

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Developing an actor's intuition
minds beyond muses

de Wet, Micia

Award date:
2023

Awarding institution:
Coventry University

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Developing an actor's intuition: minds beyond muses



By

Micia de Wet

PhD

May 2022

Developing an actor's intuition: minds beyond muses

Micia de Wet

By

*A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the University's requirements for
the Doctor of Philosophy Research Degree*

May 2022



ABSTRACT

This PhD demonstrates that the actor's intuition is developable as an embodied cognition. This research proposes that the actor's intuition is a necessary cognitive process insofar as it can facilitate an immersion into a performance and encourage affective engagement. This research has three aims: first, the production of a conceptualisation of intuition as an embodied cognition; second, the production of an original somatic acting training method to develop the actor's intuition as it is conceptualised; and finally, an analysis of the method's efficacy. This research is situated within a Euro-American, English-speaking paradigm of knowledge.

In this PhD intuition is defined as an *energetic sensitivity*, meaning the ability to be sensitive to the affective states of oneself, another, and an environment. This definition distinguishes intuition from existing conceptions which synonymise it with tacit, expert, self-evident (i.e., *a priori*) knowledge, and instinct. Defined as an energetic sensitivity, intuition is conceptualised as an embodied cognitive process and state which is responsive to the dynamics of an environment, rather than as a wealth of established skills or knowledges that are often deemed to be 'subconscious' or part of the unconscious faculty of the mind.

This study offers a developed conceptualisation of intuition for actors, which was previously absent in acting scholarship. This research challenges the belief that the actor's intuition is an undevelopable, subconscious phenomenon by offering a somatic acting training method to develop it. By offering actors a way to develop their intuition, this research addresses particular tensions that have arisen between the mainstream acting industry and actor training processes. These tensions are the effect that limited rehearsal and training time has on the actor's *creative state of mind*, as well as the trend towards inclusivity and globalisation in professional practice.

This project employs a Practice as Research (PaR) methodology that is shaped with an integrationist model of interdisciplinarity. The study integrates the disciplines of acting training, cognitive science, and somatics. This research methodology was shaped with an integrationist model of interdisciplinarity in order to argue for and explore the possibility of the development of an actor's intuition as an embodied cognition, which is the central objective of the research. This research uses a combination of qualitative, quantitative, and arts-based methods to generate and collect data. To conduct this study, data from secondary research, semi-structured interviews, workshops, group discussions, journals, psychological scales, and behavioural tasks are used. This PhD consists of this written thesis and a somatic acting training method that was examined on the 17th of May 2022 at Coventry University. A link to a recording of one of the workshops where the method was explored can be found in Chapter Four on page 59.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There's an African proverb - *it takes a village to raise a child*. Having now gone through the process of creating a PhD, I think this proverb may be true for more than just children. Or perhaps if I consider this creative act as a birthing and nurturing process, it may be that I have come to appreciate this proverb anew. Whichever way I look at it, I am brimming with gratitude for my village.

My father, Stephan – the Engineer. You are my foundation. Thank you for nurturing my imagination and cherishing my bravery and courage. My grandmother, Karin – the great Matriarch. You are my compass. Thank you for fulfilling my home and heart from across the sea. My gratitude for what you have both afforded me is bone deep.

Mark Evans, my Director of Studies – the Sage. Your enthusiasm and wisdom are magics that I have revered since my own training began. Sharing in your knowledge was an inspiring privilege. Thank you for shaping a part of this practice with a piece of your own. Emma Meehan, my co-supervisor – the Guardian who doubled as a Prophet and Warrior. Your insights, advocacy, and encouragement are somatic lessons that continue to inform and empower me. Thank you for teaching me the lesson of ownership. Valerie van Mulukom, my co-supervisor – the Teacher and Magician. Your research on imagination has mobilised me. Thank you for your kindness, alchemy, and graphs.

To each and every participant who dedicated themselves so enthusiastically and bravely to this research – you are the quiet Pioneers of this village. You have been fundamental in shaping this study. David Shirley, Vida Midgelow, Kristine Landon-Smith, Carol Ann Holness, and Oscar Giner – you have been Gardeners for my thoughts. Thank you all for helping me find the right words. Dessie Papavarnavas –my Healer. You have seen me through this in one piece. Thank you for recognising my intuition.

Finally, to Gideon – my Companion. You have cared for this work as if it were your own. You have helped keep my hands and heart open since the beginning of this study. You are behind each of my triumphs. You have helped me up each hill when my own legs were too tired. You are the greatest gift my intuition has given me.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE ACTOR'S INTUITION: KNOWING **WHAT**

In this chapter I introduce this PhD project and provide a contextual background to the research. I will facilitate this introduction by providing a review and analysis of literature in order to contextualise this project's exploration of intuition. In this chapter I will also outline the research methodology and methods of data collection that I will use to create, explore, and facilitate this research. The central objective of this PhD is to demonstrate that the actor's intuition is developable as an **embodied cognition**.¹ I will seek to achieve this objective through the following aims:

- Conceptualise the actor's intuition as an embodied cognition.
- Create a somatic acting training method to develop the actor's intuition.
- Analyse the efficacy of the somatic acting training method.

In this PhD I use a Practice as Research (PaR) methodology (as defined by Nelson 2013) which I shape with an integrationist model of interdisciplinarity. I integrate acting training, **somatics**, and cognitive science in order to meet the aims listed above. I employ the term *interdisciplinary* to mean an integration of two or more disciplines in the service of a central objective. I have chosen to use an interdisciplinary instead of *multidisciplinary* or *transdisciplinary* approach. I use interdisciplinarity as I am interested in the harmony these three disciplines may offer this research project in relationship and the synergy this creates with a Practice as Research methodology (see section 1.3), rather than the parallel or complimentary approach multidisciplinary inspires, or the transcendent nature transdisciplinarity, where the culmination of knowledge, rather than the objective this knowledge serves, becomes the focal point (see below).

Multidisciplinary draws on knowledge from different disciplines but stays within their boundaries. Interdisciplinarity analyses, synthesizes and harmonises links between disciplines into a coordinated and coherent whole. Transdisciplinarity integrates the natural, social and health sciences in a humanities context, and transcends their traditional boundaries (Choi & Pak 2006: 351).

In this project acting training, somatics, and cognitive science work in relationship in order to meet the project's objective, which is to demonstrate that intuition is an embodied cognition that can be developed. The relationship created between these three disciplines influences the approach I have applied to all aspects of the research. On a practical level, this means that readers should anticipate that

¹ Terms that appear in bold can be found in the glossary on page 194 at the end of the thesis.

how I address the aims and objective of this thesis is with symbiosis in mind; I do not ‘borrow’ illustrative examples from cognitive science, for example, or use somatic research to enrich discussion points. Each discipline in this thesis play an integral role in the relationship which serves the research’s aims and objective.

However, working this way has come with challenges that have impacted my choices in constructing a theoretical framework. Acting training, somatics, and cognitive science are all multidiscipline disciplines. Together, they share fields of interest, such as psychology and philosophy, but there are also divergences between them, such as the inclination for somatic research to lean towards literature from psychotherapy, and cognitive science to lean away from it. The generous variety of fields available in these disciplines meant that there are several theoretical frameworks I could have constructed, for example, one that combined metaphysics and somatics, or physics and spiritual anthropology.

To keep the focus of this project in line with its central objective, I employ a theoretical framework which explores intuition as an *embodied cognition*. I am thus influenced primarily by the fields of cognitive psychology and philosophy and their natural intersections with acting training and somatics. In modest ways, I acknowledge literature outside of this cognitive framework (e.g., from psychotherapy) only when such literature serves central points of particular discussions without ideologically contradicting or compromising the foundation of my framework.

A few brief notes before I begin

On frameworks of knowledge and knowing

This research operates within a Euro-American, English-speaking paradigm of knowledge. I am thus guided by the various adaptations and translations of Konstantin Stanislavski’s approach to acting training, which is “seen as the basis for acting in mainstream European and North American theatre” (Conroy 2010: 11). Euro-American acting training partly owes its formalisation to Stanislavski’s techniques that were developed in the early 20th century (Merlin 2014: 20). Prior to this, actors were often trained through apprenticeships (Evans 2009: 37).² I refer to Stanislavski’s *approach to acting* in this thesis rather than calling it a *system*. I am cognisant that there are different regimes within his approach, for example, the *Method of Physical Actions* and *Active Analysis* (see Evans 2019: 16, 50). The classification of Stanislavski’s approach as a monolithic system is due to his legacy (Merlin 2014: 20), yet he himself stated that “[t]here is no ‘system’. There is nature” (2017: 640).

² For an in-depth discussion on the various influences on acting training’s formalisation see Mark Evans’ Chapter, *Educating efficient labour for the acting profession* (2009: 14-68).

I am also aware that there are Stanislavskian techniques which are influenced by and may have appropriated Asian practices and disciplines (see Cherkasskiĭ 2016; Hodge 2010; Barba & Savarese 2006; Zarrilli 2009). Thus, while a Stanislavskian approach to acting may dominate English-speaking, Euro-American acting training (what could be generalised as *western*), I am mindful that the various techniques in his approach may come from practices that have been *westernised*.

I should also flag up that because this thesis works within an interdisciplinary approach that draws on cognitive science, the ‘look and feel’ of this thesis is notably different to that of a traditional or conventional arts and humanities PhD. As a basic example, there are many instances when I offer no direct quotes from the cognitive science literature I reference. I have provided the source material at the end of a particular statement for readers to consult, which is the convention in cognitive science. To offer direct quotations from cognitive literature in each instance opened the risk of alienating readers by expecting them to navigate complex experiments and quantitative data sets, which could lead to complex debates that would distract from the focus of the discussion at hand. That said, I chose to offer direct quotations when and where possible. I have taken care to interpret and understand the findings of the cognitive research I present in this thesis, and received guidance to this end from my co-supervisor, Dr Valerie van Mulukom, a cognitive neuroscientist herself. Van Mulukom was instrumental in initially helping me understand the foundations of the cognitive theory I offer in this thesis.

On the notion of a self

Throughout this thesis, I will be referring to a **self**. When doing so, I am referring to an actor as a self or as having a sense of self. I acknowledge conceptions of identity that have come from new materialism, post-structuralism, and postmodernism, which argue for shifting senses of self (Alaimo & Hekman 2008) and sometimes destabilise the notion entirely (Coole & Frost 2010). Phillip Auslander (2002: 28-38) highlights the problem with conceptualising the actor as a self. Drawing from the work of Jacques Derrida, Auslander argues that selfhood is subject to a continuous process of formation, shifting the notion into the territory of dialectical materialism.³ Additionally, I also appreciate that when referring to an actor as a self, there are various conceptualisations of the actor’s body to consider that may contribute to the experience and construction of selfhood (see Evans 2009; Fischer-Lichte 2008; Conroy 2010; Reeve 2011).

³ Dialectical materialism proposes that systems have the capacity for change (i.e., are material) and thus cannot be essentialised. For an overview on dialectical materialism within postmodernism and Marxism see Terry Eagleton’s (2011/2018) *Why Marx Was Right*.

I argue that the actor experiences a sense of self due to their physical (i.e., embodied) experience of being in the world. Neuroscientists Anil Seth and Manos Tsakiris state that “[e]xperiences of having a body, and of ‘being a body’ are amongst the most basic aspects of conscious selfhood upon which higher-level properties of selfhood, such as the experience of being a distinctive individual across time, may rest” (2018: 969). Physical experiences of having and being a body are primarily experienced as **interoceptions**. Cognitive philosopher Giovanna Colombetti notes that interoceptions are “ways of **feeling** the world and of perceiving its affective qualities through how the body is experienced” (2018: 578). Thus, I appreciate that conceptually, what constitutes the actor as a self may be a complex scholarly debate. However, I argue that an actor experiences a sense of selfhood and can create a sense of self because they have a body that operates *in* space-time, regardless of how that body is formed and informed *through* space-time (see also Monti, Porciello, Panasiti & Aglioti 2021: 1).

On the COVID-19 pandemic

I began this research in September 2019. In March 2020, the COVID-19 virus caused a global pandemic. A particular symptom of this pandemic was isolation. Most of my research was therefore done in various mediums of remoteness, as many PhDs from this period will probably document. While I acknowledge the influences of this pandemic on my research where necessary, I do not discuss it further. At the time of writing, I live amidst COVID-19’s infections in social, economic, political, and emotional spheres of life. Because of this, I am determined to provide a project that, although it had to accommodate this virus, does not intend to become infected by it.

1.1. SCRATCHING AN ITCH: WHAT IS INTUITION?

In this research, I define intuition to be an **energetic sensitivity**. In a 2014 psychophysics article titled *Electrophysiology of intuition*, researchers in the field of psychophysiology Rollin McCraty and Mike Atkinson proposed that intuition could be an energetic sensitivity (p. 17) but did not elaborate on this definition further. In this study, I have identified an opportunity to develop this definition of intuition by merging it with Michael Chekhov’s understanding of the *actor’s will* (1985: 147), his notion of *atmosphere* (ibid.: 32), and Rudolf Steiner’s notion of a *governing will* (1911/2006). By defining intuition as an energetic sensitivity and conceptualising it as an embodied cognition in this thesis, I offer an account of intuition as a cognitive process that is affectively based and driven, and thus distinguish it from existing conceptions that synonymise it with tacit or expert knowledge, instinct, or as an unconscious or subconscious irrational mentality.

Intuition has spiritual, scientific, and cultural conceptual origins that are traceable to early Chinese and Greek civilisations (Li 2014: 28). Somatic practitioner Hillel Braude classifies intuition as an eidetic

science – a nebulous science which exists between the subtle and manifest, or the tacit which becomes explicit (2015: 126). A result of its nebulousness is that research tends to conceptualise what intuition is not, “which can prevent it from having an...existing identity that could provide understanding of what it is” (Peña 2019: 96). Intuition has thus become conceptually vulnerable (Volz & von Cramon 2006: 2077). In scientific research, intuition is repudiated in favour of rational intellect (see Lieberman 2000; Epstein 2010), while in practices such as Buddhism and Taoism, intuition is regarded as the highest form of wisdom (Li 2014: 30-1). Yet despite its conceptual vulnerability, intuition remains a phenomenon of interest in science (Wan, Takeno, Asamizuya, et al. 2012; Isenman 2018) and the arts (Duchamp 1957; Gilbert 2016).

Within acting discourse, I found echoes of my own understanding of intuition within notions such as instinct (Zarrilli 2009), **presence** (Rodenburg 2008), “Aliveness” (Shevstova 2004: 38), impulses (Adrian 2008; Yakim & Broadbent 1990), spiritual sensing (Grotowski 1968/2002) and inspiration (Stanislavski 2017). According to Stanislavski, intuition is the core of the actor’s *creative state of mind* (2001: 68). The creative state of mind is a “special condition [wherein] bolts of artistic inspiration for the actor abide no logical plan or timing...” (Gordon 2010: 8). According to Dick McCaw, Stanislavski suggested that intuition stems from “outside the mind [as] the gift of the Muses...in the heart...[or]...in the brain” (2020: 84). Stanislavski stated that actors should “hand the creative process over to intuition and feeling” (2008: 110). Actor and actor trainer Michael Chekhov, a former student of Stanislavski’s, “believed, above all, in the power of the actor’s ingenuity and intuition, and his whole endeavour was about finding ways to harness and release it” (Rushe 2019: 3-4).

1.1.1. Defining the actor’s intuition as an energetic sensitivity

As an actor, I often felt what I would call my intuition guiding me during performances and rehearsals. In my research however, I could not gain clarity as to what intuition is defined as, despite there being a reverence for it. Stanislavski’s publications frequently mention intuition (2017; 2008; 2001), but I could not find an independent articulation of the notion or experience itself. Stanislavski recalls seeing actors perform while in an intuitive state, mentioning that it was these performances that were particularly special. He exemplifies actors who, before the formalisation of acting training, “created themselves by intuition” (2001: 93). Michael Chekhov wrote of a state that mirrors how I experienced my intuition, but he called it inspiration – “everything else is forgotten – the method, technique, the part, the author, the audience...The miracle happens...” (1985: 55).

During a lecture delivered in 1911, the philosopher Rudolf Steiner stated that intuition is a state that requires an extraordinary application of one’s **consciousness** – “it remains for the consciousness that

transcends ordinary consciousness to find something that is a higher event. It is the point at which the world enters and plays a part in consciousness” (Steiner 1911/2006).

We would need to have before us a process such as one that takes place in our own body without penetrating consciousness – a process equally external, yet connected with consciousness in such a way that we would be aware of it [...] Now that is the process that takes place in the case of intuition” (Steiner 1911/2006).

Analysing Steiner’s explanation of intuition, I suggest that he proposes it to be a way of knowing that does not necessarily require a conscious awareness of it (as a way of knowing) to be aware of the knowledge it produces. Such an understanding touches on intuition’s nebulous nature I mentioned at the beginning of this section. In Chapter Two, I will discuss this heightened consciousness Steiner refers to as an affective state that relies on heightened **perception** facilitated through attention, **affect**, and **attunement** (see section 2.2.), as well as this “process” that this heightened consciousness needs, which I argue is driven by **meta-awareness** and **absorption** (see section 2.3.).

In the same lecture I quote above, Steiner proceeds to elaborate on what he calls intuition’s *governing will*. He describes intuition’s governing will as a conscious will which directs and stimulates intuitive action. According to Steiner, a governing will drives an intuiter to know what to do, based on the feelings that would be roused in them from dreams, thoughts, and visualisations. I interpret Steiner’s concept of a governing will to be a driving feeling (i.e., affective state) which may also be recognised as the intuitive feeling of “knowing without knowing how one knows” (Nyatanga & de Vocht 2008: 492; see chapter two section 2.2. for more on governing will specifically).

Influenced by Steiner (see Gordon 1985: 14), Chekhov suggests that the will of an actor is an energetic force that guides them – “The will is something that does not need our muscles at all [...] our will is not in us but around us” (1985: 147). The sense that the actor’s will is something that is *around* them correlates with his notion of atmosphere. Chekhov writes of atmosphere as both a literal and metaphoric space that is co-created by the actor and environment, stating that “atmosphere is the best director” (ibid.: 32).⁴ Interestingly, Chekhov suggested that atmosphere works in a direct relationship with one’s intuition (ibid.: 28, 32). Though it should be noted that in this instance, he left intuition undefined.

In interpreting Chekhov and Steiner’s overlapping ideas which I have just discussed, I would suggest that Chekhov may have encouraged actors to become sensitive to the atmosphere of a performance for their governing will to come into action, which correlates with how Steiner saw intuition, as a way of

⁴ A sentiment on environments which is echoed in ecological enactivism (see Hardcastle 2017).

knowing that is reliant on both a self and an environment (see the quoted extract at the top of the previous page).

I propose that the actor's intuition is an energetic sensitivity which is fostered between them and their environment in a process of *attunement* that is then able to produce a governing will. I employ Shigenori Nagatomo's attunement theory to ground this proposition. Nagatomo, a professor of religious and comparative philosophy, defines attunement as the mutually influential process of harmonisation between an agent and their environment that creates a relationship. "The term, attunement, is a two-place predicate; it indicates a relation of two entities or two groups of entities.... persons and their ambiance. They are then the structural components of attunement" (Nagatomo 1992: 195). Nagatomo refers to an environment as *ambiance* in order to encapsulate not just the physical space, but all that fills it – both animate and inanimate. Within the process of attunement, he proposes that an individual's **energy** works through sensorial and attentional processes that are transmitted and influenced by both a self and an environment in a process he calls "fruitation".

Fruitation, epistemologically speaking, is a fruitation of somatic knowing in the sense that both the personal body and the living ambiance come to reach a common quality (or qualities) that are made explicit through the experiential momentum of coming, by means of the emanation of invisible psychophysical energies... which are issued both from the personal body and an entity in the living ambiance. In this respect, the momentum of coming may be conceived to be as temporally enabling that which is concealed to announce itself (Nagatomo 1992: 198).

What Nagatomo refers to as *coming* here in the extract above is defined by him as "an orientation 'towards' in the sense that the personal body and the ambiance engage each other" (ibid.), thus creating a relationship between the two. The relationship attunement facilitates is brought into awareness through what Nagatomo calls *somatic knowing* (ibid.: 201, emphasis added), what I would call embodied cognition – knowledge generated through and by the **soma** because of the dynamic coupling between them and their environment. Summarising then, intuition (as an energetic sensitivity) unfolds between an actor and their environment through and because of attunement.

As an energetic sensitivity, I propose that intuition is both responsive to and accessible through an attunement between the actor and their environment. I suggest that it is this dynamic process that enables actors to respond intuitively. Put another way: classifying intuition as an energetic sensitivity may be understood as understanding the actor's energy to be attuned to the performance environment,

and in this process of attunement, becoming aware of and sensitive to, knowings and actions that are intuitive (see chapter two section 2.2.2. for more).⁵

1.1.2. Framing intuition as an energetic sensitivity within Radically Enactive Cognition

I frame this definition of intuition within **Radically Enactive Cognition** (Hutto & Myin 2012). Using this framework of **cognition**, I account for both the actor and the environment as mutually influential in experiencing and developing intuition. Cognitive research that holds room for **embodiment** presently has four chief branches, collectively referred to as *4E cognition* (see Newen, de Bruin & Gallagher 2018; Kemp & McConachie 2018; Murphy 2019). The four Es refer to *enactive*, *embodied*, *embedded*, and *extended* cognition, each of which have their own sub-branches which support various conceptions of and uses for the body, mind, brain, and environment (Gallagher 2018: 354).

In this research I employ *enactive* cognition as it is defined within the discourse of embodied cognition.⁶ **Enactivism** is characterised by an interplay between biology, phenomenology, and culture, which collectively accounts for cognition within an embodied understanding thereof (Cuffari, Di Paolo, De Jaegher 2015: 1093). “The enactive approach maintains that [cognitive] science and phenomenological investigations of human experience need to be pursued in a complementary and mutually informing way” (Thompson 2007: 14). Enactivism is often accredited to Francisco Varela, Evan Thompson and Eleanor Rosch’s seminal publication, *The Embodied Mind* (1991/2016). Enactivists propose that cognition is developed by and for action. “Enactivist versions of [cognition] emphasise the idea that perception is for action, and that action-orientation shapes most cognitive processes. Most enactivists call for a radical change in the way we think about the mind and brain...” (Gallagher 2017: 5; see also Caiani 2018: 1). In enactivism, “the traditional boundaries between perception, **emotion**, and action [is] abandoned, and a more embodied and situated way of conceiving cognition [is] considered” (Caiani 2018: 2).

Within acting and related somatic discourse, I found that the sub-frameworks of *sensorimotor* and *autopoietic* enactivism are frequently cited (see Reeve 2021; Kemp & McConachie 2018; Fraleigh 2015; Shaughnessy 2014). As an example, Moshé Feldenkrais’s somatic techniques are accredited to enactivism (Kampe 2015: 204). Because the body has the potential for self-recreation (Thompson 2007: 44), autopoietic enactivism proposes that cognition is autopoietic (i.e., regenerative). An example of a

⁵ I recognise that Tadashi Suzuki’s training teaches actors “to become conscious of the many layers of sensitivity within his [or her or their] own body” (1986: 12). However, Suzuki’s approach to acting training is embedded within the practice of Japanese Noh theatre, whereas this research and the method I develop are focused on developing and exploring intuition in Euro-American mainstream contexts.

⁶ For an overview of the other three E’s see *The Oxford Handbook of 4E Cognition* (Newen, de Bruin & Gallagher 2018).

body's ability to self-create would be the skin's ability to regenerate.⁷ Sensorimotor enactivism on the other hand "hypothesises that perceptual access to objects depends on the mastery of sensorimotor contingencies, that is, on the know-how of the regular ways in which changes in **sensations** depend on changes in movements" (Froese, Zapata-Fonseca, Leenan & Fossin 2020: 1). Put simply: sensorimotor enactivists propose that cognition is a process that is dependent on the body's skeletal-muscular system. In sensorimotor enactivism, **tacit knowledges** would be examples of cognition.⁸ In short, autopoietic enactivism proposes that cognition comes from a neurobiological level, whereas sensorimotor enactivism proposes that the skeletal-muscular system creates cognition.

In both these accounts of enactivism, **proprioception** and proprioceptive awareness are recognised as the most efficient ways to engage with and influence cognition and cognitive processes. Both autopoietic and sensorimotor enactivism explore cognition as a process that transpires *inside* the body. Proprioception thus offers a way to engage with internal processes through external stimulation, primarily through movement (see for examples Feldenkrais 2010; Merlin 2014; Adrian 2008; Potter et al. 2016). I would argue that most acting training approaches that incorporate **somatic practices** place a clear emphasis on proprioception and proprioceptive awareness. For example, Feldenkrais's somatic system, which is often used in acting training, works on this principle: awareness *through* movement. However, if one is to support a more orthodox enactivist stance, then proprioception alone cannot account for the entire picture of cognition.

The focus on either the skeletal-muscular structure as the 'spine' of cognition within sensorimotor accounts, or the biological intelligence of human cells within autopoietic accounts, perpetuates an outside/inside binary of cognition, even if inadvertently so. Cognitive scientists and philosophers Daniel Hutto and Erik Myin (2012) argue that "Sensorimotor enactivism is surely committed to intellectualism through its attachment to the idea that perceptual experience is inherently contentful" (p.30). Meaning: they argue that sensorimotor enactivism still insinuates that cognition is a brain-bound mental process that requires an idea of the outside world to exist as content inside the body. Their issue with autopoietic enactivism is that its definitions of "'cognition,' 'interpretation,' 'sense-making,' 'understanding,' and even 'emoting' in describing the responses of simple living systems is misplaced and misleading" (p.35). In this confusion, Hutto and Myin suggest that autopoiesis ends up perpetuating conceptions of content too, as experiences are "interpreted" (p.35-6), thus becoming contentful in becoming mental events.

⁷ For a more detailed understanding of autopoiesis and enactivism see Evan Thompson's chapter *Autopoiesis: The Organisation of the Living* (2007: 91-127).

⁸ See chapter two section 2.2.2 for more on tacit knowledge and intuition.

As such, sensorimotor and autopoietic enactivism end up perpetuating ideas which are fundamental to **computational cognition**. In computational cognition (or *classic cognition*), cognition is deemed to be reliant on an internal model of the world created through sensory inference (inferred sensory data to the brain) and mental representation (data that is represented in and by the brain) (ibid.: 30).⁹ Representation and inference are the basis of the computational framework of cognition. Computational cognition remains the dominant narrative of cognition and opposes embodied cognition (Hutto & Myin 2018: 96).

I use **radically enactive cognition** (REC) as theorised by Daniel Hutto and Eric Myin (2012; 2017) as a framework to conceptualise intuition in this research (see chapter two). Radical enactivists argue that an individual's cognition is free of both inference and representationalism (Hutto & Myin 2012: 82), meaning “[a]ll genuine presentation is by no means a merely passive reproduction of the world; rather, it is a new relationship to the world into which the human being places [themselves]” (Cassirer 2013: 328). Put another way: REC conceives of cognition as a process that is reliant on an agent being in the world, rather than a process that transpires inside an organ or organism *per se*. REC proposes that cognition is equally dependent on feeling, thinking, sensing, and experiencing, but that none of these processes are made by any one part of a body.

According to Hutto and Myin, REC is distinct from other frameworks of cognition because it “asks us to rethink – root and branch – old school conceptions of cognition, demanding that we revise our views of the mind’s core work and how it gets done” (2018: 96). For example, REC departs from *extended cognition* (Clark & Chalmers 1998), which argues that the mind can extend beyond the body “based on the active role of the environment in driving cognitive processes” in instances of skill application (ibid. 7). REC “conceives as the mind as extensive, not merely as sometimes extended” (Hutto & Myin 2012: 137). Extended cognition continues to perpetuate computational perspectives of the brain (ibid, 7). For anyone adopting an orthodox position of embodied cognition, this would be inoperative (see also Kiverstein & Rietveld 2018).

REC “seek[s] to explain skilled performance in terms of embodied activity that involves *dynamic processes* that span brain, body, and environment” (Hutto & Myin 2018: 98, my emphasis). Interestingly, I note that as a lived experience, intuition may be a dynamic process itself. In the article *The embodied intersubjective space* (2019), somatic psychotherapist Jasmine Peña describes the embodied nature of intuition, highlighting the particular link between awareness and embodiment in the psychophysical processes that work dynamically with and for intuition. Having researched dynamic processes specifically, Daniel Stern notes that they exist between articulations; or rather, no articulation

⁹ For a detailed account of how sensorimotor and autopoietic enactivism still inadvertently supports computational cognition, refer to Hutto & Myin’s 2012 Chapter, *Enactivisms Less Radical*, pp. 23-38.

seems to satisfyingly capture their nature (2010: 17). However, I propose that by exploring intuition as a lived experience within a REC framework, a more nuanced and grounded understanding of intuition as a dynamic experience may be found.

1.2. DEVELOPING INTUITION: WHAT ARE THE POSSIBILITIES?

Alongside the conceptual issues that I discovered whilst researching intuition, I also found difficulties in consistently engaging with it as a dynamic, lived experience. I found that when I tried to call on it whilst acting, it felt like a faulty network reception. Either I was able to sustain my intuition without any intervention, or it would come and go of its own accord. I did not know of a technique to reliably engage my intuition, and on further investigation, I did not find a technique in acting practices to this end. Stanislavski argued that as a subconscious process, intuition is undevelopable (2017: 351). He stated that moments of intuition “were rare, accidental, and they did not last” (2001: 171). He warned actors that to consciously will intuition into action would be futile (2001: 345; 2017: 351). However, I remained unsatisfied. Since intuition had not yet benefited from a well-developed conceptualisation, I was unconvinced that it could be written off as being undevelopable. Moreover, I wanted to understand why my intuition was beyond my own control.

1.2.1. Acting training and the mainstream industry: what intuition could facilitate

In instances when I performed with my intuition leading me, it was as though my feelings were automatically engaged and I would be able to achieve my emotional cues effortlessly. My state of mind felt focused and heightened. I would be in tune with the performance and could sensitively engage with its dynamics. My intuition seemed to be independent of the length of a rehearsal process, proving useful in instances when I had little time between the rehearsal period and an opening night or shoot. There was a clear difference between what I felt whilst acting intuitively and in performances when I needed to rely on techniques from my training to guide me. When relying on techniques, I was hyperaware that I was an actor ‘performing a role’, as opposed to being immersed in a performance when working intuitively.¹⁰ As I was working as an actor in the mainstream industry in South Africa, I was eager to be able to consistently produce the quality of performances my intuition afforded me.¹¹

¹⁰ I discuss this point specifically in chapter two section 2.3.2.

¹¹ I define the mainstream industry to be comprised of paying jobs that are accessible to the public, regardless of their genre, style, or box-office success. In short, I use the term mainstream to denote acting that “is predominantly seen as work – serious, purposeful, structured, and ‘owned’” (Evans 2019: 15). Examples of these jobs globally would be television series and films that are distributed by streaming services like *Netflix* and *Apple TV*; films produced by studios such as *Universal*, *Paramount*, and *A24*; shows on London’s West End circuit; plays that make it to Broadway and Off-Broadway in New York. In a South African context, this would translate to performing at (for example) the *State Theatre*, *Market Theatre*, *Baxter Theatre*, and *Artscape*; commissioned performances at the *South African National Arts Festival*; television programs produced by *Mnet* and the South African Broadcasting Commission (SABC), and the streaming service *Showmax*.

Professional actors today are expected to be adaptable commodities and have the capacity for high volumes of work should they hope to remain employable in the mainstream industry (see Evans 2019: 8; Gillett 2007: 11). In addition to these demands, I find that actors are also expected to deliver consistently ‘good’ performances. An actor’s ability to authentically inhabit the emotions they are playing is arguably a barometer for ‘good’ acting in the mainstream industry. Joseph Roach acknowledges that “the physical experience of an emotion is an essential part of the creative activity of every artist” (1993: 120). Bella Merlin states that “you can’t act in a truly vibrant manner without your emotions being drafted into your...work at some level or another” (2014: 213). Vladimir Mirodan recognises that actors will actively seek ways to ensure that they can achieve this emotional authenticity and then to be able to repeat it every time they are on stage or set (2018: 100). Thus, I would argue that while acting training regimes are usually comprised of various techniques, the most sought-after ones in the mainstream may be those which enable actors to achieve emotional authenticity (see also Gordon 1985: 17).¹²

There are various courses available for actors to develop their skills in the hopes of being able to meet industry demands. Universities, conservatories, short-courses, colleges, workshops, studios, and informal collectives offer qualifications and training experiences for student, amateur, and professional actors. Many of these courses endorse Stanislavski’s approach to training, which has morphed into numerous regimes. Examples of these regimes would be Bella Merlin’s version of *Active Analysis* (2001/2014), John Gillett’s *Acting on Impulse* (2007), Jeremy Whelan’s *Instant Acting* (1994), Stella Adler (2001) and Lee Strasburg’s (1965; 1987) Americanisation of the approach, and the techniques of Sanford Meisner (Meisner & Longwell 1987). Practitioners who have credited Stanislavski’s influence in their own branches of training include Michael Chekhov (1953; 1985), Jerzy Grotowski (1968/2002), Phillip Zarrilli (2009), and Jeungson Yoo (2018).

There are also practitioners who have departed from Stanislavski’s approach. Examples of such practitioners would be Phillippe Gaulier (Evans 2019; Landon-Smith 2020; Murray 2010), Jacques Copeau and Susan Bing (Evans 2006), Jacques Lecoq (Murray 2003; Murphy 2019), Monika Pagneux (Murray 2010; Golden 2017), Tadashi Suzuki (1986), Susan Bloch (2017), Anthony Meindl (1997/2022), and Ann Bogart and Tina Landau (2005).¹³ Furthermore, I acknowledge that there are training regimes which have integrated and developed from wider somatic practices, such as Christina Kapadocha’s *Somatic Acting Process*[®] (2017; 2021); Barbara Adrian’s Laban-based approach (2008); and Nicole Potter’s movement-based system for actors (Potter, Adrian & Fleischer 2016).

¹² The necessity for actors to genuinely feel emotions whilst performing has been part of a long-standing debate in acting discourse which “concerned the idea of what at various stages had been termed ‘truthful’ acting, ‘authentic emotion’ and ‘natural behaviour’ on the stage” (Merlin 2014: 23). See Joseph Roach (1993: 57) for an account of this debate.

¹³ Bogart and Landau accredit their *Viewpoint System* to Mary Overlie’s viewpoints (2005: xi).

Yet despite this array of acting training approaches, Stanislavski's continues to be favoured in mainstream contexts (see Merlin 2016; Pitches & Aquilina 2020; Landon-Smith 2020).¹⁴ I found that the techniques within Stanislavski's approach that offer actors a way to engage their feelings and emotions bind emotion to action. In other words, action and emotion are what the actor plays (Merlin 2014: 181). Chekhov provokes emotion through empathetic connections stimulated by imagination, which then aim to stimulate action (Rushe 2019: 210). This builds on Stanislavski's earlier psychologically based techniques to generating emotion. In Stanislavski's *Method of Physical Actions*, the effort and exertion of the action intends to stimulate the emotion (Evans 2019: 49).¹⁵ In *Active Analysis*, breath stimulates emotion so that an actor does not "have to squeeze [their] emotions like a tube of toothpaste" (Merlin 2014: 59). *Alba Emoting* (Bloch 2017) works on the same principle.¹⁶ Lee Strasberg's *Method Acting* uses affective memory (building on Stanislavski's sensory recall) to generate emotion that intends to motivate action (Gordon 2010: 43-44).

However, Stanislavski's approach to acting is being critically re-examined as the acting industry diversifies and globalises (see Landon-Smith 2020; Camilleri 2019; Evans 2019; Lockett & Shaffer 2016; Blau 2011). By diversifying and globalising, I mean that casts for both film and theatre projects are, albeit slowly, becoming more racially diverse, gender inclusive, culturally varied, and accessible to disabled and neurodivergent performers than they were in previous decades. As contemporary examples, I consider the casts of the 2022 stage production of *Cyrano de Bergerac* in London (dir. Jamie Lloyd); the body of work produced over the last ten years by the black British film-maker Steven McQueen; and the series and films produced by the female-led American media company *Hello Sunshine* (e.g. *From Scratch* in 2022 and *Little Fires Everywhere* in 2020).

Stanislavski's techniques are criticised for promoting Eurocentrism as universalism. Such criticism questions how acting training intends to champion inclusivity, for example, if its dominant approach effaces diversity. When I consider that the mainstream industry is embracing multicultural and multiracial casts and practices, then I question if Stanislavski's approach is the most suitable one for actors facing a socially progressive industry. Ben Spatz states that "the goals of embodied technique continually change along with changes in society" (2015: 123). Yet I am unconvinced that the modern adaptations of Stanislavski's approach are adequately preparing actors for the demands of today's

¹⁴ It is beyond the scope of this research to debate why other approaches are not as popular as Stanislavski's.

¹⁵ See sections 1.1.2. and 1.2.2. for further discussions on emotions, affects, and movement.

¹⁶ *Alba emoting* proposes to be an alternative to Stanislavski's approach. Yet I find Bloch's desire to depart from Stanislavski is rooted in wanting to be distanced from affective and sensory recall specifically. There is extensive research which explains how the recall technique as it is commonly employed today is actually bound to Strasberg's *Method Acting* (see for example Gordon 2010; Merlin 2014; Evans 2019).

mainstream industry, which today also often requires actors to be multi-modal storytellers, using their talents in voicework, on stage, and on screen.

Stanislavski's approach requires actors to dedicate years of practice to mastering them and were primarily designed to work in the context of theatre performance (Merlin 2001: 251; Zarrilli 2009: 54; Stanislavski 2017: 640). In my understanding, mastery implies that the technique has become embodied knowledge, enabling the actor to implement the technique without consciously thinking about what they are doing. In this sense, mastery can be likened to tacit knowledge as Michael Polanyi may have employed it to mean (1966) – as knowledge that is earned through a process of doing and refining.

Yet not all courses that offer acting training affords actors the resources for mastery. For example, the current structure of conservatoires in the United Kingdom (UK) is set up to expose students to several approaches of acting during their education (Evans 2019: 21). This strategy is also adopted by South African universities and technical colleges. This strategy means that students can expect to spend a few consecutive weeks or months (at most) on a single regime. If I consider that Stanislavski's approach can take years to master, then the current structure of training arguably limits the potential of his approach working as it was designed to. Moreover, if a two-to-four-year course is unable to facilitate the necessary dedication to this approach to acting, then I am less convinced of the impact short courses and workshops may have in enabling actors to master this approach.¹⁷

I do, however, concede that exposing actors to a variety of systems may be beneficial to establish a rapport with one that feels most suited. McCaw states that an “acting method is judged according to whether it works for a particular actor” (2020: 5). Empowering actors with various approaches to acting could encourage them to later pursue further training independently. Nevertheless, the efficacy of Stanislavski's techniques could become a conflicting dilemma if not enough time can be dedicated to them to begin with. Furthermore, my experience has taught me that few actors have the privilege and resources to continue studying intensively after completing their initial training.

Along with a shortage of time, I also found that there are different states of mind I experienced between rehearsals and performance that Stanislavskian training did not adequately prepare me for. Maria Eugenia Panero, who has previously worked as an actor and now researches the psychology of acting, recognises that actors are required to be in a sustained cognitive state during performances (2019: 9). In her article, she makes particular reference to the *flow* state, as theorised by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

¹⁷ The British company *Mono Box* advertises intensive acting courses over two and four days (The Mono Box 2021). In SA, the *South African Guild of Actors* (SAGA) advertises similar workshops (SAGA 2021). From North America, the global *New York Film Academy* franchise offers acting courses that run between one and 15 weeks (New York Film Academy 2021). To my knowledge, all these institutions predominantly endorse the Stanislavskian approach in workshops focused on acting training and development.

in 1990. I will discuss flow specifically in chapter two and its relationship to intuition as I conceptualise it. At present, the discussion remains focused on the difference between cognitive states and processes, and the roles they play in rehearsing and performing.

The difference between a cognitive process and state is that processes transpire over time (i.e., thinking or feeling), whereas a cognitive state is a sustained mode of operation in a specific period of time (i.e., *a state of mind*) (Steward 2016: 76; Hutto & Myin 2018: 97). Rehearsal processes in today's mainstream industry last between a few weeks and a month. Working on a television series, it is common to be given a script the day before the shoot and an hour on set to plot blocking. In reviewing Stanislavski's own processes, I found that rehearsals would last for several months at a time (Stanislavski 2017: 197; Merlin 2014: 244; Benedetti 1998: 9).

I argue that the rehearsal process Stanislavski was accustomed to would have invariably influenced how his techniques are designed. Moreover, I argue that Stanislavski's approach to training is designed to address the actors' state of mind in rehearsals, not their state of mind in performances (i.e., the creative state of mind), which can also differ between stage and screen. Collectively, training and rehearsals work together to equip actors with confidence to perform, yet as Spatz recognises, acting often requires actors to go beyond what was acquired through training, stating that "practice is always more than the technique that structures it" (2015: 120; see also Alfreds 2007: 141). Frank Camilleri writes that training is about *formation*, and performance is about *transformation* (2019: 6). Stanislavski encouraged the actor's creative state of mind through what he called "psychotechniques", which are designed to bring the actor to a state where "the creative subconscious can burgeon" (Stanislavski 2017: 342). As Stanislavski considered intuition and the creative state of mind to be inaccessible (see page 10), then I can understand why his psychotechniques would circumvent the creative state of mind (i.e., a creative cognitive state).

I propose that if the actor's intuition can be developed, it may be a solution to tensions and challenges between how the mainstream industry works and how training currently functions. As I stated earlier, there was a clear difference in my state of mind when I acted with my intuition guiding me; my feelings were easily accessible and my intuition appeared to be independent of the rehearsal period. Feelings, movements, pace, rhythm, thought, and relationships appeared to synchronise without a stimulus when I acted intuitively, which made acting intuitively different from the techniques I mentioned earlier that aim to elicit emotions. I propose that if developable, intuition may become a way for the actor to work directly within or with what Stanislavski called the creative state of mind and assist in addressing the gaps I perceive between training, performance, and the developing mainstream industry.

To better understand intuition's link between my state of mind and the feelings it effortlessly arouses in performances, I began investigating cognitive research in relation to acting training. In conducting this research, I found that the techniques available to actors to elicit their emotions were designed with an inherent belief that they - like intuition - cannot be wilfully accessed (see Merlin 2014: 61; Stanislavski 2017: 351). Yet after reviewing recent research, I suggest that these techniques, as well as what actors are taught regarding their emotions and feelings (what I will now refer to as an affect), are facing revisions that may impact how intuition is understood and utilised.

1.2.2. What it could mean to feel: foregrounding the relationship between intuition and affect

My intuition seemed to root me into performances in a visceral way. Whilst acting intuitively, my feelings were more than **emotions**. I experienced them as heightened sensations that were entwined with my thoughts, movements, and state of mind. I reasoned that if how I was experiencing intuition was a shared phenomenon amongst other actors, then it may be possible - if it could be developed – for it to become an aid in addressing the dissonances I found between training, rehearsing, and performing.

As aforementioned, acting discourse currently supports the belief that emotion and feeling are bound together and are subconscious, thus requiring an actor to stimulate or simulate them through action and/or breath. Acting discourse currently supports Antonio Damasio's science of emotions (see Kemp & McConachie 2018; Reese 2015; McCaw 2020; Lutterbie 2019). Damasio suggests that there are "seven biologically basic emotions that developed as evolutionary adaptations: fear, anger, happiness, sadness, disgust, surprise and contempt" (Kemp & McConachie 2018: 349). Damasio's theory of emotion is an extension of Silvan Tomkins, Paul Ekman, and Carroll Izard's collective experiments in the 1960s.¹⁸ Their experiments suggested that emotions are detectable as physical responses, which function like a fingerprint. Their experiments built on the James-Lange theory, which proposes that action stimulates affects, which then stimulates emotion (Barrett 2017: 31). Tomkins "argued that affect implied the biological component of human emotions that are genetically transmitted" (Kemp & McConachie 2018: 343).

However, like Stanislavski's acting techniques, Damasio's theory of emotion is criticized for its universalisations (Colombetti 2018: 579-80). Moreover, Tomkins, Izard, and Ekman's experiments have recently been debunked. Research conducted by Lisa Feldman Barrett and her collaborators demonstrated that the experiments on which Damasio's theory of emotions is based could not be replicated, and that the measures by which the experiments were originally run were manipulated by

¹⁸ The experiments conducted by Ekman, Tomkins, and Izard from the 1960s onwards are interconnected, meaning that the methods they used to generate their data was shared, perpetuating the same model and theory of emotion and affect (see also Colombetti 2014: 26-7).

priming participants through a series of forced choice questions (2017: 45). Chapter three in Barrett's 2017 book *How Emotions are Made*, titled *The Myth of Universal Emotions* (pp. 42-55), explains the issues pertaining to the studies conducted and methods used by Tomkins, Izzard, and Ekman in full. Briefly: the model on which the theory of basic emotions (i.e., universal emotions) is based, manipulated datasets in order to get them to reflect findings which supported their hypothesis. Ekman et. al. findings ultimately worked within a Northern American paradigm of culture, but did not demonstrate any significant results outside of this collective.

According to Barrett's research, emotions are neither universal, nor do they have a 'fingerprint' (2017: 2). Instead, she proposes that emotions are psychological constructs which are unique to the cultures they are experienced in (ibid), and that affects are your interoceptions, emotions, and sensations. For Barrett, "emotions are not your reactions to the world; they are your constructions of your world" (2017: 104), whereas affect "is not emotion; your [body] produces affect all the time, whether you're emotional or not and whether you notice it or not" (2020: 105).¹⁹ Affects can transpire because of both biological reasons and/or social circumstances. Affect influences and co-creates mood, reasoning, well-being, and cognition (Colombetti 2018: 575; Gallagher 2018: 363). Cognition relies on affect as a central component of a dynamic experience of "sense-making" (Colombetti 2018: 574). According to Shaun Gallagher, affects are an example of how cognition is embodied (2018: 363). Barrett's research on emotion and affect has been available since the late 1990s (see Barrett & Russell 1998; Russell & Barrett 1999; Barrett, Gross, Christensen et al. 2001), but acting discourse has yet to significantly acknowledge her findings (see also de Wet 2022).²⁰

Barrett's research suggests that emotions and affects do not dwell in a subconscious part of the mind or exist as forces which need to be coaxed out. Her research suggests that affect is continuously generated and may influence conscious thoughts if given attention; noticing how the affect feels and being mindful of any external influences which impact the interpretation thereof. Herein, emotions are constructed with a certain amount of agency because they require an individual to classify their feelings in order to recognise them. Or, if working as an actor, they require an intentional understanding of an associated or desired affect to simulate emotion through one of the techniques I mentioned in the previous section. Therefore, I would argue that *emotions* are not integral to intuition, but *affects* are (more on this in chapter two).

¹⁹ The cognitive philosophy of Brian Massumi (2002) and Giovanna Colombetti (2014; 2018) echoes Barrett's psychological and neuroscientific research.

²⁰ Barrett's research aligns with computational cognition, even though she supports sentiments found in basic frameworks of embodied cognition; that the "body is part of the mind" (Barrett 2020: 107). Her research on affect and emotion is framed within predictive processing theories, which this study argues against (see chapter two section 2.1.1.). Predictive processing theory is a framework through which Barrett has supported her empirical findings. She describes predictive theory as a concept "invented by scientists to describe the physical activity within the brain" (2017: 290). As such, I see opportunity to suggest how her research on affect may overlap with Radically Enactive Cognition (REC). Refer to chapter two for more.

If emotions are psychological constructs and affects are interoceptions that can be independent of emotions, then it cannot be assumed that every actor in a rehearsal room will possess the same emotional vocabulary. Moreover, this research implies that actors from different cultures may associate emotions with different affects. According to Barrett's research, narratives that tell stories rooted in cultures outside of one's own may also provide opportunities initially dressed as challenges for actors and directors to navigate. I consider instances from my own experiences as a performer and theatre-maker, where actors have been asked to generate specific emotions and then felt as though they failed to do so. In reviewing Barrett's research, I suspect that in these cases, actors may have been experiencing affective responses. However, they may have failed to acknowledge these affects because they were possibly disconnected from an idea about what the emotion 'should feel like'. Taking this suspicion one step further, I suggest that this disconnect between affect and emotion may have potentially stifled the actor's intuitions in that moment as well.

When I review Stanislavski's approach to acting alongside Damasio's theory of emotions, I concede how conceptions of emotions and affects may have gone unquestioned by prior generations of trainers and actors who created spaces with people from the same socio-cultural backgrounds. Yet if acting training intends to equip actors for an industry that is diversifying, then it needs to include and encourage actors themselves as creative sources of feeling and action, rather than promoting a standardisation of feeling and being. In embracing differences between affects and emotions, acting training may need to shift its focus from a text and onto the actor as the primary generator of affect, as well as to prioritise affect over conceptions of emotion.

In a Stanislavskian approach to acting, the affects an actor is required to feel are often dictated by a director's vision of a play-text (Shepherd 2006: 14). Mark Evans states that "[w]orking from a text to create a convincing, 'truthful' and endlessly repeatable portrayal of character has, for the last hundred years at least, been the dominant skill that actor training has sought to develop" (2019: 17). Actors are instructed to "define the exact emotion for each bit [of the text] ... you then go beneath the text to see what the particular emotion is really about" (Merlin 2014: 205-6). The actor's job is to generate the necessary affect through various techniques in order to achieve the required 'emotional' reactions during their performance.

I suggest that intuition may serve actors as an alternative way to engage affectively with their performance, and that it could serve to prioritise the actors themselves as mediums of affect generation. By acting intuitively, I would argue that actors become mediums who work between themselves and a

narrative as a fully formed world.²¹ Functioning as a medium in this way provides an alternative approach to current acting training which uses an actor as a vehicle for a text. By acting intuitively, performances and rehearsals may become affectively experiential, rather than driven to a destination through pre-determined action and potentially biased conceptions of emotions.

Additionally, I aim to demonstrate in this research that intuition is an embodied cognition that every actor has capacity for. Herein, I consider that each actor's intuition may be uniquely shaped, which may inform *how* their intuition manifests and *what* their intuitive vocabulary looks like. Thus, I intend to demonstrate that intuition may encourage each actor's unique selfhood in play. I make this hypothesis based on intuition's somatic nature (see Peña 2019) which I recognise may be influenced by the knowledges that constitute the architecture of each soma. As such, my curiosity regarding the limitations Stanislavski placed on the actors' intuition goes beyond exploring how intuition could be a way for actors to meet demands of the mainstream industry only, and extends into how intuition may be a way for them to prioritise their *personal uniqueness* (Hackney 1998: 51) as they meet these demands.²² As Evans notes, "[w]e need to welcome the multiplicity and diversity of student/actor stories, however conflicting, as this diversity will better capture the totality of all the practices and concepts of acting and performance" (2019: 11).

However, I also acknowledge that as a folk concept within common parlance, intuition's somatic nature may have fuelled misconceptions against it. Intuition has been criticised as being an emotionally based process that fuels cognitive biases and stereotyping. Psychology professor Kenneth Hammond is particularly critical of intuition, arguing that "intuition doesn't take us anywhere; it doesn't offer anything in the way of explanation...it doesn't require any hard work... it doesn't take any brains to say, 'my gut tells me'" (2010: 327; see also Lieberman 2000). Herein, intuition is susceptible to being conflated with *affective realism*, meaning when a person constructs their reality according to affective reactions (Barrett 2017: 283; see also Barret & Bar 2009; Wormwood, Siegel, Kopec et al. 2018). Related to this discussion is also the stereotype that intuition is a *woman's gift* (Lieberman 2000). On this point, it should not go amiss that what is deemed as emotional has historically been associated with women, and that academia has had a long-standing aversion to emotions and subjective experiences in general.²³ The stereotype of intuition being a woman's gift or women's wisdom has been de-bunked in psychological research (see Epstein, Pacini, Denes-Raj & Heier 1996; McCraty & Atkinson 2014).

²¹ I employ the concept of a medium here to imply a cognitive channel instead of a spiritual one as Brian Bates does in *The Way of The Actor* (1987). Bates reviews the actor's role as a shaman in pre-modern communities. A focus on intuition within a spiritual framework falls beyond the scope of this research. However, an integration of such frameworks alongside this study may be of interest in future research.

²² Irmgard Bartenieff defines personal uniqueness as a principle within *Total Body Connectivity* (Hackney 1998). The principle embraces the uniquely individualised histories, practices, skills, and influences, which engineers' people as somas.

²³ See research related to developments in gender discourse, feminism, and the concept of *hysteria* (de Beauvoir 1953; Butler 2014; Adichie 2014; Gilman, King, Porter et al. 1993).

Somatic practitioner and researcher Eline Kieft highlights that “other ways of knowing (through meditation or intuition, for example), exist unacknowledged in the margins of western scholarship, but have the potential to support and inform research processes” (2018: 457).

In considering emotion and affect respectively, I am inclined to take criticisms regarding intuition as an emotion-bound process lightly. By accepting emotions as social constructions and affects as interoceptions, and by acknowledging that both play roles within cognition, there may be a clearer understanding emerging that our thoughts are permeated by emotions, the same way our emotions are permeated by our thoughts (see Colombetti 2018: 576). Both neuroscience and somatic research suggests that there is no neurological distinction between thoughts and emotions, and that they are both embodied processes (McCaw 2020; Barrett 2017; Halprin 2009; Clark 2007; Todd 1997). The binarization of thought and feeling is classified as part of *dual-processing* theory. Dual-processing theory proposes that emotions and feelings act against and are in opposition to logic and rationality (i.e., thought) (Evans 2008). Dual-processing theory is criticised for its outmoded Cartesian ideals (Evans 2008; Li 2014).²⁴

Research suggests that intuition would be stifled if it was driven by (or was equal to) day-to-day affects and emotions (see Lufityanto, Donkin & Pearson 2016). The emotions and affects people feel and experience on a daily basis are often motivated by personal desires (Steiner 2006; Eubanks, Murphey & Mumford 2010; Vaughan 1975). When desires become intrinsic drives for behaviour, it oftentimes becomes the case that wishful thinking overshadows intuition. Intuition may not always provide an intuiter with outcomes that align with what is desired (Vaughan 1975: 56). Intuition guides behavior and decision-making in a manner that best serves a situation, which can often feel as though it contradicts or oppose one’s desires (Vaughan 1979: 109).

I propose that an understanding and utilisation of intuition may be better served by equally prioritising the roles feeling, sensing, and awareness play in and for cognition. I thus intend to explore the actor’s intuition as a developable embodied cognition through a somatic acting training method that integrates these components in equal measure.

1.2.3. The possibility of developing intuition through a somatic acting training method

In my research, I discovered that both somatic practices and cognitive science have provided revisions over the last century regarding how the mind is researched and understood. These revisions challenge Stanislavski’s comprehension of the actor’s intuition as a subconscious process. Although Stanislavski

²⁴ See Gilbert Ryle’s *The Concept of the Mind* (1949/2009) regarding the failures of Cartesian Dualism.

recognised that there is “no sharp dividing line between conscious and subconscious experience” (2017: 342), he is criticised for seeing the subconscious mind as “a repository of retrievable data” (Auslander 2002: 32). Minds and brains continue to be defined by metaphors of technology that have been in flux since the 1600s (Cobb 2020). These metaphors frequently distort how cognition is understood (Barrett 2020: 45). The mind as a two-part location where ‘data’ can be ‘stored’ is an example of such distortion (see chapter two for more).

Additionally, I discovered that somatic practices have been able to develop processes previously thought to have been subconscious, and as such, unchangeable or inaccessible. I make this claim based on some of the following examples: the neurophysiological developments made possible by Moshe Feldenkrais’s methods (1977; 1984; 2002; 2010); Frederick Matthias Alexander’s techniques which have been able to change bodily holding patterns (1971; 2001); Charlotte Selver and Charles Brook’s explorations which influence motor and sensory systems (Lowe & Laeng-Gilliatt 2007); Irmgard Bartenieff’s fundamentals that promote *Total Body Integration* (Hackney 1998); and Anna Halprin’s application of dance and movement as a healing practice (1995; 2000; 2002).

Research has demonstrated that somatic practices are able to facilitate neural developments and changes (Mehling, Wrubel, Daubenmier, Price et al. 2011) and thus influence embodied processes, or what I would consider to simply be cognition. Somatic practices are able to achieve these developments and changes by utilising sensorial awareness, which requires attention and intention to be applied to interoceptions, proprioceptions, **exteroceptions** and kinesthesia (see Kampe 2015; Fraleigh 2015; Reese 2015; Feldenkrais 2010; Lowe & Laeng-Gilliatt 2007). Neuroscientists may be more familiar with this process as *degeneracy* and *neurogenesis*. Degeneracy and neurogenesis are possible because neurons, neurotransmitters, and their modulators have multiple jobs (i.e., degeneracy) and the ability to adapt and re-learn over time (i.e., neuroplasticity and neurogenesis) (Barrett 2020: 39).²⁵

When I consider the neural developments that somatic practices have been able to achieve, alongside the development in cognitive research over the last century, I propose that what Stanislovski saw as the subconscious mind may be embodied or in-bodied processes. Intuition, which I argue is experienced affectively, may have been previously accepted to be ‘subconscious’ because feeling often precedes what has come to be considered as a rational analysis the feeling. A neurobiological study on perception and brain activity linked to intuitive processing can illustrate my point above. Researchers Phan Luu, Alexandra Geyer, Cali Fidiopiastis et al. concluded that “the feeling of knowing [associated with

²⁵ Research on degeneracy has affected the validity of *mirror neuron* research, which I found interdisciplinary research between cognitive science and acting often refers to (see for examples Blakeslee & Blakeslee 2009; Kemp 2012; Tribble & Sutton 2014). Cognitive science is currently exploring the cultural impacts on empathy as opposed to focusing on neural claims (see Gallagher 2017; Gallagher & Gallagher 2020: 780; Overy & Molnar-Szakacs 2009: 490-1). For a recent account on the field of mirror neuron research see Cecilia Heyes and Caroline Catmur’s 2022 article, *What happened to mirror neurons?*

intuition] is often associated with an affective experience: the feeling of knowing arises at the gut level” (2010: 9) rather than as rational recognition developed through thought.

By reconsidering intuition as an embodied cognition, I propose that an alternative way of understanding intuition may be provided to actors that could transform how actors come to know and use their intuition in training, rehearsal, and performance processes. As I work with a radically enactive account of intuition in this research (see section 1.1.2.), I am not only concerned with sensing through the sensorial system; I explore the roles feeling, thinking, and action play in sensing and thus, in sense-making. The argument I make regarding intuition being developable rests on an actor’s awareness as a process that affects both sensing and sense-making (the awareness of each of those sensings).

In this research, I aim to demonstrate that intuition is developable as an embodied cognition by developing and applying awareness to interoceptive, exteroceptive, and kinesthetic processes. I suggest that these processes are interdependent faculties that influence and shape cognition. Therefore, I will refer to only *awareness* from here on out, rather than specifying it to be a specific type of *sensory* or *self-awareness*. I consider that “[t]he more viscerally aware, the more emotionally attuned you are” (Blakeslee & Blakeslee 2009: 175), and the more emotionally attuned, the more viscerally aware one may be.²⁶ In short, it may be that self-awareness is cultivated from developing **sensory awareness**, and that this development requires emotional intelligence; and that the cultivation of emotional intelligence requires reasoning skills in order to discern and distinguish between wants, desires, and intuitions, which contribute to wider applications of awareness.²⁷

1.3. INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

I employ a Practice as Research (PaR) methodology (Nelson 2013) to conceptualise intuition and explore its developability in this study. In adopting a PaR methodology and tailoring it to this project’s aims and objective, I shape it with an integrationist model of interdisciplinarity (as defined by van Leeuwen 2005). As this research is not about methodology *per se*, I focus my discussion in this section on framing my choices, rather than engaging in a significant way with wider methodological scholarship. In this section I will also introduce and outline my methods of data collection and documentation. It should be noted that there is no methodology chapter in this thesis. Instead, I will discuss my methods of analysis in more depth when each data set arises within the discussion of the following chapters.

²⁶ I echo Feldenkrais’s principle of discrimination here (1977: 55).

²⁷ This perspective of sensory awareness meaning ‘more’ than sensing *per se* was shared by Charlotte Selver, who found the title of *Sensory Awareness* to feel “too simplistic and limiting” (Lowe & Laeng-Gilliatt 2007: xiv).

A note on terminology

In this section I frequently use the terms *methodology*, *practice*, *method*, *techniques*, and *explorations*. Methodology relates to the framework I use to explore and execute the research (i.e., the PaR methodology). I define the method (i.e., the somatic acting training method) to be a mesh which holds the techniques I design for acting training. I define the practice to be the method-in-process. I define the techniques to be the structures that contain the explorations that the actor-participants experience in the method. In other words: the method is the collection of techniques, the techniques are the structure for the explorations, and the practice is the techniques of the method that are explored in process.

My definitions are influenced by Ben Spatz, who sees practice as “concrete examples of actions, moments of doing, historical instances of materialized activity” (2015: 40) and technique as “transhistorical,” as a material that “travels across time and space...” (ibid.: 41).²⁸ However, as I offer a training method as a practice in this instance, I deviate slightly from Spatz’s conceptions of practice and technique. I recognise that this method, like any training, is a product of the socio-historical contexts it comes from. Nevertheless, I am interested in technique as a repeatable and explicit knowledge. What Spatz suggests is valuable, insofar as time continues and allows techniques to move through and with it. But the techniques developed by and for this research do not exist in isolation. In this research the techniques and the explorations they facilitate function within a somatic training method.

Spatz argues that “training alone is not sufficient to understand the epistemic workings of technique. As a field of knowledge, technique is constituted by the dynamic interplay of *training* and *research*” (2015: 60, original emphasis). Yet I would argue that training does invariably create and contextualize the epistemic workings of techniques *in practice*, precisely because training regimes function in social, historical, political, and cultural contexts and the ideologies defined by those periods in and of time. Additionally, I would argue that this is amplified by the PaR framework, where the practice is, produces, and is produced from, research.

Thus, I agree with Spatz in that the method I create, which is comprised of techniques, is part of the knowledge I aim to share as a deliverable outcome of this study. However, I am mindful that although this knowledge may transcend its origins, acting training methods are also products of their time and are thus dependent on the structures and dynamics within those pockets of time.

²⁸ Spatz defines practice and technique outside of the Practice as Research (PaR) research methodology I use (2015: 243). Yet I consider that if the tenet of PaR is that the practice is “the key method of inquiry” (Nelson 2013: 7), then I wonder if what Spatz defines as practice and technique within the methodology of *embodied technique* (2015) could be contextualised as a branch of PaR.

1.3.1. Shaping Practice as Research with an interdisciplinary model

Practice as Research (PaR) is a case-dependent methodology led by the tenet that the practice is “the key method of inquiry” (Nelson 2013: 8). In this project, I uphold PaR’s tenet by creating a somatic acting training method that works as, is born from, and generates research. The acting training method I produce in this project becomes a *praxis*, classified by Nelson (2013: 5) as “theory imbricated within practice”. In this study specifically, I would be inclined to suggest that praxis functions in a more cyclical way, with practice being imbricated with theory as well.

“PaR typically involves a multi-mode inquiry drawing upon a range of methods” that do not necessarily circumscribe to the methodological steps, practices, and fixed designs of other qualitative or quantitative frameworks (ibid.: 99). PaR is recognised to be a methodology “characterised by... commitment to activity... process... action... collectiveness... reflexivity... and more” (Kershaw, Miller, Whalley, Lee & Pollard 2011: 63-4). PaR privileges processes of research rather than outputs (Kirkkopelto 2020: 32) and centralises “creativity [in] its research methods” (Kershaw et al. 2011: 65).²⁹ I have chosen to shape PaR in this project by using an integrationist model of interdisciplinarity. As I intend to explore the actor’s intuition as an embodied cognition that is somatically experienced, I draw on the disciplines of acting training, cognitive science, and somatics in equal measure and in an integrated way.³⁰ This research operates within an understanding that “[i]nterdisciplinarity consists... of borrowing methods and tools from across... disciplines in an effort to address needs dictated by the specific problem at hand” (Salter & Hearn 1997: 30).

Interdisciplinarity between the humanities and sciences are becoming commonplace in contemporary research. Interdisciplinary research on acting and cognition has been impacted and shaped by (to name only a few) Rick Kemp (2012; 2018); Bruce McConachie (2006; 2018); Elizabeth Hart (2006); Dick McCaw (2020); Nicola Shaughnessy (2014); Amy Cook (2016); Rhonda Blair (2008; 2016); and John Lutterbie (2011; 2019). Professor of applied developmental psychology Thalia Goldstein recognises that interdisciplinary research often enables an intricate understanding of the underlying processes of acting (2018: 164). Interdisciplinary studies create links between different categories of information and provide innovative ways of knowing and knowledge creation (Aquilina & Sarco-Thomas 2018: 1-2). As interdisciplinary research does not necessarily share a common language between the multiple

²⁹ In chapter four section 4.2.1. I discuss the challenges PaR as a process orientated methodology presented me with in relation to the interdisciplinary model adopted in this study.

³⁰ PaR’s flexible design is partly what draws criticism to it (Vaage 2020: 61). Spatz is of the opinion that “PaR has not yet convincingly engaged with the established standards of academic rigor, nor has it established a credible epistemological framework of its own” (2015: 226). However, Robin Nelson (2013: 8) suggests that PaR’s case-dependent design creates creative opportunities of knowledge generation for practitioner-researchers. To strive for academic rigor, practitioner-researchers who adopt this methodology are encouraged to contextualise their practice against and within existing research (Nelson 2013: 28-30). This is not to say that theory should be used to justify practice, but that the practice is able to orientate itself within established frameworks of knowledge (ibid.: 6).

disciplines and can become contradictory across fields (Colombetti 2018: 572; Blair 2014: 136), I rely on primary sources from the field of embodied cognitive science in this study.

In this research I utilise an integrationist model of interdisciplinarity to shape the PaR methodology. The integrationist model of interdisciplinarity echoes what Katharina Vones calls *alchemical craft* (2020: 155). Alchemical craft is used “to describe practices and practitioners who work with novel materials and processes that have been sourced... often through interdisciplinary collaborative projects...” and “experimental knowledge generation through the pursuit of an experimental practice...” (ibid.: 157).

[T]he integrationist model of interdisciplinarity focuses on problems rather than methods and brings together researchers from different disciplines. But here it is recognised that no single discipline can satisfactorily address any given problem on its own. As a result [,] disciplines are seen as interdependent... (van Leeuwen 2005: 7-8).

In this project the integrationist model of interdisciplinarity addresses two perceived problems. The first problem is that intuition has not yet been independently conceptualised in acting discourse. The second problem is that intuition is currently believed to be undevelopable. As aforementioned, these are both problems because (1) intuition is recognised as being important in acting, and (2) without a well-developed conceptualisation of intuition, only assumptions regarding intuition’s potential can be made, which then become problematic in themselves. By utilising this model of interdisciplinarity within a PaR methodology, where the practice is and informs the research, I am able to use the acting training method I create as a solution to these problems. I suggest that an integrationist model of interdisciplinarity supports a PaR methodology, which as I recognised earlier, draws on a range of approaches (Nelson 2013: 99).

In this research the disciplines of acting, somatics, and cognitive science integrate to solve these problems. By choosing to structure PaR with an interdisciplinary model, I integrate and explore cognitive theory within somatic practices, and shape somatic practices with cognitive theory, for actors. The PaR methodology affords this project the opportunity to explore how cognitive processes are experienced by actors, as well as how an understanding of cognitive processing can impact the design of acting techniques, and therein integrate disciplines to solve the problems I put forward in this research.

Working within the outlined parameters of the integrationist model, I am dependent on the guidance from my co-supervisor, Dr Valerie van Mulukom. Her background as a cognitive scientist and experimental psychologist speaks to the research’s integrationist model, that as van Leeuwen notes, “brings together researchers from different disciplines” (2005: 7). Her expertise guides me through

quantitative methods of data collection and the structures of cognitive research. However, I also acknowledge that during the process of conducting this research, my immersion in cognitive literature and research practices, as well as in quantitative data analyses, has equipped me with interdisciplinary expertise within the realm of cognitive and performing arts research. My contribution and input in shaping the quantitative measures (see the following section), in interpreting the statistical analysis facilitated by van Mulukom (see chapter three section 3.4.), and in creating the cognitive conceptual and theoretical discussions in this thesis (see chapter two), became possible due to my interdisciplinary expertise earned through the process of research and van Mulukom's supervision.

1.3.2. Methods of data collection and documentation

In this project I integrate methods of data collection and documentation from acting and somatics with methods from cognitive science. I draw on qualitative, quantitative, and arts-based approaches. According to Nelson, a mixed and integrated approach to data collection is common in PaR projects (2013: 99). I use data from secondary research, semi-structured interviews, group discussions, actor's journals, psychological scales and behavioural tasks, and workshops.

This PhD study is documented in this thesis and the somatic acting training method (see chapter three and Appendix A). The thesis and method work in a complimentary fashion. While complimentary, the thesis and method demonstrate distinct aspects of the research. To document the training method, I relied on recordings and transcripts of workshops. I would also suggest that the journals and group discussions serve as documents of the training. While the scales and tasks do not document the somatic method *per se*, they do function as documents of evidence in that they account for the method's proposed effects on the actor-participant's cognitive development in relation to intuition. These various documents that reflect on and record parts of the training method work together to shape this thesis.

In choosing which methods of data collection and documentation to use for this project, I remained cognisant of tensions that exist between practice, documentation, research, and ideas about evidencing (see Nelson 2013: 5-7). Nelson states that “[i]n institutional contexts, documentation of various kinds is necessary” (2013: 72). However, he goes on to caution that the document should not be taken to be the practice itself (*ibid*). In heeding these tensions, I see the PaR methodology – that centralises practice – as an opportunity for a relationship to form in this interdisciplinary project between various forms of documentation and data collection.

While there may be tensions between the live nature of practice and a recording of the work, documentation can be seen as a potentially dynamic and interactive process between practice, its audience, and more traditional written techniques. So from a research

perspective, documentation concerns the articulation of practitioners' questions and processes of working (Ledger, Ellis & Wright 2013: 163).

The suggestion that documentation may serve as “a potentially dynamic and interactive process” between a practice and traditional written techniques ultimately inspired me to facilitate a relationship between the training method and thesis that honours the interdisciplinary nature of this research and the PaR methodology as defined by Nelson.³¹ In this relationship, it was important to me that the method could exist as lived experience, and that the thesis serves as a document that reflects the creative process of research and discovery that are at the core of the method. As such, the process of creating the method is not discussed in this thesis. In line with the aims of this research, I focus instead on discussing the method's efficacy in chapter three when the acting training method is analysed and discussed.

1.3.2.1. Workshops

I explored the somatic acting method in workshops with actor-participants. These workshops were developed and delivered by me. I worked with facilitation skills and creative adaptations in real time. I utilised the workshops as a method by which to explore the somatic acting training *in practice*. The workshops thus serve as a culminative point of the PaR methodology in this project that explores the contextual and conceptual frameworks in this thesis.³² A workshop process is a format that I am intimate with as an actor and theatre-maker. Arts-based and qualitative research methods recognise workshops as being an effective creative approach in utilising embodied knowledges and processes within the PaR methodology (see Kershaw & Nicholson 2011: 2). Nelson states that “[k]nowing may well be embodied... and might be shared close-up by haptic means in a workshop” (2013: 58). I discuss the structure of these workshops in chapter three section 3.1.

1.3.2.2. Semi-structured interviews

I conducted semi-structured interviews with a small number of experts in the fields of acting training, performance, and somatic practice to explore my conceptualisation of intuition. These interviews provide accounts of the lived experience of intuition in performance contexts that I weave into secondary research (see Parker-Starbuck & Mock 2011: 227). Using interviews in this way, I employ a deductive approach to thematic analysis (Willig 2013: 185) and use literature (secondary research) as a framework to situate the interview data against and within. I favoured a semi-structured interview format for this purpose. I recognise it as “one that can provide detail, depth, and an insider's perspective,

³¹ In creating this relationship, I often worked in the liminal spaces created by paradoxes that arise between practices, their documentation, and discipline conventions. See chapter four section 4.2.1. for more.

³² In line with stipulations regarding PaR PhD projects examined in the United Kingdom (UK), I have provided a recording of one of the workshops that serves as an artifact of the practice. A link to this recording can be found in Chapter Four.

while at the same time allowing hypothesis testing...” (Leech 2012:665; see also Leavy 2017: 139). Semi-structured interviews are defined as interviews driven by a central question or curiosity. In semi-structured interviews, a researcher allows the interviewee’s responses to guide the flow of the interview (Leavy 2017; Wengraf 2001). Semi-structured interviews are a desirable tool for researchers who are “testing highly developed theories” (Wengraf 2001: 81). I discuss the data that arose from these interviews in chapter two.

1.3.2.3. Group discussions

I used group discussions to explore how the participant’s experience of the somatic acting training method became a means for understanding, processing, and making meaning (see Parker-Starbuck & Mock 2011: 210). Group discussions are recognised as a useful way of collecting data from experiences like workshops (Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009). “Group discussions... [provide] the researcher with the insights and understanding...that can only come from a dynamic, interactive discussion format...” (Roller & Lavrakas 2015: 104-5). I analysed the data generated by the group discussions by integrating the deductive thematic analysis I applied to the semi-structured interviews with an exploration of “the phenomenology of lived experience,” which Parker-Starbuck and Mock recognise as a method of analysis that centralises a participant’s experience of a creative practice (2011: 227-8). I discuss the data which arose from the group discussions throughout chapter three.

1.3.2.4. Journals

The actor-participants who explored the somatic acting training method kept a journal. Susan Sontag recognises journaling as an effective tool in demonstrating psychology, tone, mood, and reasoning in artistic processes (1961/2009: 14). Previous studies on intuition have promoted journaling as a useful medium in cultivating an awareness of one’s intuition (see Berkner & Czerniak 2016; Vaughan 1979; Burke & Miller 1999). In these previous studies, journaling was used as an opportunity for reflection. In this study I encouraged journal explorations to be *dynamic documentations*. Used as dynamic documentation, journaling was encouraged to be “a stimulating forum for the integration of thought, emotion and creative process” (Evans 2007: 71). In this research, the data from the actor-participants’ journals is seen as “a knowledge structure built on creative processes” (ibid.: 74). To analyse this data, I applied the same integration between a deductive thematic analysis and phenomenological account of lived experience as I did to the group discussions. In addition, I also analysed the journal entries against the data provided by the group discussions. I discuss this data in chapter three.

1.3.2.5. Pre- and post-surveys

The quantitative data for this study was generated through a pre- and post-survey which consisted of psychological scales and behavioural tasks that were adapted by myself and my co-supervisor, Valerie van Mulukom (see Appendix B).³³ The scales and tasks measured components and traits I identified as being integral to intuition. These scales and tasks provide a data set that reflects the method's quantitative efficacy. Psychological scales and behavioural tasks are commonly used in both cognitive-based research and mixed methods approaches in psychology (see Todd, Nerlich, McKeown & Clark 2005).

The quantitative data from these surveys comes from an analysis of variance (ANOVA) that was run on the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS is a software that can be used for statistical analyses such as ANOVA. ANOVA enables researchers to find significant statistical differences in the data which assists in identifying correlations between the data and the research. Significant statistical differences favourable in the context of this research would be, for example, an increase in the participant's scores post-training in the scales and tasks relating to their awareness. What ANOVA can judge as statistically significant is subject to various factors, for example, the size of a sample group, which may influence the statistical power of the results (Statistics How To 2022) In chapter three section 3.4.2. I will discuss this study's variables which impacted the statistical analysis.

I chose to analyse data from the scales and behavioural tasks in conjunction with the data that arose from the group discussions and journals. This method of analysis is recognised as a mixed method approach in cognitive research (Todd & Lobeck 2005: 175). By contextualising the quantitative findings with the qualitative data (i.e., the lived experiences of the participants), a process of *triangulation* transpires in the research. What this means is that different data sets are analysed collectively to “get a more accurate picture of what is going on” (Todd, Nerlich & McKeown 2005: 8). The triangulated data is discussed in chapter three section 3.4.

1.4. TRANSITIONING INTO CHAPTER TWO

In this chapter I introduced this research project. I outlined its central objective and the three aims through which this objective will be attained. I discussed the research methodology through which I intend to achieve these aims. I outlined this project's interdisciplinary focus. Within the discussion of this chapter I outlined how this project intends to explore intuition as an embodied cognition and

³³ The ethical application for this measure is included under the project code 109895 (see Appendix C). Originally, the quantitative measures were applied for under a related grant application which sought to contribute to and extend off this this PhD. Although the grant application was unsuccessful, the ethics application became an extension of this PhD.

somatic, lived experience. In this chapter I have defined intuition as an energetic sensitivity and introduced radically enactive cognition, which will serve as the framework for intuition's conceptualisation, which is the focus of chapter two.

CHAPTER TWO

INTUITION AND COGNITION: KNOWING **WHY**

In this chapter I conceptualise intuition as an embodied cognition, which is the first aim of this research. To conceptualise intuition as an embodied cognition, I frame it as both a cognitive process and state and extend on the definition I provided in chapter one (see section 1.1.1.). I extend on intuition's definition as an energetic sensitivity by applying a radically enactive cognitive (REC) framework to somatic discourse. The title of this chapter reflects my investigation into intuition's cognitive foundation. I propose *why* intuition can be conceptualised as an embodied cognition by underpinning the processes that drive it as a somatic experience. To conceptualise intuition as an embodied cognition, I will first analyse perception as its core process. I will then discuss the roles affect, attunement, awareness, and attention play in intuition. I will proceed to explain how intuition, as a cognitive process, may be sustained as a cognitive state through *absorption* (as defined by Tellegen & Atkinson 1974) and *meta-awareness* (as defined by Dunne, Thompson & Schooler 2019).

The discussion in this chapter is created by merging a critical analysis of literature (i.e., secondary research) with data generated through five semi-structured interviews (see chapter one section 1.3.2.2.). I held semi-structured interviews with experts from the fields of somatics, acting, and theatre performance. I define experts as individuals whose extensive experience may be valued as knowledge creation (see Hopf 2004). Between November 2020 and January 2021 I interviewed Professor David Shirley, Professor Oscar Giner, Professor Vida Midgelow, Carol Ann Holness, and Kristine Landon-Smith. These experts were selected through my process of research and recommendations from my supervisors.

David Shirley is the Executive Dean of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) in Perth, Australia. He previously worked as an actor, acting trainer, and lecturer of theatre and performance in the United Kingdom (UK). Vida Midgelow is a professor of dance and choreography at Middlesex University in the UK. Her approach to dance is shaped by improvisation and somatics. Carol Ann Holness is a multidisciplinary artist who works in the acting, music, and fine art industries in the UK and Western Europe. Kristine Landon-Smith is an intracultural theatre practitioner, director, and educator who co-founded the Tamasha Theatre Company and has worked and trained in India, the UK, and Australia.³⁴ Oscar Giner is a lecturer at Arizona State University in North America (USA) and is a poet, theatre director, playwright, and performer whose practice is embedded within his Cuban and Caribbean heritage. The diverse influences of these experts created an opportunity for me to reflect on practices both outside and within the Euro-American system of training in order to establish if there are

³⁴ Much of what Landon-Smith shared with me in her interview can also be found in her 2020 article, *A pedagogy for twenty-first century actor training: intracultural theatre practice which embraces pluristic identity and plays with difference*. As her interview also took place in 2020, I clearly note in the body of this chapter which information is taken from the interview versus the article.

ways of knowing that could enrich my understanding of intuition and contemporary approaches to acting training within the Euro-American system.

As I mentioned in chapter one section 1.3.2.2., I analysed the data from these interviews by using a deductive thematic analysis. The data from these interviews is used to illuminate the conceptual discussions in this chapter. I explored these experts' lived experiences of intuition through semi-structured interviews to inform my analysis of literature. I use their lived experiences of intuition in order to humanise the cognitive scholarship in this research. In doing this, I aim to provide an accessible translation between intuition as a cognitive process and as a somatic experience for actors and performance scholars.

2.1. WHAT IT MEANS TO PERCEIVE

In this section I analyse the role perception plays in intuition to create a foundation for intuition as an embodied cognition that is independent of its past conceptions. To analyse perception for this purpose, I deconstruct *predictive processing theory* which currently dominates beliefs regarding perception, and by proxy intuition, as a cognitive process.

2.1.1. REConsidering perception: understanding why intuition may have been criticised

At an Oxford Brookes psychology seminar in 2021, Valerie van Mulukom remarked that our **perception** of intuition shapes what we believe about intuition. Her statement prompted me to reflect on intuition's perceived role in artmaking and performing (Duchamp 1957; Stanislavski 2001; Meyer-Dinkgräfe 2005); how it is valued when it can improve the economy of decision making in daily life (Myers 2002; Langan-Fox & Shirley 2003); and despite this, how science remains sceptical of it (Epstein 2010; Kahneman 2011). Ruminating on this reflection, I became aware of how conceptual foundations of intuition may have their own power/knowledge structures (see also van Mulukom & de Wet 2021).³⁵ In considering perception itself, I reflect how it too may be susceptible to varied beliefs and perspectives.

Cognitive science currently champions predictive processing theory (also known as *predictive coding theory*) as the dominant narrative of perception (see Barrett 2020; Gilchrist 2020; Clark 2013; Vilares & Kording 2011). Cognitive philosopher Jakob Hohwy explains that “The tension between perceptual inference [i.e., predictive processing] and [the various frameworks of embodied cognition] matters because both are influential attempts at explaining the same range of phenomena” (2018: 130). In short,

³⁵ I refer to Michel Foucault's use of the power/knowledge structure (1980/1993), where socio-political agendas are recognised as influencing hegemonic ideologies and thus, what becomes and is valued as knowledge.

Hohwy explains that predictive processing theory proposes that perceptions are made from either confirmed or rejected sensory data (i.e., information) that is classified according to familiar input and is modelled accordingly by and in the brain. (2018: 132). Familiar input would be data the brain can recognise from repeated exposure, and the model created by the brain would be a model of the exterior world that is built from this familiar data.³⁶ Recognisable data are called *predictive priors*. Within predictive theory, the brain organ is responsible for ‘interpreting’ sensory data and then ‘predicting’ what is received to best respond to what the brain thinks is going on outside and inside of the body. The predictive narrative of cognition argues that “you don’t sense with your sensory organs, you sense with your brain” (Barrett 2020: 70). Accordingly, when there is a discrepancy between what the brain predicted (the predictive prior) and the perceived input from the outside world, the internal model generates a *prediction error* which must be updated. Prediction errors are updated by adjusting the perception which comes from the data (Barrett 2020: 72-8). Perception is thus accepted to be “predictions of the currently best hypothesis about the world” (Howhy 2013: 48).

To relay predictive processing theory to actors, I can use sensory and emotional recall techniques as examples. According to predictive processing theory, feelings can be recalled from memory as predictive priors. Actors can then replicate these feelings in a performance because they have a frame of reference (i.e., a predictive prior) of what they should be feeling in new contexts because they are recognised as familiar inputs fed to them from the model. In other words, feelings are predicted responses called into action through sensory and emotional recall. Predictive processing theory aligns itself with the James-Lange theory of emotion (see chapter one section 1.2.2.), where affect is argued to be generated through the action-perception-action cycle without an individual needing to analyse or think about what is happening (see also Clark 2013). However, I suggest that this creates a problematic conception of perception. If brains are only ever predicting a world based on predictive priors, then “we do not see what is really there” (Vilares & Kording 2011: 35).

Psychological and neuroscientific studies of perception are predominantly shaped by the visual inference experiments of the 1950s (see Gilchrist 2020). Visual inference research argued that vision is not an ‘outward’ mirror of the world. Instead, visual inference research proposes that vision works through a process of neural translations, stimulations, and processing (see Bruner 1957; and see Bhalla & Proffitt 1999, Harber, Yeung & Iacovelli 2011, and Balcetis & Dunning 2010 for revivals). In other words, visual inference theory proposes that because people are unable to *see* things ‘as they are’, they cannot *perceive* them ‘as they are’ either.

³⁶ See research which refers to the brain as a *Bayesian model* (for example Vilares & Kording 2011; Friston 2010; Clark 2013).

However, the methods by which visual inference made its original claims, as well as the subsequent revival studies, have been discredited (Birhane 2021; Gilchrist 2020; Hutto & Myin 2012: 100; Howhy 2018). Alan Gilchrist (2020: 999) a professor of psychology who researches visual perception, notes that “The idea that what we see is distorted by our emotions, past experience, bodily energy needs, and other cognitive factors has been all the rage lately.” He goes on to argue the visual inference experiments of the 1950s and their revivals “can be explained by two reasonable assumptions: (a) subjects tend to want to please the experimenter and (b) the hypotheses are often quite transparent.” (ibid).

Predictive processing theory, which is said to perpetuate these visual inference experiments, is criticised for upholding outmoded social norms of what it means to think and feel. Abeba Bihrane, whose research explores the ethics of computational cognition and machine learning, challenges predictive processing by arguing that “People are not solo cognizers that manipulate symbols in their heads and perceive their environment in a passive way, but they actively engage with the world around them in a meaningful and *unpredictable* way” (2021: 50, original emphasis).

Neuro and brain sciences are currently facing “particular scrutiny for [their] imagined social and political consequences” (Lysen 2020: 173), as well as for conflating sensation with perception (Hutto & Myin 2018: 15; see also Friston 2009: 295). According to my understanding, sensation and perception are independent (see the glossary on page 194). Nor sensation nor affect are dependent on a perception of it to transpire (more to come in the paragraphs below on this point particularly), which contradicts the perception of feeling and thinking perpetuated by predictive processing theory. All considered, I would argue that predictive processing theory continues to promote ideals of Cartesian dualism, and that it equates perceiving with the neuronal process of seeing. Suggesting that a brain can both predict and sense presupposes that it is separate from a sensory system or from a soma that senses (Isenman 2018: 82). Put simply: it “equates *persons* with *brains*” (Birhane 2021: 49, original emphasis).

In this research I employ a radically enactive cognitive (REC) framework, which as its name suggests, provides a drastically different account of both perception and cognition than predictive theory and computational cognition does. I take note that there are studies which suggest that predictive theory may align with embodied cognition (see Hohwy 2018; Gallagher & Allen 2018; Bruineberg, Kiverstein & Rietveld 2018). However, REC specifically cannot align with predictive theory through any mediation. REC fundamentally rejects the idea that representation and inference take place (Hutto & Myin 2018: 97; Di Paolo, Thompson & de Beer 2022), which predictive processing theory is based on.³⁷

³⁷ Revisit chapter one section 1.1.2. for a recap on representation and inference in computational cognition.

In REC, perception is “fundamentally bound up with and for action. Perceiving...is a matter of getting a grip on the world as opposed to representing it” (Hutto & Myin 2018: 97). REC proposes that perception is a cognitive process that transpires between an agent and their environment, rather than as an interior mental process dictated by and in a model of the world created by the brain organ. REC’s conception of perception aligns with James J. Gibson’s (1979) notion of *direct perception* (Hutto & Myin 2018; 2017; 2012). Direct perception is “an organism’s entire bodily relation to its environment” (Carman 2020: 1).³⁸ According to REC, it is possible to be able to perceive something *as it is*, rather than how it is predicted to be. “What the learner acquires through experience is not represented in the mind at all but is presented to the learner [...] The best representation of the world is thus the world itself” (Dreyfus 2002: 373). In other words, radical enactivism accepts perception to be an inherently objective act which is intended for action in and on an environment.

REC acknowledges how perception could be influenced by beliefs and perspectives, but it distinguishes between the act of perceiving and meanings that could be attached to what is being perceived (i.e., beliefs and perspectives of that perception) (Hutto & Myin 2018: 98). A distinction between perspectives, beliefs, and perception is possible because sensations (i.e., affects) are not dependent on a cognitive relation to an object or subject (Ryle 1949/2009: 187). In other words, “[p]erception is not intrinsically tied to judgements of reality or even inclinations to form such judgements,” because the situatedness of an agent within their environment is not dependent on a judgement of it (Dokic & Martin 2017: 305; see also Hutto & Myin 2012: 103).³⁹ Put simply: perception, nor our judgements of perceptions, are necessary for sensations to transpire. Therefore, I would argue that it is the belief *about* a feeling, thought, and action that is susceptible to the biases predictive theory argues perception is bound to.

Led by REC, I take perception to mean “multiple ways in which people receive information from their surroundings” (Gieseking & Mangold 2014: 41); and “something we do, rather than something that happens to us” (Hutchins 2010: 446). I define belief and perspectives according to their dictionary (OED) definitions: belief being the support of a perspective strengthened by one’s confidence and conviction of the accuracy of that perspective; and perspective as a *particular attitude* towards, or *way* of thinking about or reacting to something.

I would argue that perception is the core cognitive process which may be or become intuitive. I suggest that perception informs the relationship between (and the content of) action, thought, and feeling.

³⁸ Direct perception is indebted to Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of perception and embodiment (see Heft 2001; Lobo, Heras-Escribano & Travieso 2018).

³⁹ Tamar Gendler’s (2008) notion of *aliefs* makes distinctions between belief and perceptions, and how these independent yet interrelated concepts become manifest (ibid.: 570). Hutto and Myin suggest that aliefs clarify “the idea that perception is isolated from central and open-ended referential processes without assuming that perception is modular.” (2012: 104).

Intuition is “seen as the immediate, uncritical perception of the whole rather than the parts” (Hill 1987: 138). Ajahn Sumedho states that “when you’re using intuitive awareness then it includes all that is there...” (2004: 55). Lois Isenman notes that “[t]he concerns of the intuitive perceiver tend to be different... it is to perceive the object or event in its full potential, in its wholeness” (Isenman 2018: 145-6). I suggest that intuition is made possible when the actor employs their perception to encompass a holistic sense of both themselves and their environment (Vaughan 1979: 60) through attunement.

2.2. BEING ENERGETICALLY SENSITIVE: INTUITION AS A COGNITIVE PROCESS

In this section, I discuss what is required for perception to become intuitive; I conceptualise intuition as an embodied cognitive process. Additionally, I discuss how this conceptualisation supports intuition’s definition as an energetic sensitivity. To conceptualise intuition as an embodied cognitive process, I discuss affect, attunement, awareness, and attention as the central components of intuitive perception. More specifically, I analyse how the actor’s psychophysical energy may be framed as affect; how attunement works as the dynamic coupling between self and space; and how the actor’s presence may be understood as intentional attention.

2.2.1. Affect sensing: becoming sensitive to sensations

As an energetic sensitivity, intuition navigates two different vocabularies within this interdisciplinary research. I suggest that energetic sensitivity can also be referred to as *affect sensing* within cognitive discourse. I come to this translation by analysing the actor’s psychophysical energy as a phenomenon that manifests affectively (see Nagatomo 1992: 207). In analysing the role affect plays in intuition, I focus in this sub-section on the awareness of the self.

In Japanese and Korean discourse, psychophysical energy is recognised as *ki-energy* (Nagatomo 1992; Yoo 2018), or as *ki-hai* (Barba & Savarese 2006: 18). Eugenio Barba and Nicola Savarase suggest this energy may also be known to Asian theatre masters as *koshi* (2006: 9). McCaw acknowledges this energy may be recognised as *chi* energy in Chinese, and *prana* in Sanskrit (2020: 117).⁴⁰ In discourse available on the phenomenon in English, it is called *psychophysical energy* and is recognised as a life force (Nagatomo 1992: 207). McCaw states that even though there is not yet a scientific way to measure an actor’s psychophysical energy, “everyone experiences these states of increase and decrease” (2020:

⁴⁰ I would argue that prana is aligned with *Jin-Ki* (see Yoo 2018: 13), in that it is used as a term for instances when energy is channelled or translated *through* breath, rather than breath being the psychophysical energy itself. I also recognise that there are acting training practitioners who would argue that this is one and the same (see for example Zarrilli 2009).

139).⁴¹ In his interview, Oscar Giner spoke of a relationship between energy and intuition that reminded me of McCaw's sense of energy fluctuation:

Intuition channels energy. It is the channel for which energy comes out... you may not be aware of it, and it certainly it can be adopted or dwarfed or guided by other psychological states, but it seems to me that at its at its barest level... it is the mechanism that is going to direct a channel of energy... most people think of intuition as something that you take from something else you know that that allows you to detect something, but intuition seems to me outward directed. You know, in terms of energy, there's no way to take something in if you haven't projected some kind of energy (Giner 2021).

Here, I interpret Giner making an important distinction between intuition as a way of knowing and energy as the affective channel for this knowing, which echoes Lisa Feldman Barrett's affective circumplex (see Figure 2.1 below). By analysing these different perspectives on energy and affect together, I consider how affect may overlap with McCaw and Giner's sense of energy, where it is described as both an adaptable and relational phenomenon that intuition is able to channel (see above).

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Figure 2.1.: Affective circumplex (Illustration by Aaron Scott in Barrett 2017: 74).

In this affective circumplex (above), affect is illustrated to work with and between shifts and degrees of *valence* and *arousal*. These points of valence and arousal produce different experiences and sensations of energy, such as, for example, lethargy, elation, distress, and calm. When I consider these various states of valence and arousal, I come to understand affect *as* energy, which as Giner mentioned, is susceptible to being influenced; and as McCaw stated, increases and decreases, depending on what it is influenced by.

⁴¹ See chapter four section 3.2.4. for a further discussion on the actor's psychophysical energy.

In analysing affect as energy within a REC framework, where affect is its own cognitive process that would be mutually shaped by the self and environment, I then consider how energy flows between the environment and the actor in order to shape and create affect, which then impacts what is intuitively perceived and the ability to perceive intuitively. On this point, I recall Michael Chekhov's notion of *radiation* - "what we radiate has to do with will and feelings" (1985: 32). Radiation is recognised as the actor's ability to project their energy into the environment (ibid.: 124). In analysing Chekhov's notion of radiation in relation to energy as affect, I propose how energy may be experienced as three affective states which work congruently in intuition as an *energetic* sensitivity. First, there is the constant energy state an actor experiences as a general mood, which I would describe as an underlying affective state. This would be their day-to-day feelings. Second, there is intuition's governing will I mentioned in chapter one section 1.1., which I would describe as a driving affective state. This would be the actors' unique felt sensation of their intuition (more to come). Third, there are the affective responses that transpire in performance and rehearsals which are guided and elicited by both the driving and underlying affective states. These would be the actor's intuitions.⁴² I propose that each of these three affective states impact on and are impacted by the actor's environment.

To discuss the first and third affective state, I refer back to the discussion in chapter one section 1.2.2. where I stated that affect is a constant process of interoceptive sensation that is independent of emotion (Barrett 2020: 105). If actors are continuously generating affect, then I suggest that by acting intuitively, accessing affective responses will be an effortless endeavour if an actor is attuned to their energy. I propose that an awareness of how to use and identify these present feelings (affects), and to then translate and adapt these affects into a performance, would be intuitive. This would be an alternative approach to current acting training techniques that I identified (see chapter one section 1.2.1.) which, for example, encourages actors to use action to arouse or simulate affect.⁴³

I suggest that the affective states I discussed above work congruently and are dependent on intuition's governing will as a driving affective state. Intuition is recognised as being affectively distinct from other cognitive processes (Vaughan 1979: 134; Sumedho 2004: 57), which is what makes an individual aware that they are having an intuition to begin with. Commonly, this distinct feeling is referred to as a *gut feeling* (Mayer 2018; Nyatanga & de Vocht 2008). In this research I refer to a gut feeling as a

⁴² This is not to say that all intuitions manifest as affects. Intuitions may also present themselves as visualisations (Vaughan 1979: 171). However, I would be inclined to argue that regardless of how they present themselves, intuitions are all experienced affectively, which is what alerts an individual to the fact that they are having an intuition.

⁴³ Many of the rehearsal rooms I have been in encourage actors to 'use what they are feeling'. It is my observation that what is being referred to in these instances is framed within Stanislavski and Strasberg's techniques of affective and sensory recall, where an actor's personal memories are aroused to generate feeling (see Merlin 2014: 196). When I refer to translating and adapting affect in performance, I am referring to an actor's immediate affective states. I argue that affects are not reliant on consciously recalling memories. On this note, I would like to point out that neuroscientific research is still trying to understand how memory works (see Hutto & Myin 2018; Gallagher 2017; De Brigard 2013). I would therefore caution researchers on making definitive conclusions about the role of memory in acting techniques.

governing will (see chapter one section 1.1.1.). In attempting to cultivate a deeper understanding of intuition's governing will as an affective state, I consider the psychotherapist Eugene Gendlin's practice of the *felt sense* as a useful example of how a governing will may manifest affectively (see below).

Sometimes we have experiences that cross the line between thought, feeling, desire, image, and sheer body sensation... but a felt sense differs from them all. It's a bodily sense of some situation, problem, or aspect of one's life. Usually a felt sense must be allowed to come; it's not already there...It *comes* freshly, in something like the way tearfulness or yawning *comes* in us (Gendlin 1996: 19-20, original emphasis).

I find correlations between Gendlin's felt sense and intuition's governing will as an affective state which guides an intuiter. The feeling that one is being guided by this will, rather than being in control and exercising willpower, is influenced by the fact that intuition's governing will may be experienced as an affective state – it “comes to us,” as Gendlin states. Therefore, I suggest that becoming aware of intuition's governing will as a driving affective state may be possible by attuning to one's affects. By attuning to one's affects, intuition may then be “allowed to come,” as Gendlin notes. In other words, attunement allows intuition's governing will to “come to” an intuiter because it is a result of being energetically sensitive to, and aware of, oneself. As an example of intuition's governing will, I refer to how Carol Ann Holness described the feeling of her intuition during her interview:

It was excitement, a kind of tingling.... It was a prickly kind of excitement... and suddenly, I knew what to do, without even thinking (Holness 2020).

Holness' identification of knowing what to do and not stopping to analyse it alludes to how I frame intuition's governing will; the distinct sensation which drives intuitive action. Interestingly, I also note how she referred to this as being “kind of” like something else. Moshé Feldenkrais states that articulations of affective experiences will often refer to them as being *like* something because affects exist within the sensory, kinesthetic experience (2002: 152). “Affect arises in the midst of in-betweenness: in the capacities to act and be acted upon” (Gregg & Seigworth 2010: 1), which I stated in chapter one section 1.1.2. is also the case for dynamic experiences like intuition. In other words, it is the affect which carries intuition, rather than a verbal articulation thereof in its aftermath.⁴⁴

Understood as an affect driven process, intuition may be understood as an *embodied* cognitive process that is somatically experienced. The process of awareness and attunement I argue intuition requires ultimately allows an actor to cultivate a discernment of their intuition. This discernment impacts the

⁴⁴ I would go as far as to argue that this may be the case for all cognitive processes. In sharing a thought, for example, it is the content of the thought that is shared. The process of thinking itself is not what is articulated.

actor's ability to recognise and distinguish their intuition (because of its governing will) from other affective states, as well as the ability to become aware of rising intuitions.⁴⁵

2.2.2. Attunement and presence: expanding the field of energetic sensitivity

For perception to become intuitive, I suggest that it requires an awareness of both self and space. In the previous sub-section I discussed awareness in connection with affectual discernment. In this sub-section I focus my discussion on awareness of the self *in space*. Here I conceptualise intuition as an embodied cognitive process by analysing intuition in relation to the dynamics of an environment, which includes the self as one dynamic component. To facilitate this discussion, I consider attunement alongside the notion of presence. However, to move forward with this discussion in a significant way, I must first distinguish intuition from tacit knowledge and instinct.

There is research which suggests that intuition is a product of tacit knowledge (see Pretz 2008; Lieberman 2000; Seligman & Kahana 2009; Wan et al. 2012). There are also acting practitioners that synonymise intuition with instinct (see Zarrilli 2009; Zaporah 1995; Meisner & Longwell 1987). Intuitions that arise from tacit knowledge are also known as *routine intuitions*, which would account for skills that are not reliant on being consciously thought of (i.e., expertise skills) (Li 2014: 32). Examples of the actor's tacit knowledges would be their acting training, performance experience, and their *foundational practice* (Evans 2014: 149) – the embodied knowledges which come from practices unique to the actor's culmination of skills and practices. Additionally, tacit knowledge may also account for knowledge acquired because of practice; the knack of knowing that comes from processes of doing. Yet if intuitions were reducible to tacit knowledge, I questioned why there are actors who are skilled but not intuitive. Carol Ann Holness offered an observation on my question during her interview:

I can't say that it will be harmful to have that background [of acting training]. But I don't think relying on it can make you get there and be a great [intuitive] actor (Holness 2020).

During his interview, Oscar Giner shared how a lack of intuition influences an actor's ability to adapt to performance environments, despite their training (see below)

It becomes actually very interesting when you have actors who have performed in traditional theatres and then you take them outside.... you know they become confused... but the great ones, it seems to me, with intuition, always at some point find a way to adapt (Giner 2021).⁴⁶

⁴⁵ In this way, my method to develop intuition approaches awareness similarly to *Sensory Awareness* – as a process that encourages an individual to be radically discerning of their sensations. However, whereas Charlotte Selver was explicit in saying that *Sensory Awareness* does not aim to generate techniques or skills (Lowe & Laeng-Gilliatt 2007: 27), my method does, and for actors.

⁴⁶ I find it interesting that Giner and Holness referred to intuitive actors as great actors.

If an actor's intuition is their expertise, then it stands to reason that skilled people with acute memories could all claim that they are intuitive (see Vaughan 1979: 87-8). This would imply that anyone could become a 'great' actor if they trained long and hard enough, which I have not yet found to be the case. As a provocative case-in-point, Stanislavski is suspected of being an actor who struggled to produce the emotional authenticity he advocated for (Merlin 2016: 38). In my experience, I found that there are well-trained actors who have unquestionable passion and technical proficiency, yet they lack an intuition for their craft. On this matter, David Shirley spoke to me about the importance of *artistic sensibility*:

Your personality is important... So, for example... not everybody has artistic sensibility....and they're very accomplished and delightful human beings... I think life experience for an artist is only meaningful if that actor has an artistic temperament (Shirley 2021).

Reflecting on what artistic temperament/sensibility could mean for intuition, I reframe the role of tacit knowledge in intuition. I suggest that while tacit knowledge may pivot an actor's intuitive behaviour, it is not intuition itself. I concede that an actor's tacit knowledges may provide them with a vast vocabulary of action, but skills and knowledge are not the sum of intuition. I make this distinction by conceptualising intuition as a cognitive process; as a way of *knowing*, whereas tacit knowledge or expertise skill would be *knowledges*. Knowledge and knowing are not the same things (Dörfler & Ackermann 2012: 551; Polanyi 1969: 144), and as such, knowing cannot be reduced to or equated to knowledge (Li 2014: 32).

I do not think that an argument which proposes that acting training becomes intuitive or makes an actor intuitive would be well-supported by the training community. There is a difference between knowledges that can be implemented 'without thinking about it' and intuition. Phillip Zarrilli makes this precise distinction in his 2001 article, *Negotiating Performance Epistemologies*.

By 'pragmatic/intuitive knowledges' I do not mean our common place use of the term 'intuition', but rather, the skilled ability to deploy kinesthetic/bodymind 'knowledge' in the 'flow' of the moment, the kind of 'practical professional'...which, over time, becomes sedimented (Zarrilli 2001: 44).

I interpret Zarrilli to mean that, for example, an actor 'unconsciously' recalling a vocal technique during a line of dialogue where they must shout but also protect their voice, would not be intuitive; it is an embodied skill from their acting training that is refined through practice (and possibly a mastery of that technique). Although it is a tacit knowledge, it is still not a knowledge that became known through an attunement within the environment, as I argue intuitions are.

When I consider how environments are constantly changing, I propose that it is the *dynamics* of an environment that the actor becomes energetically sensitive to. These dynamics are specific to each space-time that an actor is present in, and these dynamics are not things which may be anticipated, even by a skilled actor. Shirley referred to these dynamics when he shared his experience of comedic acting. In his interview, he mentioned how his intuition guided the timing and tempo (what I would call the dynamic variables) of his comedic performances.

The placement of the line or a gag, or the timing that goes around a particular delivery of a thing is really based on intuition. Every night, you have to place the laugh differently because the nature of the audience is different. So, if you do it the same every night, you miss it. But if you allow your intuition to connect with the audience and feel their energy, then you place the line in a different way, and then you get the laugh (Shirley 2021).

When I analyse what Shirley shared with me, I suspect that the conflation between tacit knowledge and intuition may be due to the nebulous nature of intuition, where ‘reflexive’ and instinctive behavior has also been woven into its parlance. My suspicion was echoed by Giner (see below).

It seems to me that there's so many things that have been - whatever you don't understand you sort of pile up in there (Giner 2021).

I suggest that notions such as tacit knowledge and instinct have become synonymous with intuition precisely because it has been psychologically classified as a rapid, unconscious process (see Lieberman 2000; Seligman & Kahana 2009). Such classification makes intuition difficult to measure by cognitive standards and thus susceptible to conflations with established theories of cognitive processing. As scientific research continues to shape Euro-American perspectives of knowledge, beliefs about what intuition is will invariably continue to be steered by cognitive discourse (Li 2014: 28-9) which as aforementioned, is dominated by predictive processing theories and computational accounts of the brain (Gallagher 2017: 13).

For Feldenkrais, instincts are tacit knowledges which come from habitual responses, enabling mindlessly enacted behaviour. He states that people believe they have instincts “because [they] see animals having ready-made sets of responses that are set going with very little individual experience” (2002: 36). However, he argues that human development is potentially boundless, thanks to degeneracy and neurogenesis (see chapter one section 1.2.3.).

I know that our consciousness and awareness can grow. As these functions come to be properly understood and developed, we will be able to bite off, chew, and assimilate a much greater chunk of Reality. This is possible because, from the very start of our lives, our nervous system is not bound by any reality: it is a tabula rasa when we come into the world. On

a clean board you can write anything, and to make any new writing on the nervous system meaningful and superior, this new writing must be based on our choice and not upon chance (Feldenkrais 2010: 48).

Feldenkrais's perspectives on instinct and learning are supported by embodied cognitive research. Learning has been linked to the body's nervous and skeletal-muscular systems (see De Brigard 2013), rather than to a specific part of the brain or to 'unconscious' processes that would reinforce the common conception of instinct. The belief that humans have an 'instinctive' part of the brain, and that specific parts of the brain are responsible for different things, can be traced back to the *triune brain theory*. This theory has mistakenly fueled the long-standing belief that we have emotional, instinctual, and rational 'areas' in our brains. This was debunked in neuroscience in the 1990s (see Barrett 2020: 13-28).

Importantly, I am not suggesting that intuition can or should replace all acting training or life experience, nor am I insinuating that people do not sometimes behave in seemingly mindless ways. What I am suggesting is that it is a mistake to think that training and habitual behaviour *are* intuition. In doing this, one risks acting without awareness and intention. Automatic, habitual behaviour is unrelated to intuition as I conceptualise it in this research. Intuition requires an actor to be present and aware and to attune to both themselves and their environment. As a way of knowing that is intentional and sensitive, I argue that the actor's intuition is a cognitive process that can be developed through awareness, rather than by the acquisition of more acting skills or 'harder' practice.

In conceptualising intuition as an embodied cognitive process, I consider the role attention plays within and for attunement to enable energetic sensitivity. Attention is recognised as a crucial component of both awareness and embodiment (Mehling et al. 2012). Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi argues that attention is "our most important tool in the task of improving the quality of experience" (1990: 30). "Careful attention to the present moment takes us into a different understanding, an embodying of ourselves, which reveals our participation in the world" (Watson 2017: 277). Attention allows people to perceive without preconceptions (Sumedho 2004: 153).

The power of attention has been recognised in recent psychological research as foundational in bringing cognitive processes previously classified as subconscious into conscious awareness (see Morris 2021). Yet the ability of attention to foster awareness of 'subconscious' processes is not a new discovery. Somatic practices have been utilising attention to influence cognitive development since their inception (Fraleigh 2015: 15; Feldenkrais 2010: 7; Hanna 1988: 95).

In conceptualising intuition as an embodied cognition, I consider how the notion of the actor's *presence* may benefit from being framed as intentional attention when perception becomes intuitive. Presence is

an important component of an actor's performance process. Presence is said to make actors and their performances alive and purposeful (McCaw 2015; Rodenburg 2008). Patsy Rodenburg states that when operating from a state of presence, "your energy is focused. It moves out toward the object of your *attention*, touches it, and then receives energy back from it" (2008: 19, my emphasis). Lois Isenman suggests that presence is imperative in engaging intuition, as it creates the instantaneous sense of experiential immersion while responding to the "myriad layers of experience that shape the moment" (2018: 209). Ernst Cassirer refers to intuition as "the presence of the present" (2013: 331). Similarly, Sumedho (2004: 127) states that intuition requires "...a simple, immanent act of attention" that is achieved through the "open, relaxed listening" when an intuiter is present.

In Kristine Landon-Smith's interview, she mentioned the correlation between presence and intuition in her work:

I'm present so present that if something happens, I can pick it up. I don't miss it. I don't miss anything. And I think there's something around that level of presence [and intuition] (Landon-Smith 2020).

I note how Landon-Smith's experience of being present enables a perception of her environment that she regards as being inclusive, where she can attend to both the contents and the dynamics of her environment, just as I suggest intuition facilitates.

In summary, I argue that intuition is a cognitive process of knowing which relies on attention, awareness, attunement, and affect. To be energetically sensitive, I suggest that actors must become aware of their affective states by attuning to both themselves and their environments, and that this attunement is made possible by being present. Thus, I argue that perception becomes intuitive through attunement, which is made possible by awareness when awareness is achieved through focused attention (i.e., presence). Herein, intuition works in accordance with a REC framework as a cognitive process that relies on the dynamic coupling between the actor and the environment in order to facilitate attunement.

2.3. SUSTAINING ENERGETIC SENSITIVITY: INTUITION AS A COGNITIVE STATE

In this section I conceptualise intuition as an embodied cognitive state. As I stated in chapter one section 1.2.1., I define a cognitive state to be a sustained cognitive process (i.e., a state of mind). In chapter one section 1.2.1. I discussed the differences between the actor's state of mind in a rehearsal and performance environment. I proposed that sustaining intuition as a cognitive state during a performance would enable actors to access a creative state of mind that is desirable for performance purposes. In this

section I discuss how intuition as a cognitive state is possible by using absorption and meta-awareness to engage the components of its process, namely attention, awareness, attunement, and affect.

2.3.1. Going against the flow

Research regarding *flow* (Czikszenmihalyi 1990) and acting (see Evans 2009; Panero 2019; Silberschatz 2013; Robb & Davies 2015) provided an established body of literature which initially appeared to echo my hypotheses on intuition (see chapter one section 1.1.). However, when I investigated flow as it was originally conceptualised by Mihaly Czikszenmihalyi, I found a discrepancy in flow's reliance on goal-orientated and outcome-based behaviour (see Robb & Davies 2015; Huskey, Craighead, Miller & Weber 2018; Jackson & Marsh 1996) and the experiential and immersive nature I had experienced whilst acting in an intuitive state.⁴⁷

Czikszenmihalyi (1990: 6) defined flow as “the optimal state of experience.” For flow to be achieved, “attention is invested in realistic goals” and the “skills match the opportunities for action,” meaning that the goal is obtainable and does not surpass the skill level of the individual trying to achieve the goal. In flow, it is the process of pursuing the goal that “brings order in awareness,” because in order for the goal to be obtained, the “person must concentrate [their] attention on the task at hand and momentarily forget everything else.” Flow intrinsically depends on an objective-driven experience (ibid.: 6, 39, 41).

Most acting training encourages actors to apply **dual consciousness** in performance so that they may invest their attention in their goals (see Merlin 2014: 41; Silberschatz 2013: 15; Panero 2019: 9). Bella Merlin promotes dual consciousness as a technical necessity, stating that “we can't do our work without it” (2016: 18), and that the balance between playing a character whilst being conscious of oneself as the actor playing the character is “a crucial part of our craftsmanship as actors” (ibid.: 35). Flow is then said to be achieved because the actor has fixed objectives (e.g., emotional cues) that they apply their skills to (i.e., acting techniques). Actors then ‘master’ the objective through dual consciousness. In short, flow is said to transpire when an actor finds a harmony between *portraying* a character and *playing* a character.

While intuition as it is conceptualised in this research necessitates attention similarly to flow, I suggest that intuition relies on the actor's attention to shift into an experience *without* a fixed directive. I argue that intuition requires an actor to be present to the dynamics of an environment instead. As such, an application of attention for and in intuition may be counterproductive to the goal-driven experience of

⁴⁷ It is not my intention to argue against the broader conceptualization of flow in acting discourse. I am only challenging how it may fuel misconceptions regarding intuition.

flow. For Csikszentmihalyi, flow is what follows from a devoted attention in instances of trying to master a challenge (1990: 39; 48). Whereas intuition is marked by an awareness and attentional focus that is dedicated to immersion, rather than mastery. For this reason, I suggest that *absorption* may serve intuition better than flow.

2.3.2. Absorbed in the moment: sustaining intuition as a state

Originating from Auke Tellegen and Gilbert Atkinson's psychological research in 1974, absorption was first studied as a trait linked to hypnotic susceptibility. Tellegen and Atkinson defined absorption as "a disposition for having episodes of 'total' attention that fully engage one's... perceptual, enactive, imaginative and ideational resources" which they suggested is related to "a heightened sense of the reality of the attentional object, imperviousness to distracting events, and... an empathetically altered sense of self" (ibid.: 268). Tellegen and Atkinson created a psychological measure known as the absorption trait scale. The scale is a broad measure which accounts for an individual's tendencies to be impulsive or cautious, to trust, disassociate, and be open to experiences (ibid.: 272).

In recent research, absorption is recognised as "a disposition for having episodes of complete focus on an object... The episodes of absorption likely result from a heightened sense of reality ..." (Panero 2019: 7). In other words, people who are susceptible to absorption are likely to experience the task they are involved in as a reality (Lifshitz, van Elk & Lurhmann 2019). Ulrich Ott refers to absorption as a state (rather than a trait) which is "part of everyday life. When watching television or reading a book, [people] become so engrossed in the presented story that they completely forget their surroundings" (2007: 257). Subsequent research on absorption is undecided as to whether it is a cognitive state or personality trait (Roche & McConkey 1990: 92).

In her interview, Vida Midgelow touched on intuition's connection to absorption when she spoke about how when working within an intuitive state, her sense of timing disappears:

It has an immersedness that is outside of time, which is what I mean when I say it has a lostness to it (Midgelow 2020).

Absorption has briefly been linked to acting (see Panero 2019; McFarren 2003) but I did not yet find it to be connected to intuition. I suggest that absorption shares similarities with what actors would express as 'losing' themselves in a performance (more in the following section). McCaw states that actors "can transcend [their] immediate surroundings by acts of... imagination; [they] can 'forget' [themselves]... and become oblivious to [their] surroundings" (2020: 91). "Absorption seems to facilitate the individual's capacity to experience they imagined in a way that feels *sensory*" (Lifshitz, van Elk &

Lurhmann 2019: 9, original emphasis). Absorption is “associated with vivid mental imagery and altered agency, and with enthusiasm for nature, literature, music and an openness to experience in general” (Lifshitz, van Elk & Lurhmann 2019: 1). People who demonstrate a proclivity for absorption can become immersed in fictional worlds because they are “able to blur the boundaries between mind and world, between imagination and perception, so that the invisible and immaterial... can come to seem more real” (ibid.: 2).

During her interview, Holness spoke of the interconnected nature of intuition and how it relies on various aspects of oneself which echoed my understanding of intuition as cognitive state that immerses an individual into an experience:

It's kind of magical... I feel like when you feel connected to the bigger thing, the universe, or the universal force...Even if it's just a feeling... it's just a feeling of wholeness - if you like - connectedness.... (Holness 2020).

I consider how Holness’s emphasis of intuition being a connecting experience, and which Midgellow frames as being outside of time, echoes my sense of it being an embodied cognitive state that works affectively *between* an actor and their environment through a process of attunement. Moreover, I would suggest that Holness’s sense that her intuition connects her to a bigger force also directly correlates with absorption. While absorbed, an individual is likely to have spiritual-like experiences of awe (Lifshitz, van Elk & Lurhmann 2019: 8). Additionally, there are correlations between how Holness spoke of this force and how I see intuition’s governing will – as a driving affect which directs the actor’s responses, without the actor trying to wilfully control the course of events.

2.3.3. Employing meta-awareness instead of dual consciousness

While dual consciousness may work in a relationship with flow, I suggest that when acting intuitively, the actor may be served instead by employing **meta-awareness**, as defined and applied by John Dunne, Evan Thompson & Jonathan Schooler (2019). Meta-awareness is the process of an individual being aware of the experience they are having whilst simultaneously being absorbed in the experience. Meta-awareness is recognised as a pivotal component of most mindfulness practices (ibid.: 307). Meta-awareness is the “explicit awareness of the contents of consciousness.” It is also used synonymously with meta-consciousness (Schooler 2002: 339). Meta-awareness developed from *metacognition*, though they come to mean different experiences. Metacognition, as defined by John Flavell (1979) in the context of adolescent learning processes, means “knowledge and cognition about cognitive phenomena” (p. 906). “Metacognitive knowledge consists primarily of knowledge or beliefs about what factors or variables act and interact in what ways to affect the course and outcome of cognitive

enterprises” (ibid. 907). Metacognition “can be carried out without explicit awareness” whereas meta-awareness, a concept applied and created in response to mindfulness practices, is reliant on explicit awareness (Dunne, Thompson & Schooler 2019: 308), In my review and analysis of these two terms, meta-awareness seemed a closer fit with my conception of intuition than metacognition. Metacognition is described as “cognition about cognition” (ibid. 307) and meta-awareness as “the ability to take explicit note of the current contents of consciousness” (ibid. 308). The distinction for me lies in the role intention and attention plays, which I have already highlighted are integral to my conception of intuition.

Meta-awareness juxtaposes dual consciousness. I would argue that dual consciousness necessitates that the actor has an awareness of both themselves and character as distinctly separate entities. Meta-awareness requires an attending to the entire environment holistically. Put simply: meta-awareness is a process of abundance, rather than one of dividends. By applying meta-awareness to become absorbed in a performance, I suggest that intuition may become a sustained cognitive state, as the actor will then be able to facilitate an awareness of the experience as they experience it. This is contrary to an actor maintaining an awareness of themselves as both character and as the actor (dual consciousness) whilst performing in a flow state. In other words, I suggest that if actors become absorbed in the experience, rather than controlling or trying to steer how the situation unfolds, then they may be able to sustain intuition as a cognitive state, which would enable awareness of both self and space through the processes which underpin intuition as a cognitive process (i.e., affect, attention, and attunement). In psychology, this shift of focus is recognised as operating from the *experiential self* instead of a *narrative self* (Farb, Segal, Mayberg et al. 2007: 314), meaning that the individual’s attention is primarily placed on having the experience, rather than on reflecting on the fact that they are having an experience.

It is my opinion that dual consciousness may be an attractive solution for actors who do not want to ‘lose’ themselves in a performance. A reluctance to ‘lose’ oneself may be because immersion is often associated with psychological disorders such as boundary blurring, disassociation, and trauma (see Panero 2019). According to Thalia Goldstein however, “it is psychologically unknown whether a separation between self and character is necessary” or strictly speaking, possible (2018: 161). I would argue that dual consciousness leaves an actor susceptible to self-consciousness, rather than ensuring the absorption intuition requires to be sustained as a state. This argument was reflected back to me during Holness’s interview. She shared how dual consciousness during a performance, where she was led by her intuition, induced self-consciousness that made her doubt her intuition:

This little monkey on my shoulder said, ‘if you carry on like this, you can forget your lines. You’re not even thinking about your lines... you know, the longer you do this, the likelihood is, suddenly you’re going to fluff’ (Holness 2020).

According to Merlin, dual consciousness is meant to encourage intuition; “it links technique and inspiration in a way in which we can harness one to serve the other throughout all our creative work” (2001: 152). But if I analyse Holness’s experience, I am even more inclined to promote meta-awareness and absorption for actors who aim to sustain intuition as a cognitive state. A promotion of meta-awareness and absorption over dual consciousness and flow does not need to come at the expense of one’s training. During her interview, Midgelow explained that it is not possible to “separate your past experiences from where you are in that moment, having the intuition.”

Inherently, any kind of knowledges, whether we come to them by long hard slog of reading, or whether we come to them in what feels like an intuitive moment, are based on the many knowledges and influences, known or unknown to us, conscious or unconscious to us (Midgelow 2021).

Without going back down the rabbit hole of tacit knowledges, I highlight two important points brought up by Midgelow. The first being that if past experiences are shaping and informing action and knowledge, then I am inclined to agree with Goldstein’s assessment – a deliberate separation of self and character during a performance may not be necessary or even possible. Secondly, even though past experiences inform knowledges, it does not mean that present awareness cannot form and shape intuitive knowing that is dependent on the dynamics of an environment as I have previously suggested. A performance led from the intuitive state means that as an actor, I am giving myself the chance to be present to the performance to experience it, rather than to simultaneously try to reflect on it and structure it as I experience it, which is what I find dual consciousness encourages.

With that in mind, I argue that dual consciousness may encourage a divide not only between the actor and their character, but also between what is ‘real’ and ‘imagined.’ I suggest that a reaffirmed divide between the real and imagined during a performance may impact the actor’s ability to affectively connect with their work. This divide is fostered through the continuous albeit subtle affirmation that what the actor is doing is ‘not real’ and therefore creating a disconnect between how they employ their imagination. In support of my argument, Shaun Nichols states a divide between the real (being ‘in the world’) and the imagined (being ‘in the head’) reflects a *distinct cognitive attitude* about one’s imagination (2006: 19). He goes on to explain that “[b]elief is not at the whim of our intentions, but imagination is” (ibid.: 7). What I interpret Nichols to mean here is that the beliefs actors hold about their imagination may dictate the power they give it in performance and ultimately shape their experience of it in their acting. For example, if actors believe that what they are doing is ‘only imagined’, then they may struggle to affectively connect with their performance. Assuming an actor has no neuro or psychological divergencies to begin with, there are always going to be clear parameters between the ‘real’ and ‘the-real-as-imagined’ (Nichols 2006: 6). In other words, assuming that actors

have clear parameters of what constitutes their reality off-stage or screen, they should be able to immerse themselves in a performance *as its own reality* without ever ‘losing’ themselves.

Encouraging meta-awareness and absorption in order to sustain intuition as a cognitive state is also one of the central differences between acting intuitively and a Stanislavskian approach to acting. Stanislavski did not encourage *real* emotions. In a Stanislavskian approach to acting, “there’s a significant difference between *feeling the real emotion* and *believing the truthfulness of the emotion*” (Merin, 2014: 165, original emphasis). Actors are thus advised to “reconstruct all the experiences that the character has in the script”, identify through empathetic connections between oneself and their character, and identify their character’s objectives so that there is a logic and sequence to action (ibid.: 165-6). However, in reviewing what I have discussed regarding feeling and cognition so far, I would argue that actors can only ever *really* feel their feelings and emotions, regardless of whether they choose to arouse them intuitively or through other techniques.

The actor has one imagination that needs to serve them in their daily lives as well as their career (van Mulukom & de Wet 2021; see also Gallagher & Gallagher 2018). By acting intuitively, the actor immerses themselves in the narrative the same way a child would in play. I recognise that the stakes may be raised for an adult actor; the circumstances may be morally and ethically complex, as well as there being financial implications for the performance’s success or failure. Nevertheless, if it can be accepted that the rules which govern a narrative reality differ from one’s own, but do not make it *less real* because it is so, then I propose the actor can sustain their intuition through absorption and meta-awareness. Using imagination in this way is the difference between employing what Stanislavski called the *Magic If* and what I refer to in acting intuitively as *What Is* (see chapter three section 3.3.1.1.).

Acting intuitively does not put an actor at risk of losing themselves. By acting intuitively, the only thing an actor temporarily ‘loses’ is their ego so that they can immerse themselves into an experience. In doing this, the actor lets go of an awareness of themselves in a particular time, as Middelton also stated in her interview (see page 44). Jane Hirshfield offers an articulation of this egocentric lostness in the context of experiential attention: “The self isn’t lost; it’s just not constricted into a clenched fist” (in Watson 2017: 157). Nevertheless, I can concede that there may be a discomfort in shifting perspectives off the familiar psychological narratives of acting. However, as I will demonstrate in chapter three, intuition still considers the actor’s emotional safety by encouraging affective-led action that is sensitive to the dynamics of an environment, rather than being aroused through personal memories, for example.⁴⁸ Even so, I recognise that this does not free intuition from being a vulnerable experience.

⁴⁸ Strasberg’s *Method Acting* does this and is criticised for it (see McFarren 2003; Merlin 2014; Gordon 2010).

Intuition requires a willingness to let go of all the things you think you know in favour of things that other people or situations know (Shirley 2021).

I heed Herbert Blau when he states that “there is no performance without the always vulnerable, material body” of the actor (2011: 100), and that some fear and risk are inevitably part of the deal that actors sign up for when they agree to use themselves as mediums for storytelling (ibid.: 136). As a cognitive process and state which relies on feeling and sensing as ways of knowing, intuition’s vulnerability may come from letting go of control, as I suggest intuition’s governing will requires; of letting go of “all the things you think you know” in order to become intuitively perceptive, as Shirley mentioned in his interview (see above). By letting go of trying to control an experience in order to become absorbed in it, I suggest that intuition may be sustained because the actor is allowing themselves to be present, attuned, and meta-aware. In this way, intuition is about losing inhibitions, rather than one’s selfhood or sense thereof.

To this end, I note that acting trainers and directors will often tell actors to “get out of our own way” (Merlin 2016: 118). In my experience, I have found that what they mean by this is that actors should trust that they have done the necessary work and preparation in their training and are now able to perform; to not ‘overthink’ what they are doing. In acting intuitively, I suggest that getting out of one’s way means unplugging the narrative self – the self that attempts to dictate and control the experience – in order to let the experiential self flourish. If the actor is able to relinquish themselves in this way, I suggest that intuition’s governing will can take the lead and silence preconceived ideas and desires of how things ‘should’ be. By acting intuitively, ‘getting out of one’s way’ becomes about attunement rather than ‘overthinking’.

In summary, I propose that intuition can be experienced as a cognitive state if the actor is able to absorb themselves into the experience by using meta-awareness. As a sustained state, I argue that intuition is driven by that which constitutes its process: the attunement to and with affect, awareness, and attention. By attuning to the dynamic coupling between the self in space through an awareness thereof, I suggest that intuition may then be enacted, and further sustained when the actor, using their intuition, becomes absorbed. Such absorption facilitates an experience of the performance as its own reality and therefore enables intuitive perception.

2.4. MOVING INTO CHAPTER THREE

In this chapter I conceptualised intuition as an embodied cognitive process and state by extending on its definition that I introduced in chapter one. As an energetic sensitivity, I propose that intuition is reliant on the dynamic coupling between the actor and their environment. I situated this proposition

within a radically enactive cognitive framework. I have suggested that intuition transpires when the actor is able to attune to the dynamics of an environment by being energetically sensitive to it. I demonstrated that as a cognitive process, intuition relies on attunement, attention, affect, and awareness. As a cognitive state, I proposed that it is sustained as a process via absorption achieved through meta-awareness.

The conceptualisation of intuition in this chapter provides an alternative account of intuition to that of it being a gift from muses, or as a phenomenon hidden within the subconscious mind. In this research I suggest that intuition is an embodied cognition which considers cognition in accordance with a soma; where feeling, sensing, thinking, and doing work collaboratively and influentially between a self and space. It is within this somatic-scientific merger that cognitive processes come to be studied as somatic experiences, which impacts how intuition functions as a cognitive process and state. In this conceptualisation of intuition, affect becomes important component of cognition which may precede 'rational' 'conscious' thought, but is not less than it.

This chapter was guided by a discussion which sought to explore beliefs and perspectives of intuition. Subsequently, the discussion of this chapter permeated how beliefs on intuition can influence perspectives and beliefs of perception, affect, energy, and cognition as well. Reflecting on some of these perspectives, I suggest that intuition's unfavourable reputation in previous scholarship has more to do with beliefs upheld by predictive processing theory about cognition than about the process itself and what its potential is. As professor of cognitive studies Jonathan Evans notes, "[t]he difference is between what people are able to do and what they are inclined to do" (2008: 262).

It's really important for us to arrive at a fuller understanding of what intuition is. I think it's more important now than ever because we're in a place of change for acting training. Quite rightly, we need to reset as a result of lots and lots of social and political agendas to do with inclusivity and transparency and availability, so I think the whole notion of what it is to train an actor is up for discussion. An understanding of intuition comes from a deep place and we live in a world unfortunately where there isn't a lot of deep learning at the moment (Shirley 2021).

I would say that intuition encourages this deep learning Shirley speaks of; learning which requires the same awareness and attention used in its own process of development and exploration. Hutto and Myin note how REC requires a reframing of cognition's processes and purposes, ultimately posing a challenge for "how we think about minds" (2018:111). In the same way, I offer that the conceptualisation of intuition within a REC framework not only challenges current predispositions of intuition, but also what it may facilitate and make possible for actors in performance as an embodied cognitive state and process within contemporary practice, and to this end, how we think about intuition and acting training moving forward.

CHAPTER THREE

ACTING INTUITIVELY: KNOWING HOW

In chapter one I defined the actor's intuition as an energetic sensitivity and proposed that it may be developable. In chapter two I expanded on intuition's definition and conceptualised it as an embodied cognition. In this chapter I will analyse the somatic method I created to develop the actor's intuition. This chapter touches shoulders with the second aim of the inquiry, which was to create the acting training method.⁴⁹ The primary focus of this chapter is the third aim of the research, which is to assess the efficacy of the method.

To assess the efficacy of the acting training method, I analyse it in three parts. First, I will discuss the acting training *as* a method; what I call the *skeleton* of the training. I will then analyse four of the 13 techniques that the method is comprised of in detail; what I deem to be a part of the training's *flesh*. Finally, I will analyse the quantitative data produced by the surveys and behavioural tasks against the qualitative data produced by the actor-participants' experiences of the techniques. This analysis is done to create a robust account of the method within the interdisciplinary model used to shape this Practice as Research PaR project (see chapter one section 1.3.1). An overview of all 13 techniques, as well as the accompanying journal tasks, may be found in Appendix A.

3.1. A background on the workshops and the actor-participants

The background information on the actor-participants was gathered from brief interviews they had with me and the surveys they completed prior to exploring the training method. I held these preliminary interviews to assess their suitability for the study. While the purpose of the pre-surveys was to collect psychological data (see section 3.4.), they also provided an effective way to gather basic information about the participants.

This project initially garnered interest from 40 people. Each of these people were assigned a number randomly between one and 40. The actor-participants in this chapter are thus referred to as, for example, AP1 or AP40. I ended up sharing the training method with 22 of these 40 people. Of these 22 people, only 20 completed the training. Of the 20 who completed the training, 11 were male and 9 were female. The participants ranged between the ages of 18 and 60 and lived in North America (USA), Australia (AUS), South Africa (SA), and the United Kingdom (UK) at the time of the training. Henceforth, the actor-participants will be referred to as *APs*.

⁴⁹ The acting training method was examined at Coventry University on the 17th of May 2022 as an interdependent component of this PhD project. Refer back to chapter one section 1.3.2. where I discuss the relationship between the acting training method and this thesis.

In this chapter I refer to the APs by the pronoun *they*. I also do not specify their nationalities. These two decisions are a response to the ethical approval granted to this project by Coventry University which protects the APs' anonymity. I do not intend to perpetuate universalisms intentionally or otherwise with these decisions. I am also not insensitive to people who purposefully choose to identify with the pronoun *they*. I discuss the influence of cultural, nationality, and gender in this study specifically in section 3.4.2.5. and in chapter four section 4.2.

The APs all spoke and read English. None of the APs declared any neurological divergencies, physical disabilities, or asked for specific access requirements during their participation. As this research works within the realm of cognitive science, a self-report of the AP's neurological statuses was important to establish. A group with no neurological divergences creates a standardised sample that offers fewer volatile variables to consider in data analysis. As this research also works within realms of somatics, I am aware as to how disabilities and neurodivergence could have shaped the APs experiences of the training, and as such, I would have wanted to account for these variables should they have been present.

The acting method was explored in workshops that I hosted online using the Zoom platform. Hosting the workshops online was a response to the COVID-19 pandemic which influenced global states of lockdown and prohibited face-to-face training (see chapter four section 4.3.1. for more). APs were recruited by advertising the workshops to conservatoires, universities, talent agencies, and to people who completed a complimentary questionnaire posted on an acting sub-group on the social media website REDDIT.⁵⁰

The APs in groups one and four were acting students. The APs in groups two and three were a combination of professional and amateur actors. The APs in groups one, two, and three were all remote attendees. The APs in group four attended the workshops together, in-person, and I attended remotely. I originally anticipated that I would only use acting students for this research. However, by moving the workshops online, I was able to access a wider pool of participants without impacting the study's ethical parameters (see Appendix C).

Each group had between three and six workshops with a total of 15-18 contact hours. Contact hours varied based on the group's schedule and was sometimes influenced by collective fatigue during a session. Overall, the APs dedicated 22 hours to the training. Time outside of the contact hours was spent reading a script, doing journaling tasks, and completing the surveys (see Appendix B). I alternated

⁵⁰ This questionnaire was designed by me and Valerie van Mulukom. People who completed the questionnaire could opt in to be entered into a draw to be considered for the training. I then interviewed interested participants and selected them based on their suitability. To review this questionnaire in context of the complimentary research that developed from this PhD see *Such stuff as dreams are made on: Acting imagination and intuition are supported by interoceptive, exteroceptive, and immersive abilities* (van Mulukom & de Wet forthcoming).

between three scripts for these workshops: *The Humans* by Stephen Karam (2015), *Yen* by Anna Jordan (2015), and *Buried Child* by Sam Shepard (1978). The dynamics of each group guided me as to which script would be most suitable. Since this acting training method intends to be useful for actors within the mainstream industry, I wanted to offer the APs roles that they may realistically audition for. This meant that I chose these scripts based on their success within the mainstream and for having characters that would be demographically appropriate.

While I cannot make any definitive claims regarding the racial and cultural identity of each participant, I can offer the observation that the sample group was racially and culturally diverse. Unless the APs chose to discuss their cultural upbringings and racial identity in the workshops, I did not ask. Interestingly, no participant explicitly referred to their racial or cultural identity during the workshops.⁵¹ This inquiry does not intend to create a culturally specific method. As such, my analysis did not require the participants to divulge information regarding their culture or racial identity to analyse the method's efficacy. In this study I am interested in observing how this method can be useful to and inclusive of actors of different nationalities, races, and cultures, rather than focusing on the way the method is experienced by people because of these differences.

Each workshop consisted of several explorations, group discussions, and journaling tasks. The APs were guided by my facilitation in each workshop. The explorations were a combination of individual and partnered techniques (see Appendix A). The APs were allowed to ask me questions regarding the process. A favourable outcome of each exploration was never communicated to them. I did not design any of the techniques to have specific outcomes *per se*. Instead, the APs were encouraged to set intentions for each exploration and their process by using the ten agreements (see section 3.2.1.).

The APs were informed that they did not have to partake in any exploration if they did not feel up to it. An opportunity to act as a witness to another's process was offered as an alternative way to participate. I recognise witnessing as being a typical relational model in somatic practices.⁵² I reminded the APs throughout the workshops that the explorations and discussions should serve contexts of acting training. However, if their experiences prompted responses from outside of this context, I would navigate these discussions on a case-by-case basis.

I recorded the workshops with Zoom's built-in recording function to later analyse the method in practice. Recording the workshops this way also provided a way of documenting the group discussions. Part of Zoom's recording settings is that it can automatically produce transcripts. I used the transcripts

⁵¹ I discuss this as both a limitation of this study and a convention of cognitive science in chapter four section 4.2.2.

⁵² See Janet Adler's *Offering from the conscious body: the discipline of authentic movement* (2002) for more on witnessing.

in conjunction with the audio-visuals to analyse the group discussions. These recordings live on as documents which capture the method in practice during this PhD research and are protected by the ethics and data guidelines of Coventry University. A recording of a particular session is provided as an example which can be accessed via the following link: <https://youtu.be/Ps5s6iEY5RY>. The recording that can be found at the link above is one of four sessions that explored the method in its entirety.

At certain points in each workshop, I invited the APs to come into what I called the central space in order to host group discussions.⁵³ The central space referred to the space in the room they were in where the screen was that they used to connect with me. I would encourage them to shift their attention from the task they were currently busy with and onto their screens. I invited the APs to open the discussion with any observations that they felt were pertinent. Any questions I raised during these discussions were to help me to clarify a statement or to encourage a fleshier elaboration of an experience. I became involved if it was necessary to answer questions or if they addressed me directly. Although turns to speak are not generally encouraged in group discussions (Bohnsack 2005: 26), I offered invitations to hear an AP's thoughts if I got the sense that they were holding back or 'waiting' for the right moment to interject and not finding it.

After sensing that the APs had finished discussing, I would ask the group if they were comfortable to bring the discussion to a close. The group would collectively have to agree for us to do so.⁵⁴ The group discussions proved crucial in analysing the APs experiences of the method. The group discussions were also used by me during the workshops to keep track of their experiences during each session so that I could adjust the explorations and facilitation if necessary. When I share data generated from the group discussions in this chapter, I present it as an indented quotation in arial font.

Additionally, I respected that that not everyone may be comfortable within a discussion format, so I also encouraged journaling as a way to promote "confidence in responding to difficult and complex creative experiences" (Evans 2007: 71).⁵⁵ I encouraged the APs to shift between various modes of writing or mark-making if they wanted to. I mentioned free verse writing, drawing, lists, and descriptive writing to give the APs examples of what various modes of mark-making and writing may be. I also told them that these were only some examples. They were welcome to explore others. Data from the journals is presented in this chapter as images lifted from copies of the originals. Sometimes I group these images with data from the group discussions, in which case it is placed on the right-hand side of the image in arial font. If I group the image with an analysis provided by me, I put my analysis above, on the left, or below the image in times new roman font.

⁵³ Refer to chapter one section 1.3.2.3. where I outline group discussions as a method of data collection.

⁵⁴ My ability to sense these nuances is fostered by my previous experience as a lecturer and facilitator of performance practices.

⁵⁵ Refer to chapter one section 1.3.2.4. where I discuss journaling as a method of data collection.

3.2. THE SKELETON OF THE SOMATIC METHOD

In this section I analyse the training method’s design in accordance with the intention of developing the actor’s intuition. I discuss the method’s ten agreements and the roles that joy, language, and biofeedback took on in the training’s structure. At its core, this acting training method facilitates a process whereby an actor’s sensitivity to their energy (affect) is increased, and the effort and force they use to foster and engage with this sensitivity and their affect is decreased. This method does not offer techniques that aim to develop the actor’s vocal skills or their physical form. This is a training method which intends to help actors become energetically sensitive to the dynamics of their environments; to attune them to elements and aspects of space, time, and the relationships that fill and shape space and time; and to encourage an attunement to and awareness of their affective states.

3.2.1. The ten agreements as the bones of the method

I created ten agreements based on components relating to intuition’s development I saw arise between the literature and the semi-interviews I held.⁵⁶ I found that these agreements provided a lingua franca for the APs that could incorporate the cognitive science with the somatic knowledge driving the method. These agreements are useful in the process of developing intuition, experiencing each exploration, and the training overall. The agreements do not intend to develop an actor’s intuition themselves, they assist actors in the process of developing their intuition by serving as guided intentions. See below:

Agreement	Description	Influence
Joy in all things	<i>Joy is privileged above results and outcomes.</i>	Interview with David Shirley; elements of play (see section 3.2.2. for more).
Curiosity before criticality	<i>I experience rather than expect.</i>	Cultivating awareness and practicing discernment; interview with Vida Midgelow (see chapter two sections 2.1. and 2.2.).
I follow what arises	<i>I am attentive to images, symbols, words, thoughts or events that seem to occur effortlessly.</i>	Presence as attention; interoceptive awareness; interview with Vida Midgelow (chapter two section 2.2).
I relinquish myself to time and its ingredients	<i>There will always be enough.</i>	Absorption; presence as attention; meta-awareness (chapter two section 2.3).
I accept the environment as an active participant	<i>Everything I need is already manifest.</i>	REC; direct perception; attunement (chapter one section 1.1.2. and chapter two section 2.1.).
I play with trust, confidence, and freedom	<i>I know what I know, and I’m aware of what I don’t know.</i>	Cultivating awareness and practicing discernment; meta-awareness; interviews with David

⁵⁶ I embrace the term agreement to mean a harmony in the shared experience.

		Shirley, Kristine Landon-Smith, and Carol Holness (chapter two section 2.3.).
I come with what I have	<i>Everything is transitory.</i>	Cultivating awareness and practicing discernment (chapter two section 2.2.).
I am always only one part of a relationship	<i>First is what is, second is what I give, third is what I get.</i>	REC; direct perception; attunement (chapter one section 1.1.2. and chapter two section 2.1.).
Listening is an active, sensory experience	<i>I listen with my whole body.</i>	REC; direct perception; intuitive perception (chapter two sections 2.1. and 2.2.).
A performance is holistic	<i>I accept the scripted world as its own reality.</i>	Absorption; REC (chapter two section 2.3.2.).

The APs were invited to use any of the agreements as shifting intentions. Using the agreements in this way, the APs were encouraged to become aware of their unique process of developing intuition. The APs identified with the agreements and adopted them on their own accord during the training. Their agency in this matter was essential. As I noted in chapter one section 1.2.2., this method accounts for each actor’s personal uniqueness in both training processes and the development of their intuition. It was therefore important that the APs were able to shape their intentions in accordance with their individual needs.

At the end of every group’s training, I offered the APs the possibility to extend on or develop these agreements.⁵⁷ This created an opportunity for the APs to share their perspectives on the development of their intuition, as well as a way for me to analyse the agreements in context of the training method. In their final workshop AP37 shared the following:

Maybe the fact that everything that happens is perfect as is. You come in already ready and everything that rises... it's perfect as is (AP37 Session 3).

AP37 was in the final group that I explored this training with. I therefore did not get the chance to explore their suggestion with other participants. The acceptance that “everything that happens is perfect as [it] is” was, in my understanding, already accounted for by agreements *I come with what I have; I play with trust, confidence, and freedom; and I accept the environment as an active participant*. However, it may be that the agreements need to echo this more plainly in order to avoid ambiguity. It could also be that this was part of the wisdom that this training may have fostered for AP37 personally. I recognise an opportunity to investigate how the agreements could inspire actors to re-create or ‘update’ the agreements as their relationship with their intuition deepens and strengthens over time.

⁵⁷ This was a suggestion given to me by Emma Meehan during the early stages of the practice.

3.2.2. Joy as the bone marrow in the skeleton

I created this method with an intention to promote *joy in all things*, which is also listed in the previous section as one of the agreements of the method. This method aimed to cultivate joy through an application of a playful attitude in explorations which encouraged an absorptive (rather than outcome-orientated) process of development. In conceptualising intuition as an embodied cognition, I suggest that absorption is integral in encouraging intuition as a cognitive state for actors (see chapter two section 2.3.2.).

To centralise joy with the intention of facilitating an immersive experience, I explored the potential of play. Play is recognised as an effective way to develop intuition in contexts of psychotherapy (see for example Marks-Tarlow 2014). Play is recognised as being able to provide an attentive, freeing, exploratory experience for actors (McCaw 2020: 76). “Play reasserts diversity, change and unpredictability...” (Evans 2019: 181). The experience of joy through play is discussed by Mark Evans in *Performance, Movement and The Body* (2019). According to Evans, my intention to promote joy through play is a shared sentiment. For like-minded practitioners, play becomes “an attitude to the body, to the activity of performing...” (2019: 57). However, whereas Evans notes that established acting training approaches explore the *act of play* to enable a joy-filled attitude primarily through movement, I aimed to explore how a *playful attitude* within and to somatic explorations could cultivate joy and thus aid intuition’s development.⁵⁸

I distilled components of play from Evans’ analysis on how play is explored by practitioners such as Jacques Lecoq, Monika Pagneux, and Phillippe Gaulier (2019: 48-71). The components of play I incorporated are *imagination*, *freedom*, and *pleasure*. I then used these components to guide and structure the way the techniques were designed and the quality of their explorations. To provide an example of how this works in the method, I refer to AP18’s experience of the Inter/outer/play technique (see below).

With meditation...I constantly feel like my thoughts are a balloon that’s tethered somewhere and I keep yanking it back every time it floats away...I got very frustrated with myself during the whole process, but I kept reminding myself that I should try and find the joy. And every time I did, I just stretched out and had a yawn and came back and felt like at that moment it was more possible for me to engage with what the prompts asked of me (AP18 Session 1).

⁵⁸ As a point of interest, I refer to the socio-psychological research of Brené Brown. Brown’s research demonstrated that the ability to experience joy was a shared trait in people who embraced vulnerability, which she argues is integral to courage (Restrepo 2019). Reflecting on this, I am reminded of David Shirley who spoke about intuition requiring vulnerability (see chapter two section 2.3.3.). In chapter four section 4.2.2. I also discuss how joy may be seen as a form of *enactivism* within this acting method.

AP18 shared how the feeling of joy overrode their frustration they felt during the exploration in the Inter/outer/play technique. This method utilises joy to facilitate the actor's curiosity about their process. This curiosity and awareness then encourages the actor to have both the freedom and pleasure to immerse themselves in a process of discovery and development, which in turn, cultivates a space wherein the development of their intuition is possible.

In analysing what they shared, I suggest that AP18 found a playful way of dealing with distraction because they approached the exploration with an intention to experience joy. Additionally, by centralising joy through a playful attitude to the meditative experience, it afforded them a different attentional quality in and of the exploration. Therefore, I would argue that their intention to approach the exploration with joy influenced the freedom and pleasure they experienced (part of another agreement of the method), and as such, facilitated a way to attend to the task at hand joyfully.

By centralising joy, the APs were encouraged to replace a desire for control over a situation or 'outcome' in an exploration with an awareness and enjoyment of exploring as a process instead. I argue that such a shift encourages the actor to apply meta-awareness in order to become absorbed in the experience whilst having an awareness of their reactions to the experience. By encouraging meta-awareness within exploration, rather than one of control or in working towards an expected goal or outcome, the participants were encouraged to absorb themselves in the experience, rather than trying to manipulate it or will it to be another way (see chapter two section 2.3.2.).

3.2.3. Enactive languaging as the joints of the skeleton

The way language is used, especially when applied to have somatic and enactive purpose, has been recognised as being able to facilitate the development of awareness (Cornell 2015; Cuffari, Di Paolo, De Jaegher 2015). According to Tim Rohrer, at its most basic level, "Language becomes a tool that places the body in space and time in order to orientate itself and therefore help us make sense of the world and what we say" (2007: 346). Applied with an enactive context, Elena Cuffari, Ezequiel Di Paolo and Hanne de Jaegher note that language becomes "a form of social agency involving a double regulation of self and interaction..."(2015: 1092).

I suggest that how language is used may thus play a role in the development of intuition. This somatic acting training method employs language as a system of sense-making within the enactive framework of embodied cognition. Herein, language serves as an act and consequence of "unfolding experience, perception, and action as distinctions are made and interactions... are organised" (Cuffari, Di Paolo & De Jaegher 2015: 1092). In other words, the languaging this method applies in training promotes an expression and recognition of sensing, rather than as a way of rationalising the sensory experience and

attaching perspectives onto perceptions. As stated in chapter one section 1.1.2., enaction proposes that cognition is bound to and for action (Gallagher 2017: 5).

In accepting intuition as an embodied cognition that is affect-driven (see chapter two section 2.2.), this acting training method accounts for the possibility that intuition could be consciously experienced beyond a ‘rational’ articulation thereof.⁵⁹ One example of how this works in the method can be demonstrated through an analysis of the Game. In the Game, an actor is encouraged to become meta-aware, with a particular attention on their dynamic affective states so as to encourage intuitive response. The Game may align with any one or all the agreements, depending on the needs of the actor.

The Game provides actors with an opportunity to explore tonal values, moods, feelings, and qualities of a scripted world that may not necessarily be captured by an analytical, ‘naming’ language. In the Game, the character an actor plays, as well as any element of the script world they wish to engage with, is associated with (but not limited to) various sensations, objects, and miscellaneous things. The Game is an alternative approach to psychologically analysing a script. As argued in chapter one, a psychoanalysis often neglects the actor as the primary source of affect. A psychological analysis of characters is common in Stanislavskian approaches to script and character work in acting training for the mainstream (Evans 2019: 50).

Sometimes you’ll be in a scene, and maybe yesterday you really connected with some of the stuff that was coming up in a scene specifically, and on the next day would totally be flat. And then having this thing [*the Game*] where it’s like... I feel disconnected from ‘fire’, but that is a way of being like yeah, I don’t have that push in me right now, and so it’s got to be different. And that’s not necessarily a judgment value on the difference, it is what it is (AP38 Session 3).

In sharing their experience of the Game, AP38 mentioned how it afforded them the possibility of becoming aware of their feelings as dynamic states; how these states work in relation to their acting; and how this creates an awareness of their feelings. When AP38 stated, “I feel disconnected from fire,” they were referring to their own process through an example, where they identified that a character may feel like fire, and they may not; and that this awareness may afford them an awareness of the affect that would be accessible that could enrich their performance.⁶⁰ I also draw attention to AP38’s experience

⁵⁹ Reflecting on his fascination with hieroglyphs, I recognise that this application of language may have also been encouraged by theatre-maker, performer, and philosopher Antonin Artaud. Artaud’s *Theatre of Cruelty* (1938/1977) was a revolt against what he believed was Stanislavski’s psychologically driven approach to acting and performance (Esslin 1976: 37). While Artaud never offered a formulaic approach to acting training, he left behind a philosophy of practice which influenced practitioners such as Peter Brook and Jerzy Grotowski.

⁶⁰ The use of fire as an example here is one of many different types of categories that actors can use in the Game. I recognise that Jacques Lecoq’s actor training uses the notion of the *Universal Poetic Sense*, which “infers a timeless dimension to his work...beyond transitory tendencies” (Sachs 2016: 51). The Universal Poetic sense, entrenched in natural and abstract elements and imagery, was partly inspired by the philosophy of Gaston Bachelard. Bachelard “considers the role of imagination and creativity as a crucial element within scientific practice” (ibid.: 52). Bachelard works between what he calls

of how this technique afforded them an awareness of states and feelings without judgements of them. In chapter two sections 2.1. and 2.2. I argue that intuitive perception is possible because it negates a judgement value of an experience, working instead within a holistic account of the environment and self. I suggest that AP38's experience reflects how the Game intends to develop the actor's intuition – by encouraging intuitive perception through awareness.

It's allowing me to embody the qualities. Rather than having this cerebral idea that this character is washed out, I can figure out how to translate that in my body (AP35 Session 3).

AP35 states that the Game created an opportunity for them to have an embodied sense of their character's states and feelings, rather than what they call a cerebral idea thereof. I would suggest the embodiment they mention is in alignment with an enactive approach to cognition, where cognition is bound to action (see chapter one section 1.1.2.). Based on an analysis of AP35's experience, I am inclined to suggest that what they mean here by cerebral is a psychologically based idea of what a character should be feeling, as opposed to an embodied sense of that feeling (i.e., the feeling itself).

I suggest that the Game may develop an actor's intuition insofar as it provides them with an opportunity to become aware of and explore sensations and alternative qualities of their characters and the script world. These alternative qualities often exist in affective realms of knowing (i.e., in the spaces between, as I mentioned in chapter two section 2.2.1.), which I would argue an enactive approach to languaging encourages an articulation and awareness of. Within this method, enactive languaging allows an actor to cultivate an awareness of the *sensations* that both effect and create intuition. Therein, I propose that the Game facilitates an opportunity for intuition to be developed through a process of awareness.

3.2.4. Biofeedback as the connective tissue that joins the skeleton to the flesh

Biofeedback is traditionally a process of consciously altering one's physiological processes, such as brainwaves and heartrate, by becoming aware of them through, for example, heartrate monitors and magnetic resonance machines. In their 1978 primer, Edward Blanchard and Leonard Epstein provide an accessible definition of biofeedback (see below).

[B]iofeedback is a process in which a person learns to reliably influence physiological responses of two kinds: either responses which are not ordinarily under voluntary control or responses which ordinarily are easily regulated but for which regulation has broken

"the material imagination" and "the four great cosmic worlds – fire, air, earth and water – which relate to an archaic human feeling" (ibid.: 53). However, in this training method and the technique of the Game, the inclusion of elements like fire are dependent on intuitive responses of actors, meaning that they are not integral to the technique in this method, as they would be in Lecoq's training. For Bachelard, the material imagination "implies an engagement of the body with the concreteness of things" (ibid.), which I am inclined to interpret as correlating with my application of imagination in this research.

down... biofeedback consists of at least three operations, most of which are performed electronically. The first operation is the detection and amplification of the biological response... The second operation is the conversion of the amplified signal to an easily understood or easily processible form [through visual or auditory feedback]...The third operation is the feeding back to the subject on a relatively immediate basis changes in the signals from the second operation. With this relatively immediate feedback, any people can readily gain control of various biological responses, at least while the feedback signal is available (ibid. 2-4).

In this acting training method, I implement a somatic approach to biofeedback. A somatic approach to biofeedback is the process of cultivating **interoceptive awareness** that reflects interoceptive accuracy in order to induce a change in, for example, one's heartrate, through the same intentional shifts applied during conventional approaches to biofeedback (e.g., slowing down the breath, taking deeper breaths, holding breath). A somatic approach to biofeedback relies on interoceptive accuracy.

[I]nteroceptive awareness centres on the extent to which individual's find body cues salient, whereas interoceptive accuracy centres on individuals' abilities to accurately infer the cause and magnitude of their bodily changes... interoceptive accuracy is typically operationalised as the degree of reporting actual bodily states (e.g., heart rate). This distinction is also reflected on a neural level (Ma-Kellams 2014: 2).

Somatically, biofeedback is considered to be a naturally occurring mechanism (Nagatomo 1992: 62). A somatic approach to biofeedback relies on awareness and attention, rather than equipment, to relay and regulate physiological responses. In somatic contexts, biofeedback extends beyond physiological interoceptive sensations and includes all that which can be sensed by a soma, including affective states such as intuition. Affective states are neural states (see extract above).

A part of developing intuition in this method relies on actors exploring how their affective states work with sensing as a pivotal component of cognition (see chapter two section 2.2.). I propose that biofeedback is one of the processes in this method which work directly between an actor developing an awareness of their affective states (by encouraging identification and discernment) and then encouraging intuition through a cycle of becoming aware, being aware, and then letting this awareness impact action. In this acting training method, biofeedback is integrated into techniques to assist actors in discerning their intuition and intuitions. As I mentioned in chapter two section 2.2.1., this process of awareness works with an actor's psychophysical energy as affect. To briefly recap: the actor's energy manifests as (1) the actor's mood in each unique space-time (underlying affect), (2) intuition's governing will (driving affect), and (3) the affective-led intuitive responses in performance which draw from both their mood and intuition's governing will (rising affect).

In the explorations of this method, actors are encouraged to embrace their affects as dynamic states that they could become aware of through the somatic process of biofeedback whilst employing meta-awareness (i.e., awareness of the experience whilst absorbed in the experience). By exploring a somatic approach to biofeedback, this training embraces the actor's energy centre being a dynamic 'ideal'. Different acting practitioners have previously placed value on specific parts of the body as energy loci which has mostly been inspired by meridians and chakras (see Suzuki 1986; Chekhov 1985; McCaw 2020: 149). More recently however, these energy points have been proposed to be ideals or metaphors, rather than biologically fixed spaces in or on the body (Rushe 2019: 103; McCaw 2020: 142).⁶¹

In analysing the APs experiences regarding the somatic approach to biofeedback employed in this training, I found that it allowed both an awareness of and sensitivity to underlying and driving states of affect and intuition as a cognitive process that is reliant on affect.

It felt like a tingling along the tops of the arms. That was the primary interface. Shouldn't it be in the chest? No. along the arms. It felt good. I'm feeling it out. It felt right. (AP27 Session 2).

AP27 mentioned how their energy in the Energy Awareness technique (see Appendix A) came from the tops of their arms, rather than their chest. I note that Michael Chekhov's approach to acting training encourages the belief that the chest is the actor's energy centre (Chekhov 1985: 143). In analysing AP27's experience, I suggest that an application of biofeedback may have contributed to AP27 being able to identify their energy whilst immersed in an exploration, which may have gone previously amiss if they were expecting to find it in a place it was not transpiring for them. I also suggest that this moment is an example of direct perception (see chapter two section 2.1.).

I suggest that the somatic approach this method takes to biofeedback provides the actor with an opportunity to attune to their energy (i.e., their affect) through a process of awareness which encourages direct perception (see chapter two section 2.1.1.). I suggest that by having a conscious awareness of their energy and meta-awareness of their experience, actors may develop their intuition as they work through states of feeling and sensing. Additionally, I also suggest the way biofeedback is used in this training may contribute to attuning the actor to a performance to engage with their intuition in that

⁶¹ Psychophysical energy is said to flow from *meridian points* (Yoo 2018: 13; Nagatomo 1992: 70). According to Chinese acupuncturists, there are 12 main meridians, "the heart, pericardium, lung, spleen, liver, kidney, stomach, gall-bladder, large and small intestine, urinary bladder and tri-heater or triple burner" (Longhurst 2010: 68). The tri-heater or triple burner would be the gastrointestinal system. In discourse inspired by Indian practices and philosophy, psychophysical energy centres are connected to Chakra points. There are seven main chakras: the top of the head, between the eyes, the throat, the heart, the lower abdomen, the pelvis, and the base of the spine (Fadlon 2004).

environment, where their affective state impacts their intuitive action. This effect was recognised by AP35 during their second workshop:

I can understand how, if I'm in a scene, where it's very heavy content, how...I can translate [my affective state] into different things (AP35 Session 2).

In chapter two section 2.2. I discussed how in acting intuitively, the actor is encouraged to identify and use the affects that are present and 'translate' or adapt these affects to serve the performance. In having an awareness of one's own affectivity, the actor may bring an awareness to the performance of themselves in relation to the scripted world. Thus, instead of using a character as a vehicle for emotional catharsis, the actor may intuitively attune and transform what they are feeling to be of service to the scripted world through awareness, as the Game also encourages (see previous section).

By reviewing AP27 and AP35's experiences, I suggest that the implementation of biofeedback in this training facilitates an opportunity for actors to develop an awareness of their affective states. This thus assists them in attuning to a performance environment and to themselves, to respond intuitively in performance, and to develop their intuition in training through the development of their awareness.

3.3. THE FLESH OF THE METHOD

In this section I analyse how the APs experienced specific techniques within the method. In chapter one section 1.2.1. I argued that current acting training is mostly designed to equip actors to rehearse but not necessarily to perform. In this training method I therefore specifically designed techniques with a performance-orientated state of mind in focus. Within the method, I distinguish between script-focused explorations and sensory-based explorations. In this method the Sandwich, Active Reading, and the Game are considered to be script-focused explorations. The other nine techniques, for example, Inter/outer/play and Energy Awareness (previously mentioned) would be examples of the sensory-based explorations. The Prologue straddles the sensory-based and script-focused explorations. In this section I will discuss the Prologue, Sandwich, Active reading, as they encompass the various sensory-based explorations within the method, many of which use guided meditations (see Appendix A).

Meditation has been recognised as one of the most direct ways of "tuning in" to one's intuition (Vaughan 1979: 20). Meditations are recognised as a way of consciously exploring and being able to become aware of one's psychophysical energy (Nagatomo 1992: 239; Yoo 2018). In their study on mental training, Heleen Slagter, Antoine Lutz, Lawrence Greischar et al. note that "[a] major ingredient of meditation is mental training of attention. Such mental training is thought to produce lasting changes in...cognitive function, significantly affecting the way stimuli are processed and perceived" (2007:

1228; see also Farb, Segal, Mayberg et al. 2007: 319). Meditations structured by motor and mental imagery (i.e., guided meditations) have shown promise in developing sensory awareness (Eddy 2016: 12; Tang, Ma, Wang et al. 2007; Slagter et al 2007). Research suggests that meditations which use motor and mental imagery may alter neural activity (Raffone & Srinivasan 2010; Aftanas & Golocheikine 2001) Motor imagery is the process of imagining a physical movement and then sensorily and affectively experiencing the movement whilst still. Motor imagery it is also known as kinesthetic imagery (Blakeslee & Blakeslee 2009: 60). Mental imagery is when visualisations are used to encourage affective or sensual responses (Crowe 2021: 98; McCaw 2020: 174; Decety, Jeannerod, Germain et al. 1991).

3.3.1. Developing intuition through Prologuing

While current acting training recognises a kind of ‘zone’ actors aim to reach in performance (i.e., the creative state of mind), I argued in chapter one that acting training has not yet offered a formal technique to reach this zone. Most actors I know try to ‘focus’ themselves before a performance. What this means and how to do it is often a vaguer debate. The Prologue is a technique which aims to provide actors with a personalised way of coming into this zone, or rather, what I would call an intuitive state. Coming into this state what I identify in this method as an actor coming onto their *starting blocks* (see Appendix A).

The Prologue is a technique that is offered to actors as a condensed practice they can engage in during rehearsals, before going on stage, and in training. During training, the Prologue aims to develop intuition. In rehearsal, a Prologue can be used to access and engage intuition. In performance, the Prologue works to get an actor into a sustained intuitive state. The Prologue can achieve this scope because it facilitates both awareness and attunement to various ends and degrees. A Prologue should not be equated with a warm-up. Warm-ups are not designed with mindfulness or awareness as a central component. Warm-ups are often shrouded by habitual behaviours which are often foundational in specific techniques, which have their own contexts (Evans 2014: 147).⁶²

A Prologue relies on four elements: (1) building and cultivating awareness that is unique to each space-time (2) releasing tension (3) identifying energy in each space-time (4) attunement. These elements can be applied in any order and through any point of access. By offering these four elements as a loose framework, the Prologue gives the actor an opportunity for awareness and attunement that I would say is energetically sensitive (i.e., intuitive), as it is uniquely shaped by each actor according to their needs

⁶² I suspect this is partly why Monika Pagneux rather offers a *wake-up* for actors instead of a warm-up (see Golden 2017).

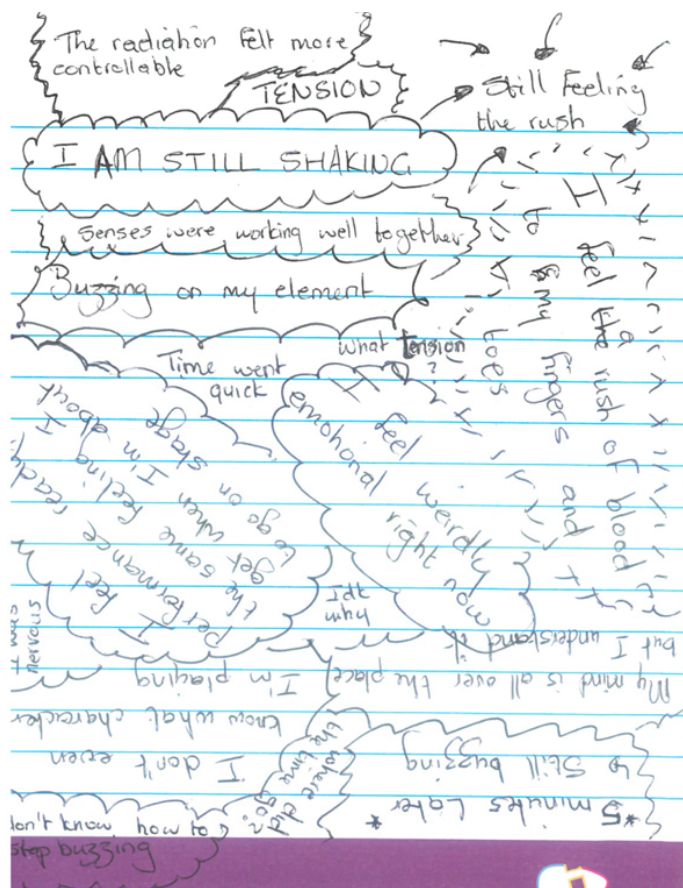
in each circumstance it is explored. A Prologue encourages an actor to be intentional and to engage their presence while drawing on and from their affective states.

In earlier workshops, APs explored their preferences in designing their Prologues. In later sessions, they explored how their Prologues may work in performances or rehearsals by doing the Prologue prior to exploring a scene with one of the other APs in the same session. Early explorations of the Prologue intended to develop the actor's intuition, while the later explorations intended to create an understanding of how the actor may sustain their intuition during performances. Nevertheless, some of the APs experienced the Prologue's ability to get them into an intuitive state from the beginning. The first time they explored their Prologue, AP33 mentioned how it facilitated an opportunity for them to engage with their presence, meta-awareness, and energy (see below), which are all components I suggested in chapter two are pivotal to intuition and sustaining an intuitive state.

More presence...more present moment awareness. Strong awareness of the feeling of energy moving in my body...The other big awareness, the sweet spot, activated energy plus presence. So: ready to respond but at the same time not in a closed off internal way, but in a spacious receptive way. So, both activated but completely open with the room and the energetic space to receive and respond (AP33 Session 2).

AP33 mentioned how their exploration of the Prologue allowed them “to respond... in a spacious, receptive way... [and] to receive.” Thus, I would suggest that AP33 experienced attunement during their exploration, where attunement works as a process of harmonisation between self and space to promote intuitive reception and response through affect (see chapter two sections 2.2. and 2.3.).

In AP7's experience (see the following page), they shared in both a group discussion and their journal how their Prologue helped them to engage with intuition through awareness (“I was aware of my body and I was attentive to what I needed in that moment ...”); affect (“My mind is in a lot of places, but I actually understand it...” / “I feel weirdly emotional right now”); and absorption (“time went quick” / “I feel performance ready, the same feeling... I'm about to go onto stage”). I suggest that AP7 demonstrates the Prologue's ability to intentionally foster an awareness of the connection the actor has with their energy (i.e., their affective state) through the process of attunement.



It started flowing really naturally. I didn't have to think about it. I was aware of my body and I was attentive to what I needed in that moment and I went for that.... There were moments where I lost it but I was able to get it back. This has never happened... My mind is in a lot of places, but I actually understand it. I understand all those places. Normally it's overwhelming but now I'm like... one with myself... (AP7 Session 5).

Reviewing similarities between AP33 and AP7's experience, I find that the Prologue demonstrates the potential to facilitate a sustained intuitive state and allows for absorption.

I feel like I can get to the [intuitive] state pretty quickly.... And I felt myself very sustained... it was nice to be sustained and allow yourself to be still and in those rooted moments. I did take a second at the end to visualise what it would be like to be in an audition room if that happens again. I did a few lines in my head from a monologue I'm working on, and I could feel my chakras align. No effort at all. I didn't have to do yoga for four hours before this, I just did it (AP1 Session 2).

AP1 mentioned that they experienced a sustained sense of themselves that was easy to access in their exploration of the Prologue. They also mentioned that they could get into their intuitive state "pretty quickly." That this state was experienced as both accessible and sustainable to AP1 was important for me. By developing intuition, this training method aims to give actors a way of engaging with the intuitive state in a way that feels accessible, rather than as a taxing or illusive experience. By developing intuition, accessing intuition, and assisting actors in coming into and sustaining an intuitive state, the Prologue aims to stimulate the possibility for intuitive perception through the process of attunement. To briefly recap: intuitive perception is direct perception that is used in a heightened (i.e., focused) way. In pursuit of developing and sustaining intuition in this method, intuitive perception is explored through an encouraged cognitive attitude I call *What Is*.

3.3.1.1. *What Is*: working with meta-awareness whilst absorbed

This method encourages the actor to absorb themselves into the experience of a performance through meta-awareness, which I describe in this method as working with *What Is*. In working with *What Is*, the actor embraces a scripted world as its own reality, governed by its own rules (i.e., *a performance is holistic*; see also chapter two sections 2.3.2. and 2.3.3.). I suggest that a cognitive attitude of *What Is* works as a perspective shift that creates an opportunity for actors to work with the dynamics of their environment intuitively. Importantly, I suggest that this distinct cognitive attitude can work in relationship with joy (see section 3.2.2). I propose that an individual may hold various attitudes simultaneously and for different purposes within a single experience. I accept this to be part of the multifaceted nature of cognition and dynamic experiences.

In my understanding of a Stanislavskian approach to training, actors are primed to approach a play text with what is called the *Magic If in given circumstances*. Herein, affect is encouraged by hypothetically placing the actor in a character's circumstances and therefore inspiring action, which in aims to stimulate affect (see chapter one section 1.2.1.). In *Active Analysis*, for example, the given circumstances – the situations the character finds themselves in – work with the actor's action to generate feeling (Merlin 2014: 98). Actors will select or create their responses by answering the question, "*If I am in these circumstances, imagined as if they are real, what do I do...?*" (Gillett 2007: 60, my emphasis).

In contrast, actors working with this method are encouraged to experience the scripted world as its own reality. In acting intuitively, it is not a question of *if* it were that way, *what would I do*; but rather: *it is that way, so what do I do?* Although this may seem like a trivial distinction, I argue that it is an imperative one if an actor intends to develop their intuition and sustain it during a performance. I argue that it does not automatically follow that knowing what an actor would do 'if' they were in those circumstances will provide them with a response beyond personal bias (i.e., responses similar to those that would be generated from sensory and emotional recall techniques). However, if the actor can immerse themselves in the experience of the scenario they face (rather than trying to imagine and stimulate mental states of another person), then I suggest that they may play out more possibilities. I propose that *What Is* facilitates an attunement with the dynamics of the environment, rather than a preconceived or anticipated reaction to an environment.

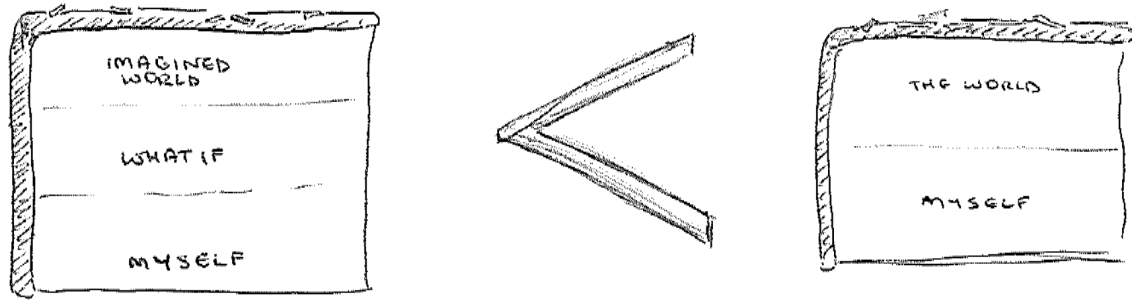


Figure 3.1. What Is (image from AP41's journal)

What Is invites actors to discover what may be possible if they relinquish control over the situation and discard the 'separation' between themselves and their characters.⁶³ What Is uses the actor's imagination in an enactive way and thus upholds radically enactive cognition (REC) in practice. What Is encourages the actor to immerse themselves into a narrative and positions the actor as the primary generator of affect and action. AP31 stated that this was a "revitalising" experience:

I think this whole process was just so revitalizing in the sense that I remember that I can use my imagination to conjure up more than what I was aware of. And that I can literally feel my body react to that, viscerally (AP31 Session 4).


What Is explores what may be possible with intuitive perception, where it is possible for an actor to attune to the performance environment and *accept it as an active participant* (an agreement of the method), as I propose a radically enactive framework of cognition would encourage. However, I appreciate that working with What Is may be an overwhelming experience for some actors.

To give an example of how it could be overwhelming, I refer to AP37's process. The first time AP37 explored their energy was in the Inter/outer/play technique. At first, AP37 described the awareness of their energy as "comforting" during a group discussion. In the explorations throughout this session, AP37's consistently reported feeling their energy as a vibration. Nagatomo, whose attunement theory I use in this research, notes that people who are sensitive to their psychophysical energy have reported feeling vibrations when pierced with acupuncture needles (1992: 70).

⁶³ See Zuzanna Rucinska's chapter, *Basic pretending as Sensorimotor Engagement*, (2014: 175-187), for an analysis on imagination with regards to the play of young children that echoes my employment of What Is in this acting training method.

This is my access point to intuition.

spiritual experience. / / /

I am vibration. 

I felt my pure frequency. - vibration comfortably returns to the sole of my feet and hands. (the place of action & doing)

I came in and out of the experience. But I entered and met this frequency. My frequency.

My head travelled, took me further away from my frequency.

Energy is wave, moving rolling, buzzing, encompassing.

I felt the thread of my forehead send a line down through my body.

AP37 Journal entry: I am vibration

When AP37 progressed to exploring the Energy Awareness and *Senseing* techniques (both of which encourage a connection and awareness between self and environment), they became overwhelmed. I addressed this in the moment with them. I encouraged them to do what they needed to do to bring relief and resolve. They stepped outside the workshop momentarily and went for a run (see the journal entry on the following page). As this method encourages an awareness of and attunement to affectivity, giving agency to actors regarding what they need to bring relief (instead of imposing solutions on them) is an important ethos of the training.

I feel really emotional... in the sense that I had to forfeit something to really engage in that sort of awareness... And like the whole time I felt like my physical body wanting to run, wanting to scream, to let go somewhere, because the sensation was so rich and so dense (AP37 Session 1).

The repetition of the words *forfeit*, *surrender*, and *release* is what I kept coming back to in this data (see also the journal entry on the next page); that something needed to “come up and out”; that they feel they should “forfeit something and surrender to something.”

Sight Crown lbt. Big picture.
 I had to Forfeit something.
 I had to release, unconsciously release.
 This resulted in urges. Strong urges to
 scream and run. To move.
 Sensory overload, I felt joy.
 I needed to laugh, I needed to exert
 laughter.
 I felt my vibration with touch. I felt
 like my vibration was met with other
 vibrations. Some vibration thicker than others,
 more dense. The chair is a thick vibration,
 the clothes on my body a lighter,
 the hair on my head, lighter.
 Rubbing together. I needed to run.
 RELEASE
 Sound.
 I heard the different dimensions in
 the room, the inner circle, another
 ring of noise (my neighbour), another
 ring (the vent), another ring (the ceiling).
 I am emotional. The unconscious was
 called to release.

AP37 Journal entry: Forfeit Surrender Release

After having this particular reaction to the techniques in their first session, AP37 was sceptical as to how this method could be a positive one that considered the actor's well-being. However, in their last session they stated that the discomfort they previously felt came from the act of surrendering, rather than the techniques or the method itself:

What we're doing isn't unsafe, but I think because it's so unknown, that can be so nerve-racking, and it will be hard to like go in that unknown, but for this awareness to truly work you have to literally surrender (AP37 Session 3).

In analysing AP37's process, I would say that the release, surrender, and forfeit they spoke of may have reflected suppressed feelings that were given room to surface. It is my opinion that if an individual is generally inclined to prevent themselves from feeling or tend to negate their feelings, then when attention and space is afforded to affectivity, it may seem as though a sluice gate is opened, and that they need to surrender to whatever is transpiring affectively. In such instances, I imagine that a

simultaneous rush of awareness, knowing, and feeling may feel overwhelming, uncomfortable, or out of the ordinary, which AP7 also acknowledged in a reflection of their process:

I've learnt to normalise not shying away from how I feel when I get into the space.... That's what happened [in the last session]; me just not stopping those feelings allowed me to reach into a new phase of my Prologue. I don't know how to feel about it. But I feel OK (AP7 Session 6).

I argue that affect's sluice gate needs to be open for intuition to stand a chance of being developed and experienced. I suggest that AP7 may have recognised this; that not stopping their feelings enabled them to have the experience of their Prologue that they did, which I analysed in the previous section. Yet I am aware that allowing oneself to both feel and express feelings may be in tension with norms of social behaviors which can impact what actors are able to dedicate to their performances (see Merlin 2016: 100). Allowing oneself to be affectively engaged often requires the courage to be vulnerable. I recognise that such vulnerability may not necessarily be sought out by all actors because it may feel uncomfortable. More than that, I am also sensitive to the fact that there are actors who could be coming to this training with a history of trauma. Affect is often suppressed by people who have experienced trauma (see van der Kolk 2014). I recognise therefore that avoiding one's affectivity may not always be about the discomfort of vulnerability; it could stem from not feeling safe in their environment, as well as being a coping mechanism.

While it is beyond the scope of this research and my present expertise to explore this method in conjunction with clinical psychology, I do recognise it as a future avenue of research (see chapter 4 section 4.4.4.). I have mentioned previously how safe spaces and appropriate guidance in instances of overwhelm were facilitated during the exploration of this training method (see above and in chapter one section 1.2.). More than that, I would like to make it clear that should an AP have made it known during this study that they were unable to participate in a specific exploration due to personal reasons; or that a particular exploration had felt harmful, I would have dealt with it sensitively and in a timely manner. Thankfully, this was not the case during the course of this research.

Putting these difficulties to one side, I recognise that embracing and expressing affect are part of what I meant when I spoke of intuition being a vulnerable experience for actors in chapter two section 2.3.3. Vulnerability is created when actors relinquish control over an experience in order to feel, and through feeling, be guided by intuition's governing will. Interestingly, AP32 reported that they experienced a sense of relief when they embraced their feelings and thus allowed what I would recognise as the vulnerability that comes from feeling (see following page).

As soon as you said, “you don’t have to feel any way except how you’re feeling right now,” it made me feel comfortable within my discomfort...As soon as I started letting myself feel all that, it became a lot easier... (AP32 Session 5).

In considering AP37 and 32’s experiences alongside one another, I am inclined to suggest that a part of *playing with trust, confidence, and freedom* – one of the method’s agreements – paradoxically means that the actor needs to embrace their vulnerability. Here is where the method’s central attitude of joy becomes pivotal to the actor’s well-being. It is this attitude that encourages actors to trust in themselves, have confidence to act, and freedom to follow their intuition. It is also this attitude which I have purposefully employed to safeguard actors (see also chapter four section 4.2.2.). By working with intuition (affective attunement moment to moment), rather than a recall technique that relies on personal memories, the actor is encouraged to feel from within the immediate experience, rather than to stimulate affect from a past experience. I credit recall techniques as being connected to unnecessary and potentially traumatic vulnerability.

In reviewing the Prologue and the attitude of What Is, I recall McCaw’s statement that an “actor’s work is a response to the world of the play” (2020: 51). This training goes one step further and encourages actors to intuitively inhabit the play as a world. This training does not ask actors to *respond* to a character or narrative; they are encouraged instead to shift their awarenesses onto the affects which shape each experience as it unfolds *in* the scripted world in each moment. This kind of awareness requires an actor to have a well-established prior understanding of the world so as to avoid playing each character as themselves. However, this understanding is encouraged through a process of holistic sensing, rather than an isolated psychological analysis. The actor’s foundational knowledge of the script world should extend to the dynamics of that world that are co-created by the environment, which will have its own atmospheres and moods, and to which actors are encouraged to attune to each time, anew.

3.3.2. Attuning through Active reading

In Active reading, actors are encouraged to engage with the scripted world by immersing themselves within the *is-ness* of it; meaning the sensations which arise from an experience of being in the world are encouraged by becoming aware of them.⁶⁴ Similarly to What Is, the *is-ness* of the world invites an actor to give attention to intuitions which may transpire during training, rehearsals, or prior to a performance. Active reading encourages an actor to use their script as dynamic document, like their journals (see chapter one section 1.3.2.4.). Active reading works independently of the actor having memorised their actions or directions (i.e., blocking and cues). This method encourages actors to be

⁶⁴ I credit this term to Jane Bacon and Vida Midgelow’s *Creative Articulations Process* (CAP; 2014) that I explored in workshops led by them between 2019 and 2020.

‘off-script’, however, it explores the potential of a script to serve actors beyond being a manual to this end.

In training, Active reading aims to develop the actor’s intuition by facilitating attention onto affective states whilst engaging with a script. It aims to provide an actor with an awareness of their intuitions; what their intuition may feel like (i.e., their unique governing will); and encourages joy within the reading experience. In rehearsals, Active reading aims to encourage intuitive behaviour. Prior to a performance, an actor may engage with Active reading to explore if any intuitions arise that are unique to their experience in that space-time.

Active reading encourages the actor to engage with the script as a world for the duration of a production, as opposed to putting the script aside once the actor has memorized their lines; or treating it like a literary piece. Active reading (1) encourages an actor to change their mindset from one of textual analysis into one that honours curiosity and awareness whilst reading, (2) shifts an actor’s attentional focus onto their affects whilst reading, (3) encourages the actor to note and attune to intuitions that may be arising, and (4) encourages an actor to honour what feels familiar and why, and what pulls their attention and why.

I could smell the whiskey and hear the sounds of the corn husks, smell the rain and the mud. That was a new experience... which I think is incredibly valuable.... It just adds such a richness... to be able to take words on a page, but to have these other levels of sensory experiences, it helps you immerse yourself a lot more... It makes the text so much more alive (AP12 Session 3).

Analysing AP12’s experience, I note that there was a clear sensual effect for them when they explored Active reading. They mention that they were able to experience smells and sounds which created a sensory experience that facilitated an immersion into the script, and into the script as more than a text; as something alive – therefore, what I would deem to be a reality, or as embracing the script as a world, rather than as a text. Therefore, I suggest that they may have experienced the script in an affective way because of Active reading.

Stanislavski encouraged the actor’s first reading of a script to happen in a ritualistic environment where “an appropriate inner creative state of mind can be tapped into straight away” (Merlin 2014: 85). However, Active reading intends to work directly with what Stanislavski called an actor’s creative state of mind (see chapter one section 1.1.), rather than with a particular environment, as I note above he encouraged. Additionally, Active reading is not limited to a first reading. As aforementioned, Active reading encourages an actor to utilise their script as a dynamic document that should ideally be re-explored throughout a production process.

Active reading aims to attune the actor to the script as a fully-fledged world and therein prompt actions based on What Is by helping to immerse the actor into the scripted world through a sensory experience of it. Active reading is one of the techniques within this method that aims to attune the actor to their environment through an awareness of their affective responses to and in the world, which I argue is essential in developing, using, and sustaining intuition. This technique integrates a radically enactive account of cognition by exploring the environment as an equal component of meaning making and thus as *an active participant* (an agreement of the method) in the process of developing and sustaining intuition.

3.3.2.1. Accepting the environment as an active participant through attunement

As I stated in chapter two section 2.2., the attunement that intuition requires works through and with affect by bringing the relationship between the actor and their environment into focus through an awareness thereof. Attunement then moves beyond this initial process by providing an intuiter with the ability to work intentionally with the relationship between them and their environment in a mutually influential way.

I feel like when I'm approaching a role or when I want to perform, when it comes to that point where you have to get on camera, or step onto stage, I'm fighting the environment, trying to get back to a previous state... where energy will happen and will grow and be sustained; I think I realised that the first thing I have to do is invite it in - the energy that's in the space - and secondly, I need to share what is happening internally. So it's the welcoming of the external world and the sharing of the internal world, and that happens continuously, from moment to moment, and as that sharing continues it changes, evolves, and grows. So... I'm limiting the space and limiting the internal world (AP31 Session 2).

In analysing what AP31 shared during a group discussion (above), I suggest that they illustrate the effects working *against* an environment can have in a performance for actors. By “trying to get back to a previous state,” I argue that actors are unable to act intuitively, because they are not attuned to the environment and present moment and as such, work with preconceptions of how something should be, rather than What Is or the is-ness of the environment (i.e., heightened direct perception). However, AP31 also recognised what may be necessary for them to attune to their environment. They recognised that they may start by inviting their energy and the space in, and then sharing themselves with the environment, where they may be influenced by the environment and may impact the environment with their action. I would suggest that this is an example of what attunement may require.

Later in the same session, after exploring the Presence and Attunement technique (see Appendix A), they then shared the following (see the next page):

I saw within my body foliage growing and that film *Annihilation* came up. And then I expanded...The radiating out was just the foliage growing and going up my walls. That's what I felt... There were roots. It felt like I was connected in a very significant way (AP31 Session 2).

I suggest that the awareness AP31 cultivated in response to the environment facilitated a clear intention of wanting to attune to the environment (within the Presence and Attunement exploration).⁶⁵ I suggest that this awareness created an opportunity for AP31 to attune to the environment by using mental imagery (the foliage) to affectively connect themselves. In this instance, the foliage imagery came from the film *Annihilation* (Garland 2018). In other words, I propose that AP31 was able to foster an affective response through this visualisation that shaped and guided their attunement, as they say, “in a very significant way.”

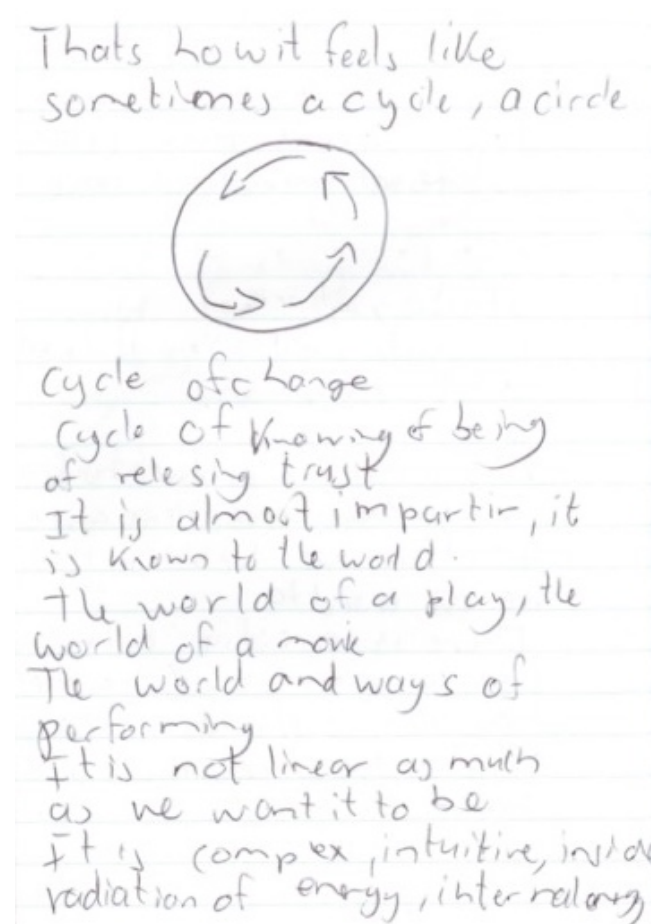
Analysing their experience and considering their participation in this session, I did not get the sense that this visualisation and affective response were ‘choices’ that were made or controlled by AP31. Instead, it seemed as though this mental imagery and the affectivity it inspired arose by their own volition. Importantly: the visualisation itself was not a means to an end, it was an image that guided AP31’s attunement. Therefore, I would say that this was an intuitive moment for AP31 which served to attune them to their environment.

In attuning to an environment, I suggest than an awareness also unfolds for actors regarding the ability of attunement to influence affective states within the environment. Reviewing AP31’s experience, I would suggest that attunement creates a connection between the self and space. Moving deeper into this analysis, the relationships and connections that unfold between an actor and what fills the environment, as well as what creates the environment, may begin to blossom in and from attunement; and therein, intuition, which I argue is reliant on the dynamics of an environment. To name but a few of the components of these relationships and connections; there is the actor themselves, their co-actors, space, time, props, and the scripted world. By choosing to frame each interaction with these components as a relationship, the actor facilitates a mutually influential exchange, which I argue is important for intuition within a framework of radically enactive cognition.

In reflecting on how this training method facilitates opportunities for attunement, I am reminded of a journal entry produced by AP2 (see the following page). They wrote of the cycle they experienced in their process of performing and exploring the scripted world in this method. They singled out change, knowing, being, trust, intuition, energy, and complexity; and how these all worked interdependently for

⁶⁵ AP31 never specified if they used any of the agreements to lead this intention. However, I can identify a few being equally applicable in their situation: *curiosity before criticality*; *I follow what arises*; *I accept the environment as an active participant*; *listening is an active, sensory experience*; and *I am always only one part of a relationship*.

them. I reflect how the cyclical process they identified echoes the dynamic nature of intuition I keep discussing in this thesis, where energy, affect, and awareness mutually impact one another and work between the actor and their environment through attunement.



AP2 Journal entry: A Cycle, A Circle

As aforementioned, Active reading is one of the ways this method promotes attunement; encouraging the actor to work as *one part of a relationship* and *with an environment as an active participant* (as agreements). By creating an opportunity to explore and give attention to affective processes in the scripted world, Active reading encourages actors to embrace the script world as a dynamic environment which actors are impacted by and can impact through action and feeling. This creates a cycle of action and response as AP2 notes in their journal (above), that is subject to change because it is intuitive, because it is responsive to the dynamics within that space and time.

In the influential and interrelated process acting intuitively encourages, it becomes difficult to single out components of acting because the actor is simultaneously working with blocking, movement, feeling, speech, emoting, memory, and the dynamics of the environment equally in an energetically sensitive way. Therefore, I propose that acting intuitively immerses the actor within the script world

and leaves no room for dual consciousness or technical concerns, giving the actor freedom to *feel* the world and therefore to intuitively perceive it. Moreover, this simultaneous and inclusive way of working is also what emphasizes the radically enactive framework I employ in this research, where cognition encompasses psychophysicality.

3.3.3. Enacting intuition through the Sandwich

The Sandwich is another one of the method's techniques where a radically enactive approach to cognition is employed. The Sandwich provides an opportunity for actors to explore intuitive responses in the script world. The Sandwich can work both with and without a physical script. The Sandwich encourages actors to shift their attention onto action which happens before and after they are cued to act. It thus creates a sandwich of action, where two slices contain and contextualise action (i.e., movement, feeling, and dialogue). By encouraging an actor to focus on action which proceeds and precedes theirs, they are encouraged to work within an understanding that they are functioning within an environment of action. In short, the Sandwich facilitates a way for actors shift attention off themselves and onto another, promoting absorption into the experience and a relinquishing of control.

In exploring this technique, the APs were given opportunities to apply take-aways they had experienced in the sensory-based explorations, for example, the Sensation of Intent and Soft and Direct Focus techniques (see Appendix A) in a scripted environment. This afforded the APs an opportunity to experience how the training may have culminated in a way that would be functional for them in a rehearsal within the mainstream acting industry. Importantly, I do not wish to imply here that the sensory-based somatic explorations of this training are not functional in rehearsal rooms by proxy. I only wish to emphasise that in my experience, rehearsals in the mainstream prioritise script-based processes.

In training, the Sandwich intends to assist actors in shifting their focus off themselves having an experience and onto the experience they are having instead, which I argued in chapter two section 2.3. is integral to being able to sustain intuition as a cognitive state and developing it to this end. In rehearsal, the Sandwich uses this focal shift to encourage intuitive responses. Before a performance, the Sandwich aims to ground an actor in the experiential process and therefore enables an intuitive state in the performance. The Sandwich technique is designed to work at any stage of the rehearsal and pre-performance process. Actors can explore it whilst learning dialogue and directions (i.e., their actions), and once they have memorised their actions. The Sandwich can work independently or in conjunction with Active Reading.

The Sandwich differs from working in beats, units, and sub-text, which may be familiar to actors who have trained in a Stanislavskian approach (see Merlin 2014: 112; Benedetti 1998: 88). In Stanislavski's techniques, actors work with units of action and then link them together to create a bigger picture. In The Sandwich, as action progresses, the sandwich shifts, continues expanding, or adding on ingredients. As each actor works with their own sandwich, the slices are not uniform and begin at different parts. There is thus no clear or defined unit that could be experienced.

I feel like this is unifying... Being present and being intuitive and in response to, and also being aware of the environment, but this sort of takes it further and also being aware of what is to come. So that affects the impulse to do something a certain way, because you know you receive, and then you're aware of what's happening in the future, but also what's there, so you kind of travel... And then you build on to each other to see it coming (AP39 Session 3).

As AP39 noted in their experience of the Sandwich, it afforded them the opportunity to attune to their environment, to be intentional, and to be aware of the environment in a holistic way. Therefore, I would say that their experience illustrates how this technique may enable intuitive action – by considering the performance holistically through the process of attunement and intuitive perception which then allows the actor to respond to the dynamics of the environment.

Utilizing this technique takes the pressure off my lines, it's like I'm a listener now rather than just getting words out...when you put your attention what comes before and after what you're saying, it's really amazing how much more it opens up... (AP12 Session 3).

In AP12's experience of the Sandwich, they noted how it shifted their focus off themselves and onto listening, and how this "opened up" opportunities for response. The shift in focus off of oneself and onto another facilitates the immersive and experiential experience I continue to argue is integral to acting intuitively (see chapter two section 2.3.3).

We've always been told acting is reacting, and I've always felt like I've *understood* it logically, but for the first time it *feels* like a whole-body thing. I listened with everything...it allowed for a lot more variation, just by knowing before and after and doing (AP18 Session 3, my emphasis).

I note how both AP12 and AP18 stated that this technique facilitated a deeper experience of listening, which is also one of the agreements of the method - *listening is an active, sensory experience*. AP18's experience of the Sandwich emphasised how the technique allowed them to engage with their affective response, where listening became an embodied sense. Analysing AP18's experience, I would suggest that the Sandwich promoted an intuitive response by working with a radically enactive account of cognition, where sensing, feeling, thinking, and doing work simultaneously in and as action to promote intuitive response.

It feels closer to how like we think as humans... it's more just like you'll say something, and then like, I'm thinking about it, then that sparks a ton of different things, and you have to distil it into one single thing, and then send it back, and maybe it's not exactly what you mean, but then that has interpreted in a different way. It's messier, which I like (AP38 Session 3).

AP38 noted that the experience of this technique emulated a process that is “closer to how we think as humans,” which is how I intended for this technique to work. The Sandwich aims to facilitate a dynamic process of communication to encourage intuition as its own dynamic process. Herein, dynamic variables of communication-in-an-environment such as the tempo, pace, and rhythm will influence the nuances of the action in each performance and rehearsal, which will be equally impacted by the Sandwich of action for each actor (as a living and dynamic process itself). This is a fraction of what I mean when I speak about how intuition allows actors to tune into the dynamics of an environment.

In reflecting on the APs experience of the Sandwich, Game, Prologue and Active reading, I observe that these techniques encouraged the participants to be present and attentive to themselves, their environments, and the scripted worlds they explored in the workshops, which are all elements of intuition as an embodied cognition I identified in chapter two. In reviewing their experiences, I have confidence in affirming that the actor’s intuition is reliant on an awareness of and attunement with affect (energy) and presence (attention) as I originally hypothesised.

3.4. AN MRI OF THE SOMATIC ACTING TRAINING METHOD

In this section I discuss the quantitative results that came from the surveys and behavioural tasks.⁶⁶ This data is then analysed in conjunction with the qualitative data I discussed in the previous two sections. As stated in chapter one section 1.3.2.5., I analyse the data generated from the journals and group interviews to contextualise the quantitative results provided by the surveys and behavioural tasks to offer a triangulated data analysis (see Todd, Nerlich & McKeown 2005: 8). In doing so, I aim to provide a robust, holistic consideration of the training method’s efficacy within an interdisciplinary context.

When I outlined my methods of data analysis in chapter one section 1.3.2., I stated that the data from the surveys come from an analysis of variance (ANOVA). I also mentioned that what an analysis of variance flags up as being statistically significant is dependent on the size of a sample group. As stated in section 3.1., the sample group for this study ultimately ended up consisting of 20 people, which is a small sample for such an analysis. I am therefore mindful that the size of my sample group may have

⁶⁶ Refer to chapter one section 1.3.2. for an overview of the methods of data collection and to Appendix B for an overview of the surveys and tasks themselves.

impacted what this analysis may have deemed to be significant. It is also worth mentioning that the results I discuss in this section are indicative of the APs as a collective.

3.4.1. The actor-participants' baseline results

Baseline measures were taken to account for psychological and behavioural traits that the APs may have had prior to the training (see Appendix B section c.). All the APs reported that their prior acting training was in Stanislavskian-based approaches. 12 of the 20 APs reported that they had previously been exposed to or trained in at least one somatic practice, with the most popular approaches being Irmgard Bartenieff, Moshe Feldenkrais, and Frederick Matthias Alexander. Four of the APs reported that they had not previously engaged in any mindfulness practices (i.e., meditation or attention practices), while eight of them said they occasionally engaged, and five APs reported that they frequently engaged in such practices.

According to the data, the APs demonstrated a significant tendency for absorptive traits prior to the training. This was measured by the Tellegen Absorption Scale (TAS; Tellegen & Atkinson 1974). As TAS is a personality trait measure and does not measure how absorbed a person is during an experience, this scale was only employed as a baseline measure. In being able to become absorbed in an experience (and therefore serve as an extended reflection on the APs ability to sustain their intuition as a state), the AP's capacity for *fantasy proneness* was measured through the Creative Experiences Questionnaire (CEQ; Merckelbach et al. 2001).⁶⁷ Understanding the APs fantasy proneness through the CEQ created an assessment of how vivid (i.e., embodied) their imaginings were prior to the training. According to the data, the APs did not demonstrate any significant sensory experiences whilst imagining prior to the training.

The APs were assessed to determine their inclination for intuition as a baseline measure. This was measured through the Rational-Experiential Inventory (REI; Pacini & Epstein, 1999) and an adaptation of the REI for acting that was designed by myself and Valerie van Mulukom. Importantly, REI accounts for a specific conceptualisation of intuition which differs from how I employ it in this research. However, it was important to have a baseline measure which could account for at least a broad conception of intuition the APs may or may not have experienced or had prior to the training.⁶⁸ Findings

⁶⁷ I realise that the term *fantasy proneness* contradicts how I argue for imagination in this research. From what I have learnt while doing this research, I can state that the vocabulary in psychological and cognitive research does not seem to be as meticulously considered as I experience it to be in performance discourse. However, I also acknowledge that this term could be an example of how psychological research is still dominated by classic accounts of cognition, where imagination is still equated with hidden mental states and fantasies.

⁶⁸ See chapter four section 4.2. where I discuss the challenges of the cognitive measures used in this research.

demonstrated that there was no notable proclivity within the sample group for possessing an intuitive personality or for making intuitive decisions prior to the training.

3.4.2. Developments post-training

3.4.2.1. Awareness and attention

As I argue that awareness may be integral to the development of intuition, the AP's awareness was measured through a combination of scales which aimed to account for the dynamic and integrative processes I suggested encompass awareness within a radically enactive framework. The APs exteroceptive and interoceptive awareness was measured through the Observing subscale of the Five Facets Mindfulness Questionnaire (Baer et al. 2006) and Body Perception Questionnaire-Short Form (Cabrera et al. 2018). The AP's sensory (five senses) and self-awareness was measured through the State Mindfulness Scale (Tanay & Bernstein 2013). Their capacity for attention was measured with the flame task. The flame task was created for this study based on common meditation practices (see Farias, Brazier & Lalljee 2021; see Appendix B section d for the measures).

The data reflects that there were no significant developments of the AP's interoceptive and exteroceptive awareness post-training (section d.1. and d.2). However, the APs were significantly more mindful during the flame task, and they demonstrated a significant development in their performances on the State Mindfulness Scale (section e.3). Since the state mindfulness scale accounts for awareness in a holistic way, I am inclined to suggest that the unremarkable result regarding exteroceptive and interoceptive awareness specifically may be reflective of the scales themselves or the statistical power of the sample group. I support this interpretation based on the observation that the interoceptive and exteroceptive scales are closer to trait scales, rather than scales that explore awareness while immersed in an experience, such as the state scale is (see sections d.1., d.2., and d.4). This interpretation of the data is also supported by reflecting on certain instances which I discussed in the previous two sections that illustrated how various participants demonstrated a developed sense of both their interoceptive and exteroceptive awareness overall. For example: AP27's ability to recognise and identify affective sensation in their arms, which they stated they had not known until these workshops (see section 3.2.4.), and AP31's ability to attune with their environment, which according to them, they had not managed to do before this training (see section 3.3.2.1.).

The significant developments on both the state mindfulness scale and attention task leads me to suggest that these improvements may reflect the training's ability to assist actors in absorbing themselves through meta-awareness whilst in a process and as such, encouraging actors to be aware of the process as they experience it. I would suggest that this result correlates with their experiences of the Prologues

that I discussed in section 3.3.1. I refer to AP33's experience here as a specific example, where they were able to sustain their presence and awareness whilst remaining connected to their experience during the exploration of their Prologue.

3.4.2.2. Affect and attunement

My suggestion that the training enabled absorption and meta-awareness is also supported by the results of the experimental acting task, which was adapted for this study from Brown, Cockett & Yuan's 2019 neurobiological study of acting (see Appendix B section d.5.). In this adapted task, the APs were asked to imagine themselves in three different ratings. The first rating was to imagine themselves (first person); the second was to imagine they were a friend (second person); and in the third rating they were required to imagine themselves as a fictional character (third person).⁶⁹ The aim of this measure was to assess whether the training had any influence over the APs ease of imagining; to what extent these imaginings became sensory; their affective responses during imagining; and their absorption in the imaginings. In other words, this measure accounted for the APs ability to attune to both their affective states and the environment, and to become absorbed. The results of this measure was analysed against the fantasy proneness baseline data.

The data demonstrated that there were significant increases in each rating (first to third person) post-training. The APs scored higher on nearly every scenario in all three ratings (see sections d.2., e.1. and e.3.). This suggests that the participants could immerse themselves in a more sensory and affective way post-training. A further analysis of these results demonstrated that the changes in the APs state awareness (see previous section) were driving the changes in the AP's imaginings (section e.3.). This finding demonstrates that a development in the APs awareness supported the developments they experienced while imagining. That their awareness impacted their experience whilst imagining supports the hypothesis I offered in chapter two section 2.3.3. regarding the actor's attitude towards their imagination and their capacity for absorption and intuitive response.

In reviewing the quantitative data in a triangulated relationship with the qualitative data I discussed in the previous two sections, I suggest that the training may have impacted the quality of the AP's imaginings by working with an embodied approach to cognition, where affective and sensorial states were encouraged through meta-awareness; and meta-awareness facilitated an absorption into imaginative states through sensory engagement which encouraged affective response. I also feel

⁶⁹ The fictional character chosen for this task was either Romeo or Juliet from William Shakespeare's (1597) play *Romeo and Juliet*. These characters were chosen to emulate Brown et al. study's parameters. According to an analysis, the APs self-reported that they had different levels of familiarity with the play. According to the data, their level of familiarity did not impact the effectiveness of the task and thus the results of the task.

confident in suggesting that this interpretation of the data may support my hypothesis that intuition's development works with and through affective states and thus upholds a radically enactive account of cognition.

3.4.2.3. Intuitive decision making

To assess the APs tendency to make intuitive decisions post-training, the APs completed an Ambiguous Decisions task and an Adaptation of the Ambiguous Decisions task for acting (see Appendix B sections d.2., d.6., and e.1.). The results of this measure were analysed against the baseline data generated from the REI scale. The results showed that post-training, the APs tended to make more intuitive decisions. Interestingly, the data showed that their tendency to make intuitive decisions was not unique to acting contexts. When I analyse this outcome, I am inclined to accept it as a favourable reflection on the training. Although making intuitive decisions in everyday life could be argued to be different from acting performance and rehearsal contexts, I consider that an actor is a first and foremost a person whose intuition is an autonomous tool that should transcend specific contexts.

3.4.2.4. Expectations and appraisals of the training

The significant statistical developments were all analysed against expectations and appraisals of the training (see Appendix B section e.2.). This analysis was done to determine whether a bias may have existed between APs expecting improvements from the training and therefore reporting that there were improvements. The only correlation which was discovered was between the APs expecting to learn new skills and an improvement in their state awareness. This finding suggests that the training was impactful independently of whether or not the APs thought they would enjoy the training, or believed it would be successful. I am inclined to suggest that this finding provides an objective account of the training's efficacy.

3.4.2.5. Gender, sex, and intuition

According to the data, there were no significant statistical differences in any of the developments between the male and female APs. That said, the data demonstrated that there was a trend towards a significant difference (meaning it was *almost* significant) for the male participants to show a greater increase in perceptive detail and vividness of imagining in the first-person rating; and ease and realness of imagining in the third-person rating in the experimental acting task (see Appendix B section e.3.).⁷⁰

⁷⁰ I mention this result as it was the only result trending towards significance from the data that van Mulukom mentioned as being noteworthy. It is her opinion that should the sample group have been larger; this would have been a significant development.

According to the analysis, there were no correlations between these covariants that would indicate an explanation as to why this may be. This result was the only inconclusive finding that arose. In reviewing the data and considering the small sample group, I would be inclined to suggest that this result could be explored in more detail in future research with a larger group of participants. An alternative consideration is that because there were more male participants than female participants, it appeared as a greater statistical outcome. Entertaining this possibility, this result may be reflective of the training's effectiveness in encouraging affective responses, regardless of sex and gender.

3.4.3. Reviewing the data within the interdisciplinary PaR methodology

In collectively analysing the data in the last three sections, I note how the data reflects a radically enactive account of cognition (REC), where sensing, feeling, thinking and action collectively contribute to intuition as an embodied cognition. I observe that a REC and somatic framework complement one another due to a mutual interest on a holistic and inclusive approach to living and being. Relatedly, the REC and somatic merger impacted both the method's structure and how it was experienced, making the method itself a unique product of interdisciplinary Practice as Research (PaR). Additionally, I note that APs various experiences all seem to echo how the training impacted their ability to sense their affective states; to engage with their affective states; and to respond affectively; which I have previously argued are pivotal in acting intuitively. Finally, I observe that the data demonstrates a development of the APs awareness in various contexts, their capacity for attention, and their sensorial and affective experiences in imagined scenarios. Since I argue that intuition's development relies on awareness, attunement, affect, and attention, I therefore suggest that this training was able to develop the actor's intuition as a cognitive process and state.

To analyse the method's efficacy, I employed a triangulated approach to data analysis (see chapter one section 1.3.). A triangulated approach allowed me to analyse the quantitative data alongside the qualitative data. By doing this, I analysed measurable correlations alongside the AP's lived experience of the training. In analysing their lived experiences and the self-reports in the surveys, I relied on the APs ability to self-reflect and trusted that their reflections were done honestly and with integrity. In *Blood, Sweat and Theory*, John Freeman asks "[h]ow accurate can one's self-reflection ever be?" (2009: 157). Ruminating on his question, I propose that self-reflection is potentially not so much about requiring a measurable kind of factual accuracy, as I find Freeman's question alludes to. I suggest that accuracy in self-reflection is about being truthful of one's experience, and within this, finding that honesty can include many knowings, some of which are not always pleasant, but nevertheless assist in being able to develop intuition.

If the awareness is present moment, curious and compassionate then it is not thinking or ruminating or worrying and it can edge towards an acceptance of *what is*. We may then find that there is wisdom in our sensations, that they contain truths which may or may not be welcome (Westwick 2021: 128, my emphasis).

3.5. TRANSITIONING INTO A CONCLUSION

In this chapter I addressed the third aim of the research by analysing the efficacy of the somatic acting training method. In section 3.2. I focused my analysis on the structure and design of the method to discuss how it promotes the development of an actor's intuition. In section 3.3. I analysed how some of the techniques work to develop the actor's intuition. I then discussed the psychological and behavioural results in section 3.4. within the context of the qualitative data provided in the previous two sections. I propose that developments in the APs attentional, awareness, affective, and immersive capacities post-training support the argument that the actor's intuition is developable through this somatic acting training method.

At the heart of this method is awareness of all the components of a self that is relevant to intuition: sensing, feeling, thinking, acting, and ultimately, how all these faculties create and shape cognition. It has been my intention in designing and delivering this method to offer actors a deeper understanding and regard for themselves as a soma in processes of acting, and to encourage them to explore themselves as relational, joyful, and curious agents within their work and craft.

We tend to disregard ourselves. We judge and criticize our response to things. We throw away who we are because we're thinking that it's wrong. So understanding the what's and why's was [*they pause to think*] everything clicked for me with these sessions (AP3 Session 6).

I propose that the actor's intuition should equip them to play with trust, confidence, and freedom; to have the confidence and ability to make decisions about how they will affectively engage with and in their performances. I am confident that the data I have discussed in this chapter has demonstrated that acting intuitively may afford actors these possibilities, and that this somatic acting training method may assist actors in developing their intuition.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTUITION IN HINDSIGHT: KNOWING WHAT NEXT

In this study I set out to demonstrate that the actor's intuition is developable as an embodied cognition. I carried out this objective through three aims. I first conceptualised the actor's intuition as an embodied cognition. I then created a somatic acting training method to develop the actor's intuition as I had conceptualised it. Finally, I explored the training method in workshops to analyse the method's efficacy. I employed a Practice as Research (PaR) methodology which I shaped with an integrative model of interdisciplinarity to conduct this research. I integrated the disciplines of acting training, somatics, and cognitive science.

In this final chapter, I discuss the three aims of this research by bringing together the pinnacle findings of the previous three chapters. I reflect on the significance and implications of this research and pinpoint its contributions to knowledge. In addition, I will discuss discoveries and challenges that arose from shaping the PaR methodology with an integrationist model of interdisciplinarity. Finally, I will discuss the parameters which moulded this project and suggest avenues of future research.

4.1. THE RESEARCH IN RETROSPECT

In chapter one I outlined two problems which this research set out to solve. I argued that a lack of focused research on intuition in acting discourse was problematic considering the reverence literature had demonstrated for it (see chapter one section 1.1.). By challenging intuition's underdeveloped conceptualisation, and in reviewing the impact somatic practices have had on cognitive development, I argued that it was problematic for the actor's intuition to continue being considered as an undevelopable phenomenon (see chapter one section 1.2.). In this section I reflect on how these problems were addressed in this research. As I conduct this reflection, I pinpoint this project's contributions to research. I ground this reflection within the integrationist interdisciplinary model applied to this project's research methodology. To briefly recap: an integrationist model of interdisciplinarity requires an integration of different disciplines to address and solve problems (van Leeuwen 2005: 7).

4.1.1. Conceptualising the actor's intuition as an embodied cognition

In this research I define the actor's intuition to be an *energetic sensitivity* (see chapter one section 1.1.1.) by merging discourse from acting training on the actor's psychophysical energy with affect theory from cognitive science. In creating this study's interdisciplinary vocabulary, I came to understand how intuition as an energetic sensitivity can also be *affect sensing* (see chapter two section 2.2.). To account for the energetic (affective) component of intuition, I suggest that the actor's psychophysical energy

serves as driving, underlying, and arousing affective states that impact and form intuition. To account for the sensitivity component of intuition, I propose how an awareness of the actor's affective states may play a role in both sensing and in sense-making within and for intuition. Defining intuition as an energetic sensitivity accounts for how awareness can both be and foster a sensitivity (i.e., intentional sensing through attunement) towards and for affect as energy. In defining the actor's intuition as an energetic sensitivity, I also accounted for the feeling intuition is commonly associated with – the feeling of knowing what to do without knowing why (i.e., a gut feeling), which I classify as intuition's governing will. I define intuition's governing will as a unique affective sensation which distinguishes it from other cognitive states and processes (see chapter two section 2.2.1.).

Having defined intuition as an energetic sensitivity, I then conceptualised it as an embodied cognition by using a radically enactive framework (REC; Hutto & Myin 2012). A radically enactive cognitive framework accounts for the integrative roles thinking, feeling, sensing, and doing play in and for intuition as an energetic sensitivity. In conceptualising intuition as an embodied cognition, I explored how it functions as a cognitive process and state. As a process, I explained how intuition utilises affect, attunement, attention, and awareness (see chapter two section 2.2.). As a state, I explored how intuition becomes a sustained process when the actor becomes absorbed in a performance through meta-awareness (see chapter two section 2.3.). By exploring intuition as a cognitive state that relies on absorption, this research contributes an alternative psychology of acting to performance research. Currently, acting discourse promotes the application of dual consciousness and flow (see chapter two section 2.3.1.). However, in this research I propose that when sustained as a cognitive state, intuition may offer actors an alternative mindset that can be adopted in performance (see chapter two section 2.3.3. and chapter three section 3.3.1.1.).

By defining intuition as an energetic sensitivity and conceptualising it as an embodied cognition that is reliant on affect, attunement, attention, and awareness, I accounted for the notion of presence (see chapter two section 2.2.2.). I suggest that presence may be a crucial component of intuition if presence can be manifested through and by intentional attention. I propose that presence enables actors to apply direct perception when attuned to themselves and their environment to become intuitive. By being present, I argue that actors will be able to become aware of their affective states in relation to their environment. Through this awareness, I propose that actors will be able to attune to themselves and their environments (and vice versa) which will then enable them to discern and employ their intuition during rehearsals and performances. In short, I argue that affect, attunement, awareness, and attention work in a cyclical relationship to make, enable and sustain intuition as an embodied cognition.

I implemented the integrationist model of interdisciplinarity to define and conceptualise intuition in this study. The conceptualisation of intuition as an embodied cognition amalgamates affect theory (Barrett

2017), radical enactivism (Hutto & Myin 2012), the actor's psychophysical energy, and the somatic notion of attunement (Nagatomo 1992). Integrating different disciplines to generate intuition's conceptualisation in this research contributes to an understanding of the radically enactive framework of cognition in practice. By exploring the actor's intuition as an embodied cognition, I provide an account of intuition that subverts its conceptualisation in previous studies as a subconscious and inaccessible mental (i.e., brain bound) phenomenon.

To my knowledge, this PhD contributes the first developed conceptualisation of intuition for actors in English-speaking, Euro-American acting discourse. This conceptualisation of intuition offers an interdisciplinary perspective which considers both its cognitive and somatic nature, which I found previous conceptualisations across various disciplines had yet to significantly consider. In addition, this conceptualisation of intuition proposes it as a way for actors to bridge gaps between the differing states of mind they may experience between their training, rehearsals, and performances (see chapter one section 1.2.). By conceptualising intuition as an embodied cognition, I hope to have demonstrated that intuition is not an elusive gift from muses, or sparks of genius lying dormant in a compartmentalised mind. Instead, I propose that intuition is a cognitive process and state that is experienced affectively; that is reliant on feeling, thinking, and doing; and as such, is an embodied cognition.

4.1.2. The somatic acting training method

It's almost like... the missing balloon piece of some of the other methods. It's like when your coat is missing a button and you have to re sew it. That's it – the missing button (AP1 Session 4).

Having identified that there were no training systems or techniques to develop intuition for actors, I created a somatic acting training method to do so. I drew on acting and somatic practices and cognitive theory to create the method. I identify the acting training method as a significant contribution this PhD makes to both the fields of acting training, somatics, and interdisciplinary research. This somatic acting training method is a product of the integrationist model of interdisciplinarity applied in this research, as well as the culmination of the Practice as Research (PaR) methodology (more in section 4.2.).

In designing this method, I relied on the conceptualisation of intuition I created. By working with a well-developed conceptualisation of intuition, it became possible to focus and refine appropriate techniques within the method in order to develop it. In creating this method, I considered how a radically enactive account of cognition could impact the design of techniques, how the techniques could be disseminated in the process of training, and what could be possible in acting training if feeling, thinking, and doing were explored in an integrated way, as a radically enactive conception of cognition may support (see chapter one section 1.1.2.).

To create the somatic acting training method, I developed existing somatic approaches within the context of this research. For this method I utilised joy, an enactive approach to language, meditation, and biofeedback. Joy, biofeedback, and enactive language are a part of the skeleton of the method, with biofeedback acting as the connective tissue that joints the skeleton to the flesh (see chapter three section 3.2.). Since principles of meditation underpin most of the techniques of the training method, I identify it as belonging to the flesh of the method (see chapter three section 3.3.). Within the method's skeleton are also ten agreements which serve as guiding intentions for the explorations. These agreements work as the bones of the method – supporting and forming the skeleton of the training; assisting actors in embracing their unique process of developing their intuition (see chapter three section 3.2.1.).

Joy is used to emphasise exploration *as a process*, rather than as a means to an end (i.e., to gain a skill), and thus encourage and facilitate awareness during exploration. Joy functions as the bone marrow in the skeleton of this training. Just as bone marrow is essential in producing blood cells which carry oxygen to tissues in the body, the experience of joy is crucial in fostering and facilitating absorption in the training's explorations and a meta-awareness of the self-in-exploration. It is the centrality of joy in experiencing that gives oxygen to intuition in this method and enables its development and later, sustainment (see chapter three section 3.2.2.).

An enactive approach to language functions as the joints of the method. To briefly recap: enactivism proposes that cognition is by and for action (Gallagher 2017: 5). I liken enactive language to being the joints of a skeleton because it joins the techniques of the method and the process of training together to enable, reinforce, and strengthen the development of intuition. Enactive language is used in this method as a creative and co-participatory tool of sensing and sense-making. The language used in this acting training by both the actors and I (as a facilitator of the method), encourages awareness and discernment, and thus encourages both attention to and an attunement with affectivity. By encouraging language to facilitate sensory knowing, this method encourages the recognition of intuition as an embodied cognition that can be intentionally explored and developed (see chapter three section 3.2.3.).

Biofeedback works as connective tissue, supporting the flesh (i.e., the techniques) of the method. As connective tissue, biofeedback connects the flesh to the skeleton of the method (language, joy, and agreements). Biofeedback is embedded within all the techniques of this acting training method. Biofeedback gives structure and support to the techniques by functioning as a way for actors who undergo this training to develop their capacity for meta-awareness whilst absorbed in exploration. Biofeedback gives structure to the actor's attention, attunement, awareness, and affect by encouraging the actor to maintain an awareness of themselves alongside their environment, and to then be aware as to how their affective states may be influenced by their environment (see chapter three section 3.2.4.).

The somatic acting training method consists of 13 techniques and six journal tasks (see Appendix A). These techniques are the flesh of this training method; they are the muscles and organs that work together with, and are held together by, the skeleton (see above). The six journal tasks work as dynamic documentations that intend to develop intuition through enactive languaging (see chapter one section 1.3.2.4. and chapter three section 3.2.3.). These six tasks work in communion with the 13 techniques. Nine of the 13 techniques are sensory-based and are driven by guided meditations. I designed these guided meditations by creating mental and motor imagery scenarios which focus on developing the actor's awareness and encouraging attentional shifts, affective engagement, and attunement through biofeedback, language, and joy (see Appendix A). The other four techniques combine aspects of these nine sensory-based techniques and apply them to script-focused explorations. These four techniques are the Game, the Prologue, Active reading, and the Sandwich. They were analysed in chapter three.

In chapter one section 1.2.1. I argued that most acting training approaches tend to neglect the actor's state of mind in performance. This training therefore focused on providing actors with techniques that are considerate of the actor's state of mind in a performance environment specifically. In chapter three section 3.3. I mention how the four script-focused explorations of this method function and differ in training, rehearsing, and performing. In training, these techniques are geared towards developing intuition, whereas in performance, they are adapted to enable the actor to sustain intuition as a cognitive state. When used in training, the Prologue helps the actor to discover and identify their specific awareness and attunement processes in order to help them come into their intuitive state; Active reading proposes to develop intuition by creating opportunities for actors to immerse themselves within a scripted world and being present to any intuitions which may arise whilst immersed; the Sandwich aims to develop intuition by facilitating a cognitive shift in focus whilst working in the scripted world that encourages actors to become immersed, aware, and attuned; the Game encourages actors to adopt an enactive approach to language and therefore encourages an awareness of their arising intuitions.

I encourage this training method to be embraced as its own dynamic process. Just as I have argued that intuition requires an actor to embrace their vulnerability, so I would suggest that this method may benefit from a similar openness. I have designed this method with an intention of it being an individualised and progressive practice, which encourages actors to come a-new into each exploration and experience, should they approach this method as it is intended it to function.

4.1.3. Developing the actor's intuition

There's definitely been a change with my intuition after doing these classes...There's a barrier that's been broken through doing these sessions and I think it can only be for good. It feels very positive (AP9 Session 6).

To assess the efficacy of this training method, I analysed data from group interviews, journaling, psychological scales, and behavioural tasks. My approach to both data generation and analysis were influenced by the integrationist model of interdisciplinarity I applied to this study. I used qualitative data to inform my analysis of the quantitative results, as well as to assess how the techniques of the training were experienced. In other words, I explored the acting training method in and as a practice to determine whether it had been able to develop the actor's intuition as it is conceptualised in this research (see chapter one section 1.3.2.).

In this research I have argued that the actor's intuition is developable as an embodied cognition by applying and developing awareness. In chapter two section 2.2. I stated that intuition's development requires the actor to discern their intuition from other cognitive processes and states, and that they will be able to do this because of intuition's governing will, which makes it affectively unique. Thus, I suggested that a foundational part in cultivating the awareness necessary to develop intuition is in creating a discernment between intuition and other affective states. Throughout chapter three I analysed how the acting training method facilitates opportunities for this discernment. Reflecting on how the method affords actors these opportunities, I highlight AP37's discernment of their intuition as a recurring vibrational affective state within their exploration of the Inter/outer/play technique as a poignant example (see chapter three section 3.3.1.1.).

In accordance with the radically enactive framework of cognition I employed in this research, the awareness I argue intuition is dependent on moves beyond a purely sensory account and includes the actor's feelings, thoughts, and actions (see chapter one section 1.1.2.). In chapter two section 2.2. I argued that a development of such awareness requires actors to apply attention to their psychophysical energy (i.e., their affect) in order to attune to both themselves and – as well as in – their environment. I argued that by developing their awareness in this way, the actor's capacity for sensing and sense-making to include their intuition and intuitions is made possible and is facilitated through absorption. In chapter three, I demonstrated that various techniques of the somatic acting training method encourages absorption through meta-awareness. In reflecting on the training's ability to enable this awareness, I exemplify AP31's intuition during their exploration of the Presence and Attunement technique, where they were able to affectively attune to both themselves and their environment through an intuition (see chapter three section 3.3.2.1.).

I also reflected on how the training method enables the development of intuition through practicing direct perception (see chapter two section 2.1.), which encourages actors to work with *What Is* (see chapter three section 3.3.1.1.). This process is facilitated within the training method through affective attunement with and between self and space. Reflecting broadly on chapter three, I find that the

method's application of direct perception to this end is well illustrated in section 3.3.1., when I discuss AP1's experience of their Prologue, which enabled them to access and sustain an intuitive state.

When I consider how the somatic acting training method works to develop the actor's intuition, I suggest that the awareness the various techniques cultivate impacts the actor's affective states (their energy), their ability to attune to both themselves and their environments, and their ability to attend to the present moment intentionally (with presence). Attunement, affect, attention, and awareness are the central components of intuition I identified in chapter two section 2.2. Therefore, I find that the actor's intuition was demonstrated to be a developable embodied cognition by this acting training method.

Before exploring this training method in and as a practice, I anticipated that intuition would be uniquely experienced and developed by actors (see chapter one section 1.2.2.). Reviewing the APs experiences, I have come to appreciate just how unique this process may be. Each one of APs came into the workshops with various levels of established awareness that I would say played a role in how they experienced the training and ultimately, the development of their intuition during our time together. AP3, for example, shared that they paid little attention to the left side of their body prior to the workshops. AP38 admitted that they have always struggled to trust their own decisions, and that this was creating a conflict for them in this experience. At the end of their process, AP8 shared that they were still wrestling with a need for control and desire for awareness:

I realised I'm struggling to find the perfect balance between still trying to activate all the senses but not trying too hard that I'm forcing. I stopped trying at all, and then I didn't accomplish anything. Or I'd notice that I'm trying too hard... I was also trying to allow the emotions, the vulnerability side of it, to push forward what I was doing – using that emotion. I can't really say if I accomplished it. It was difficult to get it right. It was difficult to allow emotion to become part of my body. To sit in my body. I allowed myself to be aware of it though, where I could feel emotion in my body... But at least I'm aware of it and I can try again going forward (AP8 Session 6).

In studying this method, I came to appreciate that an actor's pre-established awareness, as well as what they dedicate themselves to accomplishing during training, is beyond my control. What is in my control is sharing the method to the best of my ability. In accepting this, and then attuning to each actor's unique process during facilitation, I gained an appreciation for the milestones and dynamic variables that ultimately may encompass intuition's development for each actor. The training method is designed to account for individual progression with the shifting intentions emulated by the ten agreements (see chapter three section 3.2.1.). If actors present themselves as active and willing co-participants of their own experience, then I trust that progress will be made. What this progress looks like, however, will be unique to each actor.

When I speak of developing intuition, I do not imply that intuition is something that can ‘grow’ in size. I found that intuition’s development works as I would argue most cognitive processes do – by nurturing them through intentional attention and by being present to the experience of them. I would say that intuition is developed by the awareness given to one’s affective states, which in turn, encourages the strengthening of the connection to these states. Intuition is developed by being able to embrace meta-awareness whilst absorbed in experiences and in allowing itself to become known through the process of attunement. In allowing intuition to make itself known, it requires an individual to embrace direct perception. I reflect that this is different to, for example, demanding a familiarity with one’s intuition, which I would caution enforces preconceived ideas of what one’s intuition and intuitions ‘should’ be.

Developing one’s intuition should not be seen as a means to an end; for instance, as a way of trying to create a modality of perpetual certainty. I caution actors against seeking a developed intuition for the sake of itself, as I think Stanislavski may have also warned actors against (see chapter one section 1.1.). I offer this training as a way for actors to develop their intuition so that they may engage affectively in their performances, and so that their state of mind during a performance can encourage this affective engagement to be an effortless experience. Intuition is a valuable resource because of the knowledge it affords and because it is a way of knowing that is inclusive, considerate, and sensitive.

As I reflect on intuition as a way of knowing, I am reminded that Stanislavski is said to have encouraged actors to control their bodies to answer “the inner demands of their wills” (Roach 1993: 196). Yet I found that intuition unfolds when actors are intent on listening, being aware, and on being attentive, rather than by trying to control anything. I would thus also caution actors against trying to enforce any kind of *deconstructive* or *un-learning* process in the pursuit of a well-developed intuition. As an example of what this could look like, I think of Moni Yakim and Muriel Broadbent’s approach to acting training, where they encourage actors to rid themselves of their ‘perceptions’ in order to achieve awareness (1990: 35). Ironically, intuition is “not about ridding oneself of anything, it’s about knowing” (Sumedho 2004: 40).

Moving deeper into this reflection, I am reminded of how often actors are expected to whittle themselves into fine instruments. The actor as an instrument is a long-standing conception. Stanislavski felt that “[a]ctors need to be finely tuned instruments, responsive to every changing impulse, every leap of imagination” (Benedetti 1998: 13). Michael Chekhov encouraged actors to tell themselves: “My body is a fine instrument for producing molding movements and for creating forms” (1953/2002: 10). Bella Merlin states that “[o]nce you get into the rehearsal room, the director will usually assume you’ve done all the necessary preparation on yourself and your psychophysical instrument” (2014: 81). Yet I argue that seeing actors as things that need to be tuned and shaped causes fundamental problems in how training is received and what it could achieve. People are dynamic, living beings who present with more

intricate possibilities than that which the body of an instrument affords. The somatic acting training method created for this project embraces actors as thinking, feeling, and live agents. If most systems of training today are concerned with *tuning* the actor as an instrument, then this approach to training is about *attuning* them, as they are.

4.1.3.1. The impact of the method on actors post-training

Although this training method intends to help actors meet the demands of the mainstream industry (see chapter one section 1.2.1.), the inherent nature of somatic education can often be a slow-burning process which contradicts the pace of this industry. I value how somatic practices can subvert the progressively linear pedagogy of mainstream acting training, and therein paradoxically enrich the experience of acting in the mainstream and beyond. Mark Evans notes that somatic practices may be particularly effective in challenging conventions in performance training. However, he also cautions that somatic practices should remain open to a critical evaluation of their pedagogies so as not to perpetuate the practices they intend to subvert (2011: 124).

In heeding Evans' warning, I contacted eight of the 20 participants approximately six months after the last workshop to enquire as to how the method was working or unfolding in their acting practices. The participants I contacted were those who had expressed an interest in both the continuation of training and the research project in general. I was eager to see if any of the participants had experienced significant long-term effects. Since I was unable to explore the training method in a performance environment (see section 4.3.1.), I reasoned that this feedback could be a way of reviewing the training's impact outside of a workshop environment. Four of the eight participants responded to my request.

I sent an audition tape through for a soap opera... it was the first time that I got a response from my agent telling me, 'Wow, this was actually really good!'... At no point was I trying to understand character or trying to overanalyse the objectives and intentions behind what the characters were saying to one another. I was just in the moment...it was really nice once I had the lines down to breathe, and at that point I focused and I took my little step up [onto my starting block] and the audition went absolutely swimmingly. It's been really helpful (AP18).

AP18 shared with me how the training had made a difference to an audition experience and how helpful it has been for them. I note how they mention that they were able to be "in the moment," as well as how easy the process felt, and how they were able to utilise the concept of the starting block in this scenario to get into an intuitive state of mind (see chapter three section 3.3.1. and Appendix A).

For AP39, the training's emphasis on *embodied* cognition, and how this incorporated an embodied experience of their imagination (see chapter two section 2.3.3.) impacted their affective engagement during a rehearsal process they were busy with at the time:

The most significant way it is helping in relation to [my] work [now] is through the use of ticks. We are working a lot with ticks as a way for the audience to feel the subconscious passions of a character. But for me, the full-body imagination has been coming in use in these ways: one of the ticks I have for my character is him rubbing the left of his waist as a result of an injury he sustained from war. So every time I scratch it, I've not only been imagining what it looks like, but feeling small pinching points across the scar, and then the sensation of my hand rubbing over its bumps; I wear a belt across my shoulder, and I pull on it in moments of higher tension. With this, I've been imagining a sand sensation on my left shoulder (where the belt rests), it's becoming irritating, the sound it'd make, and what that'd feel like pushing against the fabric of my shirt. Additionally, we frequently look through windows towards an imaginary area, but along our discussions of time and weather, I've been taking more time to incorporate: feeling/smelling/seeing the wind/heat/ocean/breeze/light. With the birds and crickets, we luckily have audio for that. Also, I'm having to imagine seeing birds and reacting to them, and so far I've been also imagining the sound but that will be supplemented with real sound soon ☺ So whenever I have to imagine, I've been tying it back with what I took away/remember from our discussions on full-body imagination. It makes it more sophisticated, and I feel assists me... (AP39).

AP41 shared that they too experienced themselves as affectively engaged during an impromptu performance:

I had a class which involved dropping in and emotional access and I felt really connected to the text - which we had learnt 10 minutes before - and I was really surprised by what came up (AP41).

Along with this written feedback, AP41 shared with me a recording of the performance they refer to here. In this performance, AP41 went through, by my count, at least four affective states, which they appeared to effortlessly move between. They seemed to be able to sustain their performance whilst receiving direction from what I would assume was a facilitator somewhere off-screen.

Like AP39 and AP41, AP3 shared insights with me regarding the training's impact on their affective engagement. They also shared with me how the training impacted their general well-being, and provided me with some important feedback to consider in future (see the following page).

I've been able to see and feel the growth in the way I act... I was able to get into character much easier, I could understand and emotionally involve myself as performer to feel and understand different characters. The short course [was] extremely help[ful] in all departments of how I go about achieving my tasks... My feedback has been more positive, my lecturers told me how much work I've been putting in has paid off... It's helped a bit to

find the little joys about life too, so that I'm less anxious or depressed about things...The de-rolling part could have been better in the workshops by providing technical support and tools to assist with that (AP3).

Along with their praise, AP3 mentioned that they found it more difficult to de-roll. In promoting intuition as a way to access and engage affectivity in performance in the moment, I thought it would by-pass the emotional 'hangover' I had come to know from techniques like affective and sense memory (see chapter one section 1.2.1.). Thus, I did not account for the necessity of a de-rolling process. As I was unable to explore this method in a performance environment, I consider that this was not a result of the training I could necessarily have foreseen. However, I now recognise this an opportunity for the development of this method in future research (see section 4.4.).

In reviewing the feedback from these participants, I find that the training enabled a way for them to affectively engage with their performances, to sustain this engagement, and to find an enjoyment and ease within their acting. As such, I feel confident that this training method is able to achieve what it has set out to do – to develop intuition as an embodied cognition in order to assist actors in engaging and sustaining their affectivity in performance.

4.2. THE PARADOX: INTERDISCIPLINARITY, METHOD AND METHODOLOGY

This research was moulded in accordance with the Practice as Research (PaR) methodology, which is defined by Robin Nelson as practice being the crux of the research (2013: 8). In this research, the creation and exploration of the somatic acting training method was its crucible. Recognising that the PaR methodology is a case-dependent methodology (ibid.: 4), I shaped it with an integrationist model of interdisciplinarity.⁷¹ Using the integrationist model of interdisciplinarity to shape the PaR methodology for this PhD provided a way to situate the training method conceptually, which gave scholarly context to the research, as is advised for PaR projects (Nelson 2013: 31; Mock 2021). Shaping PaR with an integrationist model of interdisciplinarity allowed me to explore an inclusive perspective of intuition in order to conceptualise it (i.e., as both a cognitive and somatic phenomenon).

As I recognised in chapters one and two, interdisciplinary research is a growing trend in acting discourse. However, many of these interdisciplinary studies use disciplines like cognitive science to embolden or justify theories and practices (Blair 2014; see also de Wet 2022). Researchers within artistic disciplines specifically are encouraged to explore interdisciplinarity beyond being a way to 'evidence' creative practices with science (Pavis 2001: 156). Researchers working in-between performance discourse and cognitive science are thus encouraged to work in a way that is beneficial for

⁷¹ Refer to chapter one section 1.3.1. for the defining parameters of the integrationist model of interdisciplinarity

all disciplines involved. In this project, I aimed to cultivate a mutually beneficial environment by creating a space where intuition's cognitive and somatic foundations were considered with equal importance.

However, considering intuition as a lived experience that has both somatic and cognitive foundations was not without its challenges. John Lutterbie states that "when we turn our attention to lived experience, the complexities cannot easily be set aside" (2014: 104). Reflecting on my research process, I suggest that these complexities are often born from conflicting knowledge paradigms within various disciplines, which gives rise to paradoxes. Mari Ovsepyan acknowledges this paradoxical complexity when she states that "All human experience...is grounded in biological processes. At the same time, all human experience...is never 'simply' biological" (2019: 94).

Aside from intuition's complexities, the methodology I designed and worked within brought its own challenges. PaR is more aligned with inquiry than conventional research questions; providing insights rather than answers (Nelson 2013: 29). PaR challenges conventional methodologies which seek "fixed, measurable and recordable 'knowledge'" (ibid.: 4; see also Vaage 2020). Ironically, my study sought to demonstrate that intuition is developable as an embodied cognition, which required me to seek out fixed, measurable processes by which to assess the acting training method. For this reason, I often found myself balancing research as a process versus research as a way to generate outcomes. In maintaining this balancing act, I remained cognisant of Nora Vaage's distinction between research and science; embracing research as an opportunity for exploration and remembering that science, more often than not, encapsulates proven knowledge (2020: 64).

In liberally adapting Vaage's distinctions to my challenges, I worked within what I call the *PaRadox*. Working between science, somatics, and acting, the PaRadox became a way for me to both celebrate and function within contradictions, instead of trying to conquer them. Although the PaRadox functioned on various planes, I find that many of the paths it took joined back into the divide between myself as a researcher, working towards aims and objectives, and as a facilitator of a practice, working with momentums outside of my control. As a PhD researcher, I was aware that no matter how exploratory the process, I had aims to accomplish. Yet as a facilitator of a training method, I had to accept that sometimes relinquishing a desire to steer outcomes was the most effective way of letting the research run its course.

In my experience, workshops and training sessions will always possess dynamic variables that facilitators may either choose to attune to, ignore, or fight against. In this case, I chose attunement. Sometimes this attunement meant making peace with the fact that I would need to adapt workshops in process. The attention my first group of participants wanted to give their Prologues meant that I

sacrificed the exploration of some of the other techniques to accommodate their curiosity. The fourth group of participants craved deeper discussions of their experiences, which meant that they explored their Prologues only briefly. If this research had worked as an acting training study only, such adaptations may have been par for the course. But as an interdisciplinary project that integrated a scientific discipline where standardisation is key, the adaptation of the workshops from group to group may have impacted the reliability of the quantitative data.

Within the PaRadox was the partnership between familiarity and objectivity that often felt like weights tied to either of my hands as I walked a balancing wire. In this partnership, my expectations of the research, the repetition of the practice across continents, and my situatedness in and critical reflectiveness of the project, all came to the fore. Without critical awareness, John Freeman warns that practitioners become absorbed within their own familiarity, which for him “is the death of both practice and research” (2009: 59). I reflect on how my faithfulness to Robin Nelson’s instruction of orientation through critical contextual immersion (2013: 28-9) guided me since the outset of this project. It is this advice which acted as a homing beacon for critical objectivity amidst familiarity. Jules Dorey Richmond and David Richmond (2011: 159-160) provide useful questions that I found indispensable in this orientation. Examples of these questions are: What assumptions do you bring to the work? What is your relationship to the work? What is the context of the practice? How do you manage shifts between being a researcher, a practitioner, and possibly even a participant yourself in various contexts? In maintaining a constant awareness of my answers to these questions, I found ways to work amidst the paradoxical and rhizomatic nature of the research I engineered.⁷²

4.2.1. Using an interdisciplinary data set to research intuition

To research intuition within a PaR methodology shaped by an integrationist model of interdisciplinarity, I used both qualitative and quantitative data. As mentioned in chapters one and three, I generated data from interviews, journals, and surveys, and collectively analysed how they informed the hypothesis that the actor’s intuition is developable as an embodied cognition. The integrationist model influenced how the data was analysed, as well as what kind of data I was interested in generating. By adopting the integrationist model of interdisciplinarity to shape the research methodology, I aimed to create a robust argument that used data to analyse *how* the acting training method develops the actor’s intuition.

⁷² I adopt the notion of the rhizome here from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s (1988) postmodern approach to research. Within their conceptualisation, the rhizome is a multidimensional and fluid process of knowledge creation and conception which subverts the linearity, binary, and dualist approach to theory and research perpetuated by conventional research methodologies and theorisation.

Using the integrationist model of interdisciplinarity to analyse data provided a further dimension to the PaRadox. Within a somatic paradigm, personal experience is often sufficient evidence of a practice's efficacy (see Fraleigh 2015: 19). However, I am of the opinion that the notion of 'evidence' could arguably be immaterial within acting discourse, as different perspectives can hold different and equally important values. Furthermore, the idea that any subjective experience can serve as evidence contradicts a scientific framework, which for better or worse perpetuates knowledge structures that uphold the idea of a central, objective truth (Blair 2014: 144). To complicate matters further, I am also sensitive to the knowledge/power structures that somatic practices have been accused of perpetuating, which can privilege hegemonic structures and impact whose experiences become evidenced (see Ginot, Barlow & Franko 2010).

Reflecting on the challenges of knowing these different disciplines presented me with, I consider the over-arching questions Mark Evans asks in his article, *Dancing with Socrates* (2011). Evans invites readers to question what somatic truths may be, as well as where these truths may exist. Evans references Michael Peters in the article, who states that being honest is a courageous act (2003: 216). For an actor who intends to develop their intuition, such honesty may be needed when discerning their nervous 'butterflies' from intuition's governing will. Their honesty could require courage if they had to admit that they manipulated a performance because they were unable to discern between their intuition's governing will and their own willpower. All considered, I circle back to the concluding reflection in chapter three in section 3.4.3. Somatic experiences do not need to produce objectively measurable facts to be valid. Somatic experiences require an honesty, which I believe is cultivated through the self-awareness of the experiencer, to have integrity.

The PaRadox also meant that sometimes I was unable to find common ground whilst integrating disciplines. As a result, I needed to make measured compromises in certain instances in order to stay in tune with the research's aims and objectives. Examples of such compromises would be when I adapted psychological scales in order to assess intuition in accordance with how I conceptualise it in this research. The scales were originally designed to measure very specific traits, concepts, and states, which have their own rich foundations that extend beyond intuition as I frame it here. Since intuition had not yet been investigated as I conceptualise it, the scientific parameters by which it was measured in this study were more obscure than, for example, previously established cognitive processes that could benefit from a robust academic track record (i.e., tacit or procedural knowledge). Therefore, the obscure parameters of measurement had to become a part of the innovative design of the research. Such innovation may be acceptable as part of the knowledge exploration/generation paradigm of artistic research (see Vaage 2020), but strictly speaking, is not acceptable by scientific standards (see van Mulukom & de Wet forthcoming). Nevertheless, I collectively employed these scales in the hope that

these measured parts would somehow speak to intuition as a whole, even though I do not think that intuition is the sum of its parts.

In addition to the challenge of adapting quantitative measures, I became aware of the limited demographic variables cognitive research accounts for. I learnt that it is common practice to ask for nationality, rather than culture, and that distinctions are only recently being made in cognitive studies between sex and gender. Limited variables in cognitive research are exasperated by the fact that the brain-as-mind was accepted to be a universal construct in prior decades. Cognitive research has tended to make its claims based on sample groups and researchers from Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich and Democratic backgrounds (WEIRD societies; see Henrich, Heine & Norenzayan 2010). Cognitive science has been actively criticised for its negligence to represent peoples outside of the WEIRD hegemony (Birhane 2021).

In accordance with the standard practice of cognitive studies, the participants' nationality and country of residency were accounted for in this study, but their culture was not. This creates a gap in the data analysis for people whose cultures do not align with their nationality, and for multicultural nations that have various racial identities.⁷³ In chapter three section 3.1. I mention this as one of the limitations of working in an interdisciplinary framework. While I have acknowledged in this research that specific cultures can create specific minds (see chapter two section 1.2.2.), I am also aware that definitive claims regarding specific cultures and cognitive processes cannot be made due to the porous nature of culture and cognition (see Barrett 2020: 100).

In objectively reviewing what I have learnt about processes of data collection within cognitive research, I consider that a narrower account of variables creates a finite parameter for data analysis, which is often necessary for research to operate within institutional and funding objectives and timelines. When I consider the large sample groups cognitive research generally requires, I can also understand the power that lies in categorisation, patterns, and trends. I observe then that perhaps the fundamental issue may potentially either come down to the inclusivity and equity of the sample group, or researchers who may have biases which privilege and uphold WEIRD ideologies.

I would say that the sample group in this study consisted of a wide and varied demographic. The APs who participated in this study were at various stages of training and were of different gendered, national, and racial (according to my observation) backgrounds. Thus, although my method of data analysis operated within conventions of cognitive research, I was able to provide an analysis of the method that

⁷³ As an example, South Africa has 11 official cultures, all of which have distinct languages and traditions, and which are not necessarily reflective of race.

is considerate of a diverse group of actors. Moreover, I would argue that I provided a measured reflection by integrating somatic accounts of the training with quantitative data. It may be that ways to assess specific cultural impacts on cognition could surface in future if research practices can embrace inclusive pedagogies that utilise interdisciplinary perspectives.

4.2.2. Joy as a form of radical enactivism

When I reflect on my intention to offer this acting training method as an inclusive system (see chapter two section 1.2.), I am confronted by another important dynamic which unfolded in the PaRadox. This dynamic exists between (1) what the method invites actors to experience (2) the trends and practices upheld and perpetuated by the mainstream industry which could contradict what the method encourages, and (3) my position as a facilitator with a selfhood that for better and worse, benefits from Euro-American hegemonic markers of privilege.

I am a white, cis-gendered, heterosexual woman who has no known disabilities and speaks English as a first language. Because of this, I recognise that my conceptions of freedom, confidence, and trust, amongst other experiences singled out in the method, are unique to the privileges these identity markers afford me in my daily life and the mainstream acting industry. While my conceptions have not shaped me and in me without hardship, I recognise that I will never know the hardships that have shaped these same conceptions for marginalised people. I am acutely sensitive as to how covert and overt systemic violence can prohibit people outside of the WEIRD hegemony from feeling safe enough to play, experience freedom, and foster trust in their work environments (see for example Tulshyan & Burey 2021) .

When I reflect on the process of this research, I have come to understand how joy may paradoxically disrupt WEIRD hegemonic structures within the mainstream acting industry, even as it faces reform. Karen Walrond's 2021 book, *The Lightmaker's Manifesto: How to Work for Change Without Losing Your Joy*, explores joy in relation to activism for people of all backgrounds. In summary, Walrond explores joy as a cultivated practice that defies despair, scarcity, and Othering. For Walrond, joy works as a proactive, mobilising experience that promotes inclusivity through bonding achieved by shared and fulfilled purpose and authentic human connection. Walrond argues that by centralising the experience of joy within their work, people are able to foster and create meaning, to give purpose to their work, and to sustain themselves in often hostile environments. Within this acting training method, I observe that joy works as enacted activism. The agreement to embrace joy, and thus, have it serve as bones and bone marrow in this method (see chapter three sections 3.2.1. and 3.2.2.) invites actors to unapologetically show up for themselves and their experiences. By prioritising joy in exploration, this

method provides a gateway for individual practices to shape and transpire and influence actions, intentions, and purpose.

When I examine the privileges I benefit from, I recognise that I also *have the privilege* to create a space where inclusive practices are achieved. I see this method as such a space, and I see joy as tangible way of standing in the face of all that is skewed and giving oneself the permission to experience the world in a full and purposeful way, in spite of, and as a compassionate response to, adversity. How an actor becomes comfortable enough to embrace this is of course an intricate process of self-discovery and awareness that I believe the agreements of this method can facilitate if actors can agree to attune to their experiences as they are.

In summary, the PaRadox afforded this research with various opportunities that were often dressed as challenges. The PaRadox enabled big picture thinking, it invited an understanding of the relationships that can flourish between processes, products, and outcomes, and it exposed objective and subjective positions on research. These opportunities all came with their own unique set of challenges that were better to work amongst, rather than conquer. Nelson warns researchers that the PaR methodology can result in more effort than a traditional research project would entail (2013:9). After using an interdisciplinary model to shape a complex research methodology in order to create and analyse an acting training method, I can state that there are undoubtedly easier ways to conduct research. Yet I look at the balancing wire behind me with an appreciative gaze. As Carl Jung aptly states, “only the paradox comes anywhere near to comprehending the fulness of life” (1968: 16).

4.3. HINDSIGHT HAS 20/20 VISION

In this section I reflect on parameters which moulded this research. Traditionally, this section would discuss the limitations of the research. However, I have chosen to explore a reflection of my research process holistically, rather than framing individual components as limiting factors. In doing so, I consider the parameters in an objective way. My decision to reframe limitations as parameters echoes some of the agreements I created for the somatic acting training method, such as *relinquishing oneself to time and its ingredients; following what arises; and accepting an environment as an active participant* (see chapter three section 3.2.1.).

4.3.1. Attuning to a hostile environment: PaR during a pandemic

In January 2020 I put preparations in place to explore the somatic acting training method with acting students from various universities and conservatoires in England. My plan was to offer these workshops over a few weekends or holiday period in 2020. After continuously negotiating the national lockdowns,

I had to concede that I would need to move my practice online if it had a hope of happening. Creating a remote-attendance method was initially difficult to conceive of. I had never done acting training this way before. Moreover, working remotely meant that I needed to adapt the methods of data collection I had initially attained ethical clearance for. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, it was my intention to measure heartrate variability (see the ethics applications in Appendix C). In adapting to COVID-19 restrictions, this measure was discarded, and online surveys were favoured instead.

Yet when I considered the definition and conceptualisation of intuition I was arguing for in this research, I realised that the digital environment was just another space to be energetically sensitive to, even if it was not what I would have ideally wished for. Ultimately, I knew that nothing would come if I did not try, but something could transpire if I did – and I was more interested in something than the certainty of nothing. I then adopted a shift in my thinking. Instead of focusing on what had not done before, I began to reconsider acting training in a fundamental way. I then realised that self-led and self-exploration is, at least in my experience, a foundational component of acting training. I reckoned that if I could communicate and facilitate with clarity and purpose, there should not be any detrimental obstacle that would prohibit remote training from being possible.

By sharing the acting training method as an online practice, it ultimately created opportunities for me to explore the training beyond universities and conservatoires in England. I ironically have lockdowns to thank for the opportunity to explore this method with professional, amateur, and student actors from various continents. I consider that in pre-COVID circumstances, professional actors may have been too busy to attend these workshops, and working with actors in various parts of the world would have been a costly endeavour. By attuning to my environment, I was able to find opportunities that ultimately worked to this research's advantage.

4.3.2. Timelines are always going to be finite

In chapter one section 1.2.1. I argued that acting training courses today are designed in a way that limits the potential of Stanislavski's dominating training regime working as it was designed to. Therefore, it was important to me that I offered actors an approach which accounted for the limited training and rehearsal periods they face today. As I discussed in chapter three section 3.1., this method was explored by actor-participants over a period of 22 hours. In chapter three section 3.4., I observe that the data demonstrated that after this short period of time, there were correlations with changes in the actors' quality of imagination, their attention, and their awareness. Considering these results, I am inclined to be optimistic about this training method's effectiveness in a short span of time.

The decision to explore this training over a period of only 22 hours per group was also a strategic one. I did this PhD as a full-time study over three years. I needed to split these three years between doing the preliminary research, designing, exploring, and reflecting on the training, and then submitting the study for examination. The amount of time dedicated to exploring the somatic acting training method was always going to be tied into the greater demands of the research degree which it is defined by.

4.3.3. Big ideas on a tight budget

I was unable to offer the actor-participants financial remuneration for their participation. In my ethics application (see Appendix C) I stated that I would pay professional actors for their participation. Although I did end up using professional actors in this research, there were multiple factors that influenced an amendment on this point. For example, the workshops took place online, there was no performance output, and the project was self-funded. While I applied for funding from multiple grants and bursaries during my study, I was ultimately unsuccessful in receiving financial aid.⁷⁴

Although financial remuneration appears to be a standard practice in cognitive studies, I remain undecided as to the ethics of paying participants for studies on acting training specifically. According to research, participants are often inclined to give favourable accounts of their experiences when they are financially incentivised, which may create a bias in the data. On the other hand, financial remuneration can incentivise people to dedicate their time and effort to research projects, and may attract more participants (see Resnik 2015).

All considered, I am hesitant to make loans against a hypothetical budget. I had a group of participants that were dedicated to this research and from my observation, did not need additional incentives to participate. That said, my sample group was small by ANOVA and psychological research standards. However, I consider that by somatic, performance, and neuroscientific standards, 20 participants may be an acceptable number.⁷⁵ A lack of financial incentive was a parameter the research ultimately operated within, rather than an inhibiting limitation that provided insurmountable obstacles to the study.

4.3.4. A South African walks into a British University

⁷⁴ As the second ethics application in Appendix C shows, one of these applications was made to the *BIAL* foundation in 2020. In reviewing the various failed applications with Valerie van Mulukom (my co-supervisor who often took initiatives to support me in this way), we came to a mutual understanding that interdisciplinary projects may still be facing challenges in being accepted by funding bodies as feasible research endeavors. I presented on the challenges of applying for funding for interdisciplinary projects at Coventry University's *Research Hootenanny* in February 2022.

⁷⁵ For example, Brown, Cockett and Yuan's 2019 neurobiological study of acting was conducted on 15 participants. McCraty and Atkinson's 2014 electrophysiological study of intuition was done on 13 participants. Many of the somatic and acting training studies I researched did not overtly specify the number of participants, and some were auto-ethnographic case-studies.

As I have continuously mentioned, this research operates within a Euro-American framework of acting training. I intend for this acting training method to be useful for actors working in the mainstream acting industry, which I find is largely dictated by Euro-American trends in English-speaking countries. Furthermore, I am aware of how my observations and analyses in this study weave between my position as a practitioner-researcher who straddles both practices and knowledges from Euro-American and South African paradigms.

While my education as a South African performer was based in Euro-American constructs, I am also a product of the South African cultural climate. Although I have found that South Africa emulates Euro-American acting training practices, it is also a unique cultural hybrid which has fostered specific ways of knowing in me that sometimes subvert Euro-American ideologies. Within a PaR context, Veronica Baxter highlights that South Africa “is geared toward lived and often communal experience as a way of knowing” (2013: 164). In his interview with me (see chapter two), Oscar Giner mentioned that the South African actors he has worked with have all had a proclivity for intuition.

Before undertaking this research, I held the belief that England was the heart of renowned acting training. This belief meant two things to me; firstly, that I was in the right place to conduct this study; secondly, that my own training and experience would somehow be subpar in a first world country. Ironically, there was not a single British participant in my sample group. Whether this is because of a lack of interest in the training, the timing of the research, or a random correlation, I cannot say for sure. Bella Merlin has an interesting perspective on this matter. She states that British actors are less inclined to seek out affective techniques than their American counterparts (2001: 255). I would be interested in exploring this method with a wider cultural and national demographic in future and potentially revisiting Merlin’s provocation to see if it may hold value in this instance.

In the process of working with the participants, authoring this research, and coming to appreciate what I can contribute to the field of acting practices, I was able to create a more considered balance between my process of ownership and learning from first world systems and expertise. In this process, I realised that although my training and knowledge may be differently shaped to that of scholars and artists of the global north, it is no less important or valuable. Just as integrated interdisciplinarity can provide mutually beneficial perspectives for research, there is there an opportunity for intercultural intersections to shape the future of acting training which, like cognitive science, should work beyond WEIRD hegemonies.

4.4. SELECTED PREMONITIONS

Although I have already pin-pointed some opportunities for future research in this chapter thus far, I offer a focused discussion on six opportunities in this section which have been inspired by my process of research.

4.4.1. Exploring the somatic acting training method in performance

As this project adapted to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, I was unable to explore how this acting training method could work in rehearsals and performances; what scientific research would call an ‘uncontrolled’ environment. While I was still able to generate data from the training method in practice, and although I received feedback from some of the participants as to how the method was impacting their processes post-training (see section 4.1.3.1.), I am eager to explore this avenue further. Exploring the training in performance contexts may add an interesting dimension to the interdisciplinary nature of this research. Controlled environments such as workshops provide ways to monitor and regulate variables which are then used to evaluate outcomes in quantifiable testing. The unpredictable nature of performances does not offer such certainties. I would therefore be interested to see how a performance environment may impact an interdisciplinary data sets as well.

4.4.2. A network of practitioners

As the practitioner-researcher driving this research, I was the only facilitator to have led actors in this training during this study. Exploring how other facilitators work with this method may be an important avenue of future research. I have come to appreciate the delicate relationship that can exist between training approaches and the instructors who facilitate learning. Frank Camerilli states that “training processes are associated so profoundly with individual practitioners and ensembles” (2019: 14). This is not to say that I think that training approaches are bound to their instructors, but I think that an exploration of the relationship between these two variables may be a worthwhile pursuit in future research.⁷⁶

4.4.3. An even longer longitudinal study and the documentation thereof

I recognise an opportunity to develop this acting training method further. In applying what I have come to appreciate about dynamic processes, I leave room for the possibility of this method’s continual development well past the submission date of this thesis. Such developments may consider how various

⁷⁶ I advise facilitators and practitioners who hope to explore this method in future that although the techniques are designed speak for themselves, they need to be allowed to. Whoever facilitates this training method should understand that as a somatic training, they themselves are only a witness of another’s process. It will serve no one to enforce their own preconceived outcomes onto the method.

times, contexts, and knowledges work both in canon and individually to shape training as a dynamic process for actors in future. The parameters of this PhD provided me with an opportunity to explore and test the method over a few months. Based on the significant results the data demonstrated, I am interested in seeing what developments may occur from exploring the training over an even longer period. In addition, I also note opportunities for future research to explore modes of publication and documentation that may creatively encapsulate the acting training method.

4.4.4. Beyond acting training

There is an opportunity to develop this training into a method applicable within wider artistic contexts and paradigms of well-being. An interest in this development of the method outside of acting contexts was inspired by some of the participants who had shared with me the impact the method had on their general well-being and in their daily life. An interest in intuition has recently been revived as a lucrative endeavour in well-being and alternative therapy contexts. For example, the Netflix documentary *Innsaei: The Power of Intuition* (Gunnsteinsdottir & Ólafsdóttir 2016) takes viewers through an account of intuition's potential to act as a transformative agent to combat the stresses of modern living.

I also note how this method may be of potential interest in alternative clinical psychology. Bessel van der Kolk's 2014 book, *The Body Keeps the Score*, draws attention to therapies which enable people to attune to their bodies and their interoceptive states as a way to treat PTSD and trauma. As this is a method that fundamentally encourages individuals to attune to their affective states, I recognise how these techniques may be applied in a therapeutic framework to help patients in traumatic circumstances develop a more embodied relationship with themselves.

When I consider the integrative interdisciplinarity between cognitive science and somatics that shapes the foundation of this method, I observe that it provides an alternative approach to existing methods that propose to engage with intuition. I note that many existing methods are based in practices of mediumship and have foundations in spiritual or creatively esoteric paradigms.⁷⁷ Moreover, these methods propose to 'awaken' (Vaughan 1979) or 'cultivate' intuition (Marks-Tarlow 2014), rather than to develop it, as this somatic method does. As this method is grounded in cognitive research, I note that for better or worse, it provides a scholarly foundation which could be appealing to therapists, educators, and artist-scholars.

4.4.5. A closer look at guts and feelings

⁷⁷ For example, the psychic Laura Lynn Jackson.

In the early stages of this PhD, I was eager to explore the relationship between interoception and the gastrointestinal system to study intuition as a literal gut feeling (see de Wet 2020). Promising research has surfaced suggesting that the gastrointestinal system is a key component in affect generation (see Gershon 1999; Mayer 2018; Enders 2017). Research in this field is currently limited by the technology available to study the gastrointestinal system (Barrett 2017: 290-1). However, recent neurobiological research pertaining to the relationship between the gut, consciousness, and perception is making significant strides (see Tallon-Baudry, Campana, Park et al. 2018; Rebello, Devauchelle, Béranger et al. 2018). I also note that the role of affect in skilled processes (like acting) remains under researched (Bicknell 2021: 7), as do the roles of affective states outside of psychophysical disorders and illness (Mayer 2018: 42). Future research may have robust opportunities to study intuition as an embodied cognition that involves the gut and positive or neutral affective experiences.

4.4.6. Quantitatively measuring intuition

In section 4.4.2. of this chapter and chapter three section 3.4. I acknowledged that the scales and tasks which were used in this study to quantitatively measure intuition had to be adapted to analyse intuition as it is conceptualised in this research. Therefore, I identify an opportunity to produce a scientifically validated scale of intuition in and for future research that could measure intuition as an embodied cognition. Such a measure could potentially balance the cognitive and somatic components of intuition in a considerate way and use integrative interdisciplinarity to its benefit.

4.5. IN CONCLUSION

In this research I demonstrated that the actor's intuition is developable as an embodied cognition. I established that the actor's intuition is developable through the somatic acting training method I created. This research offers a conceptualisation of intuition for actors, a somatic acting training method to develop intuition, an alternative perspective on the psychology of acting, and a somatic exploration of the radically enactive framework of cognition.

I reflect in closing on the distinctions I made in this thesis between beliefs, perception, and perspectives. I consider some of the beliefs which have shaped the metaphors we take to be truths about cognition and human potential. The brain as a computer is one such metaphor; the actor's body as an instrument is another. Researching intuition as an embodied cognition has convinced me that bodies are not instruments, nor are brains computers, nor are brains the sum total of a mind. Bodies and the somas which shape them absorb, secrete, process, produce, and transform; they are constantly in a dynamic flux. Intuition is a process and ability which I am confident every human body has capacity for. Rather

than being confined by subconscious ideals or mythical influences, intuition can be emancipated through awareness, attention, and attunement.

Enabling an accessible understanding of cognition and cognitive processes is imperative in contemporary scholarship and practice. Cognitive research is a field that researchers are continuing to make discoveries in. These discoveries and how we understand them impact the way we think about ourselves and our abilities. How we think about and know cognitive processes is a critical part of understanding what constitutes selfhood and engaging with the world in a considerate and sensitive way.

My hope is that this research encourages acting training to become a space that reconsiders the actor's value in performance processes beyond their service to a written text; that it promotes intuition as a sensitive way of knowing, thinking, and feeling. Used in this way, intuition could demonstrate that there are valuable ways of knowing outside of what a text may dictate, of brain-based conceptions of mentality, and of conventional approaches to acting training. By demonstrating that the actor's intuition is developable as an embodied cognition, I hope that in future, the acting industry may find itself facing not only a wider demographic of better equipped actors, but more self-aware people too.

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APPENDIX A | THE SOMATIC ACTING TRAINING METHOD

a) TABLE OF TECHNIQUES

<p>GUIDED MEDITATIONS</p>	<p>1. Inter/outer/play</p> <p>Exploring the relationship between breath and psychophysical energy through somatic biofeedback.</p> <p>WHAT IS EXPLORED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agency over breath & heart rate. - Somatic point of comfort.⁷⁸ - Breath as an interoceptive process and exteroceptive focal point for the direction of psychophysical energy. - Becoming aware of the interoceptive sensations that move and shape the heightened state of awareness intuition requires. <p>2. Senseeing</p> <p>Identifying interoceptive sensations and their origins. This guided meditation focuses on the interplay between interoception and exteroception and opens into kinesthetic awareness. This meditation is guided by the somatic process of biofeedback, mental and motor imagery, sensorial awareness, and the release of tension.</p> <p>WHAT IS EXPLORED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using mental imagery to find connections between sensations and related visualisations, exploring the process of letting visualisation surface or arise <i>from</i> the sensations, rather than imposing imagery <i>onto</i> sensations. - Cultivating the practice and sense of first becoming aware of, and then attuning to, interoceptions. - Encouraging awareness and intention to collectively facilitate and develop sensory sensitivity. - Discerning between relaxation and fatigue. <p>3. Energy awareness</p> <p>Noting, building, and expanding on the identification, dynamic, and relationship with psychophysical energy. This meditation is guided by mental and motor imagery and breath awareness.</p> <p>WHAT IS EXPLORED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying the role and relationship between visualisations and their sensorial effects through an attunement with psychophysical energy. - Discerning between dual consciousness and meta-awareness. - Applying meta-awareness to expand the attentional field
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⁷⁸ I refer to somatic points as salient points of sensation. There are similarities between a somatic point and a Drishti, which may be familiar to yogis. However, whereas I know a Drishti's intention to be to focus attention inwards, somatic points work with a radically enactive cognitive approach, meaning that they are always attuned to both the self *and* space through meta-awareness.

SENSORY**AWARENESS****1. Strengthening peripheral vision**

Attending to and connecting with space intentionally. Peripheral vision “allows us to keep at least two separate and different actions occurring at different speeds in the visual field at the same time” (Stern 2010: 13-4). This technique is inspired by Rudolf Laban’s (1966) sense of kinesthetic awareness, Bogart & Landau’s (2006) use of peripheral vision within their Viewpoint System, and Charlotte Selver and V.W. Brooks *Sensory Awareness* (Lowe & Laeng-Gilliatt 2007).

WHAT IS EXPLORED

- Spatial orientation in the kinespheric field and an awareness of the atmosphere and dynamic this co-creates with(in) the environment.
- Consciously giving attention to the visual field and what visual sensing can include and expand to.

2. Soft and direct focus

Building on the dynamic interplay between extero-intero-kinesthetic awareness. Soft focus is recognised as a state of absorptive learning (McCaw 2020: 219-20). Direct focus is my own term for a focused state of dynamic energetic attunement between the actor and environment. Direct focus works through the process of attunement.

WHAT IS EXPLORED

- Establishing a unique process of cultivating and sustaining both types of focus.
- The different affective responses each focus cultivates and emits.
- The quality and sensation of the energy transference and affective states each focus requires and inspires.
- Focus as an embodied feeling, instead of as a visual ‘focal’ glare or tension-inducing concentration (thus: becoming aware of the nuance between how and where attention and intentions are placed).

3. Connecting to senses and awarenesses

Exploring and discovering a somatic way of working with sensing and awareness. This technique is inspired by Irmgard Bartenieff’s principle of *personal uniqueness* (Hackney 1998) and the intentional attention promoted by the somatic techniques of Moshé Feldenkrais (2010).

WHAT IS EXPLORED

- Discovering if there are senses that are individually preferred and therefore given more awareness or attention to.
- Finding a comfortable order to build and work with sensory awareness.
- Noticing if and how a sense or senses stimulate affective responses.
- Sensory meta-awareness.

4. The sensation of intent

Working with the sensation of touch and haptic processes, this technique encourages an awareness of how intent can travel through and manifest in touch. Virtually, this technique is explored by verbalising touch. In person, this technique works with a shift of attention and intention before touching. This technique is driven by motor and mental imagery. This technique is inspired by Christina Kapadocha’s *Haptic Possibilities* PaR project (2021).

WHAT IS EXPLORED

- Noticing how language and imagination influence the experience of touch.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Becoming aware of processes that exist in touch beyond skin. - Non-local communication.⁷⁹
<p>EXPLORING PSYCHO-PHYSICAL ENERGY</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1. Presence and Attunement</p> <p>Radiating, sustaining, and then contracting psychophysical energy. Building on Michael Chekhov’s radiation (Chekhov 1985: 151-3; Rushe 2019: 103-10), this technique develops the principle of radiation to encompass control and ease. To accomplish this, Feldenkrais’s advice is adopted: “The ability to stop an action, a process, restart it, reverse it, or drop it altogether is one of the finer criteria of proper acture” (2002: 114). <i>This technique may become a baseline once on the starting block, as well as an in-process component of the heightened state during the Prologue (see the following block of technique).</i></p> <p>WHAT IS EXPLORED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agency over the felt sensation of psychophysical energy. - How affect can influence and permeate the environment. - Feeling connected to space. - Feeling situated in space. - Sensations of presence beyond present-ness. - Engaging with and expanding the affectual sense of psychophysical energy.
<p>THE PROLOGUE</p>	<p>This exploration is comprised of various techniques within the method in condensed form. It can be used in different contexts in training, rehearsals and performances. The prologue facilitates three processes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coming into the heightened state: finding <i>the starting block</i>; <i>anticipation that is mingled with excitement and fuel for movement. It is responsiveness. It is not anticipation of expectation. It is readiness. It is intrigue. This is not about winning; it is about the physical elevation the block affords.</i> 2. Preparing the actor to sustain intuition as a cognitive state. 3. Exploration within an intuitive state. <p>Getting into this state in an accessible way is vital for intuition to be sustained in a performance. Getting out of this state in an accessible way is vital for an actor to not feel ‘burnt out’ or trepidation about accessing their intuition in future. By practicing and continuously exploring their Prologue, an actor can discover important somatic points and preferences of working / accessing the state.</p> <p>WHAT IS EXPLORED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Translating and shifting affective states - Working through and between soft and direct focus - Releasing tension - Building sensory awareness - Functioning with a heightened sensory awareness - Meta-awareness. - Identify and activate intuition’s governing will and rising intuitions.

⁷⁹ Non-local communication is defined as communication that happens between pairs or groups of people without verbal exchange or agreement, and often below the threshold of conscious awareness, such as physiological synchronization of breath, heartrates, affective states, and behavior (Guastello, Pincus & Gunderson 2006). Non-local communication has been linked to intuition insofar as intuition is recognised as a process of attuning to the energetic resonance of materials and peoples (Bradley 2007).

<p>THE SANDWICH</p>	<p>This technique facilitates an exploration with the scripted world. In this exploration, the scripted dialogue is treated as contextualised action that includes an awareness of mental, physical, and environmental response and reaction. Thus, instead of referring to dialogue, the Sandwich refers to action. In the sandwich, the actor does not ‘read’ or place intention and focus deliberately on their own line. Instead, the focus is shifted onto what happens before and after, hence the sandwich: two slices of bread which enclose the filling.</p> <p>WHAT IS EXPLORED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shifting focus from oneself onto the co-actor or co-agent in the environment. - Facilitating a perspective shift from working with ‘text’ to working with action. - Fostering an awareness of action and reaction which informs and enriches intent.
<p>ACTIVE READING</p>	<p>This technique facilitates a holistic engagement with the scripted world. Inspired by traditional table-reads, Active reading shift an actor’s attention and intention when reading off of a psychological, textual analysis of the work, and onto their experiential process while reading.</p> <p>WHAT IS EXPLORED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shifting perspectives: moving from analysis into curiosity. - Giving attention to affective processes in reading. - Attuning to arising intuitions. - Identifying and honouring what feels familiar and what pulls attention.
<p>THE GAME</p>	<p>This is a journal-based technique to facilitate a process of affectively positioning and orientating oneself in a given environment. This technique draws on the process of <i>automatic association</i> (see Uhlmann, Poehlman & Nosek 2012).</p> <p>WHAT IS EXPLORED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing an awareness of indistinct qualities over psychological motivations. - Developing an enactive language. - Trusting responses in exploration. - Cultivating an identification and clarity between what the actor brings and what the character needs. - Identifying possible overlaps or entry points between self and character unique to each rehearsal and performance.

b) JOURNALLING TASKS

Articulate your

What is your

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APPENDIX B | SURVEYS AND BEHAVIORAL TASKS ⁸⁰

c) Overview of scales and tasks

SCALE / TASK	FUNCTION
<i>Baseline survey</i>	
Tellegen Absorption Scale (TAS; Tellegen & Atkinson, 1974)	Assess the actor-participants' tendency towards absorptive traits, including hyper-focus, attentional commitment, and imaginative involvement.
Creative Experiences Questionnaire (CEQ; Merckelbach et al. 2001)	Assess the actor-participants' fantasy proneness through previous experiences, indicating tendency to fantasise, the extent to which fantasies feel 'real', and experiencing bodily concomitants of fantasies.
Rational-Experiential Inventory (Pacini & Epstein, 1999)	Assess the extent to which the actor-participants have analytical and intuitive personality traits
Adaptation of the Rational-Experiential Inventory (Pacini & Epstein, 1999) for acting	Assess the extent to which the actor-participants have analytical and intuitive personality traits with regards specifically to acting.
<i>Before versus after survey</i>	
Observing subscale of the Five Facets Mindfulness Questionnaire (Baer et al. 2006)	Examine the actor-participants' exteroceptive awareness.
Body Perception Questionnaire-Short Form (BPQ-SF) (Cabrera et al. 2018).	Examine the actor-participants' interoceptive awareness.
Ambiguous Decisions task	Examine the extent to which actor-participants would make intuitive and analytical choices in a variety of everyday scenarios.
Adaptation of the Ambiguous Decisions task for acting	Examine the extent to which actor-participants would make intuitive and analytical choices in a variety of acting scenarios.
<i>Experimental tasks and associated scales</i>	
Attention flame task	A task that allows the actor-participant to be with their thoughts for one minute, and their thoughts and type of awareness during this minute were measured afterwards. For one minute, participants were asked to imagine a flame, dancing in the dark in front of their eyes, with their eyes closed (an auditory beep notified the participants that the minute had passed).
State Mindfulness Scale (SMS; Tanay & Bernstein 2013)	Examine the actor-participants sense of sensory awareness and self-awareness during the attention flame task.
Adaptation of acting tasks developed by Brown, Cockett & Yuan (2019) (stimuli were obtained with first author's permission)	An acting task that allows the actor-participant to role play and mentally simulate performance and rehearsal conditions.
Ratings of each imagined scenario	Assess imagined details & perception: Visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory details of the imagining.

⁸⁰ The information in appendix can also be found in the supplementary material for the article *Such stuff as dreams are made on: acting imagination and intuition are supported by interoceptive, exteroceptive and immersive abilities* (van Mulukom & de Wet forthcoming).

	Assess overall imaginative aspects: Vividness, emotion, ease of imaging, absorption, realness of the imagining.
Story World Transportation Scale (Kuijpers et al. 2014)	Determine the extent to which the actor-participant was able to immerse themselves in fictional worlds, measuring specifically: attention, emotional engagement, mental imagery, and transportation.
Inclusion of Self in Other Scale (Aron et al. 1992)	Ascertain the participants' sense of how much they felt like the imagined character, how much they became 'one' with it.

d) Scales and Tasks

d.1) Correlations between intuitive acting personality items and absorption, exteroceptive and interoceptive awareness: measures and results

	Absorption	Exteroceptive awareness	Interoceptive awareness
Intuitive acting personality ($\alpha = .751$)	.33**	.17**	.16**
<i>Intuitive ability</i> ($\alpha = .626$)			
I hardly ever go wrong when I listen to my deepest gut feelings when acting.	.27**	.12*	.15*
Using my gut feelings usually works well for me when acting.	.24**	.14*	.12*
<i>Intuitive engagement</i> ($\alpha = .489$)			
Intuition can be a very useful tool in acting.	.21**	.07	.10#
I often go by my instincts when acting.	.24**	.13*	.07

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, # $p = .06$.

d.2) Acting scenarios for the Ambiguous decisions task and their correlations with absorption, exteroception, and interoception: measures and results

Scenario	Intuitive/ Analytical choice	Absorption	Extero-ception	Intero-ception
1. When you're about to go on stage, and you get butterflies. Do you:	see it as a gut feeling about a positive outcome of the performance (intuitive)	.23** [.12, .33]	.19** [.08, .30]	.19** [.08, .29]

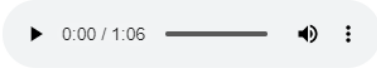
	see it as a sign of nerves (analytical)	-.07 [-.18, .04]	-.08 [-.19, .03]	.05 [-.07, .16]
2. When you're in a situation where you're not emotionally connecting with the performance, do you:	turn your attention to how you feel in the moment (intuitive)	.16** [.05, .27]	.12* [.01, .23]	.04 [-.07, .16]
	recall and implement techniques that might help you (analytical)	.14* [.03, .25]	.09 [-.02, .20]	.12* [.01, .23]
3. When you are in the middle of a dialogue during a performance, do you:	interpret the text in the moment and the way it is said (intuitive)	.20** [.09, .31]	.04 [-.07, .15]	.18** [.07, .28]
	listen to the text of the actors knowing what your next lines are (analytical)	.01 [-.10, .12]	.05 [-.06, .16]	<.01 [-.11, .12]
4. You're in a performance and your co-actor does something you never planned in the rehearsal. Do you:	go with where the moment leads (intuitive)	.11* [<.01, .22]	.15** [.04, .26]	.12* [<.01, .22]
	try steer them back on course through strategies (analytical)	-.00 [-.12, .11]	-.03 [-.14, .08]	-.03 [-.14, .08]

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Correlations between the intuitive and analytical scores for the scenarios are: (1) $s = -.48^{***}$; (2) $r = -.33^{***}$; (3) $r = -.38^{***}$; (4) $r = -.47^{***}$.

d.3) Presentation of the attention task

In this task, imagine a **flame,**
dancing in the dark in front of your eyes.

When you are ready, press play on the audiofile below.
A beep will sound. Please close your eyes
and focus on imagining the flame
until you hear the beep again (after 1 minute).



(Please proceed the next page after you've completed the task and heard the final, second sound. The 'next' arrows will appear after the task is completed.)

d.4) State Mindfulness Scale

State Mindfulness Scale items that were used from original:

-
1. I noticed thoughts come and go.
 2. I noticed emotions come and go.
 3. I felt aware of what was happening inside of me.
 4. I was aware of different emotions that arose in me.
 5. I felt closely connected to the present moment.
 6. I noticed physical sensations come and go.
 7. I clearly physically felt what was going on in my body.
 8. I felt in contact with my body.

Note. Items are from the State Mindfulness scale (Tanay & Bernstein, 2013)

d.5) Imagination task and measurements

INSTRUCTIONS

In this task, you will be asked to **imagine** acting out a number of **scenarios**. Each scenario has:

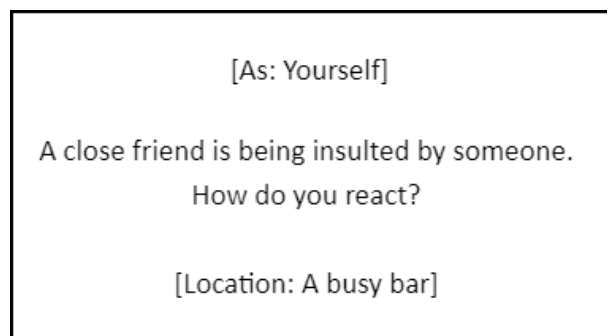
- A character

- A location
- An event

You will be imagining scenarios as **3 different characters** (in this order):

1. Yourself
2. Your best friend (of same gender)
3. Romeo or Juliet (of same gender)

For example:



Imagine acting out the scenario.

Please make sure you act out the right **character** (yourself/your best friend/Romeo or Juliet), in the right **location** (listed at the bottom), with the right **event** (listed in the middle). The idea is that you can embellish the scenario with as much detail as you like, taking the event where you feel the character would. Each scenario will automatically progress after **30 seconds**. Please try and use the full 30 seconds to imagine as elaborate or intense a scene as you can with the details provided.

Note that there is no need to close your eyes, but you may do so if you wish. Please do keep in mind that the screen will automatically move on after 30 seconds. After each scenario, you will be asked to **rate** your imagining on a number of scores, see example picture below:

	Not at all	Somewhat	Moderate	Considerable	Very much
Visual detail & perception (seeing)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Auditory detail & perception (hearing)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tactile detail & perception (touching)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Olfactory detail & perception (smelling)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vividness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not at all	Somewhat	Moderate	Considerable	Very much
Emotion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ease of imagining	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Absorption	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Realness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Visual detail & perception: How much detail could you see, how present was your visual perception in the imagining?

Auditory detail & perception: How much detail could you hear, how present was your auditory perception in the imagining?

Tactile detail & perception: How much detail could you feel, how present was your tactile perception in the imagining?

Olfactory detail & perception: How much detail could you smell, how present was your olfactory perception in the imagining?

Vividness: How vivid was the imagining? Was it clear, bright, and detailed?

Emotion: Was the imagining emotional? How much emotion/feeling did you experience?

Ease of imagining: How easy was it to imagine the scenario? How fluent was it, did it flow?

Absorption: How absorbed were you in the imagining? Did you lose track of time, did you feel immersed in the imagining?

Realness: How real did the imagining feel? Did it feel more like a memory of an event (very real), or more like an imagined fantasy (not at all)?

In total you will complete **3 blocks** of **6 scenarios** each. Each block of scenarios is for **one character**. After each block, you will be asked some additional questions about how the overall task went.

Take a moment to really understand these **instructions**, as they will not be repeated, and you cannot come back to them.

Continue when you have read through these instructions and understood them.

Note that a short synopsis of **Romeo & Juliet** will be available at the start of that block.

Instructions for the Romeo & Juliet block of the imagination task as presented to the participants

In the next block, you will be imagining scenarios as either **Romeo** or **Juliet**.

Please take a moment to read the text below to (re)familiarise yourself with the narrative, whether you know it or not.

Setting: Verona (Italy), during the period of the Italian Renaissance (around 1597).

An age-old vendetta between two powerful families erupts into bloodshed, the Montagues versus the Capulets. A group of masked Montagues risk further conflict by gate-crashing a Capulet party. A young Romeo Montague falls instantly and deeply in love with young Juliet Capulet, who is due to marry her father's choice, the older Count Paris. With the help of Juliet's nurse, they arrange for the couple to marry the next day, but Romeo's attempt to halt a street fight leads to the death of Juliet's own cousin, Tybalt, for which Romeo is banished by the authorities (the prince of the city). In a desperate attempt to be reunited with Romeo, Juliet follows a plan of a Friar from the local Catholic church and fakes her own death. The message however fails to reach Romeo, and believing Juliet dead, he takes his life in her tomb. Juliet wakes up to find Romeo's corpse beside her and kills herself. The grieving families agree to end their feud (Shakespeare Birthplace Trust 2021).

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Scenario sets of the imagination task

Scenarios set 1

	Block/condition 1: First person [As yourself]	<i>location</i>
1	You just got fired from your job. How do you tell your parents?	Parents' kitchen
2	Your friend who has gotten into trouble. How do you defend them?	An uptown night club
3	One morning the weather is really nice. Your boss calls, what do you say? Do you call in sick?	Bedroom with lots of light
4	You are in an argument with a store clerk. How do you behave?	Quiet supermarket
5	A waiter starts a personal conversation. How do you respond?	A small, local restaurant
6	You are asked to fight in a war by your government. How do you react?	In front of the council hall

Block/condition 2: Third person [As friend]		<i>location</i>
1	All of your friends are going out to a dance club. What do you do, do you join in?	Outside a rowdy dance club
2	Someone confronts you. How do you respond?	Busy train station
3	Your parents disagree with you about a decision you've made. How do you react?	Parents' garden
4	You are at the funeral of a family member. How do you behave?	Beautiful church chapel
5	A close friend has got into trouble with the police. When interrogated, what do you say?	Quiet public park
6	Your romantic other announces they'll move to another city. How do you react?	Your living room

Block/condition 3: Fictional person [As Romeo or Juliet]		<i>location</i>
1	You have met someone you like. How do you tell your parents?	Parents' reception room
2	A religious advisor tells you not to go ahead with your plan. What do you do?	Old stone church in Verona
3	A friend betrays you. How do you react?	On an old road near a field
4	Your closest friends ask you about a secret you have. How do you react?	Outside an Italian mansion
5	You get an order from the prince of the city to stop your activities. What do you do?	Town square of Verona
6	You have a personal matter. Do you ask your servant for their opinion?	Your mansion's kitchen

Scenarios set 2

Block/condition 1: First person [As yourself]		<i>location</i>
1	You are out of work. How would you ask your parents for support?	Parents' living room
2	Someone gets in your way. How do you respond?	Long queue at the bank
3	You're out all night with your friends. What do you do?	Nightlife centre of town
4	Your romantic other asks you not to take a job because it interferes with theirs. What do you do?	Busy, fancy restaurant
5	You witness a funeral of someone you didn't like. How do you behave?	Small countryside church
6	You are in a rush and the traffic light is about to change to red. What do you do?	Intersection in a major city

Block/condition 2: Third person [As friend]		<i>location</i>
1	You have to wait in a long line. How do you respond?	Busy post office

2	A friend has gotten into trouble. What do you say to your parents?	In your parents' hallway
3	Your employer is wrong about something. How do you respond to them?	Your workplace
4	You have a funeral of a family member at the same time as work. What do you do?	Front of your house
5	Someone of a lower economic class than yourself flirts with you. How do you respond?	An old-fashioned bar
6	After many years of no contact, a childhood friend gets in touch. How do you react?	Empty parking lot
Block/condition 3: Fictional person [As Romeo or Juliet]		<i>location</i>
1	A friend tries to stop you from going to Romeo/Juliet. What do you do?	On a stone bridge in Verona
2	You hear about a party you're not invited to. What do you do?	Local inn
3	One of your enemies has died. How do you react to the news?	On a church square in Verona
4	You have some personal trouble. How do you discuss it with your parents?	Parents' library room
5	Romeo/Juliet asks you to do something difficult for him/her. How do you respond?	In Juliet's family's orchard
6	The prince of the city tells you to go home and not see Romeo/Juliet. What do you do?	Palace garden

Imagination task measurements

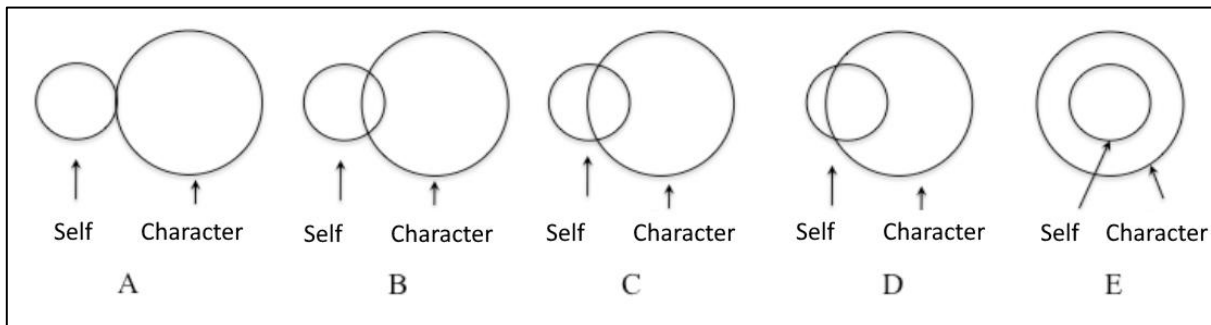
Story world absorption items that were used from original scale

Subscale	Items
Attention	When I finished the scenarios I was surprised to see that time had gone by so fast. When I was imagining the scenarios I was focused on what happened in the scenario.
Transportation	When I was imagining the scenarios it sometimes seemed as if I were in that world too. The world of the scenarios sometimes felt closer to me than the world around me.
Emotional engagement	I felt connected to the main character in the scenarios. I felt how the main character was feeling.

Mental imagery When I was imagining the scenarios, I could see the situations happening in the scenarios being played out before my eyes.

I could imagine what the world in which the scenarios took place looked like.

Note. Items from Story World Absorption scale (Kuijpers et al., 2014)



Pictorial identity fusion measurement (Swann et al. 2009), adapted for the imagination task.

d.6) Ambiguous decisions scenarios

Scenario	Intuitive/Analytical choice
1. You just completed a particularly difficult monologue on stage, and you feel you're glowing. Do you:	interpret it as a gut feeling that the piece went well (intuitive)
	interpret it as a sign of nerves and effort (analytical)
2. You are portraying a character which you find difficult to emotionally connect with. Do you:	turn your attention to how you feel in the moment (intuitive)
	recall and implement techniques that might help you (analytical)
3. When you are in the middle of a movement action during a performance, do you:	interpret the way and direction of the movements of the actors in the moment (intuitive)

anticipate that the other actors will walk in a way and to the location as they were instructed to (analytical)

4. You are in a performance and there are technical difficulties. Do you:

adapt to the situation (intuitive)

try to control the situation (analytical)

e) Results

e.1) Results and measures of the ambiguous decisions

The means and standard deviations of intuitive decisions in everyday scenarios of the Ambiguous Decisions task before and after the training in Study 3

Scenario	Intuitive choice	M	SD
<i>Pre-training</i>			
1. You have got a belly ache, and you try to figure out if you're getting ill. Do you:	use your intuition, and listen to your feelings?	48.00	33.94
2. You feel your belly rumble, and you try to figure out if you're hungry. Do you	go with your intuition?	65.45	31.79
3. You are cooking a new dish. Do you:	let your appetite at the moment lead you?	50.20	31.83
4. You are starting a new project at school, work or at home. Do you:	go with the flow?	62.95	26.00
<i>Post-training</i>			
1. You have got a headache, and you try to figure out what is wrong. Do you:	use your intuition, and listen to your feelings?	62.15	28.14
2. You feel that your mouth is dry, and you try to figure out if you're thirsty. Do you:	go with your intuition?	88.10	11.19
3. You are building a new piece of LEGO. Do you:	let your inspiration lead you?	56.15	34.05

4. You are planning a trip abroad. Do you:	go with the flow?	74.90	21.03
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Note. Scores on a scale from 0-100.

e.2) Expectations and appraisal of the training

Participants were asked a number of questions about their expectations and appraisals of the acting training programme: *Intuition*. “Do you think the training will have/had an effect on your intuition or intuitive capacity?”; *Analysis*. “Do you think the training will have/had an effect on your analysis or analytical capacity?”; *New*. “Do you think you will learn/learned new things (whether knowledge or skills) in the training?”; *Perform*. “Do you think the training will have/had an effect on your acting performance?”; *Enjoy*. “Do you think you will enjoy the training?”. Options for responses to the *Intuition*, *Analysis*, and *Perform* questions were: -2 (“A large negative effect”), -1 (“A small negative effect”), 0 (“No effect”), 1 (“A small positive effect”), 2 (“A large positive effect”). Options for the *New* question were: -2 (“Definitely not”), -1 (“Not”), 0 (“Neutral”), 1 (“Yes”), 2 (“Definitely yes”). Options for the *Enjoy* question were: -2 (“Definitely not”/“I definitely did not enjoy the training”), -1 (“Probably not”/“XX”), 0 (“Might or might not”), 1 (“Probably”/“/”), 2 (“Definitely”).

Participants overall had positive expectations and reviews of the training, whereby the expectations were generally consistent with the appraisal, as evidenced by non-significant paired samples *t*-tests. Participants felt the training would ($M = 1.50$, $SD = 0.76$) and had ($M = 1.65$, $SD = 0.49$) improved their acting intuition ($t(19) = 0.77$, $p = 0.45$), they expected they would learn ($M = 1.70$, $SD = 0.47$) and had learned ($M = 1.70$, $SD = 0.47$) new things ($t(19) < 0.01$, $p > 0.99$), and that they would enjoy ($M = 1.55$, $SD = 0.51$) and had enjoyed ($M = 1.80$, $SD = 0.41$) the training ($t(19) = 2.03$, $p = .06$). There were two scores that did not change (decreases that fell just short of significance): participants expected it would improve ($M = 1.55$, $SD = 0.51$) their acting performance, compared to their score after training ($M = 1.30$, $SD = 0.57$), $t(19) = -1.75$, $p = .10$, and participants expected it would also have an effect on their analytical capacity ($M = 1.40$, $SD = 0.60$), compared to their score after training ($M = 1.15$, $SD = 0.74$), $t(19) = -1.75$, $p = .10$.

We investigated correlations between the significant increases in these scores with the expectations participants had before the training, and found that the expectation of learning new things during the training was correlated with an increase in 1P realism ($r = .51$, $p = .02$), 1P story world absorption ($r = .55$, $p = .01$), 3P emotion ($r = .51$, $p = .02$), FP absorption ($r = .48$, $p = .03$), FP realism ($r = .44$, $p = .05$), and a trend for FP ease of imagining ($r = .43$, $p = .06$). All other *r*-values .38 to -.02, *p*-values .09 to .95. The other expectations did not show significant correlations with the significant differences as a result of the training. In terms of the participants’ appraisal of training, the feeling that they had learned

new things was significantly correlated with an increase in character fusion with the fictional person ($r = .54, p = .01$) – a difference from before the training which itself was not significant. None of the other appraisals was significantly correlated with differences in the ratings (r -values .39 to .01, p -values .09 to .99).

e.3) Comparing pre- and post-training imagining scores while accounting for state awareness

Estimated marginal means (with standard errors) and repeated measures ANOVAs comparing after versus before the acting training for imagination task ratings whilst controlling for training-induced changes in state awareness post-training.

Ratings	First person (1P)					Third person (3P)					Fictional person (FP)				
	Pre	Post	$F(1,19)$	p	η_p^2	Pre	Post	$F(1,19)$	p	η_p^2	Pre	Post	$F(1,19)$	p	η_p^2
<i>Scenario ratings</i>															
Perception	2.28 (0.16)	2.56 (0.16)	2.50	0.13	0.12	2.12 (0.18)	2.45 (0.17)	1.82	0.19	0.09	2.21 (0.2)	2.46 (0.19)	1.06	0.32	0.06
Vividness	2.47 (0.18)	2.78 (0.16)	4.69	0.04	0.21	2.33 (0.20)	2.62 (0.15)	0.52	0.48	0.03	2.32 (0.2)	2.74 (0.1)	5.38	0.03	0.23
Emotion	2.74 (0.16)	3.00 (0.13)	0.85	0.37	0.05	2.43 (0.16)	2.74 (0.16)	1.43	0.25	0.07	2.58 (0.21)	2.90 (0.12)	0.19	0.67	0.01
Ease	2.81 (0.20)	3.13 (0.17)	2.07	0.17	0.13	2.57 (0.21)	2.78 (0.16)	0.57	0.46	0.03	2.67 (0.19)	2.91 (0.14)	0.81	0.38	0.04
Absorption	2.38 (0.19)	2.88 (0.17)	11.16	.00	0.33	2.23 (0.23)	2.65 (0.17)	2.15	0.15	0.11	2.29 (0.24)	2.74 (0.16)	2.34	0.13	0.12
Realness	2.57 (0.17)	3.04 (0.14)	4.76	0.04	0.21	2.38 (0.21)	2.74 (0.13)	1.95	0.17	0.11	2.45 (0.21)	2.88 (0.13)	1.84	0.19	0.09
<i>Block ratings</i>															
Flow state	2.23 (0.23)	2.68 (0.16)	1.14	0.30	0.06	2.06 (0.23)	2.35 (0.19)	1.78	0.20	0.09	2.19 (0.2)	2.53 (0.17)	0.27	0.61	0.02

Story	0.79	1.08	0.66	0.4	0.0	0.62	0.69	<.01	0.9	<.0	0.64	0.81	0.04	0.8	<.0
world	(0.1	(0.1		3	4	(0.1	(0.1		3	1	(0.1	(0.1		5	1
absorption	5)	0)				6)	4)				7)	4)			
Character	3.65	4.45	4.18	0.0	0.1	3.00	3.30	0.19	0.6	0.0	3.05	3.4	0.72	0.4	0.0
r fusion	(0.2	(0.1		6	9	(0.3	(0.2		2	1	(0.2	(0.2		1	4
	5)	9)				1)	0)				7)	7)			

Note. Scenario ratings are on a scale from 0-4, for block ratings, flow state on a scale from 0-4, story world absorption (and subscales) on a scale from -2 to 2, pictorial fusion on a scale from 1-5.

GLOSSARY

This glossary is comprised of terms that play key roles in this thesis. I define these terms in accordance with the theoretical framework I apply in this study. The terms in this glossary appear in **bold** when first mentioned in the thesis. Words that appear in italics below can themselves be found in the glossary. I provide the page number in the far-right column where these terms are first mentioned in the thesis, as well as the page on which they can be read in context, if this is different from when the term is first used. The page numbers in the far-left column reflect the pages as numbered in the body of the thesis, rather than the page numbers of the document. For example, absorption is first mentioned on page seven in the body (and is so marked) but is on page 18 of the document.

A	Absorption	The ability to immerse (i.e., ‘lose’ oneself) in an experience (Tellegen and Atkinson 1974)	p.7 p.48
	Affect	<i>Interoceptions, sensations</i> , as well as <i>feelings</i> , that work between high and low points of valence and arousal (Barrett 2017). Although affects can be feelings, it does not necessitate an individual to consciously experience them, whereas feelings do. In other words, affects can transpire without being ‘felt’. Examples of affects could be dizziness (high valence low arousal), elation (high valence high arousal), or heartbeat (high or low valence and arousal, case-dependent).	p.7 p.17
	Attunement	The process of connecting and the subsequent connection between oneself and something else (i.e., to be ‘in tune’ with something or someone) (Nagatomo 1997).	p.7 p.8
C	Cognition	Thinking, feeling, sensing, and experiencing (Hutto & Myin 2012). I define cognition to imply physical as well as mental processes, whereas conventionally, cognition implies mental processes only (e.g., thinking, imagining).	p.2 p.9
	Computational cognition	Computational cognition proposes that cognition is a brain-based process. In computational cognition, the brain is likened to a computer. This framework opposes <i>embodied cognition</i> and <i>enactivism</i> . Computational cognition is the standard framework of cognition in cognitive science.	p.11
	Consciousness	Salient awareness - awareness here meaning that experiences are attended to with intentional attention (i.e., ‘to be conscious of something’). This interpretation of consciousness works in accordance with its most basic meaning in cognitive science.	p.6
D	Dual consciousness	Holding a simultaneous awareness of both performing and being the person performing, “the basic paradox of acting” – being “fully engrossed in the role while at the same time being attentive to all the technical stuff” (Merlin 2016: 18).	p.47
E	Emotion	A culturally defined label which helps a person categorize and make sense of what they are feeling (i.e., I feel <i>happy</i>) (Barrett 2017).	p.9 p.13

Embodiment	The “body-in-space, the body as it interacts with the physical and social environment” (Rohrer 2007: 344-5). I suggest that all experiences are mediated through a body (see Merleau-Ponty 1945/2012; de Wet 2022) and thus make no real distinction between embodiment and <i>cognition</i> .	p.2 p.9
Embodied cognition	A framework of <i>cognition</i> which argues that the body, brain, and environment all play a role in creating and shaping cognition. Embodied cognition opposes <i>computational cognition</i> . Different branches of embodied cognition will argue for different degrees or variations of body-brain-environment involvement.	p.2 p.9
Enactivism	A view of <i>cognition</i> which suggests that “cognitive processes are not just in the head but involve bodily and environmental factors” (Gallagher 2017: 1). Enactivism suggests that the relationship between action (i.e., in doing) and orientation (i.e., knowing where I am when I do, and in what context I am doing) shapes cognition. Enactivism contradicts <i>computational cognition</i> , which is focused on interpreting cognition a mental event (i.e., as independent from action).	p.9
Energy	A person’s underlying affective state that is influenced and co-maintained by both external and internal factors (e.g., blood sugar, blood pressure, interactions with people and the environment).	p.8 p.38
Energetic sensitivity	The ability to sense and attune to the affective states in another person, thing, or environment. Energetic sensitivity differs from empathy in that it does not assume an identification with another person or object. Energetic sensitivity encourages a relationship of energy between oneself and another (i.e., a communion), fostered through awareness.	p.5
Exteroception	A person’s attention to space and environment (interconnected with but distinct from interoception, proprioception, and kinaesthesia). It can include attention to the senses such as touch, smell, taste, sound but with a primary focus on how these senses are immediately experienced outside or on the surface of the body.	p.22
F Feeling	The conscious experience of affect and emotion (i.e., the feeling of interoceptions and sensations which inform both homeostasis and emotional climates).	p.5 p.18
I Interoception	Visceral motions inside the body (e.g. heartbeat, pulse). Interoceptions may be understood as “not propositional or conceptual in format; their content may include the body or body parts” (Gallagher 2017: 4), meaning that they could be described as <i>sensations</i> that are unique to the physiological conditions <i>inside</i> the body. While interoception is mostly used to denote the perception of these motions, I distinguish interoceptions here as motions that transpire independently of perception (i.e., our heart beats whether we perceive of it beating or not).	p.5 p.18
Interoceptive awareness	“Interoceptive awareness is typically operationalised as the frequency of reporting bodily sensation and beliefs about the importance of such bodily states” (Ma-Kellams 2014: 2).	p.66

		A developed interoceptive awareness would include the ability to tell the difference between one's affective processes (e.g. the ability to distinguish between emotions and physiological conditions). It would also include the ability to understand links between various on-going affective processes in a somatosensory approach (i.e., interoceptive accuracy).	
	Intuition	The ability to attune to the affective states of oneself, another, and the environment (i.e., <i>energetic sensitivity</i>) through heightened <i>perception</i> .	p.i
M	Meta-awareness	The awareness of having an experience whilst being absorbed in the experience. Whereas dual consciousness requires an actor to have a split focus on themselves as the actor who is acting, as well as the character they are portraying, meta-awareness only requires a focus on the experience of performing as it transpires. Put another way: meta-awareness does not require any conception of selfhood (i.e., of being an actor). It places a focus on the experience, rather than on being the person having an experience.	p.7 p.49
P	Perception	“[A] matter of getting a grip on the world as opposed to representing it” (Hutto & Myin 2018: 97). A cognitive process that transpires between a person and their environment, rather than as a mental act ‘inside’ a brain, as <i>predictive processing theory</i> argues.	p.7 p.9
	Predictive processing theory	A theory supported by <i>computational cognition</i> which proposes that perceptions are predictions of an environment and oneself that are formulated based on existing perceptions (which are themselves formed by predictions). Predictions can be updated if an individual becomes conscious of the fact that their prediction does not correspond with sensory input (incoming data). This view of perception frames it as a brain-bound process. This theory opposes the <i>enactive</i> position of perception.	p.34
	Presence	An intentional application of one's attention and cognitive focus to the experience of the present moment.	p.6 p.42
	Proprioception	Movement from the skeletal-muscular system which is communicated throughout the body by neural receptors in the joints, muscles, ligaments, tendons, and inner ear (Olsen 2002: 57).	p.10
R	Radically enactive cognition	A theory of <i>embodied cognition</i> proposed by Daniel Hutto and Eric Myin (2012) which argues that the body, brain, and external environment play equal roles in shaping and creating <i>cognition</i> . Radical enactivists support the <i>enactive</i> view of cognition.	p.9
S	Sensation	Information obtained through the sensory organs. Sensations can transpire both inside (interoceptively) and on the surface of the body (exteroceptively) (e.g., heat, cold, skin-to-skin contact).	p.10 p.18
	Self	The experience of being a person in a material body in a specific space and time, as well as the experience of being a distinct, albeit developing,	p.4

	person over a period of time (i.e., the embodied experience of having or being a body over the course of your lifetime).	
Sensory awareness	An awareness that includes interoception, exteroception, proprioception, and kinaesthesia, and through this culmination of sensory perception, produces an awareness that is more than the sum of its parts. For example, sensory awareness extends to the way a person may interpret their affective states.	p.23
Soma	The dynamic lived experience of being a <i>self</i> which extends beyond the physical, material body. This lived experience includes factors which may contribute to an individual's unique experience and construction of their own selfhood, such as their culture, relationships, language, and environment. Whereas the concept of a self is more 'inwardly' directed (i.e., the experience of being me), I would argue that the concept of a soma includes an exchange between inner and outer environments and influences (i.e., the experience of being a unique me in my relation to my world).	p.8
Somatics	A field or research and practice that privileges the bodily based experience of a person. This bodily based (i.e., <i>embodied</i>) pedagogy equally values mental, physical, and often spiritual elements of a <i>soma</i> in the process and experience of learning, doing, and being. Examples of somatic thinkers and practitioners would be Thomas Hanna, Moshé Feldenkrais, Martha Eddy, and Anna Halprin.	p.2
Somatic practice	Any practice which uses techniques and methods that draw on physicality and mentality equally, often disrupting the binary distinction between them in the process. Examples of somatic practices would be <i>Awareness Through Movement</i> , <i>The Alexander technique</i> , <i>Skinner releasing technique</i> TM , <i>Body-Mind Centering</i> TM .	p.10
T Tacit knowledge	The knack of performing a skill. Michael Polanyi elucidates tacit knowledge's meaning in the statement, "we can know more than we can tell" (1966/2009: 4) (e.g., riding a bike, swimming, walking). Tacit knowledge may also be known as expert or implicit knowledge, practical intelligence (Cianciolo, Grigorenko, Jarvin et al. 2006) and procedural knowledge (Georgeff & Lansky 1986).	p.10