for years and years and years. So there was no discomfort but I'm the same, there was that incredible privilege to be that close and that intimate in that rehearsal space as opposed to seeing it on the stage.

P3 I agree. I didn't think that they were fazed but I couldn't help feeling how I would feel if that were me. So that's where the discomfort bit came into it. Here's some extra pressure, a whole row of eight people. That's where I sort of felt like I didn't want to, although I rationalised that I wasn't intruding because they are professionals. I couldn't help it because you put yourself into it, I don't know, it crosses your mind, how would I feel if, you know, a group came in. You know that's why we're not performers you see. That's why they are. They're used to it, they're comfortable with it.

I Thanks Participant 3. Did you want to add something in Participant 2?

P2 No, I think that's all.

I Okay. Did you feel self-conscious? So perhaps this question is more for the people that did feel uncomfortable at some point. I'm very interested in knowing what point you became more comfortable.

P3 Probably time. It probably was time and noticing how focused they were, and that in addition to getting lost, yourself, in the performance. And like, how you said, they

bring it all together, you just got wrapped up in it and forgot that you were watching them and that they could possibly see you. That sort of thing.

I Thanks Participant 3. You say in the performance, as in when they would run it with music?

P3 Yeah, particularly. I think so, because the music then starts to, like it's heading towards the end product and a lot of dancing around. And like I said, all we could hear is the domp domp domp domp of the floor, it doesn't feel quite like a finished performance you know. I definitely felt a shift that went from feeling like I was intruding to "I'm completely a part of the wallpaper now."

I And you preferred being part of the wallpaper?

P3 Definitely. I would shudder to think that my presence was in any way going to disturb them. That would really upset me because I want them to be focused and they were focused.

I Thank you Participant 3. Does anybody else want to agree, disagree, or something different?

P2 It was the time and also the viewing windows as well. We were seeing people passing by and peeping in at some point. I think initially the dancers, as I said early on, they started practising and when you realise that they weren't even looking at you, that was about the point when you started to settle in comfortably. So it's a bit of the window, a bit of that relationship with the audience and the dancers, we're looking for communication from then and vice versa. And when there's none you can sort of settle into your own space, sort of merge into the background.

- I So it's that point when you realise that you're not going to be a point of focus?
- P2 Yes. Pretty much when you notice that, to them, we are not there you go, "Okay, I'm not there to you so I'm okay," if that makes sense.
- I I understand what you're saying. Thank you. Did seeing the rehearsal make you want to see more of the process of movement-making, or of the dancers practicing sequences, or of the choreographer? Did it make you want to see more rehearsal stuff?
- P8 Yes.
- I What do you want to see more of?
- P8 It's actually really making me want to see the finished product as well and making me look forward to the performance. So I'm a lot more excited to see that now. Yeah, I think it would be nice if it was a bit more available to the public to be able to see rehearsals in some way and be part of that process.
- I Thank you. Go ahead Participant 1.
- P1 Yeah, just to see the rehearsal. It might have been Participant 3 that was saying it's such an organic process and to actually seeing that and especially being dance, because I've seen performances of ballet with not having seen the rehearsal process, to see it now it's sort of like, "Can I go back please? I'll be quiet, I won't say anything, but just to see it." And it gives a greater degree of anticipation to want to go and see the final product now that you've just seen even such a small part of what its genesis has been. So yeah, bring on the twenty-third.
- I Anything else on this topic, about wanting to see more? Or maybe you don't?

P3 I think we all agree.

“Mmm” from some participants.

P3 We just want it to fast track to the end, especially the bits where they’ve practiced it and pulled it together. They trapped you in and you did just want watch more and more. Well I did.

P4 It will be interesting to see, when we see the final product, what that little section that we’ve watched, where it comes in the ballet.

I Thanks Participant 4.

P2 Actually can I just add, I wouldn’t mind seeing the whole rehearsal and not actually seeing the final product, because I’m used to seeing the final product and this is more fascinating for me to see the creative process and just to see how it builds and builds. Because when I see a finished product it’s just all so slick and finished and this one is, you know, much more interesting, and plus I get to see another genesis of how this is created. I think the finished product is just a full stop, so that you can refer back to the whole creative process. For me the most interesting thing is the whole rehearsal, so yeah I’d love to see the whole rehearsals and if I can’t see the finished product that’s fine.

P3 I just think when you see the finished product you’re going to appreciate it so much more from seeing that as just a fraction.

P2 And between now and when it is actually produced, that could be refined further and further. On the night we might not see anything of what they just did.

I Thanks Participant 2. My last questions is now that you've experienced one part of one rehearsal would you come to another rehearsal? Is that something that you would be interested in?

P4 We sort of do have the opportunity to go the dress rehearsals here in Melbourne through the Ballet Society.

I But one like this?

P4 No. This is the first time I've been this close, watching the choreographer actually working.

P5 They do occasionally have open days during school holidays.

P4 Which we can access through the Ballet Society, so we're lucky in that respect. I guess and I do try to come to most of those that I can. I don't think they're having a dress rehearsal as such on the stage like the ones we usually go to because it's a new ballet. Sometimes that does happen. So we're really lucky to have seen the rehearsal today. That's why I was so excited when you rang.

I So for those who haven't even been able to experience a dress rehearsal, does seeing today's rehearsal make you want to come to another?

"Yes" from most participants.

I Does anyone not want to come to another rehearsal as a result of today?

"No" from most participants.

I You're neither nodding or shaking your head Participant 3.

P3 Well there is two parts to it. There is the, does seeing them behind the scenes take something away from end product?

Some participants said "No" and "I think it adds to it".

P3 I was shocked, really, at how impressed I was with how it was happening, the creation bit happening in front of us. Like, I thought we were going to watch something that was fairly rehearsed. I didn't realise it was a new production. So that was a really, really great experience and that makes me want to keep watching more and more practices until they have the finished product. But on the other hand I was wondering if it's spoilers in a way, you know, if a preview will take away from anything.

I I guess that's a question we can answer after the performance when we will, again, have a discussion.

P3 I think it could be an anticlimax because there's so much. I mean to see the whole process and then to see the final product, and then afterwards I can imagine depression.

Laughter.

P3 Falling off the cliff. It's all done.

I Well I hope that's not the case. So that's it for today. Thanks so much for sharing your thoughts about the experience and for coming and participating.

Appendix 4: TAB Post-Performance Audience Discussion

Location: Arts Centre, Southbank VIC

Date: 23 September, 2013

I = Interviewer

P1 = Participant 1 (male, 40-49, train driver).

P2 = Participant 2 (female, 30-39, architect).

P3 = Participant 3 (female, 40-49, home duties).

P4 = Participant 4 (female, 60-69, retired primary teacher).

P5 = Participant 5 (female, 50-59, event coordinator).

P6 = Participant 6 (female, 40-49, canine massage).

P7 = Participant 7 was not able to attend the performance.

P8 = Participant 8 (female, 18-29, physiotherapist).

I Thank you for staying back this evening, especially because it is a weeknight. Like last time, I'll be posing questions and the idea is that we talk about each topic as a group. I want you to focus only on tonight's performance and the rehearsal we saw together, and to base your comments only on these two experiences. I'm interested in your first, instinctual responses so please try not to analyse your comments because that's my job for later. To start off, I'll like to know what thoughts were going through your mind, what feelings you experienced, or even what you talked about with the person next to you?

P6 Well we talked about the beautiful costumes and how sparkly and Cinderella-like she looked, especially when she stepped into the light and sparkled.

P5 Yeah I thought the costumes were just beautiful. Yeah that drew my attention right from the start, really.

P3 We did touch on costumes as well. The men wearing the poof ball.

Laughter.

P2 The tutus.

P3 Yeah, dancing with each other.

P2 And the ladies in the first part of the dance scene wearing tuxes.

"Yeah" from some participants.

P2 We were disappointed. There's no ball gowns.

Laughter.

I They got to put some skirts on later.

“Yes” from some participants.

P4 I thought they were stunning in the trouser suits though. I thought their dancing was really,

P3 You could see their movements more.

P4 it just looked so elegant. And the men in the long coats as a balance. I thought they looked stunning.

I So what about feelings?

P2 I was really involved in the story, in the whole setting and scenario. It made it more believable, seeing everything put together.

I Okay. Put together, as in the performance?

P2 Yeah, that’s right. So the costumes gave a lot to character in comparison to what we saw in the rehearsal. So it just made it more absorbing. I was just transported to that scene.

I Did anybody else find that that was the case with them as well? Or something different perhaps?

P3 I felt pretty excited, quite frankly. And I think it was a different excitement to seeing the practice. It’s just, sort of, a more glamorous excitement, if you know what I mean. Just dazzling and you really felt like you were having a special night, you know the Cinderella feeling, I guess. That kind of thing. While at the practice it was exciting for

a different reason. I think it was exciting because you were so close and it was so visceral in a way, but here you're definitely more removed but just much more glamorous.

I So did watching the rehearsal help or hinder your enjoyment of the performance?

P1 Both.

"Yeah" from another participant. .

I Okay.

P1 It helped in that it was fascinating to actually see the rehearsal process, because I'd never seen the rehearsal process for a ballet before. Hinder in that, the main thing we discussed, we could not identify the passage in the ballet that we looked at in the rehearsal.

Laughter.

P1 We knew it was in the second act, but I missed it.

I It sounds like it frustrates you that you couldn't easily identify it.

Laughter.

P1 No it doesn't frustrate me.

P3 We were deeply satisfied because we found the spot.

P1 Yeah.

P3 But there was that thought in the back of your mind, "Where's the spot? Where is it?"

Some participants spoke simultaneously. Some said “yes”.

P1 And that was the interesting thing. But apart from that I think seeing the rehearsal makes it so much more impressive when you see the final product. To see that in all of its stunning glamour and its professionalism and to have seen, basically, half a dozen people in tracksuits six weeks beforehand.

I Thanks Participant 1. Did anyone else feel both? That it was good in one way but not so good in another way?

P3 I'd definitely go on the side of enhanced, I think. Especially because we did identify the small little passage. But yeah, I think it goes to the credit of the whole performance and how polished it is that you did lose yourself and you did forget about, I did forget at times, well probably a lot of the time, about the practice session. So I would say that it did enhance, you saw how much work went into it but I would forget to concentrate to look for that spot. I did want to see the spot but I would forget. So I knew I was getting lost in it all the time. So I sometimes have to bring myself back.

I Thanks Participant 3. So who thinks they found the spot?

Participant 2, Participant 6, Participant 3 and Participant 5 raises hands.

P4 Not sure.

I Participant 1, you felt like you found it?

P1 No, it was in there somewhere.

I Ah, okay. Well my question to the people who feel like they found it, what was that feeling like? When you recognised it, what happened in your mind?

P3 I think it was a sense of relief actually. Yeah, there was a building up, “Yes, I think it’s coming. I think it’s coming. I think it’s coming. This is the spot.” And then yeah, there was a definite relief that I hadn’t missed it. I was pleased.

P5 I just found that it distracted me from the rest of it. I was just waiting for it all the time. And then when I did see it, well I think I saw it, yeah it just distracted me from the rest of it. I was just too busy focusing on that part.

P6 I thought it was exciting, “Oh look there it is. I know that bit.”

P1 Even though I missed it, I actually think it enhanced the experience having seen the rehearsal. Even though I tried to see it, and I obviously couldn’t, I still think it made me appreciate more the development from that very nascent rehearsal that we saw. Even though I didn’t spot the actual part, that section of the ballet, be it very small, to then see what the result was, I still think seeing the rehearsal process for me certainly enhanced the experience, even though I didn’t spot the little section that I saw rehearsed.

I Did you want to say something about the moment of identification, Participant 2?

P2 Yes, I think all of the above that everyone has said. It’s a mixture of satisfaction. And I did switch a bit because I was involved in the story. But coming up to that scene I kind of switched to more academic thinking, “Where is it? Where is it? I’ve got to tick that box because I’m going to have a question about it.”

Laughter.

P2 And then once I saw it I tried to put it together. I was trying to compare it to the rehearsal, thinking which parts have changed and which parts remained, and thinking

about how the choreographer, Alexei, might have refined it when we were not there after rehearsal. So seeing what parts he kept in, what parts he changed. So it did remove me a little bit from the immediacy of the performance, but overall it was kind of a satisfying feeling. And I think it was more an enhancement of the enjoyment of the experience rather than a hinder.

I Thanks Participant 2. Just to clarify, is there anybody who wasn't looking for the bit we saw in rehearsal?

P3 Couldn't help it.

Laughter. Some participants spoke simultaneously.

I Okay. So did you feel like this completed performance was familiar to you?

P5 At times. Well, most of the time. I think the part with the sun and the moon, I didn't read the blurb beforehand and that really sort of threw me a bit. I just didn't quite understand that at the time.

I Have you seen Cinderella before?

P5 Yes.

I Okay. Not the narrative, but did the dance, the movements, feel familiar? And it's okay to say no.

Some participants say yes.

P2 Only the certain elements that they rehearsed, the pas de deux, between the two lead characters that they repeated elements of. So moments of it were familiar but the rest weren't.

P1 I'd say it was pretty much all familiar for me.

I The movement?

P1 Yeah, the movement. But there again I'm relating the movement back to music which is Prokofiev, which is what we discussed even before we went in. It's that I've seen other Prokofiev ballets and so that music and that stylistic impression that people have for some of that music is definitely identifiable, at least it is for me. So even though I don't know the precise themes that are playing I can relate that to what I'm seeing onstage and say, "Yes, I know this." Whilst it's not all overly familiar, there are enough aspects for me to go, "Yeah, I like this. I know it. This is good."

I Thanks, Participant 1. How does being in the theatre compare to being in the studio space?

P3 Well it's a lot more anonymous for a start. You're just in the dark, so you can smile as you please or laugh as you please. I was more relaxed about that, because you don't feel conspicuous or noticed in any way so it's a little bit more relaxing for me.

I Relaxing. You're nodding Participant 2.

P2 Comfortable.

I Comfortable.

P2 There was a part where they had that mirror reflecting back on the audience. It was just darkness. It was almost like they couldn't see us.

P3 Yeah, I noticed that.

P2 Yeah, that was striking. Do you remember that scene? When they were peering at their own reflections. Yeah, so it gave me a sense of confidence that they couldn't pick us out or that they couldn't see individual faces.

I Participant 8, you've been quiet. What was the difference or similarities for you?

P8 It was completely different I think. Yeah, like the other girls were saying, it's a lot more anonymous and I know I found it quite uncomfortable in the rehearsal session, at least initially. So this is completely different. You know you're supposed to be here. The show is being put on for the audience.

I Whereas the rehearsal?

P4 Was a creative part.

P8 And it was more like us in their space.

P4 Yeah, it was kind of intruding on the process, I think, in the rehearsal part. But that was a privilege too, and wonderful to see that side of it.

I But it still felt like intruding?

"Mmm" from some Participants.

P2 Can I just say very quickly, I wouldn't feel that intrusive if I was watching them rehearse through a one way mirror, where they couldn't see me. That was it. If they couldn't see me.

P3 Or even the kids that were looking through the window. That's just a step more anonymous.

I So there was something about being in the same four walls?

P2 In the space, yeah. Seeing them see us so visibly.

I Thank you Participant 2. So after the rehearsal, some of you said that you felt intimidated. Did you feel differently during the performance? Did you feel intimidated?

"No" from some participants.

I Participant 4, you've been quiet.

P4 No, not at all because that's what they do it for, the audience. We were just part of the audience tonight and along with thousands of other people. So no, you don't feel intimidated, you just feel more privileged that you can do it.

I Does that about sum it up?

P3 Yep.

P8 Yeah, I'd agree.

I So it's got to do with the performance being for the audience, is that correct?

“Yes” and “Mmm” from many participants.

I And does the anonymous aspect play a big part in feel comfortable?

P3 Yeah, the fact that they really cannot see you. You know they really cannot. You know that they’re doing it for you but they could not pick you out. Definitely not. So it’s completely different. Definitely no intimidation when you’re a part of a theatre audience in my opinion.

I Is this something you agree on?

“No” from some participants.

P1 No, because I think I was one of the ones, if not the only one, that I said that I didn’t feel intimidated because even though there was that incredible immediacy, that the dancers are there only feet away, I didn’t feel that sense of intimidation that a number of other people had made mention. So I don’t feel any difference in regard to seeing the performance. The only difference is that I’ve seen the beginnings of the performance and I’ve seen how they all put it together and then you’ve got the music and you’ve got the sets and you’ve got the lighting and all of the effects that adds onto it. So the intimidation wasn’t there, but it still provides a greater appreciation of what I’ve now just seen from having seen those first baby steps, so to speak.

“Mmm” from some participants.

I Thanks Participant 1. Did you want to add to that?

P5 Yeah, I agree. I didn’t feel the rehearsal was intimidating. I felt quite comfortable being there.

I So then my question to you is did it feel different on that comfort level between the rehearsal and the performance? Was there a difference at all?

P5 Well, yeah, there was a definite difference. The intimacy in the studio was more intimate. There was just them and us. Here we had to share that experience with everyone else.

“Mmm” from some participants.

P1 Yeah, I'd agree. To see it on that almost one on one level in the rehearsal studio, I think everybody mentioned, is an incredible privilege and it was to see it. But then to see the experience with a theatre full of two and a half, three thousand other people, it doesn't diminish the experience but it's a different experience. And because I've already seen that very intimate moment, the creative process, and seeing it up close, so personal, so immediate, that then to be sitting in Row W on seat thirteen or whatever I was, it doesn't diminish it but it does change the emotion that you feel regarding the performance.

I Can you try to explain this different emotion?

P1 It didn't diminish the experience. Having seen the rehearsal enhanced aspects of the performance. Then there's the corollary which is to have seen such a unique and very personal and intimate moment in the rehearsal studio and, even if I didn't see it, but not to have that same experience in the final performance. It wavers between yes I was incredibly privileged to share that experience in the rehearsal studio but I can't explain to two thousand, four hundred and ninety-two other people there what I've seen and to just say, “Do you guys have any idea what the rehearsal was like before you've seen this?” Because we've had that very, very privileged moment and it does change, well

for me, it changed how I viewed it to the young lass sitting next to me, how she would have viewed it.

P4 Yeah, I'd agree with that. I've talked to a few people about how privileged I was to see that creative process and they've been amazed. And they've said, How do they?" And I said, "It's all in here. It's all in here." *Points to brain*. And I couldn't pick out the particular part that we saw rehearsed at all because we really didn't have any music. If there had been music for me, during the majority of the rehearsal, when I heard the music then I would have perhaps picked up on the thingo, because really we only had music in the last five to ten minutes. It was all done in silence from here, communicating to the other people in here, and I just can't understand how people are capable of doing that. I'm in awe of their talent.

I Tell me more. Tell me how the experience is different when you see that little bit of rehearsal.

P5 I think one thing that made it different for me was when we were in the studio watching the rehearsal, I didn't know who the choreographer was. But since I've read up about him.

P4 Yeah, me too.

P5 Well I've been reading the paper and I've realised how fortunate we were because he's a world-renowned choreographer and I didn't realise.

P4 Lots of people just don't let them in.

P5 I just kept thinking during the rehearsal, “Who is he? Who is this guy?” I mean, I knew he was obviously a very good choreographer but I didn’t know how good he was.

P4 You see we wouldn’t have seen the process if Nureyev was doing it because he wouldn’t let outsiders in. And they’re often very personal those people. We were just so lucky, very, very lucky to have that privilege.

I Going beyond that, how did it change this performance experience? Can you identify what’s different this time compared to any other performance you’ve been to?

P3 I would say that seeing that practice session and then seeing it on the stage, and seeing just how very tiny a part it was, that brought into perspective how much work that they must put in.

“Mmm” from some participants.

P3 And I don’t know if you would automatically think that, if you go to just any performance, whether it would occur to you just how intense, and how many hours and hours and hours, because we sat there for one hour to see that tiny thing, and it wasn’t even properly polished or perfected or finished. So I think you gain a huge perspective seeing that.

P1 The degree of appreciation I’ve got for the sheer effort that’s obviously gone in to being able to stay on stage for that period of time, especially when we’ve seen in that one hour, as you said, I think it was only a three minute section of the ballet. But to see them go over and over and over and over again in that one hour period, and then

you think they've got the whole rest of the ballet that they've done in exactly the same way.

P3 The costumes, the music, et cetera, et cetera and everything that they have to coordinate.

P1 And then once they get on stage they've got to hit their mark just right.

P3 Yes, and it all looks so polished.

P1 It's fluid. No one's sort of hesitating going is this something on the floor over here.

P4 I have a feeling that when we saw them, the rehearsal part that we saw, that was at the very start of the creation of that one.

I I did request that we were there quite early in the process so that you saw the dance being created rather than a run of the finished thing. So we were much further away from the dancers in the theatre, did this affect the intimacy that you experienced?

P8 I don't think it was less intimate. I just think it was intimate in a different way, because they were very into their character and they were quite good performers and actors as dancers. So I think I was quite involved in the story and quite empathetic towards the characters. So I think it was intimate on that level between the performer and the audience.

I Does anyone want to add something to that?

P3 I think it was less intimate in that sense that you couldn't hear them breathe and pant and all that kind of stuff, but it was brilliant to see it zoomed out, to be further back to

see the whole picture because you can take so much more in. So it's just a different in that way. But less intimate I would say.

I But a different intimacy?

P3 Yes. You actually gained more by actually seeing the whole zoomed out kind of thing from further back. You can see the overall picture with the elements coming together and the set, the whole lot.

I Any other comments?

P2 I kind of compared it, seeing them in rehearsal, as almost like watching them get dressed and then seeing the performance tonight is seeing them put on a story, so it's a different intimacy. The rehearsal is very personally intimate especially because we got to see their personalities. They were not really in character, they were rehearsing the steps, and tonight they were playing the character so we were more involved with the story that they were trying to tell us.

I That leads me into this next question. What was it like seeing the dancers in a more casual context and then seeing them in performance mode?

P6 I think you felt more of a connection, you know, you remember that that person was making a joke or that one smiled a lot or whatever. So yeah, I think it did give you a different kind of connection or, kind of, intimacy with the performers.

I During the performance as well or just the rehearsal?

P6 During the performance as well. You know that was the person that smiled last time or who had a good sense of humour or whatever.

I So you remembered the human side to them while they were performing?

P6 Yeah.

I Did anyone else feel similar to that, or different?

P8 Yeah. I suppose, like, if you go to a different performance where you haven't seen the rehearsal and you're not familiar with the cast it's just sort of, they're just dancers. Their faces don't mean a lot to you. But with these people we've learnt to associate them with certain personalities or traits.

P3 I think I saw them more in performance mode, rather than rehearsal mode. They couldn't afford to relax or fall through the move or be casual or smile like during practice, but on stage they really have to stay in character. So I sort of see that more as performance.

I Thanks Participant 3. I've got time for two questions. Oh good, I've only got two left.

Laughter.

I We've done well. Comparing the performance to the rehearsal did you feel more or less constricted in behaviour tonight?

P3 Less, definitely.

P4 Yeah, because you can clap and applaud and all that.

P3 That's right.

P4 Whereas at the rehearsal studio we were on hallowed grounds so you had to respect that you were witnessing the creative process of a very intelligent man

communicating. Whereas tonight it was more relaxed because you could enjoy the whole process and be enjoying the movement and applauding the bits that you really liked.

P5 For me I think the difference was the rehearsal was about them and the performance isn't about us, but for us. Whereas the rehearsal is just for them.

I So when it's for an audience, for you, that gives you the freedom to respond in any way you wish?

P5 At the performance.

"Yeah" from some participants.

P3 But you're also allowed to applaud I think. I mean, in the practice you wanted to but you could not. So that release of applauding or laughing or whatever it is that you were able to do in the theatre, it's much more satisfying. Even though, frankly, you're just a sea of clapping hands. It's still something you can do to show your excitement, your appreciation. Whereas you couldn't do that in the rehearsal.

P1 I was just going to add that you were right. Not just the applause but there was certain moments where there was that little snigger from the audience because there was just one slight gesture, one slight movement that was done by one of the performers that resonated with people and they felt like they were in a comfortable space and they could do that. There was a couple of times I would have loved to do that in the rehearsal room but I just don't think it would have gone down as well. Well, we wouldn't do it because it's a completely different environment. But when you're in that performance, this is the performance, it's what they do for a living, and it's

almost, I won't say expected, but those little giggles, that applause in certain sections, you can't do that in the rehearsal.

I And why do you feel like you couldn't do that in the rehearsal?

P3 You might get some attention on yourself that you might not want on you suddenly.

P5 Because I think it's like what you said with hallowed ground, it's just not done in a rehearsal studio. It's just tradition. I don't know what it is but that's the way it is.

I For those of you who have never been in a dance studio. Why did you feel like you couldn't applaud or giggle?

P3 Because you don't want to interrupt their process.

Some participants speak simultaneously.

P6 You don't want to be distracting, that's it exactly.

I And is that the general consensus? About not wanting to distract?

"Yeah" from some participants. Some participants speak simultaneously.

P5 Respect for their talents.

P1 And you don't want to distract them because it is a rehearsal.

Some participants speak simultaneously.

P1 It is the rehearsal. This is what we've got to go through and practice and go over and over again to provide what we see on the evening. When you go and see it, like we did this evening, yes you can have that release, you can have that degree of comfort

because it is allowable, it is acceptable. But when you're in that process, even very, very early on, they're still finding out and developing the character and developing how they want to express themselves. You don't want to, I won't say not show appreciation, but that is a very personal and intimate thing that we got to witness.

P4 And he was creating a new ballet.

P1 Yeah, so you feel like you want to take that one step back, remove yourself. Yes I can see that you're one way mirror would have been wonderful even though I was quite happy sitting there, but it's just I'll sit there. I'm not going to draw any further attention to myself.

P3 As well that they were having a lot of non-verbal communication, so to suddenly interrupt with sound and noise would have been just breaking what seemed to be some sort of telepathy that's going on.

I Thank you. That's really helpful. And finally, now that you've done the whole experience of rehearsal into performance, you now know how the rehearsal impacts on your performance experience. With that in mind, would you attend another rehearsal like the one we saw?

Some participants speak simultaneously, comments are agreeable.

P1 Put me down.

Laughter.

I Is there anyone who does not want to go to another?

Silence.

I Is there anything that we haven't spoken about tonight that adds to your reasons for wanting to go again?

P1 Yeah, because it was absolutely fascinating to see a choreographer who is taking a known piece of music and is developing the expressive. It's got nothing to do with the music but all to do with the ballet. He's thinking it up here. *Points to brain.* He's got his own little ideas that we get a small microcosm of how he explains his vision to the dancers, how they interpret that vision, and how then after they go through the rehearsal process of taking in that initial information, developing how they're going to move it, how they're going to express it, and then to see what they do on the night. Yeah, I think that is absolutely fantastic. I would be back again tomorrow.

I Is that the general gist of it?

"Yeah" from some participants.

P1 I don't know if I articulated it very well.

P3 You're seeing two different types of magic in one. You're seeing the magic of the creation and the other, the magic of the performance. So both is fantastic.

I And from what you've been saying they're both magic, but for different reasons.

P3 That's right.

I That's a good way to finish.

Appendix 5: Content Analysis

Rehearsal spectator/project audience comments by topic

n=349 (SDC=201, TAB=148)

TOPIC	SDC Total (%)	TAB Total (%)	TOTAL (%)
RELATIONSHIPS			46.2
Spectator/audience role & contribution	8.3	3.7	12.0
Dancer's 'face'	8.0	4.0	12.0
Spectator/audience 'face'	1.1	6.6	7.7
Etiquette / rules	2.9	3.4	6.3
Privilege	0.9	3.2	4.0
Empathy and intimacy	0.9	1.7	2.6
Choreographer's 'face'	0.9	0.6	1.4
EXPERIENCE			29.2
Comparing work in progress to final performance	5.7	3.7	9.5
Performance qualities	4.3	3.7	8.0
Cognitive "interruptions" during performance	3.4	1.4	4.9
Wide lens view	1.7	0.6	2.3
Rehearsal qualities	2.3	0.0	2.3
Greater anticipation & appreciation	0.0	1.1	1.1
Preference of rehearsal over performance	0.9	0.3	1.1
MEANING-MAKING			13.5
Meaning-making & evaluation	11.7	1.7	13.5
DANCE WORK / CREATIVE PROCESS			11.2
Dancer's labour	2.0	4.0	6.0
Choreographic/rehearsal direction	2.6	2.6	5.2

Grounded coding: list of topics

n=349 (SDC=201, TAB=148)

Topics	SDC		TAB		COMBINED	
	Reh. (no.)	Perf. (no.)	Reh. (no.)	Perf. (no.)	Total (no.)	Total (%)
Meaning-making & evaluation	2	39	0	6	47	13.5
Spectator/audience role & contribution	21	8	6	7	42	12.0
Dancer's 'face'	15	13	10	4	42	12.0
Comparing work in progress to final performance	4	16	2	11	33	9.5
Performance qualities	13	2	1	12	28	8.0
Spectator/audience 'face'	3	1	11	12	27	7.7
Etiquette / rules	10	0	5	7	22	6.3
Dancer's labour	5	2	11	3	21	6.0
Choreographic/rehearsal direction	9	0	5	4	18	5.2
Cognitive "interruptions" during performance	0	12	4	1	17	4.9
Privilege	0	3	7	4	14	4.0
Empathy and intimacy	3	0	4	2	9	2.6
Wide lens view	3	3	0	2	8	2.3
Rehearsal qualities	7	1	0	0	8	2.3
Choreographer's 'face'	0	3	0	2	5	1.4
Greater anticipation & appreciation	0	0	4	0	4	1.1
Preference of rehearsal over performance	0	3	1	0	4	1.1
TOTAL	95	106	71	77	349	100.0

Grounded coding: data

SDC post-rehearsal focus group discussion

P1	Like a private space almost.
I	Did anyone else feel similar about it?
P2	Yes, certainly different to a performance. It felt like a really authentic insight, like we're in a movie almost. This is really what the real rehearsal would be like. It's not like they're putting on a rehearsal for us. It's the real thing and that's really authentic and that's really valuable
	<i>Comments missing from recording.</i>
P3	It's clearly not dictatorial, but at some point it's Rafael's choreography so there must be something that is all his and then, you know, then it all comes together with everybody else's input.
I	And, so Participant 3, you were saying that you were noticing the details and that Rafael was really looking at the details. Do you think that that will then be something that you will look for when we watch it later?
P3	I was wondering that, yeah. "Am I going to notice that when I am watching it at the performance?" "Am I going to turn around and go, "Yeah, that was my note."
	<i>Laughter</i>
P3	I don't want to annoy the shit out of everybody around me, but I possibly will now. It's something that I know I hadn't thought of before. You tend to sit back, and also a lot further away to be quite frank, and see the whole thing as a great body rather than necessarily picking up the, particularly as a non-dancer, you wouldn't pick up those details that dancers probably do. But yeah, I probably would now.
I	Did anyone want to add something to that?
	<i>Participant 1 and 4 start speaking at the same time.</i>
P1	I felt similar to that. Oh sorry.
I	Go on, Participant 1.
P1	Especially one of the female dancers, more or less, had one of those actions where she tapped the back of her back and that was the cue for others to move in. I thought, "Oh wow, I must look out for that in the show."
I	You wanted to say something Participant 4?
P4	I was just going to say that it raised a whole lot of questions too, like what does it all mean? You know, all those little actions have got some sort of, there's a whole story behind them. I'm always hungry to know, where does all the choreography come from? What's the story? And each dancer has a story and it's just amazing.
	But I suppose one thing I was wondering was whether we were meant to be able to hear what Rafael was saying because I couldn't actually hear a lot of what he was saying. It would be really interesting to hear what all those little things he is saying to the dancers is, the essence of the whole thing, that would be interesting to have access to.
I	Did anyone else feel similar about being able to hear what Rafael was saying?
P3	I would have liked to be able to hear all of what he was saying.
P2	Yeah, it probably would have been good.
P4	And also what the dancers were saying back as well, that dialogue.
I	So that conversation?
P4	Yeah, but for me I wondered whether it needed a bit more context for what was happening maybe. Whether it's an explanation at the beginning or a piece of paper that tells me what the purpose of this particular thing is. That may be just me wanting to know more. It was a bit of a vacuum in a sense just in this place which was fantastic but I also wanted to know what it all meant.
I	Thanks Participant 4. Did you want to add something in, Participant 5?
P5	I was just following up on Participant 3's point in terms of looking forward to seeing how they work out or work through particular things. So I'm quite keen to see how they work out that last lift that they didn't quite have down yet and see how that turns out in the final production.
	I'm kind of okay with not having heard a lot of what Rafael was saying because it seemed to be very minimal instruction anyway in the sense that because, as Participant 9 was saying, they're so far down the process of working through it you could just say one or two words and the dancers were already there because they got the solid base. It would be like, "Go to the tango position." "Oh yeah, okay. We'll go straight to that." So it wasn't in the early process, it's quite far down the track so I didn't quite mind not hearing a lot of what he said.
I	Thank you. What was it like being quite close to the dancers and also having the choreographer and also Amy, the rehearsal assistant, in there. What was that like as an experience for you?
	<i>Many participants start talking. Laughter.</i>
P2	It's great being quite close and whenever you buy your tickets, if you're going to contemporary dance, you always aim for close. I do, because there is often quite a lot of detail that, if you're sitting in the gods, you just miss completely. So yeah it's great sitting front row, two metres away. <i>Laughs.</i>
I	Thank you Participant 2. Does anybody else prefer to be closer in the theatre?
	<i>Many participants respond by saying "yes", "I do" or "mmm".</i>

P6	I don't.
I	You don't?
P6	No. Maybe dance is not as bad but in theatre I feel that I don't like it to be too intimate because I feel like, I don't know, I guess I feel a bit awkward being so close, like in the front row, and watching them do their job. Yeah I feel like it's a very separate experience, being onstage and being the audience, and I prefer to keep that separate I guess.
I	Thanks Participant 6.
P3	I think, from my experience, it depends sometimes on what the performance is.
	"Mmm" from some participants.
P2	Definitely.
P3	I've been very close for some and been overwhelmed. All you can really focus on is what happening right here and there's a whole lot over there that you miss out on because it's so close. So sometimes being back a bit where you can see, some of the works it's all about the relative movement of each other, so seeing it from a bit further back gives you that feeling of what it's supposed to be as a group of people rather than just watching this dancer and having peripheral vision of the other guys.
P2	A good example of that was their last work with the orchestra that was behind the dancers. I was actually up higher for that one, and it was great because you could see all the orchestra really well and all the dancers in the front and, you know, it worked really well from a distance. That one, however, I think we'll have to be a bit closer.
	Laughter.
I	Thank you Participant 2 and Participant 3. Being close. Everyone had a response when I asked the question about being close to the choreographer and dancers. So coming back the rehearsal that we just watched, what was it about the closeness that you liked or disliked?
P7	For me it was about the focus on the details. So for example Charmene, one of the dancers that I've seen in a number of things and she's an incredible dancer, just to be able to see her close up, see the process she's going through and see how her limbs move and see that intimate detail of all the body movements. It's just an amazing experience that you don't get very often. So while in the theatre when you're seeing the whole thing I think it is maybe a bit better to be further away, but when we're looking at fragments it's just that opportunity we've got. This time is a unique experience.
I	Does anyone want to add to that or contribute something different on that topic?
P3	I think they're in a smaller space here than they would be on the stage. It made it easier to be close to them because you can see everything going on, because they weren't as spread out as they would be on the stage.
I	Thank you Participant 3. I'll just go to Participant 8. What do you think about being close to the dancers and/or choreographer?
P8	I think that, maybe, seeing more of the dancer's life, because when you go to a show you don't think, "Oh, that's real life." But since you see them, coming in here for one hour, and think, "What do they do for the rest of their life, for the rest of the day?" You want to find out what they're doing, apart from this and what interests. When you watch a show you go for one hour and a half and then you're gone.
P10	Yeah it makes you wonder.
P8	Interaction.
P10	What do they do with their day? They have this rehearsal. You feel like you kind of want to get to know something about them as people.
I	On a personal level?
P8	Yeah, on a personal level.
P10	Well, their dance day I guess. You know, how their dance day evolves and this opens up a whole new avenue of interest in them.
	"Mmm" from some participants.
I	Did you want to say something Participant 5?
P5	I was just going to say, in terms of sitting so close, it was quite enjoyable for the rehearsal to sit so close because they didn't have their kind of, show face on. So you actually got to see their actual emotions as they were doing it and when they stuffed something up they laughed and when they, you know, were really getting into it you could see it on their faces. So you're quite privileged to see the facial expressions that you don't get to see at the performance.
	"Mmm" from a couple of participants.
I	Thank you Participant 5. When you saw the dancers stuff something up and pull a face, what was that like for you?
P1	I was struck by how normal they seemed.
	Laughter.
P1	I thought, "Oh wow. They're going to be fantastic in their final performance but right now, today, they look very normal." Their expressions and their interaction to each other and, yeah, a little bit of what Participant 5 was saying that they just seem so normal. I thought, "Oh wow."
I	Thank you Participant 1.
P6	Yeah, that's what I felt. You know, when I've been to dance, seen performances before, and you just think that these are super-talented people and, you know, like most people you think it's effortless and they're just good at what they do. And obviously they are. Watching the rehearsal was incredible as well, but it put more of a human face to the performance and you saw, going back to what Participant 3 said, them adjust their movements and things didn't come naturally like they obviously do in a performance.
	"Mmm" from some participants.
I	Did you want to add something Participant 9?

P9	I think when you're in the context of the performance there is that clear separation between performers and you as the audience. it.
	I think that in this case, being so close, contemporary dance is so emotive and, not so much with the trios and those bigger groups, but when there's just two people dancing it's, I was feeling quite, I don't know how to describe it, but I was taking in what they would be feeling. Some of the movements were very intimate, they were very, very close, and the way that they were interacting with each other in your mind you're sort of going, "Are they playing a love scene, what's happening here?" I was sort of going, "I could really feel that in some places." But when you're in the audience you're a little bit removed from that, or withdrawn so it's not so prominent. But I've found that in this setting it was, for me, I was really noticing.
I	Thank you Participant 9. Would anybody like to comment on that?
P2	It's interesting. I'd probably go the other way and say that I was following it more from a technical point of view because you didn't have that theatre environment. Once you've gone into the theatre, and there's lights and costumes and everything, you do sort of step into a separate world and I guess that sets up the feeling of the piece perhaps. Whereas because they were all in their shorts and singlets and doing it wrong and changing it, you sort of think, "Ah yeah, I can see how that leg doesn't go there."
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P2	"We'll have to, you know, we'll have to rethink that." So then I guess that's sort of the opposite take.
I	Thank you Participant 2. You used the word "we". Do you mean "we" as in, are we, the audience, part of it?
P2	Nah, I'm sort of sitting there thinking, "Hmm." It's me, yeah right, telling them how to do it.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P2	Yeah, you think, "Ah, maybe if they, you know, went the other way." So yes, I did feel a part of it, yeah.
P10	It's funny you say that. I had exactly the same feeling when that boy was trying to get his leg above the other boy.
P2	Yes. I'm sure we could have fixed that.
P10	And in my mind I'm thinking, "Now I bet there's a much better way to do that."
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P10	I think they could, "Maybe if they tried this."
	And something else that I was worried about, I actually did start to get a bit worried for them, because, particularly for the trio up in the corner there, they seemed to have it down so perfectly and then they started changing things around and I'm thinking, "What if the whole thing unravels?" And suddenly you know, because they obviously have a cue to get from this movement to that movement and they changed the movements around and they'd lose their cues. I really started to get worried that it would all fall to pieces for them with all the different changes that were happening. So that was just how I was getting involved.
I	Thank you Participant 10. It sounds like you wanted to, sort of, help problem-solve?
P10	I am. That is one of my failings.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P9	I think it is a very good failing.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
I	Did anyone else find themselves taking on that technical eye, looking at the movement and how they were doing it, or were you looking at it in a more artistic way?
P9	I think with a different dance I would be seeing it in a more technical way, but I think contemporary is such a fluid thing. The way they move, it's meant to grow organically and I think to be a good contemporary dancer, at least in my mind, you have to let it evolve organically. If you're a very good technical dancer I think that could interfere with that process. I mean some of them were very precise with their movements but at the same time you can see that they're not thinking too much about it. They just doing what works in that moment so I wasn't seeing it so technically but I was seeing it more artistically.
I	Thank you Participant 9. Did you feel at ease or comfortable in that setting, in the studio? Was it a comfortable or uncomfortable experience for you? Or something else perhaps?
P2	Yeah, I was comfortable.
P4	At first I thought, "Oh, I hope they don't mind us being here. Have they checked out if it's ok?"
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P4	We didn't get acknowledged.
	<i>"Mmm" from some participants.</i>
P4	And, you know, I felt we didn't acknowledge them. There was no kind of greeting, so I thought that we were there but I wasn't quite sure if it was okay with everyone. That was just initially and then I relaxed into it.
I	Thanks Participant 4 and when you say then you relaxed into it, was there something in particular that made you relax?
P4	I think just when they were just doing their thing, you know. I forgot all about that and just immersed into the whole thing. You could obviously see that they were very focused on what they were doing and it didn't really matter that we were there or not and they had their purpose.
I	Does anyone else want to comment on being comfortable or uncomfortable?
P3	It was similar. You walk in and there was that no acknowledgement, no introduction. That sort of thing. So it's like just go in quietly and try to stay out of the way kind of thing but I relaxed into it as it went and by kind of not acknowledging us they were happy to have us there. No one was glaring at us. <i>Laughs.</i>
I	Thank you Participant 3 and did you want to add something Participant 5?
P5	I was just going to say that there were a couple of points that I felt uncomfortable and the first one was where we came in and it did feel like we were intruding a little bit, and that made me feel uncomfortable.
	And the other one was when it seemed like one of the dancers was cut from the fight scene and told that, "You're not wanted anymore," and then responded, "You know, you're the boss," or words to that effect, "You're running the show." And then, you know, for a couple of minutes there I felt uncomfortable having watched that and sympathetic for him. And then somehow he was back in the particular piece. So that was fascinating and I loved watching it but it also made me feel uncomfortable.

	<i>Laughter.</i>
I	Fascinating seeing how a dance, as it evolves, how it changes?
P5	Seeing just the politics of, you know. It's, brutal is not the right word, but it's kind of, "You're not right for this so I'm going to do this and see how it goes." So it's very, kind of, direct.
	<i>"Mmm" from some participants.</i>
I	Thank you Participant 5.
P11	It did feel a little bit sort of almost like seeing a performance. We were there and they were there but there was no interaction between us. But then there were things that made it a rehearsal like clothes and other things, but it was almost like a different kind of performance.
I	Different how?
P11	It was more real life. So you saw people interacting and having conversations with each other rather than just dancing,
	but from an observers point of view I felt like I was an observer and I did wonder whether their behaviour was different because we were in the room. And I wondered whether they were on special behaviour or whether they were not being as they normally would be.
I	Thank you Participant 11. Does anyone want to add something else to that, similar or different?
P11	One thing for me at the start when we walked in the room, because I've been to five or six performances, I recognised most of them and I thought, "Is that a bit weird?" Because I'm used to seeing them but not used to them seeing my face.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P3	"It's that guy from G6. What's he doing here?"
	<i>Laughter.</i>
I	Did anyone else have the same thought cross their mind?
	<i>"Yeah" from most participants.</i>
P9	Very much so. Especially with the one person that was told, "No, we don't want you. That's it." I know he's a new dancer and, in my mind, I'm going, "Hmm, are they testing you out now to see what you're capable of?" I mean, "You've got very established dancers here who have been with the company for a while, you know. You are a very new face to the company. Are they just seeing what we're capable of at the moment in the context of the performance?"
I	Does anyone want to add to that?
P2	Yeah, I didn't feel uncomfortable at all there. I thought there was a feeling in that room that all those people are professional dancers there and they know who the boss is. And yes, they can have input and that would be welcomed but everybody knew their place, and if you change things or move them from one group to another they were all just going to go with it.
I	Thank you Participant 2. What you said about everyone in the room knew their place. We were in that room too and, it just makes me wonder, do you feel like you knew what your place was in that room?
P2	Fly on the wall. <i>Laughs</i> .
P7	To observe. I felt my place there was to observe and I felt like I knew that's what it was.
I	To observe. Thanks Participant 7.
P1	Yeah, same.
P10	I hope you don't mind me saying this Participant 1, but at one point Participant 1 wanted to applaud.
P1	Yes.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P1	But I didn't think I should.
P10	And at the end she said, "Oh, I wanted to applaud," but obviously didn't because, and I guess this is one of the things, we knew we had to be quiet. So even though we may have wanted to, as you asked the question, did we laugh or something. I think we felt that we couldn't do anything in joining in because we had specifically been told to be quiet. And we didn't want to distract anybody, I suppose, was another thing I was thinking of.
	So it didn't limit my enjoyment of it at all but you were definitely conscious of the fact that you weren't there to participate or be an active audience, very much a passive observer in that way.
I	Thank you Participant 10. Any last takers on the role that we were there for or to do with comfort, discomfort?
P3	I think my perception of it or my experience of it changed during the course of it. I kind of relaxed into it and enjoyed it a bit more. But you were there is an observer sort of. There was an element of it, you know, "Am I here for my own enjoyment or am I here for Anja's study?"
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P3	And I think I'm here for my own enjoyment.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P3	But it still was an enjoyable experience and, you know, there was that awkward moment as we came in. There was, similarly, an awkward moment when they would clap, I think with Natalie's solo, they clapped and I wanted to do it as well.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P3	Yeah, I think my perception or my place in there changed during the course of it.
I	Thank you Participant 3. Seeing this rehearsal and being in this context, does it make you want to see more?
P11	More rehearsal?
P2	At that time in the rehearsal process?
I	Yes, more of that particular rehearsal, it could be more rehearsals on different days, more of the work, more of dance rehearsals in general. Does it make you want to see more of anything to do with the dance work or dance rehearsals?
P3	I'll pick up on Participant 9's earlier point.
P2	Yeah.

P3	I think seeing that initial,
P2	The timeline.
P3	that starting point of the creative process.
P10	Exactly, yes.
P3	I think that would be really interesting to see how it's introduced and, "This is where I want to take it." You know, does he sit them all down over a big breakfast and talk about it and come back next week and then, you know, "Show us your ideas", kind of thing? How does that inception actually happen?
P6	I almost kind of was thinking that, because the moves are so intricate and so detailed, I just couldn't fathom how someone could, obviously these are professional dancers but, do that, remember it, repeat it and know exactly, like, they knew exactly what points to start off from. And it just felt, to me, like it was all one thing and I couldn't differentiate all the different moves because it was seamless. But yeah, I was thinking about the initial stage as well, like, for me it felt like you'd show them a video of something similar.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P6	I couldn't even imagine verbalising those kinds of moves, so I felt like it would have to be something visual, like you'd have to demonstrate or show them a video. Although I can understand, sure there is lingo to explain those moves, but yeah.
I	Thank you Participant 6.
P5	I'd have to agree with both of those in the sense of how you, the weeks leading up to this, how you get to the point where you have different groups in the same room, some dancing to music, other people going off their own timing. And it's interacting, knowing the piece well enough that they don't need the music and they can count in time. I think it's just amazing but, I think you mentioned before, wanting to know what's the daily schedule? How is it, is it a couple of sessions of a day? How is the daily life of the dancer and the dance company? How does that work and that side of things. That's what I'd like to know about as well.
I	Thank you Participant 5. We kind of touched on this a little bit earlier, but I just want to discuss it further. Did it feel like a performance?
	<i>"No" from some participants.</i>
P11	I'd say part of it did. When Natalie did hers it felt like a finished performance.
	<i>"Mmm" from some participants.</i>
P11	And there were, there were all those different sections and they went through them with music and that felt like it was a finished performance. The actual, whole thing didn't.
I	Thanks Participant 11. So when the music was playing, when they were running a section, that's when it felt like a mini performance within a greater non-performance?
P11	Not always. It's not necessarily tied to the music being on because sometimes they'd have music on and they were still very much rehearsing. There were definitely bits that seemed finished and they felt like we were watching a performance.
I	Would anyone else like to add something?
P9	I agree with Participant 11. I think it doesn't necessarily need to have music but some bits did seem more complete and that completion made it feel like a performance because there was no input from Rafael. There was no input from anyone else. They went, "Da da da." They knew all the moves, everyone's happy with the end product, "Let's move onto the next step," and that was very much a performance. And they're still tweaking and adding and going, "I'm not sure about this, maybe do it that way," and that's when it stops being like a performance.
I	Thanks Participant 9. So it felt like a performance when there was no tweaking going on. Would anyone like to add something about whether it felt like a performance or not?
P3	Participant 5 used a good term before when they had their show face on.
P10	Yes.
P3	And it's like that's what was happening in those sections, everyone's switched on to, "Okay, so what we're doing now, I know exactly what I'm doing." And that's when it felt like a performance, when they switched into that, you know, "Now I'm doing it right," mode. And then it was back to that tweaking. You could see them switch on and off, particularly when the music was on you could see them switch over into a different mode and that's when it felt more like a performance.
I	Thanks Participant 3. And that makes me wonder then, seeing that switch, do others agree that you could see the performance mode come in?
P10	Yes, but from my point of view I have a feeling that nothing is finished. I still feel that even though we saw that girl on her own, in the solo piece which was very good I just don't know why, I feel there's still something that's going to happen to that to change it. I just think that everything we saw, even though some of the pieces looked finished, I am still expecting on the night of the final performance that a lot of those pieces will have changed in some way and that we still saw, sort of, snippets of things that are still not finished. I still just felt that it was just a rehearsal.
I	Thank you Participant 10.
P1	It didn't strike me as a performance either. Even when they were doing it smoothly I still thought they were yearning for Rafael's approval. They were rehearsing for him to say it was all okay before they could consider it a performance. I felt that they thought they were still seeking his approval, not performing.
I	Thanks Participant 1.
P2	I just don't think that there was the energy level there that you feel in a performance where they press the go button and they just go and they perform whatever it is. You know, they all had about another ten percent I reckon. <i>Laughs.</i>
	<i>Laughter.</i>
I	Thanks Participant 2.
P5	I felt there was a moment in the very first couple of minutes where we had all walked in and they did that first group performance and they were all into it, it wasn't what they would do on the night, but some of them felt like they were performing to us so they were acting up a little bit towards us. It was performing in a way and I found that quite interesting. You know, "We've got these new people in the room," and they were, kind of, doing it to us and then they relaxed back into their rehearsal.

I	Thanks Participant 5. For those who felt that there were performance moments in that rehearsal, and thinking about the switch, did that impact on how you watched it? Did you feel or think that they are performing now, so I'm going to watch it the way I would a performance?
P4	For me you could never really quite tell. I always thought it was a rehearsal. I suppose I don't fall into that category. Even when the girl did the really lovely solo, she was smiling halfway through it. I thought, "Does that mean she's caught herself up or, is she supposed to smile at the point?" You still couldn't quite tell whether they'd reached performance level. Yeah it probably didn't. You were asking about people who were in the performance camp and I followed with this.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
I	Thanks Participant 4. So for those in the performance camp?
P7	I did. I felt there were parts where I was absorbed by the performance or what was happening and I wasn't thinking about things, and then there were other parts where I was thinking about the technical questions and the questions about the process. So I definitely shifted between thinking about the process and being absorbed by the performance or the dance.
I	Thanks Participant 7.
P11	Yeah, I'd agree with that.
I	You'd agree with that Participant 11? Thank you.
P3	I tended to in those moments, because the music was going as well, I engaged more with it when they were working with the music. So that made more it more performance-like for me as well. So my level of engagement with it as a work rose when they were working with the music.
I	Thanks Participant 3.
P9	Going back to the performance aspect, I did notice that it felt more performance when everyone's eyes were on the one dancer. Because throughout the piece everyone's doing their own thing and the dancers weren't focused on each other but when the solo happened everyone pulled away and everyone's eyes were on her. Rafael, all of the dancers and all of ours and that, to me, felt like a performance. Suddenly this person is showing, this is a more complete, not completed, but it's a more complete product. Rafael was happy and he moved on, but everyone's eyes were on her at that moment in time.
P11	There were a few moments like that, not just that one, but there were a few where the dancers were, kind of, doing their own thing and then they suddenly stopped and started watching.
I	Thank you.
P10	If I could say, just quickly, from my point of view I didn't see it as anything but a rehearsal because I am so looking forward to the final performance because it is so much more involved. There'll be costumes, there's the makeup, there will maybe be some backdrop or something and I always look for a total package of something. So it was very stripped bare, they were in their shorts and singlets and socks with holes in them. I was worried about that.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P10	And so, for me, I just saw it as that and then I'm really looking forward to the final performance. So that's just from my point of view.
I	Thank you Participant 10. Finally, is this something you would do again? Where you come watch a rehearsal, nothing's prepared for you specifically as an audience, but you're just in there seeing them do their thing.
P2	Yeah.
P10	Definitely
P2	Sure.
	<i>"Mmm" from many participants.</i>
P5	Often.
I	Is that unanimous? It seems so.
	<i>"Yes" from all participants.</i>
I	Okay.
P11	I would have preferred for it to be more unrehearsed, more unfinished and I would rather see that than what I saw today, but I did enjoy today.
I	So would you like to get in there earlier in the process?
	<i>"Mmm" from some participants.</i>
P11	Totally.
I	Thanks Participant 11. Is that something that others are feeling too?
	<i>"Mmm" from some participants.</i>
P2	Yeah, that would be interesting.
I	No, Participant 7?
P7	I don't know. I was very happy with today's. I mean, yes for a different point of view but not because I didn't like today's.
	<i>"Yep" and "Yeah" from some participants.</i>
P7	It's just because it would be a different part of the process. If it was the same period again I would definitely go again to this part of the process.
I	Thanks Participant 7. Any final comments? Something that we haven't touched on that you'd like to throw into the mix.
P3	Something that I really liked from there was how they show their appreciation for each other and also too, sitting on the end you can kind of hear them chatting amongst themselves a bit and hear the nice comments they have. I think even, as they were finishing up one of them said your last arabesque was fantastic. I thought no one says that to me at the end of the day at work.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P2	You need to do more arabesques.

	<i>Laughter.</i>
P3	But it was very nice to see that level of interaction and the nature of that interaction with them as well. I think that made it, yeah it raised the enjoyment for me as well, to see how much they enjoy working with each other.
I	Thank you Participant 3.
P11	I was actually surprised with how they worked with each other. They were pleasant to each other, but I did expect them to be more rowdy-like, more friendly. Friendly is the wrong word, more relaxed.
I	Thanks Participant 11.
P4	I just wonder if that's because we were there.
P11	Yeah.
P4	And if not, the fact that they are supporting each other as much as they do, that strikes me as a very supportive environment. But if I was very much having favourites, there wouldn't be as much support because everyone would be trying to get ahead of everyone else. But I think being a supportive environment that's more likely to happen. That struck me as a very supportive environment for the dancers.
I	Thank you Participant 9.
P4	One that I would love is to know more about the choreographer. Like, I loved doing it today but I think the choreographer is a fascinating person and their vision and where their ideas come from. I don't know how you would build that into it but some kind of educational thing about it would be nice as another add on to the rehearsal somehow.
I	Thank you Participant 4. I'll wrap it up now. Thank you for coming and for sharing your thoughts. I look forward to doing it again in March.

SDC post-performance focus group discussion

I	Thank you for that. Thinking now about the experience we've just had in the theatre. What thoughts were going through your mind and/or feelings did you experience during the performance? Anything that popped into your head while we were in there.
P8	I thought it was spectacular the last part.
I	Spectacular?
P8	Yes. It was really refreshing because it was the first time with the voice over and engaging, much more engaging than just seeing the movements which is beautiful, but once you've seen some movements in a few shows then that show's emotional but it doesn't go much further than that. The last one you think, "Wow, I've seen something really unique," and seeing it was important.
I	Thanks Participant 8.
P1	It was hugely surprising. I got a real shock. Very surprising.
I	Thanks Participant 1.
P5	I think it confirmed my preference to have more narrative, more story to what I'm watching. Even though I had seen Fanatic back in September I still enjoyed it for that reason. That it was entertaining that way and the last piece wasn't necessarily a story but it was still easier to engage in rather as a narrative work as opposed to the first piece [Emergence] which was movement and feeling.
I	Thanks Participant 5. Any other thoughts that cropped up in your mind?
P11	I think it took away, the narrative of the last piece, I think that took away from enjoying the movement because I was watching more of how it corresponded with what they were saying. So it was more like a comedy event rather than looking at the physicality. But I enjoyed it, but it was a different experience to just enjoying dance.
P2	Yeah, I'm a bit like that. I've seen a few things where there's been speaking as well and it just, sort of, jars a bit for me. They're great dancers. Don't speak. <i>Laughs</i> . I mean I think that the message is pretty clear generally just with the dance. As you say, the last one was quite funny as they're going through the moves. I thought it was a clear narrative.
I	Thanks Participant 2.
A9	Well that was very tongue and cheek. I think that was the whole point, it was a collaboration. It was discussed in an article that it is in fact a collaboration. So it is jarring, you sort of go I'm here to focus on dance but I'm focusing on narrative. But then there's parts when they're not talking and you're so focused on the movement. I think they actually achieved a very good balance and I think it was a good amount of narration, also a good amount of dance and that fact that it sort of, it flowed. I think it's a testament to the choreographer and the dance director in that case. Because I think sometimes we have too much of one or too much of the other but for this one it seems to balance, at least in my opinion.
P2	Mmm.
I	Thank you Participant 9. Focusing on Emergence for a little while which is, obviously, the piece that we saw bits and pieces of in rehearsal. My first question on that is did you feel like this piece was familiar to you or was it still quite new or unexpected?
P2	No, it was familiar and I was looking for bits. I wanted to see how they resolved things. <i>Laughter.</i>
P2	It's probably the same with anything you've seen more than once, expecting the next bit to happen. If I'd never seen it before I'd just be sitting there watching, enjoying, but I was looking for a couple of bits in particular to see what they'd done.
I	And did you recognise these bits when they came?
P2	Yes.
I	Thanks Participant 2. Did you want to add something Participant 11?
P11	Yeah. So the whole piece for me was brand new but then there were tiny little bits throughout it that you get a flash of recognition. There was one piece where it was all familiar, the bit where they were struggling to step over him, and it wasn't there and I was looking for that in that seat. I couldn't spot it in performance. So, yeah, it took away from enjoyment because I was looking for that bit.
I	Thanks Participant 11.
P10	I found the piece tonight, the actual performance, extremely emotional. I was very, very caught up with it. Where as in the rehearsal I didn't have any emotion about it at all. I know this sounds ridiculous, but this is me. The very first piece with the girl and the two men I was caught. I was feeling upset because of the story in the paper about that girl who was attacked. I felt that it was, to me, a woman being mistreated and yet in the rehearsal and probably because this incident hadn't happened, I don't know, but in the rehearsal I didn't feel anything. It was just people practising something. But because tonight was the final and I knew it was, it's almost like tonight it was for real. And you asked us about the rehearsal before. Rehearsal for me is purely rehearsal, it wasn't anything finished, but tonight I felt uncomfortable and I felt a bit upset because I felt the woman, the way they had the two men with the woman in the middle and she is quite fragile looking, the way she was dressed. Whereas I'd see exactly the same thing in the rehearsal and I didn't think anything of it. But it really upset me to start with and then of course it moved on, but the initial thing just upset me. And then the piece I found really, really beautiful with the two men dancing.

	And what I thought in the rehearsal, I was just wondering whether in fact that was the piece we saw in the rehearsal, because in the rehearsal it looked like they were fighting. I was almost thinking it was something out of Hamlet. You can imagine them getting some swords out and going to stab each other but tonight, that dance was very, very moving and I think it was all about love. I didn't think that they were fighting at all and yet when they were in the frantic one when the two men were making, you know, towards the end there they were fighting, that looked more like what we saw in the rehearsal. Even though they weren't as engaged physically as they were in the rehearsal, I just felt that the finished piece of those two, the two men, was quite different. If that's the one we saw in the rehearsal I felt it was quite different from the rehearsal piece. I was very engaged with it, very much so.
I	Thank you Participant 10. Going on that point of a rehearsal being one thing and a performance being another, did anyone else feel a distinct difference with how you engaged with what we saw tonight versus what we saw six weeks ago?
P4	I suppose I thought a kind of privilege in a way that I had this inside view of it and I could see how it's been like this embryonic thing. Even though it looked amazing in rehearsal as well, but it had formed into this incredible sort of final piece. It seemed like a tenth of what it had become, you know, in the final work. I just thought, "Oh, I'm so lucky I got to see something developing and then to see this incredible sort of, wow." Just sort of took you over. Yeah, it was just a sense of, "Aren't I fortunate that I got to do that," sort of thing. It's very rare to be able to see behind the scenes.
I	Thanks Participant 4. Does anybody else want to comment?
	<i>Participant 5 and Participant 7 start talking at the same time.</i>
I	Participant 5 we'll go to you and then Participant 7.
P5	I actually found that it made me much more critical of the piece, in terms of critically assessing it while I was viewing it. So because of the bits I'd seen I'd go, "Oh, are they doing it the same? What's changed?" Because of the background knowledge it's made bits of my thinking into assessing rather than enjoying and I'll contrast that with Fanatic. Even though I'd seen it before I haven't seen the rehearsals, it hasn't built me up to anything so I'll sit back and enjoy it. Whereas the way that my mind works is I'm going to criticise it and not just the pieces I'd seen before, but the whole piece.
I	Thank you Participant 5. Participant 7.
P7	I was going to say essentially the same thing, but basically we were talking a lot about process in the rehearsals and how it was really interesting to see the process and I found in the performance, having seen the rehearsal, the process impinged on the performance. I found myself being more critical and looking for bits we'd seen and I think it impaired my ability to just enjoy the dance in this particular performance because I don't do that normally when I watch dance.
I	It's sounding like it's, going back to what you said earlier, in a way it almost ruined the experience because as Participant 11 was saying you were looking for those bits.
	<i>"Mmm" from some participants.</i>
P7	I think ruined is a bit strong.
P2	Yeah that's too strong.
P7	But it definitely impacted it, definitely impacted it.
P5	It made the difference.
P7	Yeah.
I	Thank you Participant 7. Does anybody else want to add any comments about the dance feeling familiar or unfamiliar?
P6	It didn't feel that familiar to me but that's probably because I have less of a critical eye when it comes to things like music and dance, but also because the performance I was kind of half to three quarters dance and the rest was everything else, the atmosphere of the theatre, the lights, the music. So that was obviously what stood out and what made it a performance for me.
	And I actually enjoyed watching the rehearsal more than the actual performance.
I	Thank you Participant 6. Does anybody else feel the same way about enjoying the rehearsal more than the performance?
P8	The performance was more interesting.
I	The performance was more interesting?
P8	Yes.
I	Thanks Participant 8.
P8	The different aspects of the dancing and music and even their expression.
P5	I'd have to agree. I found the rehearsal more enjoyable than the performance.
P6	It's more that, not that I enjoyed, I don't know if I really enjoyed it more but it made an impression on me, watching the rehearsal.
I	Did you want to add something in Participant 1?
P1	Well what I was just thinking that I really enjoyed seeing the rehearsal but it didn't in the slightest degree detract from the performance tonight for me. If anything it assisted me to appreciate it more that I'd seen those real people in their rehearsal gear learning that and to see the polished performance, it meant more to me having seen the rehearsal.
P10	I agree exactly with you.
I	Thank you. So do you think that watching the rehearsal helped or hindered your ability to understand Emergence?
P1	I'm not sure I understand it.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P2	Wasn't that the narrative of the last one?

P1	Isn't that what it's all about? <i>Laughter.</i>
P1	I was wondering about that. Was I supposed to be understanding this one? I might be failing.
P4	You don't always come away with an understanding.
P2	No.
P5	No.
P4	of what you've seen.
P2	Did you enjoy it?
P4	It's if the experience impacts on you and you take something from it. It's an emotional thing. It's a cerebral thing and you're always wanting to know more, for me anyway. Like, "What did that mean and why did he do it that way?" I suppose it makes me wonder more about it actually than having an understanding.
I	Thanks Participant 4.
P1	Yeah, I kept wondering whether there was a story that they were trying to tell us that I was meant to be understanding better. Made up a few ideas but I wondered if there was a story they were intending to impart to us.
I	Thanks Participant 1. So how did you feel as an Participant during the performance compared to in the rehearsal?
P2	I thought in the performance they are performing for the audience where in the rehearsal it was very much a work situation and they're learning it and making it up and just a totally different atmosphere.
I	So does that mean that in the performance you felt like you were more a part of it perhaps?
P2	Yes. Yeah definitely.
I	Okay. Thanks. Does anyone else feel the same way that the performance was perhaps more inclusive for an audience than the rehearsal?
P11	It was more immersive.
I	More immersive.
P11	Definitely more immersive in the performance. In the rehearsal I felt like a fly on the wall just watching it.
I	Thank you Participant 11 and that's something that we talked a bit about last time.
P11	Yeah.
P1	I think with the performance you know you're meant to be there, the whole place is there to watch them, in the rehearsal it felt as if it was a privilege.
P11	Yeah.
P1	to be behind the scenes, being allowed to watch them when you wouldn't normally be sitting to watch them. So you did feel a little bit, I felt as if I was imposing whereas tonight we were meant to be there to watch the performance.
I	Thanks Participant 1. Did somebody want to add to that?
P5	I was just going to say the same things but with the opposite meanings. <i>Laughter.</i>
P5	So I felt privileged to be in the rehearsal and that it felt great to be able to see something that not many people get to see in the rehearsal. You're not just one of the crowd and it is special because you're in such a small group.
I	Thanks Participant 5. After the rehearsal some of you said that you were noticing the details of the dance and that's what you were focusing on. Did this change when you watched the performance tonight?
P2	I was looking for the finger with the two fellas. <i>Laughs.</i> Yeah, where his finger came, I don't know, under the other fellow's leg or something, I thought, "I wonder if that made it this far." <i>Laughs.</i> And it did. It did. So I was looking for a few of the very small details.
I	And was it just the details that you knew about through the rehearsal or were you looking very closely at how they were doing everything?
P2	Actually I was looking more closely than I had previously.
I	Thanks Participant 2. Does anybody else agree with that, that they felt like they were looking closer?
P4	Yeah I was more attune to all the small detail and the intricacies of it that I probably didn't appreciate if I hadn't been to the rehearsal.
I	Thanks Participant 4.
A9	I was looking for details that I'd seen in the rehearsal. I think, because I was connecting more with it emotionally with the dancers in the performance, I think I sort of took a step back to see the bigger picture from just looking at the finer details. Like the two male dancers dancing or the three, you know, you try to create a story in your mind and whilst that's happening, for me at least. I wasn't focusing on how they did the leg thing at all but there were some things that I had noticed because of what I had seen. You know, how are they going to do that lift? How did they resolve that move? So I think that for me, having made a more emotional connection with them in the performance, I think instead of looking for little details I stepped back a little bit.
I	Thank Participant 9.
P10	Yes, I agree with Participant 9. Although I recognised the patterns that they were making, that they did in the rehearsal, in the performance I was looking at the whole piece rather than individual movements. Yes, I was looking at the entire finished movements rather than individual, what did they do there. And I thought it had changed so much. Just in my mind, I thought some of the finished pieces had changed so much since the rehearsal that it looked new and different to me.

I	Thanks Participant 10. Did anyone else experience the same feeling that what you had seen in the rehearsal, and what you had come to expect, didn't happen? That it changed? Or did that final work turn out how you were expecting it to?
P8	The rehearsal was just a fragment of the piece. You can't just extract a little fragment and then you add all the movements, so it changed so much into another new form of dance altogether. It was something that transforms.
I	Thanks Participant 8.
P7	Right at the end, it was unexpected in what they were wearing. So seeing them onstage, I hadn't thought at all about what they were going to wear, so it was seeing them there in those costumes I thought, "Ooo, I didn't expect to see them wearing that," although I didn't have a view of what they were going to be wearing. But then after that for me it was familiar, the rest of it.
I	Even the bits that we hadn't seen in rehearsal?
P7	Yeah, because I was looking at it more as a big picture so you could see those fragments all worked together but it wasn't, I wouldn't say it was unexpected. I think that as a whole it felt familiar.
I	Thanks Participant 7.
P2	Yeah, I'd agree with Participant 7 on that.
I	Thanks Participant 2.
P1	I found it really impressive, just how much it developed. It's really only four or five weeks and I could still see some similarity, although it had developed so much more. The thing was there, but it had developed.
I	Thanks Participant 1.
P5	I didn't find that except for the bit with the two male dancers. I thought that that had changed, and was much more impressive than I was expecting, but the other bits,
P1	Yeah. Flowed.
P5	didn't seem to have changed that much.
I	Thanks Participant 5. Another thing that a couple of you mentioned last time was focusing on the mechanical aspects of the dance, how it actually works, rather than the artistic ideas. What were you focusing on tonight?
P2	Same thing. <i>Laughs</i> .
P5	Whether they did the lift.
P2	I do love the mechanics of it.
I	So you were looking at the mechanics Participant 2. What were you looking at Participant 5?
P5	Whether they were going to do the lift on the back. Mechanics.
I	Again, looking at the mechanics. Were you focusing on how they were doing the movement throughout the piece or just the sections that you had seen?
P2	No, throughout.
P5	Yeah.
I	Throughout. What about everyone else, what were you focusing on?
P11	I was focusing on the emotion of the piece and apart from the bits that I had seen and those were the bits that took me out of that.
I	And is that where it broke for you?
P11	Yeah, I would say broke.
P2	Interrupted.
P11	Yeah, it kind of just switched. I don't know whether it's different parts of your brain or whatever, but you kind of go focusing, "Oh yeah, I recognise that," and it does kind of detract you, takes you out of the flow of your experience.
I	Thanks Participant 11. Did anyone experience something similar?
P7	Yeah, but I think mine was not the level of detail, technical individual moves, but more of the fragments. "Mmm" from some participants.
P7	As you said I was looking for that three piece part and then that two piece part and then once they happened I was into the sort of the big picture, the emotion. I didn't look at the technical details within those sections.
P11	Yeah, you did get back into it.
P7	Yeah.
P11	I did get back into it very quickly. It was kind of just a flash.
P7	Yeah.
I	Thanks Participant 11. Did you want to say something Participant 9?
A9	Just the difference between the rehearsal and the performance. I felt like in the rehearsal I felt more connected with the dancers while in the performance I was connecting with the character in the play. It was a very big distinction in my mind, because I felt that during rehearsals there were three dancing, they pulled the one out saying, "No, you'll probably be better here." I was thinking, "I wonder how they're feeling right now. I wonder what's going through their brain as they are now dancing with different people," or "I wonder if their dynamics are different there." In the performance, for me, it wasn't much about the dancers, it was about the people or the emotion or the characters they are trying to portray and that's what I was looking at this time round.
I	Thanks Participant 9. That leads me into another question. Seeing the dancers in a more casual context in rehearsal versus seeing them in their performance mode in that polished state. What are your thoughts on that contrast?
P10	It's a huge contrast. No one had holes in their socks, thank goodness. <i>Laughter</i> .
P10	It was chalk and cheese to me, it was. In the rehearsal they were in their daggy old clothes. I actually found it very interesting to see what they do wear for a rehearsal. They just wear whatever's the cleanest on the floor I think. And yet for the performance they wore very interesting costumes, they had makeup on, the girls' hair, all their hair was done perfectly and pulled back and beautiful. And the guys had their hair done. I mean, it's just a performance. It's just fabulous and the lighting, just everything was fabulous compared with rehearsal. The rehearsal was a rehearsal.

I	Seeing the holey socks and the clothes, did that have an impact on your idea of the dancers in anyway?
P10	No.
I	Did you enjoy seeing that aspect?
P10	It was interesting. Yeah it was interesting, and because as I think somebody mentioned here they were at work. This is their job. I mean they look stunning and fabulous and ethereal and other worldly and all these things but they are doing a job, and they were at work in the rehearsal, and this is the pinnacle of their job. The final performance, that's how I felt.
I	Thanks Participant 10. The difference between the holey socks and perfect buns.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P2	I agree with Participant 10 that it's two very different looks, experiences, but I love seeing both and one doesn't take away from the other at all. It's just a different show really.
I	Does one add something to the other?
P1	Yeah, definitely.
P2	Oh I think so because you can really see how different a performance is to the rehearsal. It's great to see that link from one to the other.
I	Thanks Participant 2.
P1	I think I appreciated tonight's performance more having seen those people in the rehearsal because I could recognise them, because I could identify with them it seemed more personal. I've seen you working hard and I can really be happy for you and appreciate that you've achieved it. It's to do with their sense of achievement maybe. They pulled it off.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
I	Anyone else want to add in something?
P5	I didn't find that it added to it. I felt that it changed what I was viewing tonight. For some of them I could still hear their voices while they were dancing. So when they spotlight was on them I was hearing what they were saying in the performance and that changed it.
P10	In the rehearsal you mean?
P5	Yeah, so that had carried over and seeing their personalities had carried over a little bit as well. So who I was interested in, who I was paying attention to, who I liked or didn't like had been changed by seeing them in rehearsal.
I	Thanks Participant 5. That's an interesting point about who you liked, who you didn't like. In the rehearsal, did you have favourites?
P4	I think you got to know them. The girl that did the solo, you know the short girl with the short hair. It's funny, you sort of feel like you've got to know a bit about them even though you've never met them.
	In the rehearsal you feel like you've got a little bit of what their story is and in the performance it gives you, it just adds another dimension to the performance.
I	Thanks Participant 4. Did you want to say something Participant 11?
P11	Well I can add to that. So I have favourites from seeing previous performances and having seen people in rehearsals and sort of hearing their voices it kind of changed that. So I saw them differently this time than how I have in previous performances.
I	Did your favourites change once you saw them in rehearsal?
P11	Well there are new people. There's quite a few new people so I can't really say yet.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P2	For me, because we only saw specific bits in the rehearsal you saw more of some people than you did of others.
P11	Yeah.
P2	And the trio at the beginning of the piece tonight, we didn't see a lot of them in rehearsal. It wasn't one of the pieces they really focused on, but the girl in this piece she was just so good tonight and I think that when we saw them in the rehearsal they were really just running through the piece without really doing it very well. <i>Laughs</i> . So for me she was just a much stronger person, character, than what we saw in the rehearsal. That's probably just because it wasn't a focus in the rehearsal.
P11	Is that the girl who did that solo?
P2	With the two fellows, the trio.
P11	Oh okay, yeah.
I	At the beginning.
P2	At the beginning, yeah.
I	Thanks Participant 3.
P11	So the girl who did the solo, she ran the whole solo in the rehearsal and I was disappointed with her tonight.
P2	Natalie.
P11	Yeah, Natalie.
I	You were disappointed. Why?
P11	I don't know, I don't know.
P10	It was different.
P11	Was it different?
P10	I thought it was, I was trying to work out which one she was by her hair.
P2	Yeah, it was different.
P10	Sorry to cut across you there.

P11	That's alright.
P10	In the rehearsal I think she had curly hair.
	<i>"Mmm" from some participants.</i>
P10	So her hair, I think, was slicked back because there was another girl, who had had her hair dyed dark red, and that wasn't the same girl. And I feel that the piece that we saw in the rehearsal was much stronger than what we saw tonight of her.
P11	Yeah, I agree.
P10	For that piece. Her specific solo.
P11	Yeah, whereas the girl with the red hair, she was brilliant.
P2	She was excellent tonight.
P10	Yes.
A9	Just speaking about favourites.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
A9	Purely by chance I went and saw Giselle the ballet the week after and as I went into the theatre I saw a couple of the Sydney Dance Company dancers. I saw them, they saw me.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
A9	And literally I was sitting right next to them and hearing their talks amongst themselves I was just, "Wow."
	<i>Laughter.</i>
A9	"You're not what I had in my mind." So I've come to the performance not having changed favourites but just going, "I know a little more about you now, and it has altered my image of who you are. Instead of just being a dancer I see you as a person and I'm not sure if I'd speak to you if I could see you again." Not that that's got anything to do with what we've done here.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P2	What were they saying?
A9	Well we are just such worlds apart, you know, "I can appreciate what you do but I think on a day to day basis I don't think we'd get along." But that's literally ten minutes conversation between them.
P10	Sounds like the tall poppy syndrome to me.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
I	Thanks Participant 9. Did you feel more or less comfortable in the theatre compared to the rehearsal?
P11	More comfy in the theatre.
I	More comfy in the theatre?
	<i>"Yes" from some participants.</i>
I	And what is it that makes you comfortable there? Go on Participant 6.
P6	That we're supposed to be there.
P11	Yeah.
P10	Exactly, I think so too.
	<i>"Yeah" from some participants.</i>
P2	And they need an audience for a performance. They didn't need us the other day, a few weeks ago, but for a performance it's a lot better if there's an audience.
I	And do you think it's important to feel needed?
P4	It's more anonymous for me. Yeah, I suppose in the rehearsal I felt like a bit in their space and I'm not sure whether we were following the right protocol and were they really entirely happy with us being there. This is just speculation. And then in the performance there is none of that that enters your mind. You've got your role as the audience and you see what they do.
I	Thanks Participant 4.
P8	They kind of shine in the show and you're just there. It's not your time to shine. It's their job.
I	Thank you. Just quickly, did you feel like you had more of a connection to the dancers in the performance or the rehearsal?
P11	The performance.
	<i>"Performance" from most participants.</i>
P2	Yeah, the performance.
P10	Performance.
	<i>"Rehearsal" from some participants.</i>
P5	Yeah, I think the rehearsal.
I	Okay, so for those who said rehearsal, why?
P7	I think in the rehearsal they seemed like people and in the performance they were dancers. So they were much more anonymous in the, I felt, in the performance whereas in the rehearsal you could see who they were and that they were people and individuals where it is, they were much more a dancer in the performance.
I	Would you agree with that Participant 5?
P5	Yeah, I would agree.
I	And those who said that they felt more connected in performance, what was it about the performance that made that connection?

P6	It was more that I had seen in the rehearsal rather than anything I had seen in the performance I think. So not that we established a relationship in the rehearsal, or anything like that, but I felt more connected because they were more familiar rather than anything actually in the performance that they did.
I	Thanks Participant 6.
P1	Same.
I	Thanks Participant 1. I'd like to talk a little bit now about Fanatic and Cacti as well. I'm not trying to figure out which piece is the best. I'm just interested in your ideas and opinions about the experience of watching these pieces and how this compares to your experience of watching Emergence. So first of all, who here has seen Fanatic before? Okay, so Participant 5, Participant 7, Participant 11 for the record. This is to everyone. Do you feel like you understood Cacti or Fanatic more or less than you did with Emergence?
P11	What do you mean by understood?
P2	I feel I understood them all about the same but obviously I may have got this very completely wrong.
I	The question is not about figuring out whether you are right or wrong with your understanding but whether you feel like you understood.
P2	Yeah, I felt pretty equal.
P6	Emergence was more abstract than the other two so that's why, I guess, I don't know. I don't usually come into these things really feeling like I need to understand anything, otherwise it's a lost battle sometimes.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P6	Yeah, I guess because the other two had narratives. That doesn't mean that I enjoyed them anymore it was just more of a matter of that kind of work.
I	Do you think that because Emergence was abstract, do you think that being in the rehearsal and seeing the process has helped or hindered your understanding?
P2	No, I think I would have had the same understanding anyway and as I say, my level of understanding of these things is probably quite shallow. <i>Laughs.</i> So I'm not making any claims there. So no I don't think it, sort of, increased that understanding.
I	Thanks Participant 2.
P10	I agree with Participant 2. I don't think, and I agree with Participant 6 as well, I don't go along to watch to actually understand it as much as to engage and enjoy it and I didn't feel that the rehearsal meant that I could understand it any better.
I	I'd like to open it up to everyone.
P8	I think the last part was really deep and meaningful much more because it was comparing humans with orchestra and it was like, it was like philosophy in a way. For me it was much more original and sophisticated.
I	So for you it was the subject matter that set it apart?
P8	Plus the dance, the choreography was really new. At the same time there was new meaning to dance with people being orchestra and people connecting with nature in the cactus. So for me it was like, and at the end when he said it was almost done and it was finished and they keep walking, I think I'm finished there. I think you really connect with this piece much more than the other two pieces because it was much more meaningful.
I	Thanks Participant 8. In talking about understanding someone mentioned enjoyment as being more of a focus going into watching dance. So did you enjoy watching Cacti or Fanatic more or less than Emergence?
P4	I think they're all so unique and different it's hard to compare them or rate them like one against the other kind of thing. They were complete individual experiences and I suppose that the rehearsal, for me, added more depth. I don't think I'm sophisticated enough, been to enough dance, you know I haven't got the critiquing eye on it. I'm just allowing it to just, sort of, happen and experience it. To me it just added another dimension. I don't know if it helped me understand more because it was abstract but it did give it a bit more colour and light.
I	Thanks Participant 4.
P10	I think because Fanatic and Cacti were so different and Participant 8 had said that some of the dance moves in Emergence were familiar to her because she had seen them in other pieces and I tend to agree with that. So I feel Emergence was more accessible to me and because I hadn't seen Fanatic and Cacti before I was sort of a bit overwhelmed because I was trying to take it all in and there was a lot happening. So I would probably like to see those two again and then the next time, because when you know where something's going you can sort relax a bit, knowing where it's going to go and just follow it step by step instead of wondering where it's going. So I think if I saw it again I'd probably get more enjoyment. I really enjoyed them, I thought they were funny and different, but I would probably like to see them again to get more enjoyment and perhaps try to get the philosophical side of it.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
I	Thanks Participant 10. So now that you've had the chance to experience the rehearsal and then the performance, would you still turn up to an open rehearsal if it was offered again?
P2	For sure.
	"Yes" from many participants.
I	Even the people who felt it had a disruptive effect?
P7	I don't know how I feel about it.
P11	I'd probably say no. If it was a really early rehearsal where they were explain, where you got more from it, but not the rehearsal we saw.
I	Do you think it was too close to the final production?
P11	I don't think I benefited. It was nice to be a fly on the wall and watch them but I don't think I benefited. If anything, it detracted.
I	Thanks Participant 11. Did you want to add anything Participant 7?
P7	Yeah. I mean, I loved being at the rehearsal and I loved that performance but I did think that the rehearsal did detract from my ability to enjoy the performance so I didn't like that aspect. So I would think very carefully about going.

P11	If I could see the dancers rehearse something else, then that would be fine.
P7	Yeah. <i>Laughter.</i>
I	So you got something more out of the experience rather than the actual specifics of the dance?
P11	Yeah, I enjoyed being there. It was a privilege to be there, but I felt it disrupted the performance.
I	It's too close?
P5	I think even though it detracted from the performance it was so enjoyable as a standalone thing that I would still probably come and see it.
P10	I wouldn't see a rehearsal again because I want to see the finished, polished piece and that's just from my point of view because I like a performance. I like the whole show, the whole thing, so I wouldn't see a rehearsal again.
P1	I would see the rehearsal again.
P2	I find the two to be almost completely separate entities. I guess I'm watching them in different mind space perhaps. So yeah, I would.
I	Thanks Participant 2. Is there anything that someone's been dying to say that they haven't had a chance to yet? Now's the time.
P8	I was thinking of the socks, the holey socks. I'm not sure if they were supposed to have socks on as part of the costume. <i>Laughter.</i>
P2	Yeah, they were a bit woolly-looking.
I	Any other last comments?
P11	I'd say one thing. If we'd seen them rehearsing either of the other two performances I think it would have been worse.
I	Sorry?
P11	If we'd seen them rehearse Cacti or Fanatic, because they were all about being new, and because it was Emergence and it was much more involved. If I'd seen them rehearse Fanatic or Cacti it would have spoilt it because it was the newness about those pieces that I really enjoyed. <i>"Mmm" from some participants.</i>
I	Thanks Participant 11.
P1	I did think it was lovely that Rafael in person introduced the evening. I thought that was lovely.
P11	I thought he was very different in rehearsal, because I've seen him do that previously and I thought what a lovely guy and then rehearsal I didn't think the same thing. <i>Laughter.</i>
P11	Because he didn't talk to you, or just a little bit towards the end but I was expecting that guy in the rehearsal and he wasn't that guy.
I	Thank you, I'll wrap it up now.

TAB post-rehearsal focus group discussion

I	Thank you. Thinking about the rehearsal we just watched together. What thoughts were going through your mind or feelings did you experience while we were in there? So this is open for anyone to answer now.
P6	I think we all appreciated how lucky we were, because we're all fans of the arts in some way so we appreciate how fortunate we were to have this experience today.
I	Thanks, Participant 6.
P3	I felt it was extremely intimate to be in there. First of all it was just amazing and then to see it all so closely, and so it was just intimate. And then it took a long while for me to realise, to forget, that they could see me. So I then, kind of, felt a lot more comfortable, but in the beginning, "I shouldn't be here. This feels really close." Especially because they don't talk very much and they are taking a lot of cues from the choreographer and it's just, it seems to be a very small space in a way. That's just the first thing that struck me. It's a bit private and I don't know if I should be here.
I	Thanks, Participant 3.
P4	I felt very privileged to be able to see the choreographer or the dance person, the leader, and watching him and his emotions that he goes through, trying to get the right positioning of the people. I've never experienced that before. And just watching the work they go through to get to that, probably, five minutes of choreography on stage was incredible. So I was so privileged to see the thinking and the workings and the emotions in the background that you don't realise when you go to an ordinary show.
I	Thanks, Participant 4. Participant 3 said something about it being very intimate, that they could see you and that was something that came into your mind. Is that something that other people thought about, the fact that they you could be seen?
P5	No, I don't think that they see you. They are just so into their zone, I don't think they see us. They don't know that we're there.
P1	I took it from a different viewpoint. I actually found the rehearsal very random initially, in watching the choreographer make subtle suggestions to the individual dancers. Because I come a music background, I played with a youth orchestra for a long time, and for me rehearsal was always a very structured. "We're going from this bar to this bar and we want you to play louder and we want you to play softer," and that was just completely, initially, random. And then the choreographer, whose made these very little, subtle suggestions, then turns to the rehearsal pianist and says, "Right, belt it out from bar six point one," and they all just come together in front of you. And that's incredible to see, this random movement all of a sudden become so synchronised. I found it fascinating.
I	Thanks, Participant 1. Did anyone want to add to that or something different about the thoughts going through your mind or feelings that you experienced?
P2	I think that initially I felt a bit uneasy in the small space especially because I think the dancers realise that it's time for rehearsal. They become so focused that they don't realise, because every time they have to keep watching the mirror behind us to study how they move. I keep thinking that every time they are looking in the mirror they see us looking back at them, so I felt bad that way. But I think that they are all such professionals that they don't notice us after a while. They just focus on how they move.
I	Thanks, Participant 2. You felt bad that they were seeing you? Can you explain that a bit more?
P2	Just on the conscious level. Also coming from a semi-artistic background, you're putting yourself out there and you feel very conscious of how you receive. And this is almost like their refining their art before it's released. I think artists are often quite sensitive to critique so it's almost like they're displaying something that they is not ready yet sometimes.
I	Thank you. Did anybody want to add to that or contribute something different on that point? About being there and being seen.
P3	I wonder how often they would have that many people sitting in a row in a practice session. I mean, when they perform on stage I'm sure it's fairly black out there and they're not seeing eight people just right in their faces. So I wonder, if any effect that was. I mean, clearly they are focused so they are tuning out and looking at themselves in the mirror, but I just wonder how often a troupe of eight people just sit in their practice session seeing their mistakes, seeing their awkward moments and not perfection.
I	Thank you Participant 3. Did you want to add something in Participant 5?
P5	I was just going to say that it's not an unusual thing. My daughter's a dancer so I've got a bit of an idea. It's quite common. They'll have people sitting in on class, different choreographers, different teachers. I don't think it's an usual thing for them.
P1	I'm sort of guessing that's why they've got the three windows down the side of the rehearsal room.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P1	And everybody was wondering by, stopping for a couple of minutes, having a look and going. I think that had happened once or twice before.

I	Did seeing that there were windows in the rehearsal space and seeing that the dancers were quite comfortable with people stopping and watching them, did that make you feel more at ease about being in there? <i>"Yes" from some participants.</i>
P4	Most of those people going past down the corridor would have been sort of junior members of the company anyway. So most of those going past, that I could see, would be people who are a part of The Australian Ballet Company anyway. Most of them.
P3	A fair few of them also did look at us. <i>Laughter.</i>
P3	<i>"How come they get the front row seats?"</i>
I	So did that make you feel more or less comfortable?
P3	Well it made me feel pretty special that I had the good seat. <i>Laughter.</i>
I	Thanks Participant 3. Any other takers for thoughts or feelings experienced in the rehearsal?
P8	I thought it was really interesting to see. When you see ballet dancers of such high calibre on stage they're just always really perfect and everything is so choreographed and everyone runs so smoothly. But here, you know, they don't have their makeup on, they're not as graceful as you think they would be in everyday life. So it's just really nice to see that more human side to them and realising that they're not always entirely perfect and polished, and it actually takes some work to get there. <i>"Mmm" from some participants.</i>
I	Thanks Participant 8.
P3	That's a good point. You almost always expect them to come out to do the most and you know they're not putting in all the effort because they've got to do it that many times over. So they do it a bit slap dash sometimes. But that's true, you kind of almost expect a huge level of effort. But quite often they'd take it easy or wouldn't jump or whatever.
I	Thanks Participant 3. So more specifically now, what was watching the creative process, the act of dance being made, what was that like for you?
P4	Inspiring and amazing.
I	In what way?
P4	Well, just watching the leader. Is he the choreographer?
I	Yes.
P4	Yeah, okay. Well just watching his thought processes as it's going through and he's obviously watching the different couples, and their technique, and also putting that all together and how they work together. That's what I felt anyway. I just found that absolutely amazing to watch that process and you could almost see the thoughts that were happening in his head.
I	Thanks Participant 4. Did anybody want to add to that?
P5	I find it incredible to see how long it takes them to figure out a hand movement or a head movement. That can take fifteen minutes to get that right and yet to the audience, when you're watching the performance, it just happens.
P4	And that's where the professionalism comes in. You know, we are so privileged to see this process and then perhaps see the finished product on the night and know how much work has gone into it to get to that. So lots of people don't understand it or don't get to see it.
P1	What struck me was just the physicality of the rehearsal. It's one thing to see the finished performance but to see how physically labour intensive it obviously is for the rehearsal process and, as you say, privileged to be able to sit there and watch it. That's the thing that really struck me, and they just go over and over and over and over again. Whereas if it had of me I would have gone for about five minutes and said, "Sod this. I'm off to the pub." <i>Laughter.</i>
P4	And they probably feel like it too, at times. <i>Laughter.</i>
I	Did you feel like that after watching it for five minutes? <i>Laughter.</i>
P1	No, no. I could watch and watch. It truly was fascinating to see. And just how each individual dancer takes on that one little movement, that one hand gesture, and they all combined it together once again to get the synchronicity when they run through. It's just a really fascinating thing to see. I really am blown away. I want to go back in. <i>Laughter.</i>
I	Thanks Participant 1.
P5	I think also the risk factor that you don't see on stage. The risks involved, particularly for the girls. How easy it is to have an accident.
P5	And you never see, well, hopefully you never see that on stage.
P3	I agree with the amount of work, that was amazing, but what struck me most about the whole relationship between the choreographer and the dancers was how organic it was. I thought he would have everything in his head already, and he's just, "No, how about we try this? How about we try that?" It was so flexible. He was making it up on the spot in a way, you know, or going with the flow. That was really that most surprising thing. I honestly thought the choreographer would come in with already his plan and, "This how it's going to go," but once he saw a certain movement he would change quite a lot. That to me was the most surprising part of it. I didn't realise quite how organic it would be.

I	Thanks Participant 3. Anything else about what it's like to watch the creative process?
P6	I thought, sort of following on from what Participant 3 said, that it was amazing how much they remembered everything.
	"Mmm" from some participants.
P6	Because I sing in a choir and I have to write everything down when someone makes a change and, you know, every time they change something they were right on it and they remembered it straight away. I just thought that was amazing.
I	Thanks Participant 6.
P2	Similarly, I think it's a collaborative, organic and collaborative, process between the choreographer and the dancers and from my understanding it is because this is a new production. It's almost like he's drafting it out right now and the dancers are helping him.
	"Mmm" from some participants.
P2	He'll say, "That one's good." The dancers could suggest some movements that he might take on a vice versa. It not him with just a set manuscript. And it's fascinating to see choreography being born, really.
I	Thank you Participant 2. So what was it like being very close to the choreographer and dancers?
P3	As I said before, pretty intimate.
P8	I found it a little bit intimidating at the start. Yeah, but again, as the process sort of moved along and everyone felt a bit more comfortable that was okay.
	Yeah, I find it, like it's an exclusive environment and we are really privileged to be here but just at the start I felt a bit intimidated.
P4	Like we were intruding.
	"Mmm" from some participants.
I	And what was it that made it feel intimidating?
P8	I suppose because they're some of the best dancers in the country. They're pretty special people. They're really good at what they do.
P4	It's almost a spiritual thing, I think.
P3	I agree. When you're in the presence of this level of professionalism, that's the intimidating thing.
I	Thanks Participant 3. Other thoughts about being close to the dancers and choreographer?
P7	I had a fan type reaction. I saw Madeline in Swan Lake just recently and she was wonderful, and the whole time I just wanted to say, "You're wonderful. Thank you."
	Laughter.
P7	And I think also, because ballet, you know these are very disciplined, talented and just kind of hallowed halls in a way. Yeah, and I always have, when I recently saw Swan Lake and this was the same reaction I get, it's a very emotional feeling, very powerful feeling. It's just very beautiful to watch. And I think because we also know about the dedication behind it, it just feels like a real gift. I guess that's what it felt like.
I	Thank you Participant 7.
P3	Sorry, can I just add two other things about intimacy?
I	Yes, of course.
P3	One is the shoes. How much we could hear those shoes and every movement that was ever made rustling in the shoes, and that kind of thing, which you don't normally, when you're out in an audience, hear too much of really. And that kind of made it really real.
	And the other thing about the intimacy, I think the huge level of unspoken communication that was going on between partners, between the choreographer, they just didn't even need to speak. They didn't sometimes, would use signals and things like that. A lot of unspoken communication, that was the other intimidating thing about being in the rehearsal.
	If I make one flinch they're going to pick up on it. Very fine-tuned.
P4	That's what I sort of mean about the spirituality between the dancers, is that almost unspoken. They hone in on each other and that's what I mean by spirituality, it's between them. We're intruding in their space.
P2	It's an intimate bond.
P1	You could tell that with, certainly something I picked up, was the amount of eye contact the individual dancers had not just with the choreographer but with the other dancers. Because even though maybe they've stopped or paused for thirty seconds, they're watching how somebody else is doing it and they're picking up on that and there's, as Participant 3 mentioned, almost totally non-verbal communication but they're just grasping every idea almost instantaneously and then translating that back into the performance space. And that for me was really interesting to see because I'm used to having an idiot at the front called a conductor telling me I've got to bash something here, and it was just really fascinating to see that non-verbal communication that everybody picks up. So that's very intimate because you have to know the other individual so well to be able to grasp that level, that detail, and transform it.
I	Thank you. I'm going to go back to something Participant 8 said earlier on. You mentioned that you saw a human side to the dancers. Can you elaborate on what you mean by that?
P8	Just them not being perfect all the time and making mistakes and, you know, working things out and thinking things through and fooling around with her partner and having a bit of a giggle. That sort of stuff. Yeah, that was really good to see.
I	Opening it up now, is that something that other people were noticing as well?

P2	One of the couples, they were just really cheeky. They were having such a fun time and very playful. Madeline and Kevin, yeah. And then there was one couple that was very serious, quite studious. They each had their own personalities and I think they were matched up pretty well that way, apart from physicality. Like Participant 8 said, they nearly all had the human quirks and some of them fooled around and having slips and falls and things like that. It was very natural.
P8	And I think when you watch ballet performances, because they get so into their characters, you forget that you know the people playing the part have their own personalities as well. Another thing I found with being so close is that you notice what size they are in real life.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P8	Because when they are on stage they have the beautiful lines and everything looks flawless and they just, I don't know, you just don't think of them as a normal person. You don't think to size them up in that sort of way, and just seeing how tiny Madeline was, probably about my height, they look quite different.
P3	Yeah, that's right. When they've got all their makeup the same, their costumes the same, they tend to look all identical to each other, the girls. And seeing them that closely, totally different head shapes and sizes and intense looks.
I	Thanks, Participant 3. You touched on this a little bit but I'd like to make it a point of discussion. Did you feel at ease or uncomfortable in that environment and did that change at any point? Go on Participant 6.
P6	I guess initially you felt uncomfortable because you were in their space, but I guess you became comfortable with it as they noticed us less. I think you became more comfortable.
I	As they noticed us less. Is that something that other people felt happen?
P3	Totally, I totally agree. I felt more noticeable in the beginning and very much less at the end, except when we trooped out. So it just got more comfortable.
I	Participant 5, you are shaking your head.
P5	I just didn't feel uncomfortable at all. Maybe that's because I've spent many hours in dance classes over the many years. To me, I felt quite comfortable being there. I didn't feel like I was intruding at all because that's what they do and they're used to having people there. So for me, no I didn't feel uncomfortable at all.
I	You wanted to say something Participant 7?
P7	Yeah I just wanted to say I don't feel like I was intruding either. These are people that have probably been looked at a lot while dancing over the years and critiqued and all of that. I mean while I felt lucky and privileged to be in that space, because it's a rehearsal space, I didn't feel like I was affecting it. That was my impression.
I	Thank you.
P1	I'd agree. I didn't feel any discomfort, but purely of the fact that these people are professionals. They've probably had a lot more people looking at them for a lot longer than the small period of time that we had. They are probably used to it. We're just another group of somebody that's probably, I guess, been trooped in or trooped out. They're going to have to deal with that anyway, and they're going to end up doing it for years and years and years. So there was no discomfort but I'm the same, there was that incredible privilege to be that close and that intimate in that rehearsal space as opposed to seeing it on the stage.
P3	I agree. I didn't think that they were fazed but I couldn't help feeling how I would feel if that were me. So that's where the discomfort bit came into it. Here's some extra pressure, a whole row of eight people. That's where I sort of felt like I didn't want to, although I rationalised that I wasn't intruding because they are professionals. I couldn't help it because you put yourself into it, I don't know, it crosses your mind, how would I feel if, you know, a group came in. You know that's why we're not performers you see. That's why they are. They're used to it, they're comfortable with it.
I	Thanks Participant 3. Did you want to add something in Participant 2?
P2	No, I think that's all.
I	Okay. Did you feel self-conscious? So perhaps this question is more for the people that did feel uncomfortable at some point. I'm very interested in knowing what point you became more comfortable.
P3	Probably time. It probably was time and noticing how focused they were, and that in addition to getting lost, yourself, in the performance. And like, how you said, they bring it all together, you just got wrapped up in it and forgot that you were watching them and that they could possibly see you. That sort of thing.
I	Thanks Participant 3. You say in the performance, as in when they would run it with music?
P3	Yeah, particularly. I think so, because the music then starts to, like it's heading towards the end product and a lot of dancing around. And like I said, all we could hear is the domp domp domp domp of the floor, it doesn't feel quite like a finished performance you know.
	I definitely felt a shift that went from feeling like I was intruding to "I'm completely a part of the wallpaper now."
I	And you preferred being part of the wallpaper?
P3	Definitely. I would shudder to think that my presence was in any way going to disturb them. That would really upset me because I want them to be focused and they were focused.
I	Thank you Participant 3. Does anybody else want to agree, disagree, or something different?
P2	It was the time and also the viewing windows as well. We were seeing people passing by and peeping in at some point.
	I think initially the dancers, as I said early on, they started practising and when you realise that they weren't even looking at you, that was about the point when you started to settle in comfortably. So it's a bit of the window, a bit of that relationship with the audience and the dancers, we're looking for communication from then and vice versa.

	And when there's none you can sort of settle into your own space, sort of merge into the background.
I	So it's that point when you realise that you're not going to be a point of focus?
P2	Yes. Pretty much when you notice that, to them, we are not there you go, "Okay, I'm not there to you so I'm okay," if that makes sense.
I	I understand what you're saying. Thank you. Did seeing the rehearsal make you want to see more of the process of movement-making, or of the dancers practicing sequences, or of the choreographer? Did it make you want to see more rehearsal stuff?
P8	Yes.
I	What do you want to see more of?
P8	It's actually really making me want to see the finished product as well and making me look forward to the performance. So I'm a lot more excited to see that now.
	Yeah, I think it would be nice if it was a bit more available to the public to be able to see rehearsals in some way and be part of that process.
I	Thank you. Go ahead Participant 1.
P1	Yeah, just to see the rehearsal. It might have been Participant 3 that was saying it's such an organic process and to actually seeing that and especially being dance, because I've seen performances of ballet with not having seen the rehearsal process, to see it now it's sort of like, "Can I go back please? I'll be quiet, I won't say anything, but just to see it." And it gives a greater degree of anticipation to want to go and see the final product now that you've just seen even such a small part of what its genesis has been. So yeah, bring on the twenty-third.
I	Anything else on this topic, about wanting to see more? Or maybe you don't?
P3	I think we all agree.
	"Mmm" from some participants.
P3	We just want it to fast track to the end, especially the bits where they've practiced it and pulled it together. They trapped you in and you did just want watch more and more. Well I did.
P4	It will be interesting to see, when we see the final product, what that little section that we've watched, where it comes in the ballet.
I	Thanks Participant 4.
P2	Actually can I just add, I wouldn't mind seeing the whole rehearsal and not actually seeing the final product, because I'm used to seeing the final product and this is more fascinating for me to see the creative process and just to see how it builds and builds. Because when I see a finished product it's just all so slick and finished and this one is, you know, much more interesting, and plus I get to see another genesis of how this is created. I think the finished product is just a full stop, so that you can refer back to the whole creative process. For me the most interesting thing is the whole rehearsal, so yeah I'd love to see the whole rehearsals and if I can't see the finished product that's fine.
P3	I just think when you see the finished product you're going to appreciate it so much more from seeing that as just a fraction.
P2	And between now and when it is actually produced, that could be refined further and further. On the night we might not see anything of what they just did.
I	Thanks Participant 2. My last questions is now that you've experienced one part of one rehearsal would you come to another rehearsal? Is that something that you would be interested in?
P4	We sort of do have the opportunity to go the dress rehearsals here in Melbourne through the Ballet Society.
I	But one like this?
P4	No. This is the first time I've been this close, watching the choreographer actually working.
P5	They do occasionally have open days during school holidays.
P4	Which we can access through the Ballet Society, so we're lucky in that respect. I guess and I do try to come to most of those that I can. I don't think they're having a dress rehearsal as such on the stage like the ones we usually go to because it's a new ballet. Sometimes that does happen. So we're really lucky to have seen the rehearsal today. That's why I was so excited when you rang.
I	So for those who haven't even been able to experience a dress rehearsal, does seeing today's rehearsal make you want to come to another?
	"Yes" from most participants.
I	Does anyone not want to come to another rehearsal as a result of today?
	"No" from most participants.
I	You're neither nodding or shaking your head Participant 3.
P3	Well there is two parts to it. There is the, does seeing them behind the scenes take something away from end product?
	Some participants said "No" and "I think it adds to it".
P3	I was shocked, really, at how impressed I was with how it was happening, the creation bit happening in front of us. Like, I thought we were going to watch something that was fairly rehearsed. I didn't realise it was a new production. So that was a really, really great experience and that makes me want to keep watching more and more practices until they have the finished product. But on the other hand I was wondering if it's spoilers in a way, you know, if a preview will take away from anything.
I	I guess that's a question we can answer after the performance when we will, again, have a discussion.
P3	I think it could be an anticlimax because there's so much. I mean to see the whole process and then to see the final product, and then afterwards I can imagine depression.

	<i>Laughter.</i>
P3	Falling off the cliff. It's all done.
I	Well I hope that's not the case. So that's it for today. Thanks so much for sharing your thoughts about the experience and for coming and participating.

TAB post-performance focus group discussion

I	Thank you for staying back this evening, especially because it is a weeknight. Like last time, I'll be posing questions and the idea is that we talk about each topic as a group. I want you to focus only on tonight's performance and the rehearsal we saw together, and to base your comments only on these two experiences. I'm interested in your first, instinctual responses so please try not to analyse your comments because that's my job for later. To start off, I'll like to know what thoughts were going through your mind, what feelings you experienced, or even what you talked about with the person next to you?
P6	Well we talked about the beautiful costumes and how sparkly and Cinderella-like she looked, especially when she stepped into the light and sparkled.
P5	Yeah I thought the costumes were just beautiful. Yeah that drew my attention right from the start, really.
P3	We did touch on costumes as well. The men wearing the poof ball.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P2	The tutus.
P3	Yeah, dancing with each other.
P2	And the ladies in the first part of the dance scene wearing tuxes.
	<i>"Yeah" from some participants.</i>
P2	We were disappointed. There's no ball gowns.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
I	They got to put some skirts on later.
	<i>"Yes" from some participants.</i>
P4	I thought they were stunning in the trouser suits though. I thought their dancing was really,
P3	You could see their movements more.
P4	it just looked so elegant. And the men in the long coats as a balance. I thought they looked stunning.
I	So what about feelings?
P2	I was really involved in the story, in the whole setting and scenario. It made it more believable, seeing everything put together.
I	Okay. Put together, as in the performance?
P2	Yeah, that's right. So the costumes gave a lot to character in comparison to what we saw in the rehearsal. So it just made it more absorbing. I was just transported to that scene.
I	Did anybody else find that that was the case with them as well? Or something different perhaps?
P3	I felt pretty excited, quite frankly. And I think it was a different excitement to seeing the practice. It's just, sort of, a more glamorous excitement, if you know what I mean. Just dazzling and you really felt like you were having a special night, you know the Cinderella feeling, I guess. That kind of thing. While at the practice it was exciting for a different reason. I think it was exciting because you were so close and it was so visceral in a way, but here you're definitely more removed but just much more glamorous.
I	So did watching the rehearsal help or hinder your enjoyment of the performance?
P1	Both.
	<i>"Yeah" from another participant.</i>
I	Okay.
P1	It helped in that it was fascinating to actually see the rehearsal process, because I'd never seen the rehearsal process for a ballet before.
	Hinder in that, the main thing we discussed, we could not identify the passage in the ballet that we looked at in the rehearsal.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P1	We knew it was in the second act, but I missed it.
I	It sounds like it frustrates you that you couldn't easily identify it.
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P1	No it doesn't frustrate me.
P3	We were deeply satisfied because we found the spot.
P1	Yeah.
P3	But there was that thought in the back of your mind, "Where's the spot? Where is it?"
	<i>Some participants spoke simultaneously. Some said "yes".</i>
P1	And that was the interesting thing. But apart from that I think seeing the rehearsal makes it so much more impressive when you see the final product. To see that in all of its stunning glamour and its professionalism and to have seen, basically, half a dozen people in tracksuits six weeks beforehand.
I	Thanks Participant 1. Did anyone else feel both? That it was good in one way but not so good in another way?
P3	I'd definitely go on the side of enhanced, I think. Especially because we did identify the small little passage.
	But yeah, I think it goes to the credit of the whole performance and how polished it is that you did lose yourself and you did forget about, I did forget at times, well probably a lot of the time, about the practice session. So I would say that it did enhance, you saw how much work went into it but I would forget to concentrate to look for that spot. I did want to see the spot but I would forget. So I knew I was getting lost in it all the time. So I sometimes have to bring myself back.
I	Thanks Participant 3. So who thinks they found the spot?

	<i>Participant 2, Participant 6, Participant 3 and Participant 5 raises hands.</i>
P4	Not sure.
I	Participant 1, you felt like you found it?
P1	No, it was in there somewhere.
I	Ah, okay. Well my question to the people who feel like they found it, what was that feeling like? When you recognised it, what happened in your mind?
P3	I think it was a sense of relief actually. Yeah, there was a building up. "Yes, I think it's coming. I think it's coming. I think it's coming. This is the spot." And then yeah, there was a definite relief that I hadn't missed it. I was pleased.
P5	I just found that it distracted me from the rest of it. I was just waiting for it all the time. And then when I did see it, well I think I saw it, yeah it just distracted me from the rest of it. I was just too busy focusing on that part.
P6	I thought it was exciting. "Oh look there it is. I know that bit."
P1	Even though I missed it, I actually think it enhanced the experience having seen the rehearsal. Even though I tried to see it, and I obviously couldn't, I still think it made me appreciate more the development from that very nascent rehearsal that we saw. Even though I didn't spot the actual part, that section of the ballet, be it very small, to then see what the result was, I still think seeing the rehearsal process for me certainly enhanced the experience, even though I didn't spot the little section that I saw rehearsed.
I	Did you want to say something about the moment of identification, Participant 2?
P2	Yes, I think all of the above that everyone has said. It's a mixture of satisfaction. And I did switch a bit because I was involved in the story. But coming up to that scene I kind of switched to more academic thinking. "Where is it? Where is it? I've got to tick that box because I'm going to have a question about it."
	<i>Laughter.</i>
P2	And then once I saw it I tried to put it together. I was trying to compare it to the rehearsal, thinking which parts have changed and which parts remained, and thinking about how the choreographer, Alexei, might have refined it when we were not there after rehearsal. So seeing what parts he kept in, what parts he changed. So it did remove me a little bit from the immediacy of the performance, but overall it was kind of a satisfying feeling. And I think it was more an enhancement of the enjoyment of the experience rather than a hinder.
I	Thanks Participant 2. Just to clarify, is there anybody who wasn't looking for the bit we saw in rehearsal?
P3	Couldn't help it.
	<i>Laughter. Some participants spoke simultaneously.</i>
I	Okay. So did you feel like this completed performance was familiar to you?
P5	At times. Well, most of the time. I think the part with the sun and the moon, I didn't read the blurb beforehand and that really sort of threw me a bit. I just didn't quite understand that at the time.
I	Have you seen Cinderella before?
P5	Yes.
I	Okay. Not the narrative, but did the dance, the movements, feel familiar? And it's okay to say no.
	<i>Some participants say yes.</i>
P2	Only the certain elements that they rehearsed, the pas de deux, between the two lead characters that they repeated elements of. So moments of it were familiar but the rest weren't.
P1	I'd say it was pretty much all familiar for me.
I	The movement?
P1	Yeah, the movement. But there again I'm relating the movement back to music which is Prokofiev, which is what we discussed even before we went in. It's that I've seen other Prokofiev ballets and so that music and that stylistic impression that people have for some of that music is definitely identifiable, at least it is for me. So even though I don't know the precise themes that are playing I can relate that to what I'm seeing onstage and say, "Yes, I know this." Whilst it's not all overly familiar, there are enough aspects for me to go, "Yeah, I like this. I know it. This is good."
I	Thanks, Participant 1. How does being in the theatre compare to being in the studio space?
P3	Well it's a lot more anonymous for a start. You're just in the dark, so you can smile as you please or laugh as you please. I was more relaxed about that, because you don't feel conspicuous or noticed in any way so it's a little bit more relaxing for me.
I	Relaxing. You're nodding Participant 2.
P2	Comfortable.
I	Comfortable.
P2	There was a part where they had that mirror reflecting back on the audience. It was just darkness. It was almost like they couldn't see us.
P3	Yeah, I noticed that.
P2	Yeah, that was striking. Do you remember that scene? When they were peering at their own reflections. Yeah, so it gave me a sense of confidence that they couldn't pick us out or that they couldn't see individual faces.
I	Participant 8, you've been quiet. What was the difference or similarities for you?
P8	It was completely different I think. Yeah, like the other girls were saying, it's a lot more anonymous and I know I found it quite uncomfortable in the rehearsal session, at least initially. So this is completely different.
	You know you're supposed to be here. The show is being put on for the audience.

I	Whereas the rehearsal?
P4	Was a creative part.
P8	And it was more like us in their space.
P4	Yeah, it was kind of intruding on the process, I think, in the rehearsal part. But that was a privilege too, and wonderful to see that side of it.
I	But it still felt like intruding?
	<i>"Mmm" from some participants.</i>
P2	Can I just say very quickly, I wouldn't feel that intrusive if I was watching them rehearse through a one way mirror, where they couldn't see me. That was it. If they couldn't see me.
P3	Or even the kids that were looking through the window. That's just a step more anonymous.
I	So there was something about being in the same four walls?
P2	In the space, yeah. Seeing them see us so visibly.
I	Thank you Participant 2. So after the rehearsal, some of you said that you felt intimidated. Did you feel differently during the performance? Did you feel intimidated?
	<i>"No" from some participants.</i>
I	Participant 4, you've been quiet.
P4	No, not at all because that's what they do it for, the audience. We were just part of the audience tonight and along with thousands of other people. So no, you don't feel intimidated, you just feel more privileged that you can do it.
I	Does that about sum it up?
P3	Yep.
P8	Yeah, I'd agree.
I	So it's got to do with the performance being for the audience, is that correct?
	<i>"Yes" and "Mmm" from many participants.</i>
I	And does the anonymous aspect play a big part in feel comfortable?
P3	Yeah, the fact that they really cannot see you. You know they really cannot. You know that they're doing it for you but they could not pick you out. Definitely not. So it's completely different. Definitely no intimidation when you're a part of a theatre audience in my opinion.
I	Is this something you agree on?
	<i>"No" from some participants.</i>
P1	No, because I think I was one of the ones, if not the only one, that I said that I didn't feel intimidated because even though there was that incredible immediacy, that the dancers are there only feet away, I didn't feel that sense of intimidation that a number of other people had made mention. So I don't feel any difference in regard to seeing the performance. The only difference is that I've seen the beginnings of the performance and I've seen how they all put it together and then you've got the music and you've got the sets and you've got the lighting and all of the effects that adds onto it. So the intimidation wasn't there, but it still provides a greater appreciation of what I've now just seen from having seen those first baby steps, so to speak.
	<i>"Mmm" from some participants.</i>
I	Thanks Participant 1. Did you want to add to that?
P5	Yeah, I agree. I didn't feel the rehearsal was intimidating. I felt quite comfortable being there.
I	So then my question to you is did it feel different on that comfort level between the rehearsal and the performance? Was there a difference at all?
P5	Well, yeah, there was a definite difference. The intimacy in the studio was more intimate. There was just them and us. Here we had to share that experience with everyone else.
	<i>"Mmm" from some participants.</i>
P1	Yeah, I'd agree. To see it on that almost one on one level in the rehearsal studio, I think everybody mentioned, is an incredible privilege and it was to see it. But then to see the experience with a theatre full of two and a half, three thousand other people, it doesn't diminish the experience but it's a different experience. And because I've already seen that very intimate moment, the creative process, and seeing it up close, so personal, so immediate, that then to be sitting in Row W on seat thirteen or whatever I was, it doesn't diminish it but it does change the emotion that you feel regarding the performance.
I	Can you try to explain this different emotion?
P1	It didn't diminish the experience. Having seen the rehearsal enhanced aspects of the performance. Then there's the corollary which is to have seen such a unique and very personal and intimate moment in the rehearsal studio and, even if I didn't see it, but not to have that same experience in the final performance. It wavers between yes I was incredibly privileged to share that experience in the rehearsal studio but I can't explain to two thousand, four hundred and ninety-two other people there what I've seen and to just say, "Do you guys have any idea what the rehearsal was like before you've seen this?" Because we've had that very, very privileged moment and it does change, well for me, it changed how I viewed it to the young lass sitting next to me, how she would have viewed it.
P4	Yeah, I'd agree with that. I've talked to a few people about how privileged I was to see that creative process and they've been amazed. And they've said, How do they?" And I said, "It's all in here. It's all in here." Points to brain. And I couldn't pick out the particular part that we saw rehearsed at all because we really didn't have any music. If there had been music for me, during the majority of the rehearsal, when I heard the music then I would have perhaps picked up on the thingo, because really we only had music in the last five to ten minutes. It was all done in silence from here, communicating to the other people in here, and I just can't understand how people are capable of doing that. I'm in awe of their talent.

I	Tell me more. Tell me how the experience is different when you see that little bit of rehearsal.
P5	I think one thing that made it different for me was when we were in the studio watching the rehearsal, I didn't know who the choreographer was. But since I've read up about him.
P4	Yeah, me too.
P5	Well I've been reading the paper and I've realised how fortunate we were because he's a world-renowned choreographer and I didn't realise.
P4	Lots of people just don't let them in.
P5	I just kept thinking during the rehearsal, "Who is he? Who is this guy?" I mean, I knew he was obviously a very good choreographer but I didn't know how good he was.
P4	You see we wouldn't have seen the process if Nureyev was doing it because he wouldn't let outsiders in. And they're often very personal those people. We were just so lucky, very, very lucky to have that privilege.
I	Going beyond that, how did it change this performance experience? Can you identify what's different this time compared to any other performance you've been to?
P3	I would say that seeing that practice session and then seeing it on the stage, and seeing just how very tiny a part it was, that brought into perspective how much work that they must put in.
	"Mmm" from some participants.
P3	And I don't know if you would automatically think that, if you go to just any performance, whether it would occur to you just how intense, and how many hours and hours and hours, because we sat there for one hour to see that tiny thing, and it wasn't even properly polished or perfected or finished. So I think you gain a huge perspective seeing that.
P1	The degree of appreciation I've got for the sheer effort that's obviously gone in to being able to stay on stage for that period of time, especially when we've seen in that one hour, as you said, I think it was only a three minute section of the ballet. But to see them go over and over and over and over again in that one hour period, and then you think they've got the whole rest of the ballet that they've done in exactly the same way.
P3	The costumes, the music, et cetera, et cetera and everything that they have to coordinate.
P1	And then once they get on stage they've got to hit their mark just right.
P3	Yes, and it all looks so polished.
P1	It's fluid. No one's sort of hesitating going is this something on the floor over here.
P4	I have a feeling that when we saw them, the rehearsal part that we saw, that was at the very start of the creation of that one.
I	I did request that we were there quite early in the process so that you saw the dance being created rather than a run of the finished thing. So we were much further away from the dancers in the theatre, did this affect the intimacy that you experienced?
P8	I don't think it was less intimate. I just think it was intimate in a different way, because they were very into their character and they were quite good performers and actors as dancers. So I think I was quite involved in the story and quite empathetic towards the characters. So I think it was intimate on that level between the performer and the audience.
I	Does anyone want to add something to that?
P3	I think it was less intimate in that sense that you couldn't hear them breathe and pant and all that kind of stuff, but it was brilliant to see it zoomed out, to be further back to see the whole picture because you can take so much more in. So it's just a different in that way. But less intimate I would say.
I	But a different intimacy?
P3	Yes. You actually gained more by actually seeing the whole zoomed out kind of thing from further back. You can see the overall picture with the elements coming together and the set, the whole lot.
I	Any other comments?
P2	I kind of compared it, seeing them in rehearsal, as almost like watching them get dressed and then seeing the performance tonight is seeing them put on a story, so it's a different intimacy. The rehearsal is very personally intimate especially because we got to see their personalities. They were not really in character, they were rehearsing the steps, and tonight they were playing the character so we were more involved with the story that they were trying to tell us.
I	That leads me into this next question. What was it like seeing the dancers in a more casual context and then seeing them in performance mode?
P6	I think you felt more of a connection, you know, you remember that that person was making a joke or that one smiled a lot or whatever. So yeah, I think it did give you a different kind of connection or, kind of, intimacy with the performers.
I	During the performance as well or just the rehearsal?
P6	During the performance as well. You know that was the person that smiled last time or who had a good sense of humour or whatever.
I	So you remembered the human side to them while they were performing?
P6	Yeah.
I	Did anyone else feel similar to that, or different?
P8	Yeah. I suppose, like, if you go to a different performance where you haven't seen the rehearsal and you're not familiar with the cast it's just sort of, they're just dancers. Their faces don't mean a lot to you. But with these people we've learnt to associate them with certain personalities or traits.

P3	I think I saw them more in performance mode, rather than rehearsal mode. They couldn't afford to relax or fall through the move or be casual or smile like during practice, but on stage they really have to stay in character. So I sort of see that more as performance.
I	Thanks Participant 3. I've got time for two questions. Oh good, I've only got two left. <i>Laughter.</i>
I	We've done well. Comparing the performance to the rehearsal did you feel more or less constricted in behaviour tonight?
P3	Less, definitely.
P4	Yeah, because you can clap and applaud and all that.
P3	That's right.
P4	Whereas at the rehearsal studio we were on hallowed grounds so you had to respect that you were witnessing the creative process of a very intelligent man communicating. Whereas tonight it was more relaxed because you could enjoy the whole process and be enjoying the movement and applauding the bits that you really liked.
P5	For me I think the difference was the rehearsal was about them and the performance isn't about us, but for us. Whereas the rehearsal is just for them.
I	So when it's for an audience, for you, that gives you the freedom to respond in any way you wish?
P5	At the performance. <i>"Yeah" from some participants.</i>
P3	But you're also allowed to applaud I think. I mean, in the practice you wanted to but you could not. So that release of applauding or laughing or whatever it is that you were able to do in the theatre, it's much more satisfying. Even though, frankly, you're just a sea of clapping hands. It's still something you can do to show your excitement, your appreciation. Whereas you couldn't do that in the rehearsal.
P1	I was just going to add that you were right. Not just the applause but there was certain moments where there was that little snigger from the audience because there was just one slight gesture, one slight movement that was done by one of the performers that resonated with people and they felt like they were in a comfortable space and they could do that. There was a couple of times I would have loved to do that in the rehearsal room but I just don't think it would have gone down as well. Well, we wouldn't do it because it's a completely different environment. But when you're in that performance, this is the performance, it's what they do for a living, and it's almost, I won't say expected, but those little giggles, that applause in certain sections, you can't do that in the rehearsal.
I	And why do you feel like you couldn't do that in the rehearsal?
P3	You might get some attention on yourself that you might not want on you suddenly.
P5	Because I think it's like what you said with hallowed ground, it's just not done in a rehearsal studio. It's just tradition. I don't know what it is but that's the way it is.
I	For those of you who have never been in a dance studio. Why did you feel like you couldn't applaud or giggle?
P3	Because you don't want to interrupt their process. <i>Some participants speak simultaneously.</i>
P6	You don't want to be distracting, that's it exactly.
I	And is that the general consensus? About not wanting to distract?
	<i>"Yeah" from some participants. Some participants speak simultaneously.</i>
P5	Respect for their talents.
P1	And you don't want to distract them because it is a rehearsal. <i>Some participants speak simultaneously.</i>
P1	It is the rehearsal. This is what we've got to go through and practice and go over and over again to provide what we see on the evening. When you go and see it, like we did this evening, yes you can have that release, you can have that degree of comfort because it is allowable, it is acceptable. But when you're in that process, even very, very early on, they're still finding out and developing the character and developing how they want to express themselves. You don't want to, I won't say not show appreciation, but that is a very personal and intimate thing that we got to witness.
P4	And he was creating a new ballet.
P1	Yeah, so you feel like you want to take that one step back, remove yourself. Yes I can see that you're one way mirror would have been wonderful even though I was quite happy sitting there, but it's just I'll sit there. I'm not going to draw any further attention to myself.
P3	As well that they were having a lot of non-verbal communication, so to suddenly interrupt with sound and noise would have been just breaking what seemed to be some sort of telepathy that's going on.
I	Thank you. That's really helpful. And finally, now that you've done the whole experience of rehearsal into performance, you now know how the rehearsal impacts on your performance experience. With that in mind, would you attend another rehearsal like the one we saw? <i>Some participants speak simultaneously, comments are agreeable.</i>
P1	Put me down. <i>Laughter.</i>
I	Is there anyone who does not want to go to another? <i>Silence.</i>

I	Is there anything that we haven't spoken about tonight that adds to your reasons for wanting to go again?
P1	Yeah, because it was absolutely fascinating to see a choreographer who is taking a known piece of music and is developing the expressive. It's got nothing to do with the music but all to do with the ballet. He's thinking it up here. <i>Points to brain</i> . He's got his own little ideas that we get a small microcosm of how he explains his vision to the dancers, how they interpret that vision, and how then after they go through the rehearsal process of taking in that initial information, developing how they're going to move it, how they're going to express it, and then to see what they do on the night. Yeah, I think that is absolutely fantastic. I would be back again tomorrow.
I	Is that the general gist of it?
	"Yeah" from some participants.
P1	I don't know if I articulated it very well.
P3	You're seeing two different types of magic in one. You're seeing the magic of the creation and the other, the magic of the performance. So both is fantastic.
I	And from what you've been saying they're both magic, but for different reasons.
P3	That's right.
I	That's a good way to finish.

Appendix 6: Recruitment Correspondence

TAB Facebook post



The Australian Ballet

July 24, 2013 · 🌐

Want to see a performance (and a rehearsal!) of Alexei Ratmansky's Cinderella? Queensland University of Technology PhD Candidate Anja Ali-Haapala is looking for eight people to participate in her research into the audience experience. You must be available to view one rehearsal of Cinderella, and you will receive a free ticket to a performance of the ballet. For further details on the study and how to participate, follow this link: <https://survey.qut.edu.au/f/177391/a8bb/>

Screening questionnaire for The Australian Ballet audience research

The purpose of this project is to understand the experience of audience members when they watch both a rehearsal and performance of a dancework.

[SURVEY.QUT.EDU.AU](https://survey.qut.edu.au)

Like · Comment · Share

👍 49 people like this.

↪️ 18 shares

SDC email



Dear dance enthusiast,

Sydney Dance Company is inviting you to participate in research about dance audiences. PhD Candidate, Anja Ali-Haapala, is studying the experience of dance audience members when they watch both a rehearsal and performance of a dancework.

She is currently looking for people who are 18 years or older and HAVE NOT trained in or worked with dance to watch one rehearsal, followed by a focus group, and one performance, followed by a second focus group, of the upcoming production [De Novo](#). Anja is looking for a maximum of 12 people of a range of ages who will be randomly selected from those who meet the criteria as determined by completing the preliminary questionnaire.

Participants will receive free admission to the rehearsal and performance of *De Novo*.

[Please follow the link](#) for further details on the study and how to participate. The researcher's contact details are as follows if you have further questions or would like to take part in this project.

Anja Ali-Haapala
PhD Candidate, Creative Industries Faculty
Queensland University of Technology
Phone +61 7 3138 5619
Email anja.alihaapala@student.qut.edu.au

Please note that this study has been approved by the QUT Human Research Ethics Committee (approval number 1200000647).

Many thanks for your consideration of this request,

Sydney Dance Company

sydneydancecompany.com

De Novo

1-23 March 2013
Sydney Theatre

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Appendix 7: Sample Focus Group Questions

Post-rehearsal focus group questions

1. What thoughts were going through your mind and/or feelings did you experience while we were in the rehearsal space?
2. What was watching the creative process, seeing the choreographer and dancers coming up with ideas and creating movement, like for you?
 - Did seeing snippets of the dance work being created interest or intellectually stimulate you, dissatisfy you or something else?
 - What was it like being very close to the choreographer and dancers?
3. Did you feel at ease or uncomfortable in that environment?
 - Did you feel self-conscious? If so, did your self-consciousness subside at some point?
 - Did you feel constricted in your behaviour, like you were not allowed to move, make a sound or something else? If yes, did being close to the choreographers and dancers play a part in this?
4. Did seeing this rehearsal make you want to see more?
 - If yes, what did you want to see more of; the process of making movement, the dancers practicing the sequences, more of Rafael, the performance itself or something else?

Post-performance focus group questions

1. What thoughts were going through your mind and/or feelings did you experience while we were watching the performance?
2. Did watching the rehearsal help you to enjoy the performance more?
3. Did you feel like the completed dance work was familiar to you?
4. How did you feel as an audience member during the performance compared to the rehearsal we watched in the studio?
5. After the rehearsal, some of you said that you felt and did you feel differently during the performance?
6. We were much further away from the dancers in the theatre. Did this impact your engagement with the dance work?
7. Was it interesting for you to have seen the dancers in rehearsal, and then see them on stage?
8. Comparing the performance to the rehearsal, did you feel more or less constricted in your behaviour?

Appendix 8: Interview Questions, Open Rehearsal Practitioners

1. What year did these open rehearsals begin and why?
2. At what stage in the rehearsal process do the open rehearsals occur?
3. Who does/did attend these open rehearsals? (E.g. subscribers, schools, general audiences/single ticket holders).
4. Does it cost anything to attend an open rehearsal?
5. How many audience members would/do attend the open rehearsals?
6. Describe the space where the open rehearsals are/were held.
7. Tell me about the content of the rehearsals. What happens?
8. What interaction does the audience have with the choreographer/dancers?

Appendix 9: Sample Research Proposal to Companies

Enhancing the audience's experience

Research Project – 2013

<Name of Company> and Queensland University of Technology

Researcher: Anja Ali-Haapala

PhD Candidate



Image by Camera on autopilot

Research project proposal

Dance audiences, more so than audiences of other disciplines, “increasingly want to see ‘under the hood’ of a work in progress. They not only want to better understand the artistic process, but actually be a part of the creative act itself as a way of deepening their experience” (Alan Brown and Rebecca Ratzkin. 2011. *Making Sense of Audience Engagement*. Page 68).

Through her research Anja Ali-Haapala has identified an opportunity for audiences to extend their theatrical experience and proposes a research project with <Name of Company>. The research explores how audiences can engage with dance in pre-performance situations; specifically in the rehearsal space. The proposed project has three (3) aspects:

Audience participants attend a rehearsal

- This aspect is crucial to the research project. Twelve (12) audience participants will be invited to watch one hour of a working rehearsal. This rehearsal must be in the studio space.
- The target participants are current audience members who have not worked with or trained in dance.
- Immediately following the rehearsal the audience participants will engage in a focus group that is organised and moderated by the researcher.

Audience participants attend the performance

- At a later date the audience participants will attend a performance of the same dance work that they watched in rehearsal.
- Immediately following the performance the audience participants will engage in a second focus group that is organised and moderated by the researcher.

Interview with choreographer

- It is extremely beneficial if the researcher conducts a short interview with the choreographer at a convenient time after the audience participants watch the rehearsal.

Requirements from <Name of Company>

The best process for this research to move forward is as follows:

1. Once the rehearsal and performance dates are confirmed, the researcher will provide the <Name of Company> marketing team with copy for advertising the research through Facebook and/or e-mailing lists.
2. All advertisements will link to a QUT survey webpage that captures screening data and contact information of prospective audience participants. **From this point, all recruitment processes are managed by the researcher.**
3. On the day of rehearsal the researcher will greet the audience participants and accompany them for the entirety of their <Name of Company> visit.
4. Similarly, at the performance the researcher will be the point of contact for the audience participants.

<Name of Company> research benefits

Taking part in ground-breaking research

- This research has the potential to change some of the ways we engage audiences.
- The project extends the theatrical experience for audience members.

National and international exposure

- Publications documenting this project will be included in national and international peer-reviewed journals.

Potential to inform audience development strategies

- This research focuses on the audience's experience of dance which could inform audience development strategies.

Full project report

- A document that includes audience responses, the researcher's observations and recommendations for potential future implementation of open rehearsals.

Researcher contact details

Anja Ali-Haapala

PhD Candidate


Performance Studies, Creative Industries Faculty

Queensland University of Technology

(07) 3138 5619

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Appendix 10: Ethics Approval Certificate

	University Human Research Ethics Committee (UHREC) HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE NHMRC Registered Committee Number EC00171
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Date of Issue: 19/2/15 (supersedes all previously issued certificates)

Dear Miss Anja Saara Ali-Haapala

This approval certificate serves as your written notice that the proposal has met the requirements of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* and has been approved on that basis. You are therefore authorised to commence activities as outlined in your application, subject to any specific and standard conditions detailed in this document.

Project Details

Category of Approval: Human Negligible-Low Risk
Approved From: 11/12/2012 Approved Until: 11/12/2015 (subject to annual reports)
Approval Number: 1200000647
Project Title: Rehearsal and performance: The experience of dance audiences when they watch both

Investigator Details

Chief Investigator: Miss Anja Saara Ali-Haapala

Other Staff/Students:

Investigator Name	Type	Role
Dr Caroline Heim	Internal	Supervisor
Dr Bree Hadley	Internal	Supervisor

Conditions of Approval

Specific Conditions of Approval:

None apply

Standard Conditions of Approval:

1. Conduct the project in accordance with QUT policy, the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/e72>), the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/r39>), any associated legislation, guidelines or standards;
2. Gain UHREC approval for any proposed variation (<http://www.orei.qut.edu.au/human/var/>) to the project prior to implementation;
3. Respond promptly to the requests and instructions of UHREC;
4. Immediately advise the Office of Research Ethics and Integrity (<http://www.orei.qut.edu.au/human/adv/>) if:
 - o any unforeseen development or events occur that might affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project;
 - o any complaints are made, or expressions of concern are raised, in relation to the project;
 - o the project needs to be suspended or modified because the risks to participants now outweigh the benefits;
 - o a participant can no longer be involved because the research may harm them; and
5. Report on the progress of the approved project at least annually, or at intervals determined by UHREC. The Committee may also choose to conduct a random audit of your project.

If any details within this Approval Certificate are incorrect please advise the Research Ethics Unit within 10 days of receipt of this certificate.

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