

Postmarginality:
Ethical Relationality of Theatre Rehearsal Practice

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Abstract.

Postmarginality: Ethical Relationality of Theatre Rehearsal Practice

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As debates about the under-representation of marginalized communities grow in North America, identity-centred perspectives have had a polarizing effect on cultural relations (Preciado; Couturier). In the Canadian theatre community, the ideals of artistic freedom in theatre creation conflict with the need to achieve meaningful progress in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), and the results have proven painful for different communities (Gilbert; Martelly; Aguirre). New communication tools are required in theatre rehearsal practice to help negotiate between the welcome increase in the political representation and agency of marginalized artists and the ongoing need for creative liberty. With a cohort of ethnoculturally-diverse participants, I devised a one-hour performative inquiry (Fels) from excerpts of a written play and devised solo work from the participants. The objectives of the inquiry were threefold: (1) to explore how social norms driven by a 'coloniality of power' (Quijano and Ennis) manifest in the rehearsal process; (2) to examine if a posture of ethical relationality (Donald) can disrupt these social norms and lead to the rhizomatic connections of *Tout-monde* (Glissant) and Third Space (Donald; Ermine; Bhabha; Turnbull), and; finally (3) to evaluate if the psychophysical nature of theatre practice (Zarrilli) facilitates pathways towards intersubjectivity (Fuchs and Koch), empathy (Thompson), and generative dialogue (Scharmer). This project suggests that ethical relationality in theatre rehearsal practice would require less emphasis on hard-coded ethical approaches and embrace the dynamic, shifting nature of relationality in a way that generates spontaneous human agency and preserves the creative spirit of theatre practice.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 “Constructing Freedom Collectively”.

My curiosity for the topic of ethical relationality in theatre rehearsal processes emerged from my experience as co-artistic director of the Modern Times Stage Company, an ‘intercultural’ theatre company based in Toronto that I co-founded in 1989 with theatre director, Soheil Parsa. Over 30 years as an actor, producer, dramaturg, and writer with this small theatre company, I participated in over thirty rehearsal processes with artists of different cultural backgrounds. In my view, the cultural differences between the artists– which I observed as speech accents, languages, physical and emotional expression, and training– had an impact on our theatre rehearsal practice, as well as a creative influence on the productions. Accepting cultural differences into the rehearsal process provoked new creative ideas that challenged Euro-centric Canadian production and aesthetic practices, and in so doing, created for me what was an emerging ethical space of theatre rehearsals.

With time, I became interested in the creative potential of theatre rehearsal practice that involved a plurality of ethnocultural backgrounds, as well as the power dynamics that might limit the agency of the artists in those practices. I spent several years doing volunteer work with a non-government organization, Diversité artistique Montréal, whose mandate is to mentor the careers of racialized and immigrant artists. In addition, I sat on other committees and roundtables tasked with bringing the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)¹ into the theatre arts scene in

¹ As three interlinked concepts, equity, diversity and inclusion represents the political dimensions of parity in policy, process, treatment and outcomes, differences in lived experiences and perspectives, and the ongoing intention to build a community where all members feel valued (Gagliardi 1).

Montreal. Finally, I began a project with Modern Times called *Postmarginal: Inclusive Theatre Practice*, to support theatre rehearsal practice that is inspired by marginalities.

At the same time, as flare-ups and conflicts surrounding representation and ‘cultural appropriation’ expanded in the Quebec and Canadian theatre communities from 2000 to 2020 (Alvarez and Knowles), I became disheartened to see a growing nationalized view of ethnocultural diversity that constrained artists in strictly defined categories of identity. In the words of trans philosopher and artist, Paul B. Preciado:

...our justice movements have oriented themselves towards identity politics... feminism for women, the politics of LGBTQ... if you are a sexual minority, you pursue LGBTQ politics, if you are Black, you pursue anti-racist politics. There has been a real separation of identities, so we have become more female, more homosexual, but have we become freer? ... I think absolutely not... When will we construct freedom collectively? I think it’s not by way of identity (Richeux, "Le corps est la chose...", 00:38:30 – 00:39:25, translation mine).

Contemporary discourse about the rights of marginalized communities can become oversimplified by centre-periphery binaries in which each community perceives itself in a struggle with its unmarginalized Other. I believe that this carries into the EDI work in the theatre community. These binaries create idealized visions of community purity that can be challenging for change-makers who strive for a more progressive and equitable theatre community, but whose methods (or mistakes) are unacceptable to more militant members of the movement. Latinx theatre artist, Christina Aguirre, described it in this way in the winter of 2021:

I’d like to call the last few years in our theatre community the time of the great purge. A shameful time. A time to learn a great deal from. Because it has been a time of cruelty and psychological violence. The opposite of empathy and

solidarity. I want to be part of a theatre community where there is a great range of thought, of perspectives, of political positions... The time of the great purge has been led by the notion that there is an absolute truth. And that that absolute truth is my opinion on any given subject. And usually, these absolute truths are tied to my identity. That, for example, as a Latinx woman of colour, I have the absolute truth on any number of things connected to my culture. And people who don't adhere to my absolute truth need to be cancelled. Fired. Disposed of. Mobbed, publicly humiliated, shamed, and, essentially, sent to the far right. Because that's what we're risking (00:15:29 –00:17:24).

EDI is an important catalyst for change in theatre practice, with respect to removing systemic barriers that push back the representation of marginalized communities. In this study, I posit that the socio-political transformation with respect to EDI in the Canadian theatre community should be approached as relational because it involves a complex interconnection of psychological, cultural, and historical factors that resist the essentializing views of identity politics. A form of *ethical relationality*, such as described by Métis writer Dwayne Donald, can continue the necessary work of decolonization and decentering of theatre away from Euro-Canadian perspectives without falling into the trap of setting “les uns contre les autres à jeu à somme nulle” (Couturier 1). In this sense, I consider ethical relationality as building upon the concept of ‘intersectionality’, coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, in which the positionality of marginalized persons is informed by the confluence of several discriminations. An ethically-relational approach would embrace the dynamic, shifting, and rhizomatic nature of intersubjective relations, which is inclusive of experiences of discrimination, but not limited to them. I believe that this can generate opportunities for new ethical rehearsal processes that empower the creative spirit of theatre practice and encourage a

'commons' approach. An ethically-relational theatre rehearsal practice could help reconcile the politics of class, gender, race, sexual orientation, and disability² within the messy, uncertain, intersubjective space of human relations.

I propose three main research questions to explore how EDI in theatre rehearsal processes can embrace ethical relationality and move beyond essentializations of political identity. My questions are interlaced, in the sense that each question flows into the next in a deepening analysis of the political, social, and intersubjective facets of ethical relationality in theatre rehearsal practice. I first sought to understand how the presence of artists with a plurality of ethnocultural backgrounds exposes the colonial norms or 'coloniality' (Quijano and Ennis) of Euro-Canadian theatre rehearsal practices. I then attempted to reframe these political, cultural, and historical inequities into a conceptual space of 'ethical relationality' (Donald) to constitute a Glissantian '*Tout-monde*' ("Le traité du Tout-monde") or Third Space (Bhabha; Turnbull). I finally explored the psychophysical processes of theatre (Zarrilli) that facilitate passage to an encompassing intersubjective field (Thompson) where artists can connect more deeply so that new potentialities and future-oriented thinking can emerge for theatre artists (Scharmer).

The participants included four actors, one theatre director-actor, one research assistant-actor and me, each of us from diverse cultural origins. We created a one-hour performative inquiry, *All Things Being Equal*, in which an existing play and a series of autoethnographic solos were brought together into a cohesive whole. I observed the entire process as principal investigator and participated as a director, dramaturg,

² Positionalities of the physically-disabled, neurodivergent, and non-gender-binary sexual identities were beyond the scope of this study.

performer, and video editor. It was not our intention to attempt to create a lived experience of ethical relationality in rehearsal practice through this performative inquiry; the goal was to identify the ingredients of ethical relationality (in the time and context of this study), and to suggest some possibilities of a future theatre rehearsal practice application. Nonetheless, the subject of the research study centered the ideas of an ethical relationality of theatre rehearsal practice into our thinking as participants. Our search for this utopian idea was oblique, but as will be seen in this paper, we experienced instantiated moments of this ethical relationality in practice.

The overall objective of this work is to lay the theoretical basis for a new communication tool that could help navigate the many political, social and layers of theatre rehearsal practices, especially those that involve ethnocultural plurality. To this end, I introduce the term, 'postmarginal' (Alvarez *et al*), a neologism I coined in 2017 to express a movement away from an essentializing center-margin paradigm towards a view of identities that is inclusive of the complexity of human relations. By examining the web-like interconnections, quandaries, and conflicts that arise in postmarginal theatre rehearsal practice, I wish to propose an initial schematic for an ethically-relational rehearsal practice that would be the subject of further study. This research will hopefully contribute to the development of an ethical theatre rehearsal practice. It is a discussion that began in the latter half of the 20th century and will no doubt continue to evolve in the next decades. The language that I have introduced in this paper will no doubt evolve too over time as new conflicts arise and new understandings emerge. The fluidity of this topic (and the language I use here to describes it) is a factor that must be considered by future readers of this paper.

1.2 *All Things Being Equal: A Performative Inquiry.*

As my professional background is as a practitioner of theatre (acting, directing, writing), I chose an embodied research approach. In this method, “the primary objects of investigation are the possibilities and potentials of bodies, individually or together” (Spatz 5). However, rather than look back at my time with Modern Times Stage Company and its artistic director, Soheil Parsa as a case study, I was inspired by my 30-year lived experience at the company to make a fresh inquiry into the relational dynamics of a rehearsal process involving ethnocultural differences. From December 2020 to May 2021, I worked with a team of artists to create a performative inquiry that “[embraces] performance as an action-space of exploration, reflection and learning” (Fels 1). This research-from-creation (Chapman and Sawchuk) process (in the sense of carrying out research on the creation of an artistic work) was a heuristic, a tool for discovery in which qualitative analysis emerged from the metaphoric world of artistic exploration.

Over a period of four months of intermittent work (60 - 70 hours total), we developed a one-hour performance, *All Things Being Equal*, woven from the following material: (1) staged excerpts of the play *Aurash*, by Bahram Beyza'ie (Parsa et al); (2) autoethnographic narrative description (writing and movement) based on the participants' creations; and (3) discursive field research. We were accompanied by a set designer, a lighting designer, a video designer, a sound designer, and a production/stage manager. My role as principal investigator was to lead the overall research elements and to co-write and direct the performative inquiry. Originally intended to be a live performance, the creation was video recorded scene by scene due

to constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic. As will be discovered in this paper, this had some special advantages to this research project.

I divide my study into five chapters. Following this introductory chapter one, I will detail the theory (chapter 2) and methodology (chapter 3) of my inquiry, offer some observations about discoveries coming from the research (chapter 4), and conclude with some observations and suggestions for further study in the final chapter five. Before moving on, however, I would like to take a moment to outline my perspective of 'knowledge' (epistemology) and 'being' (ontology) that has emerged over the course of this research, and how these views intersect with my own positionality as an ethnographer.

1.3 Epistemological and Ontological Perspectives.

1.3.1 Introduction.

As a white researcher collaborating with racially-marginalized persons³, my epistemological and ontological perspective must be open to interrogation to minimize the tendency to draw solely from "the archive" of knowledge and systems, rules and values... now referred to as the West" (Tuhiwai Smith 42). I do not claim to have been value-free in this research process; I will always be subject to my background and its systems of thought. I would like, however, to draw one possible picture of my own 'positionality' and express the important influence it has on my worldview and knowledge systems.

³I consider a 'racialized' individual one who experiences "the process through which groups come to be socially constructed as races, based on characteristics such as ethnicity, language, economics, religion, culture, politics" (Canadian Heritage 1).

The term 'positionality' refers to social-cultural perspectives of gender, race, physical abilities, or sexual orientation that shape "an individual's world view and the position they adopt about a research task and its social and political context" (Holmes 1). In research, the intersection of these social positions link individuals together in a web of connections that involve relationships of power. Understanding my own positionality as a researcher who observes the process is essential to address my evolving relationships with the participants and my relationship to knowledge in the study (Maher and Tetreault).

I am a white, middle-aged, cisgendered heterosexual male of British-Scottish descent who is able-bodied and economically middle-class (see fig.1). From the perspective of my skin colour, gender and sexual orientation, age, economic status, and physical ability, I can move freely through a North American society that allows bodies like mine "to inhabit the world as if it were home" (Ahmed 159).



Fig. 1. Vallès, Helena. Video still of Peter Farbridge from *All Things Being Equal*. 3 May 2021, Author's personal collection.

No privilege is without its caveats⁴, and my positionality is complexified by, for example, my linguistic group (English) within Quebec and my social status as an artist. However, it is necessary to see how the above-named privileges intersect with and shape the ontological and epistemological perspectives of this work.

1.3.2 Ontological considerations.

The most salient of these intersections between my privilege and my worldview can be seen in my desire to work towards the idea of a '*Tout-monde*' (a "worldmentality") of social relations proposed by Édouard Glissant ("*Traité du Tout-monde*"). An Afro-Caribbean from Martinique, Glissant calls upon his society to evolve towards a stateless, classless, egoless, non-violent, environmentally-sound, and culturally-unbiased form of post-colonial utopia "as opposed to the state of affairs produced by globalization and neoliberal forms of accumulating capital" (Diawara 22). I believe that my experiences as a white male theatre artist growing up in the ethos of Canadian multiculturalism have instilled in me the view of intercultural relations as being enriching and positive, and that this underpins my interest in issues of marginalized communities and the arts. From an ontological perspective, my privilege has instilled in me a 'realist' belief of a society (i.e., one which is knowable) in which social, economic, and environmental equilibrium can be attained. But although I believe this just world to be real, and thus consider myself a realist from the perspective of believing in a knowable future, I also recognize that this is an 'idealist' vision, that is, my perception is

⁴ For a discussion of whiteness, see Chapter 5 in (Garner, Steve).

inherently subjective and thus unknowable, since the objects of this future are dependent on the qualities of my own mind.

Noam Chomsky navigated this philosophical dilemma in his 1971 debate with Michel Foucault on justice versus power, in which their respective structuralist and post-structuralist positions clashed about what progress can be achieved by social justice movements. According to Foucault, it is not possible to imagine a future just society because we know it might be misconceived through our imperfect knowledge⁵ (Chomsky.info, "Chomsky vs Foucault" debates, 00:09:50 – 00:10:15). According to Chomsky, however, "...we have to be bold enough to speculate and create social theories on the basis of partial knowledge, while remaining very open to the strong possibility, and in fact overwhelming probability, that at least in some respects we're very far off the mark" (Chomsky.info, "Chomsky vs Foucault" debates, 00:10:43 – 00:11:32). In other words, we need educated guesses to move society towards an ideological goal. My ontological perspective reflects this view: to proceed in my research, I imagine a future in which a better world exists, while knowing that there is a significant chance that my perspective might be biased by unseen or unconscious factors.

I place myself, therefore, in the spectrum of ontological perspectives as a *critical realist*, one who maintains "an ontological realism while accepting a form of epistemological constructivism and relativism... accepting the possibility of alternative valid accounts of any phenomenon" (Maxwell, 2008: 164, quoted in Butler-Kisber 7).

⁵ Foucault cites the failure of the Bolshevik revolution as an example, as it was steeped in the same bourgeois understandings of the society that it challenged (Chomsky.info, "Chomsky vs Foucault" debates, 00:09:50 – 00:10:15).

This ontological stance resembles *social constructivism*, in which we understand lived experience as “socially constructed, understood in context, and influenced by the historical and cultural experiences known to individuals” (Butler-Kisber 5). Social constructivists work for an objective world they consider as more just, a world which in fact can only ever exist in their subjective imaginations.

1.3.3 Epistemological considerations.

This tension between my belief in an objective world, on the one hand, and the understanding that knowledge of that world is constructed subjectively, on the other, requires a research approach that can bridge these two understandings of being. I have chosen embodied and Indigenous knowledge systems to navigate this dualism. In embodied knowledge “the lived body is the knowing subject” (Tanaka 47). The idea emanates from the works on phenomenology by Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, both of whom proposed that the body provides the sole avenue for perception of the world. It was further advanced by the work of philosophers of embodied mind such as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, who propose that “Reason is not disembodied, as the tradition has largely held, but arises from the nature of our brains, bodies, and bodily experience” (3). The phenomenological perspective inhabits the embodied nature of theatre research, the foundation of which is the psychophysical relationships of live performance (Zarrilli; Garner, Stanton B.). These relationships extend beyond the limits of the body into an intersubjective field where individuals and their environment form a web of interconnections in a process of “embodied affectivity” (Fuchs and Koch). It is in this liminal space, this in-between location of the theatre artists participating in my study, that my perception of knowledge exists. This is not unique to ethnographic research such as mine. As David Turnbull suggests in his book

Masons, Tricksters and Cartographers: Comparative Studies in the Sociology of Scientific and Indigenous Knowledge, “The attempt of one group of human beings to study another is an interpretive dialogue in which understanding is achieved through an interactional process of constructed meanings” (218). In my research methodology, therefore, and specifically through the performative inquiry, I will weave the participants’ knowledge bases together with my own in an embodied rehearsal and performance process.

The second form of knowledge-making in this research is related to Indigenous epistemologies. I wish to tread carefully into this world. As Carl Ahenakew warns, including Indigenous ontology, epistemology and methodology in Western-oriented research can be tainted by the “historical context of severely uneven grounds of negotiation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples” (328). The inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in my research represents an intention to move towards a greater understanding of Indigenous knowledge, rather than any purported lived experience or deep understanding of these cultures. Nevertheless, I cannot overlook its pertinence to my research. My interest in Indigenous worldviews and epistemologies arose when I noticed parallels between ethical relationality and Indigenous cosmologies (Donald himself is a Métis, descendent of the Papaschase Cree). For instance, Margaret Kovach describes the dualist worldview of the Tewa, a linguistic group of Pueblo Native Americans, as being mediated by “a cosmological relation to the natural environment, tribal knowledges...” that establishes “...an ethic of interconnectivity...” (220). Kovach describes the dualism of the Tewa (between the spirit and material world) as based on an interconnectedness of all things that resolves different perspectives and balances the world. From an Indigenous perspective, therefore, my approach to knowledge building involves multiple ways of knowing that can interact in a process of making connections through ‘braiding’ (Donald; Ermine; Jimmy et al.; Kimmerer). In

braiding no one perspective has dominance over, or more legitimacy than, the other. Braiding, in this sense, is not meant to combine two things “to create a new, third possibility to replace them both”, but rather it is “an ongoing and emergent process” (Jimmy et al. 22) in which each of the two things has equal voice.

My performative inquiry will engage the imaginative processes of performance that includes non-anthropocentric sources of imagination present in the creation process, such as location, objects, time, and events. As Sheridan & Longboat describe in their explanation of the Haudenosaunee imagination: “Imagination, in its ecological sense, is the cognitive and spiritual condition of entwining with local and cosmological intelligences” (325). This idea of braiding of the local physical presence (the artist-participants) and the non-local, cosmological intelligence (the creation process) will guide me in my approach to knowledge in the study and express itself through the performative inquiry. Although my sense of the ‘non-local’ (the more-than-human) does not refer to elements in the natural world such as animals, plants, and rocks, it does include more-than-human understandings in the form of creative connections with elements, such as time, physical space, and events. It is in this veiled and subtle liminal world of creation that I sense a possible connection between my epistemological stance and Indigenous ontologies. This metaphoric world is central to my epistemological approach:

When botanists go walking the forests and fields looking for plants, we say we are going on a foray. When writers do the same, we should call it a metaphoray, and the land is rich in both. We need them both; scientist and poet Jeffrey Burton Russell writes that “as the sign of a deeper truth, metaphor was close to sacrament. Because the vastness and richness of reality cannot be expressed by the overt sense of a statement alone” (Kimmerer 46).

In this sense, the convergence of embodied and Indigenous approaches to knowledge are enriching this study.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction.

The three principal research questions of my study are:

- (1) How is coloniality manifested in a rehearsal process⁶ that involves theatre artists from different ethnocultural backgrounds?;
- (2) In what ways, if any, can ethical relationality be established in a theatre rehearsal process to allow theatre artists of different ethnocultural groups to share power and agency?, and;
- (3) Can theatre artists' psychophysical processes facilitate a common intersubjective space where artists can engage in generative dialogue?

When I began this project, I positioned these three questions within theatre (performance) studies and anthropology (ethnography), but I researched many other fields, including cultural studies, colonial and post-colonial studies, whiteness studies, gender studies, ethics, dialogue studies, somatics, and phenomenology. Such a polyphony of perspectives is not unusual to research on theatre, as Richard Schechner, the founder of performance studies, says, "...it is at its best when operating amidst a dense web of connections..." (24). To embrace this complex interdisciplinarity, I would like to unpack the theoretical framework of each question separately, a process which I will repeat in my chapter on methodology and refer to in my conclusion as well, for the sake of consistency. Like a *matryoshka*, or 'Russian Doll', I will attempt to demonstrate how each question fits into the next as the political, social, and psychophysical dimensions of my subject.

⁶ Throughout this paper, I refer to 'theatre rehearsal practice' and 'theatre rehearsal process'. I understand these terms to refer to a specific context of contemporary Euro-Canadian theatre.

2.2 A Basis for Ethical Relationality in Theatre Rehearsal Practice

2.2.1 Theoretical Explorations of Question # 1.

Question # 1: How is coloniality manifested in a rehearsal process that involves theatre artists from different ethnocultural backgrounds?

Before addressing the components of my first question, I would like to unpack the discipline of performance studies in relationship to research on ethnocultural theatre practices, and in so doing, establish my own perspective of the ethnographic description of theatre rehearsal practice. Research into “theatre artists of different ethnocultural backgrounds” implies a neutral view of performance studies, however, a review of the literature shows a history of failed attempts to find a non-Eurocentric position. I would like to move forward from this past, while respecting what it might have to offer. For example, ethnographer Jean-Marie Pradier proposes the neologism, *ethnoscénologie* (“ethnoscenology”)⁷, to describe a study of “the organized human performing practices (OHPP) of diverse ethnic groups and cultural communities around the globe, including the West” (Pradier, “The Flesh is Spirit” 62). Although his arguments and ideals are at times flawed⁸, his lexical analysis and ontological construction of non-Western-centric performance studies are instructive to my inquiry. The term ‘scenology’ comes from the Greek word *skênê*, a “temporary covered

⁷ I will continue to use the term ‘theatre’ to discuss my subject, as the performative aspects of my research are centred on European theatre practice.

⁸ As an example, Pradier makes reference to musicologist Alan Lomax’s research on African American music as “an exemplary model” of music ethnography (“The Flesh is Spirit” 72) but neglects to mention (or perhaps didn’t know of) Lomax’s highly unethical methods of data collection, which included forcing African American prison inmates to play their folk songs for recordings (see Oforlea 2012).

structure", and its related metaphor of *skênos*, or "the body" as representative of the two aspects of the physical location of the performance and the body in performance (Pradier "The Flesh is Spirit" 63). This is more accurate to my embodied research of rehearsal practice⁹. Pradier's ethnoscenology also supports the phenomenological aspects of my inquiry (see Question # 3 in this chapter), as "an appreciation of the complementary nature of mind, spirit and body" ("The Flesh is Spirit" 81). I will use Pradier's term 'ethnoscenology' as the study of "different cultures, practices and behaviours of organized human spectacles" (Pradier & Bertelli, "Les périphériques..." 26) to express my understanding of less Westernized views of the two terms 'performance'¹⁰ and 'theatre', but I will also use these two terms as a shorthand in this paper, as there was consensus among the study's participants in their use of these terms to describe what they were doing.

In my performative inquiry, "different cultures, practices and behaviours" were present in a single rehearsal process. This context of theatre practice is also known as 'intercultural theatre' (Knowles, "Performing the Intercultural City") which could be said to be an ethnoscenographic description of how "organized human performing practices" manifest within a plurality of cultural influences¹¹. In the search for a non-

⁹ The term 'practice' is used here as always located in a specific time and place and enacted by individuals or groups (see Spatz 7).

¹⁰ I use the terms 'performance' and 'performative' in this paper not to describe a wider sense of human activities that "bear similarities to performative acts within theatrical contexts" (Butler 521), but as theatrical performance involving professional artists performing in rehearsal and performing live in front of a theatre audience or recording device.

¹¹ In her article on the German/Ivory Coast company Gintersdorfer/Klassen, Rahel Leupin defines 'intercultural' as "a philosophical and creative concept..." that "includes a multitude of (art) disciplines, ethnicities, sexual orientations, morals, and values..." (507). Although my study focuses solely on the ethnocultural, I find this delineation of

Eurocentric form of theatre and performance studies, the term 'intercultural theatre' is now a relatively discredited—if still widely used—description of theatre involving several ethnocultural identities. Critics such as Patrice Pavis, Rustom Bharucha, Una Chaudhuri and Erica Fischer-Lichte have argued (see Harding; Bharucha; Fischer-Lichte et al.) that intercultural productions and theatre studies are appropriative, in that they use “decontextualized elements of othered cultures in their attempts to rejuvenate decadent Western theatrical forms” (Knowles, “Performing the Intercultural City” 1). This criticism has also been levied by Bharucha, among others, against Western theatre artists such as Peter Brook, Richard Schechner, Ariane Mnouchkine and Eugenio Barba (Knowles, “The Modern in Modern Times”). Although these Western theatre artists have made a substantive contribution to the development of an internationalist theatre, their 'orientalist' outlook (Said), that is, their tendency to exoticize non-European cultural sources, has, in the eyes of some critics, dulled the impact of their humanist intentions. The idea of a “before and after” with respect to issues of the de-Westernization of performance studies is not pertinent, however. The attempts of Western scholars and artists to seek a universalist notion of cultural relations is the beating heart of theatre and performance studies; each person, regardless of their positionality, is subject to the understandings available in their time. Their approach therefore proceeds from the basis of a continuum of well-intentioned (if fallible) research.

The German theatre historian Erika Fischer-Lichte provided an important new term for decreasing the Western-centric pull of the term 'intercultural' through her

'culture' apt in the sense that it includes positionalities other than ethnicity (although disability is notably lacking from her list).

concept of 'cultural interweaving'. Fischer-Lichte suggests that this term expresses a more even-handed exchange of artists coming from different identity positions (Fischer-Lichte et al. 10). A member of the group "Interweaving Performance Cultures" at the Freie Universität in Berlin, Fischer-Lichte (and others) suggested that interweaving "captures the processual 'nature and generation of new differences' that can occur in the spaces between..." (Zarrilli et al 4). Fischer-Lichte proposes that the "utopian and transformative potential of aesthetic experiences" (Fischer-Lichte et al 10) provides a basis for transcultural performance creation. This concept of interweaving is thus instructive to my study in that it recognizes cultures as hybrid (Bhabha, Said) and rhizomatic within the intersubjective field of the theatre artists in rehearsal. As a critique to Fischer-Lichte, Rustom Bharucha's caution in his essay, "Hauntings of the Intercultural: Enigmas and Lessons on the Borders of Failure" (2014) serves to dampen any enthusiasm for an 'even-handed' process of cultural exchange. Bharucha warns of the power relations that are ready to undermine any hope for an even-handed cultural exchange in the theatre rehearsal:

Who are the weavers doing the weaving? Under what conditions? Are they expected to 'give and take' or to 'produce'? What are their ownership rights over what is being woven? For how long do they weave? Once you insert identity and conditions of work into a collective action, agency gets contextualized and the metaphorical thinking that attempts to elude history or to transcend or suspend it will inevitably be troubled" (184).

Bharucha's belief in the inevitable failure of cultural interweaving due to relations of power and agency calls into existence an exception to the phenomena that must exist to confirm his belief. It is in search of Bharucha's exception that my research proceeds: the theatre rehearsal practice that I am examining seeks to examine the "different cultures,

practices and behaviours of organized human spectacles” (Pradier & Bertelli, “Les périphériques...” 26), in the sense of aesthetic-utopian values of cultural interweaving to which Fischer-Lichte has referred, but simultaneously to find an answer to Bharucha’s claim of the fallibility of notions of even-handed power relations.

With this context, I would like to continue my discussion of Question # 1: *How is coloniality manifested in a rehearsal process that involves theatre artists from different ethnocultural backgrounds?* The first part of the question addresses how ‘coloniality’ manifests itself in a rehearsal setting of multiple cultural identities within Euro-Canadian theatre practice. It follows that the socio-political context of a rehearsal practice in Montreal, Quebec is colonial, given the history of the two European colonial settler populations—the Anglo-Saxon and the French—who established themselves on the lands of the Haudenosaunee (and other nations) after the 16th century. The development of the local theatre communities (Anglophone and Francophone) from the 18th to 21st centuries on the island of Montreal (Tiohtià:ke) has thus been dominated by this European colonial influence (Pfeiffer Quiroz). Coloniality in the context of my own study manifests as the knowledge systems, hierarchy, and culture of my study’s socio-political context of Montreal, Quebec, which have been circumscribed by European colonial ideology since the late 16th century.

Anibal Quijano’s concept of the ‘coloniality of power’ characterizes how Euro-Canadian theatre rehearsal processes have been shaped by “structures of power, control, and hegemony that have emerged during the modernist era, the era of colonialism” (Martinot 1). In his central work, “The Coloniality of Power”, Quijano describes how colonialism continues to operate in global societies. Specifically, he refers to concepts of ‘eurocentrism’ and ‘coloniality’ in which one perspective of knowledge

supersedes “other previous or different conceptual formations and their respective concrete knowledges...” (Quijano and Ennis 519). This ‘coloniality of power’ has engendered social norms that inhabit theatre rehearsal practice and serve to exclude racialized theatre artists from full participation, whether from gainful employment or creative freedom within that employment (Pruneau). I equate these norms to Durkheim’s idea of ‘social facts’, that is, “ways of acting, thinking, and feeling, external to the individual, and endowed with a power of coercion, by reason of which they control him” (Edles and Appelrouth 195). Durkheim’s understanding of the external, constraining, and general notion of social facts is relevant to my examination: theatre artists work largely by standards of theatre production that have been defined by the dominant models of European theatre production. I delineate these into three types of exclusion in theatre rehearsal processes:

- (1) **aesthetic conventions:** performance aesthetics that exclude ethnocultural differences;
- (2) **neoliberal economics:** production processes that constrain the expression of ethnocultural differences (such as short rehearsal periods); and,
- (3) **internal power relations:** hierarchies based on notions of professional conduct that discriminate against ethnocultural differences (e.g., director-actor power relationships).

I equate these three types of exclusion to Bharucha’s idea of “identity and conditions of work” (184) that polarizes power in the hands of a controlling individual or group. I view this power as being a product of a structural process, in which it is not wielded by an individual, but “can only be found at its point of application” (Sørensen 1). What gives power its form is the fact that, “Where there is power, there is resistance” (Foucault 95), that is, the oppressed incarnate the power of the oppressor through their

resistance, the expression of which constitutes the presence of agency. To be clear, I define power and agency as follows:

Power: “The ability or official [institutional or individual] authority to decide what is best for others. The ability to decide who will have access to resources. The capacity to exercise control over others” (Parsell et al.1).

Human Agency: “An individual's capacity to determine and make meaning from their environment through purposive consciousness and reflective and creative action” (Parsell et al.1).

In the context of this study on ethical relationality in theatre rehearsal practice, agency became significant in the construction of my theoretical framework because the ethic of theatre rehearsal practice is frequently expressed by the creative agency of the participants within it. Agency needs to be transferred at different times between these participants, according to the requirements of the rehearsal process.

2.2.2 Theoretical Explorations of Question # 2.

Question # 2: In what ways, if any, can ethical relationality be established in a theatre rehearsal process to allow theatre artists of different ethnocultural groups to share power and agency?

Deepening the discussion of the previous research question, I would like to suggest a theoretical framework to address Bharucha’s contention that attempts to find even-handedness in theatre rehearsals will always be thwarted by power relations. This part of my theoretical framework explores if the conditions exist whereby a relational approach that balances power and agency can negotiate social, historical, and cultural factors in a theatre rehearsal process.

To define the term 'relationality', I would like to turn to the philosophical writings of Édouard Glissant (1928 to 2011), an Afro-Caribbean poet-philosopher from Martinique who--along with an array of novels, poetry and literary criticism--wrote a number of essays and books on the subject: "Poétique de la relation" (1990), "Tout-monde" (1995), "La Traité du tout-monde (1997)" and "Philosophie de la relation..." (2007). Among Glissant's thoughts, he developed the concept of the *Tout-monde* as "...notre univers tel qu'il change et perdure en échangeant et, en même temps, la 'vision' que nous en avons." ("Traité du Tout-monde" 176). Glissant contends that the world has become so connected by technology that languages, cultures, traditions, and people are subject to an inevitable process of *créolisation* in which all of us possess "la totalité du monde" (Chamoiseau. 00:01:29 – 00:01:31). Glissant suggests a possible post-colonial world in which differences are exalted and the hierarchies between them abolished:

In order to understand and thus accept you, I have to measure your solidity with the ideal scale providing me with grounds to make comparisons and, perhaps, judgments. I have to reduce. Accepting differences does, of course, upset the hierarchy of this scale. I understand your difference, or in other words, without creating a hierarchy, I relate it to my norm. I admit you to existence, within my system. I create you afresh. But perhaps we need to bring an end to the very notion of a scale. Displace all reduction ("Poetics of Relation" 190).

Glissant calls upon societies to acknowledge the chaotic mosaic of cultural identity and to let go the need to reduce cultural differences to a vertical plane of essences.

Embracing this chaos allows for our understanding of others to be opaque. Rather than the transparency needed from in Western thought to reduce others to essential beings, *opacité*, as Glissant calls it, allows for new possibilities of relation and filiation:

The opaque is not the obscure, though it is possible for it to be so and be accepted as such. It is that which cannot be reduced, which is the most perennial guarantee of participation and confluence. I thus am able to conceive of the opacity of the other for me, without reproach for my opacity for him. To feel in solidarity with him or to build with him or to like what he does, it is not necessary for me to grasp him (Glissant, "Poetics of Relation" 191-193).

This, Glissant believes, will allow for less conflict that comes from a ranking system of differences in which identities are set against each other: "La pensée de la Relation... Elle ne confond pas des identiques, elle distingue entre des différents pour mieux les accorder" ("La Philosophie de La Relation" 72). In this sense, Glissant rejects cultural nationalisms, standpoint epistemologies, and their inherent violence to move towards "a conscious and contradictory experience of contacts among cultures... produced in the chaotic network of Relation" (Glissant, "La Philosophie de La Relation" 143). Glissant offers the many humanities of the world a relational space in which subjects have the responsibility to define their own ethics and morals, without those being dictated by the "barèmes de l'histoire" or "fictions... bâties autour de leur conceptions systématique du monde et de la vision de leur propre nature" ("La Philosophie de La Relation" 73). In effect, he inspires an ethical space in which conflicting moral standpoints must be negotiated.

A similar concept of 'ethical space' was proposed by Cree scholar Willy Ermine in his musings on a possible mediating territory between irreconcilable Indigenous and non-Indigenous justice systems in Canada. In "The Ethical Space of Engagement" (2007), Ermine speaks to a "...space between people, at the unstated, unseen level of thought and feeling... the sacred space of the ethical [that] helps us balance these moral considerations as we discuss issues that are trans-cultural, or trans-boundary in nature"

(195-196). I am interested in the transculturality of Ermine's ethical space and its connection with the notions of "Third Space", described by post-colonial writers such as Homi K. Bhabha and David Turnbull, among others. Third Space is a conceptual location in which identities are seen as hybrid and interconnected—being there requires that "the hidden power assumptions about the kinds of selves, objects and their relations that is presumed in the moral order, have to be allowed to become visible" (Turnbull 228). Bhabha echoes, it is a space where "we will find those words with which we can speak of Ourselves and Others" (157). It is not the process of transculturality that interests me here (as I am not examining transcultural production in my study), but rather the ethics of relations within cultural production. What is salient about the transculturality of Third Space is the notion of 'impurity' of cultures, in the sense that there is no such thing as an essential or pure notion of cultural identity. In the words of Edward Said, "All cultures are hybrid; none of them is pure; none of them is identical to a 'pure' folk; none of them consists of a homogenous fabric" (26). In this way, transculturality expresses the notion of Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome, conjuring the image of the tangled roots of cultures that are intertwined and interdependent. Rather than one single root, rhizomatic thinking includes Said's notion of the impurity of identities. It is one to which Glissant also attributes his concept of the *Tout-monde*:

The notion of the rhizome maintains, therefore, the idea of rootedness but challenges that of a totalitarian root. Rhizomatic thought is the principle behind what I call the Poetics of Relation, in which each and every identity is extended through a relationship with the Other ("Poetics of Relation" 11).

But if Bharucha is correct about the need to distrust metaphoric splendour, attempts to achieve an ethical space as proposed by Ermine will always be subsumed by social, historical and political constraints. I propose, however, that the 'relational' is a language

that can help to navigate the ethics of Third Space and answer Bharucha's critique, since,

The more [that the relational] works in favor of an oppressive order, the more it calls forth disorder as well. The more it produces exclusion, the more it generates attraction... The more things it standardizes into a state of lethargy, the more rebellious consciousness it arouses (Glissant, "Poetics of Relation" 138).

Relationality can make visible the unseen forces of coloniality, but it requires intentionality and persistence over time to do so. It is not a fixed state of being-in-the-world, but one which requires continued inquiry and reformation. Here, I refer to the writings of Métis scholar, Dwayne Donald, who called for a more ethical form of Third Space through the notion of 'ethical relationality':

[Ethical] relationality is not just a simple recognition of shared humanity that looks to celebrate our sameness rather than difference. Rather, this form of relationality carefully attends to the particular historical, cultural, and social contexts from which a person or community understands and interprets the world. It puts these considerations at the forefront of engagements across perceived frontiers of difference. *This concept of relationality instantiates an ethical imperative to acknowledge and honour the significance of the relationships we have with others, how our histories and experiences position us in relation to each other, and how our futures as people in the world are tied together*" (535, emphasis mine).

Rather than to engage in "metaphorical thinking that attempts to elude history or to transcend or suspend it..." (Bharucha 184), Donald proposes a form of ethical relationality whose function is to acknowledge "historical, cultural, and social contexts" (535). I understand 'ethical' to be a form of 'virtue ethics', in which emphasis is based on practicing pro-social behaviours (such as openness to cultural differences, in my case).

In this sense, the term comes closer to the concept of 'morals' as guiding principles of behaviour, rather than the strict sense of the term ethics as a code or set of rules of behaviour. Ethical relationality employs a mutually-conceived understanding of right and wrong that respects the chaotic web of human interaction. Donald's concept echoes Glissant's *Tout-Monde* or Bhabha and Turnbull's 'Third Space', with a significant evolution of thought: the multiple contacts between individuals includes an intentionality to redress inequity, and the unknowns in this process are an opportunity for creative adaptation rather than "responding to feedback effects in ways which close off alternative possibilities for change" (Chandler 1).

2.2.3 Theoretical Explorations of Question # 3.

Question # 3: How can theatre artists' psychophysical processes facilitate a common intersubjective space where artists can engage in generative dialogue?

As explained in Question # 1, research on "different cultures, practices and behaviours of organized human spectacles" (Pradier & Bertelli, "Les périphériques..." 26) centres the psychophysical presence of the actor or performer in a physical location (both components of the Greek word *skene* of 'ethnoscenology'). Theatre director and scholar Phillip Zarrilli (1947-2020) proposed four of these states at work in the actor: (1) the "surface" body of the actor, or the actor's awareness of the body in its physical environment; (2) the "recessive" body, that is, the actor's awareness of the inner body; (3) the "aesthetic inner bodymind", meaning the awakened body in performance; and finally, (4) the "aesthetic outer body", or the actor engaged in relationship to character in a performance (Zarrilli). These four body states express the range of psychophysical

experiences through which an actor engages with other actors, the performance venue, the text, the public and other physical and non-physical objects in their environment. These processes are by their nature phenomenological as they embrace the “centrality of the lived body... and embodied experience as the very means and medium through which the world comes into being and is experienced” (Zarrilli 655). One of the principal theorists of phenomenology, Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961), refers to the “circular relationship between the objective and subjective dimensions of the body – between the objective and the lived” (Halak 26). Merleau-Ponty argues for a notion of self and other in which the two are not distinct entities, but both contained within the sense of being-in-the-world. In this concept, known as ‘reversibility’, the body is neither the subject nor the object, but exists as both, through a process “in which the subject/object distinction is fundamentally blurred” (Frie 62). Edmund Husserl (1859 to 1938), whose work on a transcendental phenomenology predates Merleau-Ponty, wrote that phenomenology is “the science of pure consciousness” (Husserl). This refers to a larger array of experiences including relationships with “the significance of objects, events, tools, the flow of time, the self, and others...” (Smith, Edmund 1).

In this sense of relations that surpass the confines of the body, phenomenology echoes aspects of the “interplay of human and more-than-human consciousness” (Sheridan and Longboat 365) that are present in Indigenous ontologies. I believe that this more-than-human consciousness occurs in the intersubjective field between individuals and more-than-human objects, which in Indigenous ontology focuses on animals (those other than human, that is) and inanimate natural objects (trees, rocks, plants, etc.). As with this Indigenous concept of imagination that exists beyond human-centred origins (Sheridan and Roronhiakewen), phenomenology has the quality of

'totality', in the sense of the body in communion with the outside world, and the outside world in communion with the body in a circular relationship.

I posit that the actors' psychophysical presence (Zarrilli's body states) is conducive to the circular flow between their bodies and their environment as a component of empathetic intersubjective exchange¹². As philosopher and psychiatrist Thomas Fuchs explains, two bodies intertwined in subject-object circularity are already in an empathetic state in a process he calls "interactional or interbodily resonance: [the] dynamic mutual feedback between two bodies" (Fuchs and Koch 5). Fuchs points out the braided nature of human interrelations in which subjects are embraced in a state of "embodied affectivity" (Fuchs and Koch 9). In the context of my theatre rehearsal process, this circularity takes place between multiple individuals. I extend Fuchs' theory in my work to include the intertwining of empathetic subject-object circularity between many intersubjective fields. As Evan Thompson describes in his paper on "Empathy and Consciousness" (2001):

...the intersubjective openness of consciousness and empathy are the preconditions for our experience of inhabiting a common, intersubjective, spatial world. Empathy... provides a viewpoint in which one's centre of orientation becomes one among others. Clearly, the space correlated to such a viewpoint cannot be one's own egocentric space, for that space is defined by one's own zero-

¹² The term 'empathy' is a 20th century translation of the German word *Einfühlung*, or "in-feeling", which was originally coined by the philosopher Robert Vischer in 1873 to describe the effect of projecting one's feelings into inanimate objects in aesthetics. The term was not used outside of aesthetics until the late 1940s, when Rosalind Dymond Cartwright revised the meaning to include interpersonal connections (Lanzoni). As interest in empathy grew into psychology, social psychology, therapy, neuroscience, and eventually, the general public, the definition became more and more splintered (Yamada et al 1821).

point, whereas *the new spatial perspective contains one's zero-point as simply one spatial point among many others* (19, emphasis mine).

In theatre rehearsal practice the awareness of psychophysical states might create greater manifestations of empathy. As Tracey Moore writes, theatre is an “empathy bootcamp” (Moore 64), in which the artists are confronted with a panoply of worldviews, conundrums and crimes of dramatic texts.

To understand the notion of empathy in theatre rehearsal practice, I refer to the communication theories that Otto Scharmer lays out in his seminal work, “Theory U: Leading from the Future as it Emerges” (2003). Specifically, I refer to Scharmer’s *Four Levels of Listening* (or *Model of Generative Dialogue* as it is also known) in which he describes a hierarchy of dialogue from ‘Talking nice’ to ‘Talking tough’ to ‘Reflective dialogue’ to ‘Generative dialogue’ (Gunnlaugson 46). In figure 2 below, when conversations move from the field of ‘Reflective dialogue’ (top right) to ‘Generative dialogue’ (top left), there is a shift from the experiencing empathy towards learning to engage with future, not-yet-instanced possibilities of transformation, that is, there is an activation of empathy towards the establishment new ethical relationships (i.e., ‘Rules - generating’).

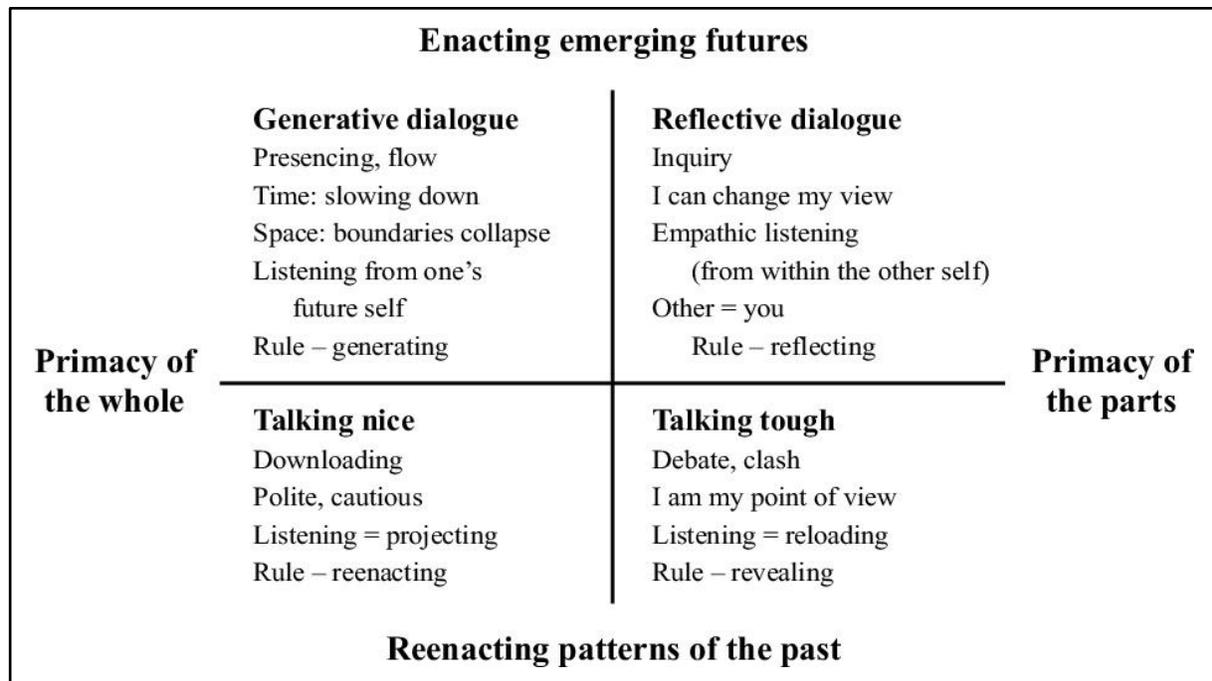


Fig. 2. Gunnlaugson, Olen. "Exploratory Perspectives for an AQAL Model of Generative Dialogue", *Integral Review*, 4, 2007, p.46.

This resembles the nature of Bhabha's Third Space, in which hybridity is established through the process of merging intersubjective fields in which historical, cultural, and political conditions are a part of the process. Scharmer's model centres an embodied dialogue between the interlocutors that can bring them into a realm of the 'letting come', or an artist's mode of attention that is "receptive to new meaning, knowledge and insights" (Gunnlaugson 47). It also recalls Glissant's concept of 'opacity' in that those who engage in generative dialogue must resist the Western urge to reduce others into categories and give way to an unknown (and potentially "better") future version of themselves in which they find new perspectives of kinship with others. It also reflects the kind of relationships gained through an understanding of the phenomenological

experience of reality, the constant circularity between the self and objects that expresses a totality of consciousness:

When individuals learn to operate from a real future possibility that is seeking to emerge, they begin to tap into a different social field that manifests through an altered quality of thinking, conversing, and collective action. When that shift happens, people can connect with a deeper source of creativity and knowing, one they don't normally experience. They step into their real power, the power of their authentic self. This change is a shift in the social field because that term designates the totality and type of connections through which the participants of a given system relate, converse, think, and act (Scharmer 3).

Scharmer's idea of 'generative dialogue' brings subjects into the realm of the web-like, illusive, and chaotic connections in which ethical relationality operates. 'Authenticity' in figure 2 does not imply a sense of 'truth', but rather a sense of "self, one's own, by oneself, of oneself" ("Authenticity", etymonline.org'), a totality that allows for the presence of the Other, the presence of what is unknown of that Other, and the presence of exterior contexts as well (e.g., objects, time, events) perceived consciously or not. In this conceptual location of relationality, the sense of the 'authentic' contains all the ingredients, known and unknown, for transformations to occur. It is in this conceptual space of relationality that the interpersonal empathy of the actors is activated, and where theatre artists are "inhabiting a common, intersubjective, spatial world" (Thompson 19). This intersubjective space is the conceptual location of relationality, the liminal zone in which different positionalities meet and negotiate new common futures.

2.3 Summary of the Theoretical Framework.

As the content of the above chapter was dense, I would like to summarize the theories presented before moving onto the next chapter on methodology. My theoretical framework describes the political, social, and psychophysical aspects of ethical relationality in theatre practice. I commenced with a political perspective of how social norms operate in Euro-Canadian theatre rehearsal practices by extending Quijano's concept of 'coloniality of power' into three axes of exclusion due to aesthetic conventions, neoliberal economics, and internal power relations. I then discussed Bharucha's call for a theatre practice that can address the issues of power and agency in the rehearsal process and suggested a pathway through a combination of a Glissant's relationality, which can resist the reductive forces of a hierarchy of differences; and Donald's concept of ethical relationality in which he proposes a process of negotiating political, historical, and cultural contexts of coloniality. Finally, I outlined a phenomenological basis for a theatre actor's psychophysical experience of empathy in Thompson's "common, intersubjective, spatial world" (19) that can give rise to future-oriented empathetic connections as proposed by Scharmer's Model of Generative Dialogue.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Interlacing Perspectives: A Methodological 'Bricolage'.

I chose to explore my theoretical positions through a methodological *bricolage* of performative inquiry and ethnographic description, with the latter divided into forms of narrative analysis and poetic inquiry. The term 'bricolage' means "construction... achieved by using whatever comes to hand" ("Bricolage", Merriam-Webster Online dictionary). The idea of bricolage as a research methodology was pioneered by Kathleen Berry and Joe Kincheloe in the early 2000s as a way of combining several complementary research methods to construct a methodology that acknowledges the messy and complex nature of human society. Bricolage attempts to reconcile different ontologies through the sensitive interlacing of contrasting methodological perspectives. It is thus a relational tool for research, a "research sensibility... about relationality and the desire to treat texts - and lives - as relational and braided rather than isolated and independent" (Kovach 220). In the following sections, I will lay out my two components of this bricolage (first, ethnographic description and second, performative inquiry), and then describe how each one was actualized in support of my three research questions. As seen in figure 3, these two components expand further: The Ethnographic Description has two poles of inquiry, poetic, and narrative. The Performative Inquiry comprises three elements: the rehearsal of the play *Aurash*, the creation of autoethnographic solos, and a Key Rehearsal Moment that emerged during the process.

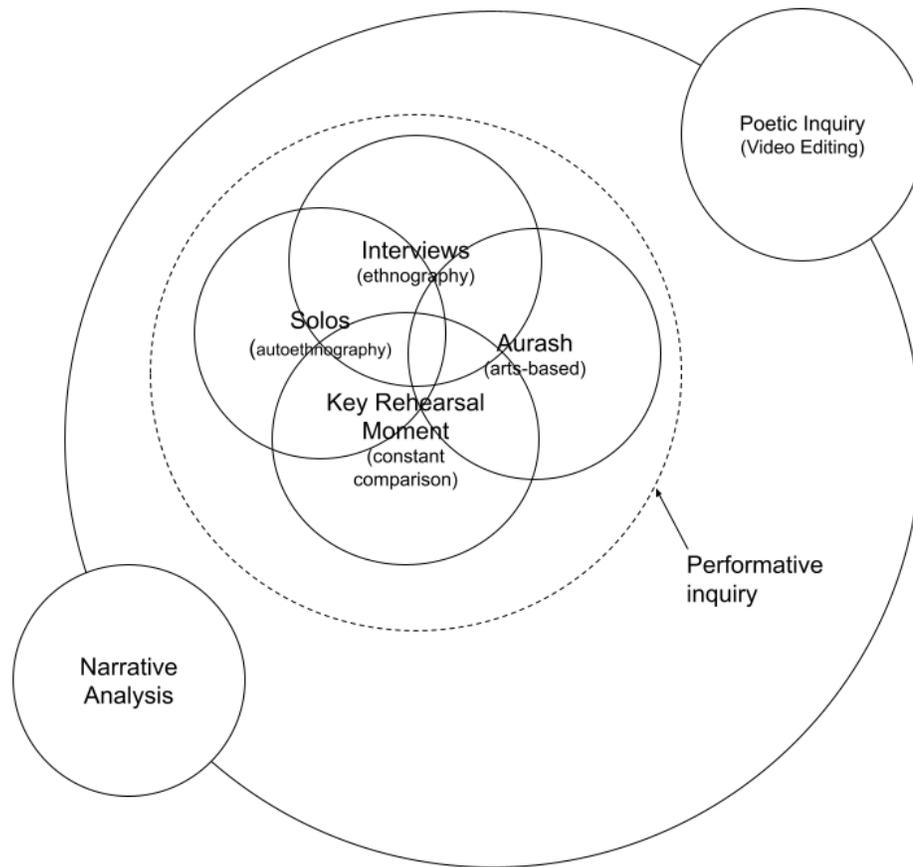


Fig. 3. Farbridge, Peter. A Schematic of the Methodological Process and Methods Used.
15 Dec. 2021, Author's personal collection.

3.2 Ethnographic Description: Making "Interpretive Dialogues".

In addition to my role as a principal investigator in this study, I participated as a director, writer, and a performer in the creation process of the performative inquiry. I was thus both a participant and an observer in this project, a participant observer "taking part in the collective life of those they observe..." (Lapassade 375). My examination was ethnographic and autoethnographic, in the sense that my own

positionality and function in the rehearsal process as a leader and participant were deeply intertwined with those of the other participants.

I collected ethnographic material during the rehearsal process through audio-visual recording of the rehearsals, as well as personal journaling (writing and drawing) during and between the rehearsal periods. I also carried out a series of three interviews (on or around January 15, 2021; March 17, 2021; and May 14, 2021) to gain specific context and opinions of the process from each of the participants¹³. I followed Seidman's three-part interview method (Seidman 2019) at the beginning, middle and end of the rehearsal process. To reflect the evolution of the rehearsal process, I updated the questions from their original versions as the work progressed (See Annex I: Interview Questions).

Interviews were an appropriate data collection tool in this project as they "[affirm] the importance of the individual without denigrating the possibility of community and collaboration" (Seidman 13). They are a form of confessional writing, but as a dialogical confessional narrative, they attempt as much as possible to avoid "the superficial and sentimentalised confessional writing as reflective practice..." (Bleakley 22), as the subject is pointed towards reflexive thinking by the interviewer.

I transcribed these interviews and selected rehearsal days with the help of transcription tools Otter.ai (for English) and Sonix (for French). I edited the transcriptions only to remove unnecessary disfluencies ('umms', 'ahhs', and repeated words) and have put in ellipses to represent areas where I have removed certain phrases or concepts for efficiency or clarity. The collected material served to illuminate the three research questions in the editing process of the performative inquiry. I used

¹³ It should be noted that one of the participants, Laura Gallo-Tapias, was not a subject of these interviews. This information was gathered through personal correspondence and meetings at several points during the process.

the ethnographic descriptions to reflect Turnbull's assertion that ethnographic research is "an interpretive dialogue in which understanding is achieved through an interactional process of constructed meanings" (218).

3.3 Performative Inquiry: Metaphoric Expressions of Relationality.

3.3.1 Introduction.

I chose an arts-based research methodology to examine my research questions because this approach is more open to the complexity of performance studies, as described in chapter 2. Arts-based research (also known as research-creation) "is a heuristic through which we deepen and make more complex our understanding of some aspect of the world" (Barone and Eisner 3). As a heuristic, arts-based research offers a flexibility and open-endedness that can help to fathom the rhizomatic processes of relationality. I would further specify my approach as "research-*from*-creation" in the sense of "performances, experiences, interactive art works, et cetera [that] can also be ways of generating research data that can then be used to understand different dynamics" (Chapman and Sawchuk 16, italics the authors). As a technique of research-*from*-creation, I focused on performative inquiry to explore my topic, with the proviso that 'performance' in my research also signifies the act of performance creation (performing within a rehearsal process), as well as the performance itself. The method "describes the current, burgeoning use of performance/dramatization [to address] social issues with goals of change" (Butler-Kisber 136). Since my research aims to feed into and support the social-change work of EDI in Euro-Canadian theatre rehearsal practice, this method seems the best adapted for the purpose. Arts-based researcher Lyn Fels, captures the metaphoric expression of performance inquiry in this poem/quote:

Our implements of inquiry are
 our bodies,
 our imaginations,
 our experiences,
 our feelings, our memories, our stories,
 our biases, our judgments and prejudgments,
 our hopes and desires, our curiosities and questions
 —simply, our very being, becoming (Fels 1).

Therefore, a relational approach performance inquiry encourages “empathetic ways of knowing and deeply sensing the other” (Conrad 16) that are essential to social research involving human participants.

I believe there is a connection to Indigenous methodologies as I began to present in the introductory chapter. Performative inquiry about moments of trying to understand relationships that were otherwise unfathomable. As Sheridan and Longboat propose in their essay on Haudenosaunee imagination:

Spiritual and intellectual integrity is achieved on Turtle Island by the interplay of human and more-than-human consciousness. *The experience of imagination is minding all things.* Minding all things performs the spiritual conservation of all things. All things comprise the Indigenous mind and Indigenous minds are composed of all things (365, italics mine).

Although Sheridan and Longboat refer to the animal world, the experience that I felt was one of attempting to mind-all-things from the perspective of what was known and unknown in the research process. These unknowns refer to those more-than-human elements—events, time, history, traumas—which became visible as part of our creative experience of *All Things Being Equal*. I equate these elements to the natural world

referred to in Indigenous thought (e.g., plants, animals, and rocks), as their language remains unknown to us in the conscious realm—their meaning is gleaned in the liminal space of creation outside of the confines of our own imaginations, in the intersubjective space influenced by external factors. Rather than a reductive process of boiling things down into essences, or fixing them in time, this process of minding-all-things brings doubt and possibility into the process, in which the very idea of opacity to which Glissant alludes became our field of discovery.

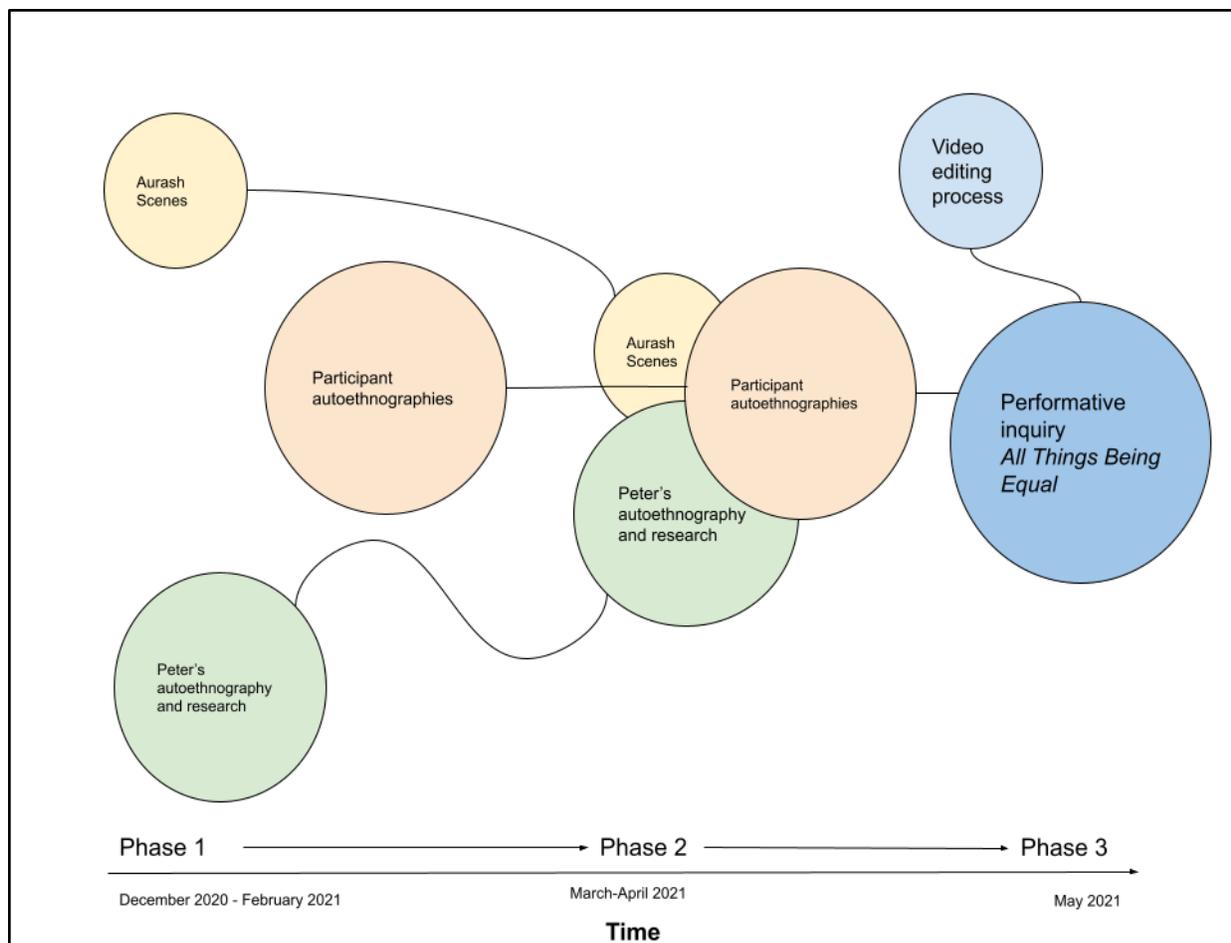


Fig. 4. Farbridge, Peter. Schematic of Creation Process for *All Things Being Equal*. 2 Jan. 2021. Author's Personal Collection.

3.3.2 Details of Creative Process.

Figure 4 shows a schematic of the creation process of *All Things Being Equal*. The participants and I co-created a one-hour long performative inquiry woven from the following material: (1) staged excerpts of a play *Aurash*, by Bahram Beyza'ie, (2) participants' autoethnographic 'solos' (two to five minutes of self-generated performance material), and (3) other ethnographic description and research drawn from the rehearsal period (notes, rehearsal recordings and interviews). There were four phases to the project: (1) the rehearsals of the *Aurash* scenes; (2) the creation of the participants' narrative writing (autoethnographic solos), (3) the construction of the performance inquiry, and (4) the video recording of the final product. There were moments when these phases were more collaborative, for example, when the participants created their own material, and moments when the process was more top-down, for example, during the dramaturgical and video editing phases, when I consulted the other participants, but did not include them in the working process. We engaged in the process with the collective understanding that Sina and I formed a decisional hierarchy within a process that sought for everyone's collaboration and input. The rehearsal practice was collaborative within a decisional hierarchy (in the sense of creative options were examined together but decided upon by a director) as opposed to a collective creation (in which creative decisions are arrived at consensually without a designated leader). In this research study, I suggest that hierarchies in theatre rehearsal processes can exist without implying negative impacts on power dynamics and agency. This arrangement was discussed with the participants at the beginning of the process, that is, it was agreed upon that the nature of this project was not collective creation, but that the input of the individuals came in the form of their solo material.

Sina Suren was the director of the *Aurash* scenes, and I was the director of the performative inquiry. As this play had been adapted by the Iranian-born Soheil Parsa, I felt it more appropriate that another Iranian-born director lead the process. I took over a leadership position from Sina in March and April 2021 to weave together the *Aurash* scene work, elements of my didactic research, and the participants' autoethnographic solos (which were two-to-five-minute solo performances of any genre that I will discuss in more depth later in this chapter).

The rehearsals took place in Montreal for 60 hours spread over a five-month period between December 2020 and May 2021 at Théâtre bouches décousues, Espace Libre, as well as the ALLab and the Video Production Studio at Concordia University (see fig. 5). In general, we would start each rehearsal day with a check-in and housekeeping discussion, guided by me, followed by a physical warm-up period of 20-minutes. Then we would work on various aspects of preparing the text and staging the different scenes, led either by the *Aurash* director, Sina Suren or myself. Sometimes, discussions would ensue surrounding the text or the order of scenes in the performance inquiry, or other subjects related to the overall research questions.

In a separate dramaturgical process, I worked for a period of two months (from February to March 2021) to weave together the *Aurash* scenes with the autoethnographic solo work. I presented iterations of the dramaturgical progress to the group for their feedback. The process mainly involved braiding or weaving the solo contributions into the performative inquiry so that they would emanate from the play *Aurash*; the story of *Aurash* was the anchor of the narrative, but our solo work became the material in which we were able to link the themes of *Aurash* to our own lives. I also introduced video design to represent the more discursive investigations of the process, using recorded material from interviews and improvisations with the participants, as

well as graphic design. There were also graphical and visual elements from the production history of *Modern Times*, which relate to my own solo work, which reflected my experience with the company.



Fig. 5. Farbridge, Peter. Video still of participants of *All Things Being Equal*. 5 mar. 2021, Author's personal collection.

I worked with a production team of a lighting designer (Audrey-Anne Bouchard), a set and costume designer (Cassandre Chatonnier), and a video designer (Andrew Scriver) to create a simple production design for the performative inquiry. The goal of this process was to give the final production a basic theatrical context so that aesthetic choices would resemble a professional theatrical context. We (Helena Vallès and I) audio-video recorded *All Things Being Equal* on May 2nd and 3rd, 2021, in the Fine Arts Blackbox at Concordia University without the presence of an audience due to restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.3.3 Participants and production team.

I selected my cohort after posting a general call for participants to the theatre community through professional support agencies. I made my final selection of participants following suggestions from the theatre community, as well as contacts from my own professional circle. I asked these individuals to join the project after presenting my informed consent document and explaining the parameters of the research, including the use of their personal data. I paid all the participants \$18 per hour for their participation.

I informed the participants that they would be a part of a project that would explore the nature of an 'ethical space' as it relates to a theatre rehearsal process. I explained that this theatre rehearsal process would be hierarchical in nature, in that the *Aurash* scenes would be led by a theatre director and the performative inquiry would be led by myself, but that everyone's input was vital to the process, and would be expressed through the autoethnographic solos. The notion of hierarchy of decision-making implied relations of power and their concordant impact on agency in the rehearsal process, and my intention was to observe these phenomena as a part of my study while limiting my interference in that process.

The principal participants were four actors (Amir Sám Nakhjavani, Claudia Chan Tak, Bénita Jacques, Roxanne de Bruyn), a director-actor (Sina Suren), a research assistant (Laura Gallo-Tapias), and me. I also worked with a set designer, a lighting designer, a sound designer, a videographer, a video designer, and a production stage manager (See Annex 2: Participants and Production Team and Annex 3: Biographies of Research Participants).



Fig. 6. Vallès, Helena. Photograph of the cast of *Aurash* in *All Things Being Equal* (l-r Claudia Chan Tak, Roxanne de Bruyn, Bénita Jacques, Amir Sam Nakhjavani). 8 May 2021. Author's personal collection.

3.3.4 Performance elements and process.

a. Staged excerpts of Aurash.

The first major element of the performative inquiry was a selection of 20 minutes of scenes from *Aurash* by Bahram Beyza'ie (Parsa 2008), adapted and translated by Soheil Parsa and Brian Quirt. Soheil Parsa (playwright-adaptor) gave his consent for me to use this play in my research (Farbridge, "ATBE_Private_Email_Communication_Soheil Parsa" 18 Dec. 2020.). Rooted in a Persian myth dating back over 1,000 years, the story of *Arash*¹⁴ is well known in Persian culture. In the original myth, attributed to the

¹⁴ 'Arash' is another phonetic spelling of the hero's name in English.

Persian poet, Ferdowsi (940CE – 1025CE), Iran's arch enemy, Turan, brutally defeats the country. According to the terms of the armistice, Arash, Iran's most famous archer, must save the Iranian people by shooting an arrow from the highest mountain to determine the country's new border (see fig. 7 below). He carries out his mission, and his arrow flies for two days, finally falling on a land far from the Iranian border, defeating their enemy and unifying the Iranian people. Arash himself vanishes, never to be seen again. In the 1970s, playwright, filmmaker and theatre historian, Bahram Beyza'ie, revised this myth into an anti-war play in the form of an epic poem. In Beyza'ie's version, Arash is a naïve and gentle stablehand who is coerced to fire an arrow from the top of a mountain to determine his country's new borders. Arash's arrow never falls to earth, erasing national identity and borders. In 1998, Modern Times' Soheil Parsa adapted Beyza'ie's anti-nationalist poem with dramaturge Brian Quirt into its present form, a one-hour fusion of story-telling and physical theatre. Originally produced by Modern Times in 1998, *Aurash* was translated into four different languages and produced nine times – in Toronto (Canada), Tehran (Iran), Bogotá, (Colombia), Havana (Cuba), Mostar and Sarajevo (Bosnia & Herzegovina).



Fig. 7. Unknown, Photograph of Statue of Arash the Archer, www.behindthename.com/name/arash. Accessed 8 Dec. 2021.

I have performed as an actor in *Aurash*, produced it three times, and have at various points updated the English translation. The play is anchored in my 30-year career with Modern Times as one of the most significant pieces of the Iranian canon that Soheil Parsa and I helped bring to Canadian audiences. In addition, the play had become anchored in my mind as representative of my own world view. I specifically invited Sina (another director of Iranian background unrelated to Modern Times Stage Company) to direct the scenes of *Aurash* because, as an Iranian-born artist with a strong knowledge of his culture and the myth of Arash, he already had an important understanding of the themes and context of Beyzai'e's work.

It is those themes of *Aurash* that explain why this play was important for me to use in this research. *Aurash* explores the philosophical, political, and psycho-spiritual dimensions of identity. Aurash's countryfolk remove his position in society through

crushing betrayal. He is beaten, reprogrammed for a different societal purpose, and sent on a suicide mission. His journey up the mountain is also a descent into himself and into rage against the injustice of his fate. Aurash's final speech at the summit of mount Elborz is a plea for self-understanding and a plea to understand his place in a society that has betrayed him:

Mother earth, this arrow belongs to Aurash, who was once a shepherd. Love has given him a passionate heart. He has never held a bow or released an arrow. He has never hurt an ant or set a trap. Who is Aurash?-- who was unknown at dawn, and now at sunset has the eyes of the world upon him. He was a warrior whose most dangerous weapon was his shepherd's crook. Who is Aurash?-- an ignorant farmer who won't even curse a man who steals from him. Who is Aurash?-- a curved back that has been loaded and loaded but never complained. I am Aurash, a man once devout and pious. I was taught only to love: I turned my back on spite. But now there are scorpions in my head; now a man, a wicked man called Aurash, has stained me with disgrace. He is Aurash, standing on the other side of the earth, on the peak of a mountain, like a mirror, facing me, and his heart is my arrow's aim. He is a man so wretched, so disgraced, that he was condemned before he was tried. I am Aurash, the one who at sunrise was ignorant, and now, at sunset, knows something about the world. And, he, Aurash screams: "I wish I didn't know!" (Parsa et al "Stories from the Rains..." 92).

The final, endless flight of Aurash's arrow around the globe signifies his final cry for the erasure of national and political borders as well as the limitless possibilities of a human individual unbound by their ego. As such, the play represents two separate aspects of this study: the violent and hierarchical notion of filiation to which Glissant refers, and

the limitless and liberating vision of a world beyond cultural and national identity which is proposed by Dwayne Donald.

Aurash director, Sina Suren, and I selected ten scenes so that there would be adequate time to properly rehearse the material. In our selection, we attempted to maintain the story of *Aurash*, while excluding some of the play's subplots. Sina rehearsed these scenes of *Aurash* with the actors. The first period of rehearsals, from December 17, 2020 to January 31, 2021 was concentrated on staging these scenes.

b. Autoethnographic Solos.

The second major element of the performative inquiry was related to the individual cognitive and affective experiences of the participants in the research study. I asked every participant to create two to five minutes of performance material of their choice that we would then weave into the final performative inquiry. All participants were involved in this process (Sina, Laura, and I joined the actors onstage with our own autoethnographies). I used the audio-visual ethnographic interview process (See Ethnography earlier in this chapter) as a platform to help the participants to choose their solos. The question that I asked was: "I'd like you to generate two to five minutes of text, movement or other performed material based on something that is unexpressed in you or something that you want to present in the rehearsal process" (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview #2_Claudia"). In some cases, I helped them to arrive at their decision, in others, the participants took the entire lead; their choices and their comfortability with the subject matter was prioritized. These autoethnographic 'solos' (henceforth referred to as "solos"), eventually addressed the themes of history and culture,

ethnocultural identity, personal traumas, and artistic practice as they related to their journey in the *Aurash* process.

I wove the solos into the performative inquiry during a two-month period of dramaturgical exploration and composition. The solos became a form of narrative ethnography, that is, “the combination of epistemological, methodological, procedural, and analytical sensibilities that must be brought to bear to understand narrativity in social context” (Gubrium and Holstein 254). In this sense, the environment and circumstances of their storytelling were intrinsic to the stories themselves that we told.

By leading the participants toward their solo material and adding new ethnographic perspectives in the editing process of the video (See Poetic Inquiry below), I tried to elicit narrative discoveries in the research, as well as aesthetic possibilities for the performative inquiry. All the participants reviewed the impact of the poetic inquiry on their solos and were given the opportunity to change elements with which they might be uncomfortable. Specific examples of this can be seen in Chapter 4: Discoveries.

c. Poetic Inquiry.

The third and final element of the performative inquiry was a poetic layer that I added to the production of *All Things Being Equal* in the form of textual and visual elements. These were applied to the solo work, but not the *Aurash* scenes. They are an analytical and metaphorical response to my evolving perceptions of the performative inquiry and its significance to the research. This form of ‘poetic inquiry’ “...promotes criticality, can make explicit the position or reflexivity of the researcher, and allows for different perspectives to be considered through the artistic medium of poetry” (Vincent 50). As material for this poetic inquiry, I used recordings from Parsa’s production of *Aurash* as

well as my memories of my production history with Modern Times, ethnographic material generated by the interviews, and recordings of rehearsal sessions. This approach allowed me to intuitively explore the theme of ethical relationality in my research through the embodied, emotional and “associative logic” of visual and textual poetry (Sullivan). Practically speaking, I applied this technique both during the production phase leading up to the recording of *All Things Being Equal* as well as the final editing phase of the video.

To build more interest into my intuitions and how my own positionality played a role in them, I decided to use a technique of qualitative inquiry known as Constant Comparison Inquiry (Maykut and Morehouse) to explore a 30-minute event in rehearsal that occurred on April 21, 2021, henceforth known as the “Key Rehearsal Moment” (see Annex 5 for the transcription). Constant Comparison Inquiry involves categorizing (or coding) texts into parcels of information that can lead to new insights to a text. It does not constitute a method *per se*, “but rather an inquiry perspective, a way of being in the research” (Butler 41). In this approach, the researcher reviews the textual material repeatedly to identify different phrases, sentences, paragraphs which can be divided into themes. Gradually, relationships develop between the themes and categories, resulting in the merging of some themes and the addition of others. The process does not occur in a linear fashion, but the themes evolve iteratively, with the researcher moving back and forth between the text and the developing themes. Eventually, rules of inclusion and exclusion are established for each theme.

The goal is to construct a plausible and persuasive explanation of what is transpiring when the emergent themes are considered together, recognizing again that all explanations are partial by nature, and that there are always multiple ways in which experiences and/or phenomena can be explained (Butler Kisber 47).

The reason for using Constant Comparison Inquiry for the Key Rehearsal Moment was not to provide direct support for my theoretical frameworks, but rather to focus on certain points of interest and inspire the poetic inquiry process for the video of *All Things Being Equal*.

To facilitate the work, I used the online tool Ligre[®]. Ligre[®] uses four levels of thematic analysis: 'Tree', 'Roots', 'Branches', and 'Leaves'. The Tree refers to the corpus of the text under investigation; the Roots refer to the central theme of inquiry. Branches constitute different aspects of that major theme; and finally, the Leaves are the actual coded parcels of information that provide insights into the text. Ligre offers several data visualizations to understand the relationships between Tree, Roots, Branches, and Leaves in the text.

I coded one tree of the participants' speech fragments from the Key Rehearsal Moment. My initial intuition for choosing the Key Rehearsal Moment was that the events resembled the four fields of Scharmer's Model of Generative Dialogue (See Research Question #3 in chapter 2: Theoretic Framework); therefore, I used Scharmer's theory as a guide to the coding to see what it would reveal. The Tree I chose to code is the transcription from the Key Rehearsal Moment. I named the Root of the tree 'Dialogue', which is the progression of the dialogue in the event. I then delineated different types of dialogue by following Scharmer's four fields, from 'Talking nice' to 'Talking tough' to 'Reflective dialogue' to 'Generative dialogue', allowing myself the flexibility to name the Branches in my own way. I then looked for evidence in the text of these four fields as described in Scharmer's Model of Generative Dialogue (see fig. 1). The themes are the Leaves of the Branches (A full description of these codes and their inclusion and exclusion criteria is located in Annex 6: Ligre[®] Coding Tree – Inclusion

and Exclusion Criteria, along with a visualization of the Coding Tree). Figure 8 shows the visualization of that coding exercise that I used to inspire my poetic inquiry:



Fig. 8. Farbridge. Leaf Cloud from Ligre[®] based on coding of Key Rehearsal Moment, 4 Jan. 2021, Author's personal collection.

I have provided some thoughts about the results of that coding in chapter 4: Discoveries, but rather than attempt to deeply analyse the output of the constant comparison inquiry in a more traditional research approach, I used the above visualization from the Ligre[®] coding tree to inspire the video editing in a process of poetic inquiry. I allowed my poetic and textual layering of the video document to be informed by the prevalence of certain themes, represented as the size relationships between the Leaves as presented in the visualization. I found this approach to be more consistent with my methodology, as well as the social constructivist approach to my epistemology; by maintaining the arts-based approach to the discoveries, I found more intrigue and artfulness to the outcome.

CHAPTER 4: DISCOVERIES

4.1 Introduction.

As described in the previous chapter on methodology, the performative inquiry was a heuristic, a theatre rehearsal process and production designed to explore the components of ethical relationality in a theatre rehearsal practice involving theatre artists who come from a plurality of ethnocultural backgrounds. My objective was not to attempt to conjure or force a lived experience of ethically-relational theatre rehearsal practice, but rather to allow the rehearsal period to reveal some of the qualities or conditions of this ethical practice. At the end of this chapter, I would like to propose a possible schematic of an ethically-relational theatre rehearsal process that was inspired by the lived experience of the performative inquiry. Although the schematic is contextualized within this Euro-Canadian theatre rehearsal practice along with the time, place and people in which the research took place, this schematic could suggest ways to negotiate the elements of a collective view of ethical relations in theatre rehearsal practice.

I call this chapter 'Discoveries' in the sense of the Old French word *descouvrir* "to uncover, unroof, unveil, reveal, betray... we discover what already exists, though to us unknown..." ("Discover", etymologyonline.org). Nothing in this paper was 'invented' in the sense of finding something new; I will describe the field research in this chapter in terms of pre-existing phenomena that I have chosen to observe and interpret, with the understanding that these are contextualized by my own perspective as principal investigator. This chapter has four sections: in the first section, 'Reflections on the Performative Inquiry', I will trace my journey through the performative inquiry as a whole, including the subsequent poetic inquiry of the video editing period; in the

second section, 'Reflections on the Autoethnographies', I will describe the solo work of the participants and its some significant intuitions that arose; in the third section, 'Reflections on the Key Rehearsal Moment', I will explain the findings from my comparative inquiry of the 'Key Rehearsal Moment' and relate them to my three research questions; and in the fourth and final section, 'The Ethical Relationality of *All Things Being Equal: A Schematic*', I will outline an approach to conceptualizing the ethical relationality of theatre rehearsal practice, with reference to this study in particular.

4.2 Reflections on the Performative Inquiry.

The performative inquiry allowed me to review my methods, my positionality in the research, as well as the quality of our overall experience from the perspective of a participant-observer. Since we recorded the performance, I was able to review the entire process and weave different elements together in the editing process. I was no longer fixed by my didactic reading and theoretical frameworks I had developed; it led me towards a more introspective and personal reflection of the experience that we had together as a cohort, in which I could be inclusive of the other participants' thoughts and feelings. At the same time, I was aware of the large decisional role I had assumed in the project at the end of the field research as editor of the video, and how this project would now become much more personal. I discussed with the participants at the final interview that I would be adding audio-visual material to the edited version of the performative inquiry, and in some cases treating their solo work with a further layer of poetic inquiry. The audio-visual recording of *All Things Being Equal* turned out to be a unique tool for discovery; in the video editing process, I was able to weave and reweave our experiences in different patterns and push my inquiry further (see fig. 9). I

highlighted possible parallels between participants and their different ethical positions in the rehearsal process. I was able to juxtapose different elements of the research in the video. This poetic inquiry allowed me to be *reflective* about the kinds of relationships that were forming between us in the process, and *reflexive* in the sense of questioning and reacting to my decision-making.



Fig. 9. Farbridge, Peter. The poetic inquiry of *All Things Being Equal*: Four selected scenes (top left) Sina Suren; (top right) An image of the rhizome; (bottom left) Roxanne de Bruyn; (bottom right) Bénita Jacques, 3 May 2021, Author's personal collection.

It was an instance of the notion of 'I' in the process as one inextricable from observation of the research and my participation in it. It reminded me of this thought by philosopher Michel Serres:

Ce qui différencie les cultures, c'est la forme de l'ensemble des raccordements, son allure, sa place, et, aussi bien, ses changements d'états, ses fluctuations. Mais ce qu'elles ont en commun et qui les institue comme telles, c'est l'opération même de raccorder, de connecter. Voici que se lève l'image du tisserand. De lier, de nouer, de pratiquer des ponts, des chemins, des puits ou des relais, parmi des espaces radicalement différents (31).

My role on the performative inquiry was one of Serre's weaver, creating links between different phenomena of the inquiry and choosing what their presence would be or not be. In effect, I felt the presence of Bharucha's criticism of cultural interweaving. I noticed my unwillingness to be in control of that process but felt that this was a central question of authority in the process, the "power to give orders or to make decisions" ("Authority", Miriam-Webster online dictionary) that had to be addressed. I wondered that responsibility was in my editorial role, and how I could give agency to those who no longer had a voice in the process. For example, with Sina's scenes, I felt that the weight of the dialogue and its documentary style gave more presence to his ideas when compared with the more poetic contributions from the other participants. I worked for a long time to balance that view out within the perspective of the entire process, choosing to cut in places, to replace sections with documentary style images, and to juxtapose my own reflections/critiques, and to in other ways try to maintain all the perspectives in the room. (I will discuss this further in the section on "Reflections on the Narrative Autoethnographic Solos" below.) This process was an example of my authority over the process that I felt was linked to a moral stance that everyone's perspective should have equal weight in the outcome of the video. I felt constrained by time and my positionality, but I strove to create a balanced perspective within these limitations in which, based on my understanding of the individuals of the process, I believed they

would be happy. At the end of the project, I showed the performative inquiry back to the participants to gain their reflections and make changes as necessary.

4.3 Reflections on the Narrative Autoethnographic Material (Solos).

Below is a summary of each of our solos, with a brief interpretive reflection to construct meaning to the research:

4.3.1 Amir Sám Nakhjavani: A dance solo about assault.

Amir chose to create a three-minute movement piece based on the physical and emotional trauma of an assault that left him permanently injured at the age of 23. For the purposes of this study, I define trauma as a disordered psychic or behavioral state resulting from severe mental or emotional stress or physical injury. (“Trauma”, Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary). Amir chose to externalize these feelings because:

...trauma, psychologically, sometimes manifests itself as ... a defensiveness, and a closedness, which gets in the way of my ability to do this work. But it's the very reason why I need to do this work. So, it's a paradox. I'm drawn to the work for the very reason that it's the thing that I'm the least inclined to do in the wake of trauma” (Farbridge, “ATBE, Amir Interview#2”, 00:26:15 – 00:26:35).

Amir collaborated with Claudia Chan Tak to develop his choreography. They worked together to find the major images and themes arising from his psychophysical trauma, and how Amir could represent these in movement. Amir set the vocabulary into a narrative, repeatable structure. In his piece, he remains in one position on the stage, and moves through different levels between kneeling and standing, clutching at

his body with his hands and arms. He performs to the music of Bing & Ruth, "Put Your Weight Into It".



Fig. 10. Vallès, Helena. Video Still of Amir Sám Nakhjavani in *All Things Being Equal*. 3 May 2021. Author's personal collection.

By expressing his traumatic experience publicly, Amir made visible the layers of oppression that an individual can feel within a rehearsal process, and which can affect their agency in a rehearsal process. Some of Amir's experiences as he described them in the interviews had to do with racially-motivated abuse: Amir had also been the victim of racism surrounding his accent in French in his high-school years (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#1_Amir_Text"). However, the physical attack he chose to develop in his solo was a physical attack that was not racially-motivated, but the result of a disturbed individual. As an artist, his danced expression of the traumatic attack funnelled a moment of time into the process; his performance of this attack gave us an

opportunity to see how we could be interacting with his interior life in the rehearsal process.

In the process of the poetic inquiry, I brought in some textual and visual elements: a short poem to represent a metaphoric interpretation of my response to his work; Claudia, who was watching him dance; and some elements of image treatment that could emphasize the violence and distorting power of his experience.

Writhe,
 bind and
 compress...
 The weight of the world on
 Hero's feet
 roots pressing into ground.
 witness in
 silence
 all that.

You are (Farbridge, "ATBE_AllThingsBeingEqual_FinalCut, 00:09:40– 00:10:00).

4.3.2 Claudia Chan Tak: A pluridisciplinary solo about 'multi'.

Claudia developed a five-minute multidisciplinary installation (dance, written text, video, music) inspired by a series of 18 drawings that she created during the process to document her evolving self-understanding during the creative process in *Aurash*, both as an artist and racialized person. The first part of her installation featured four drawings and a slide of text related to her evolving process in the rehearsals, the Atlanta attacks on Asian American women of March 16, 2021 (to be discussed later in

this chapter), and her feelings of being an imposter due to her pluricultural (Chinese-Malagasy-Quebecker) and pluridisciplinary (danse, visual art, theatre, video) identity. This was followed by a dynamic screen of different shades of green (representing Claudia's search for the perfect shade of green to represent her character), after which she danced live behind a rotating carousel of four final drawings to the tradition Urhu music of Huai-Hai, Huang entitled "Horse Racing" (see fig. 11).

Claudia's work represented an intrapersonal experience linking multiple aspects of her life that were present during the rehearsals between December 2020 and May 2021. The interior fragmentation that Claudia represents in her drawings stems from the internalized political pressure to conform to the stereotypes of national and racialized identities, as well as the professional pressure (institutional exclusion) to conform to specific notions of training and competence in the industry. In this sense, Claudia's dance explored the dissociative forces of cultural plurality, exposing Said's notion of the hybridity of culture: "All cultures are hybrid; none of them is pure; none of them is identical to a 'pure' folk; none of them consists of a homogenous fabric" (26). And yet, it would appear from her solo that for Claudia, at least, this was not easy to live.



Fig. 11. Vallès, Helena. “Video Still of Claudia Chan Tak in *All Things Being Equal*”. 3 May 2021, Author’s personal collection.

Claudia expressed the multilayered and messy connections of pluricultural forms in an individual and the Western gaze that essentializes and exoticizes her Chinese cultural roots. For example, Claudia spoke of her challenges attempting to regulate an internal racism related to a Western exotification of her interest in Kung Fu:

...j'aimerais ça arriver à ce qu'on peut... que je veux pas effacer le “chinois” du Kung Fu, parce que c'est quelque chose de très beau, que ça appartient à cette identité-là. Mais je veux effacer la fascination exotique... je n'ai pas envie de perpétuer un racisme intégré que j'ai moi-même envers ma culture, que j'essaye de comprendre. Ça y est. Ouais, c'est ça cette complexité... (Farbridge, “ATBE_Interview#1_Claudia”, 00:21:40– 00:22:35).

Claudia offered a perspective of her totality—a totality which in fact was present in each of us as participants. By watching her process, I began to sense the multiplicity of the

fields of contact between the participants, and that her 'multi' expressed the multi in all of us. At the end of the performance, she was breathless, giving me the impression of an exhaustion of living all these multiplicities.

In the poetic inquiry of her solo, I simply added an excerpt from her first interview # 1, in which she speaks about her pluridisciplinary and pluricultural background. I added wind, which sometimes obscures her voice, and reflected this visually in the subtitles, which become broken down or disappear completely. For me, the mystery of the dance was preserved in this choice.

4.3.3 Roxanne de Bruyn: Performance art about presence.

Roxanne created a three-minute solo of performance art, in which she used the sounds in the theatre venue as a tool for 'mapping' the physical environment around her. She introduced her subject matter with a short descriptive text and then invited the 'audience' to listen to the sounds in the room, which she described one by one. The inspiration for her piece came from a professional workshop she was taking at the time. This offering came from Roxanne's recognition that her differences lay in other the unique aspects of her being-in-the-world. Roxanne's performance and its relationship to the performance space was phenomenological, rather than socio-political. She introduced her body as a receiver, communicating in a cyclical pattern with the sounds of the many objects, people, and concepts in the room.

Their reality is inferred by her ears, by her body. Through her choice, she establishes the initial relational link in the work, instantiating the totality of "the significance of objects, events, tools, the flow of time, the self, and others..." (Smith,

Edmund N. 1), and demonstrating the actors' capacities to relate to each other, the text, and objects on the stage (Garner, Stanton B.).

Roxanne's piece gave one example of how a human body, in this case a non-racialized one, can receive information. When they are unconscious, unheard to the individual, they become absent. Through drawing attention to their absence, Roxanne calls into being the multiple forms of 'listening' in relationship with objects, persons and events in the space— that through touch, smell, sight, taste, and perhaps non-corporeal means, we are in contact with each other. In my poetic inquiry, I blended her solo with a graphical visualization of interconnecting fields of intersubjectivity of emotion along with poetry (see fig.12).

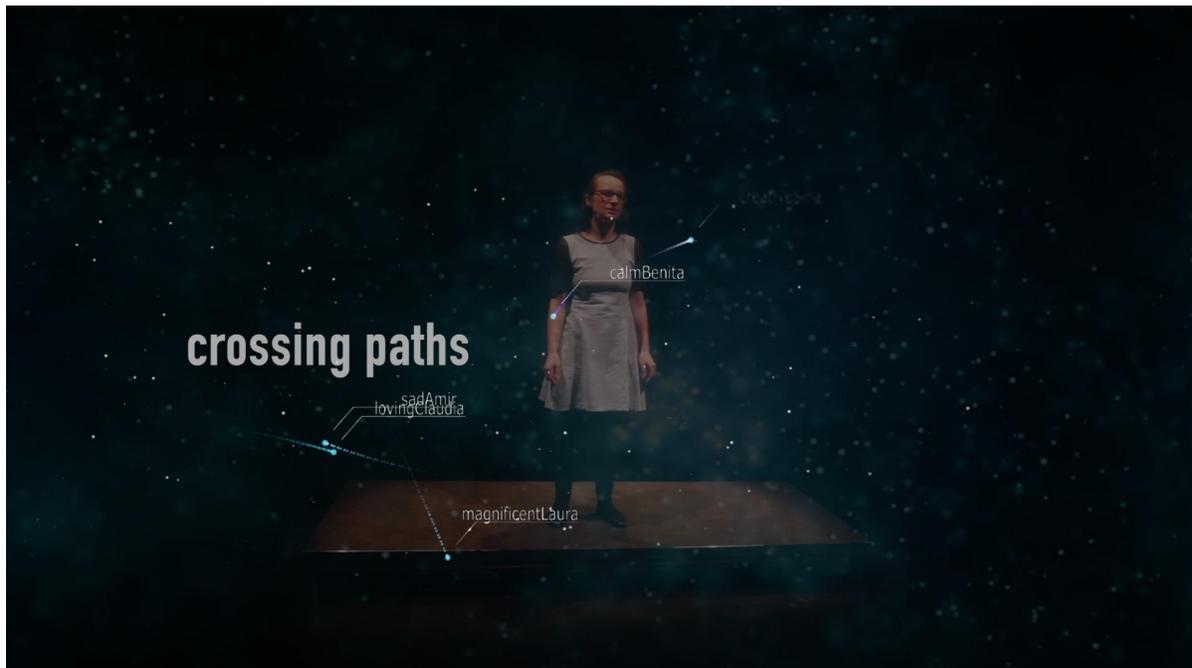


Fig. 12. Vallès, Helena. "Video still of Roxanne de Bruyn in *All Things Being Equal*". 3 May 2021, Author's personal collection.

I felt a desire to connect Roxanne’s Western-centric ‘mapping’ of space with a world less fixed in which the unknowable, the intangible in the room was also present and swirling around.

We are beings

particles

i n t e r s u b j e c t i v e

time

colliding with breath

being separated,

unmasked and assessed

crossing paths

changing the moment

and again.

touch

see

hear

taste

smell

think (Farbridge, “ATBE_AllThingsBeingEqual_FinalCut”, 00:01:10 – 00:01:55).

4.3.4 Bénita Jacques: A monologue about Black love.

Bénita wrote a three-minute monologue about making a documentary video on the history of African technological inventions. She had traveled to Senegal in late 2020 to capture footage and to interview African historians on the pre-colonial scientific,

technological, and linguistic advances of the African people. For Bénita, her creation was an opportunity to externalize her pride in her African descendance and to shine a light on the manifestations of her cultural heritage for her children.

Je veux que mes enfants apprennent tôt ce que moi j'ai appris tard dans ma vie que l'Afrique est le berceau des civilisations modernes. (Farbridge, "ATBE_AllThingsBeingEqual_FinalCut", 00:44:10 – 00:44:23).

I worked with Bénita to help her draw out some connections to her trip and her feelings while in Senegal. Bénita's monologue was a kind of confessional utterance and it transformed and expanded several times during the rehearsal process, indicating the sense of importance of this message for her and its dynamic nature. In effect, the interviews frequently touched upon her experience as a Haitian woman living in Quebec, evidence by this passage in her second interview:

On parle aujourd'hui de racisme systémique, mais ce n'est pas la faute des gens, et c'est normal qu'ils ne soient pas conscients de... ce comportement qui nous atteint comme personne de couleur. C'est normal qu'on dit bien, "Encore ils parlent de ça! Pourquoi ils reviennent là-dessus?" C'est parce qu'on le vit, parce qu'on leur reçoit ça. On le vit tous les jours et c'est quotidien. On n'a pas besoin d'attendre l'événement de George Floyd (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#2_Bénita", 00:24:15 – 00:24:48).



Fig. 13. Vallès, Helena. “Video still of Bénita Jacques in *All Things Being Equal*”. 31 May 2021. Author’s personal collection.

I did not add any elements of poetic inquiry to Bénita’s solo during the performance or during the video editing process. I sensed that her story was all that was needed in that moment of the climax of the *Aurash* scenes, just before Aurash shoots the arrow that never lands. In fact it was that juxtaposition that I felt was necessary in the dramaturgy, a moment of close parallel to the myth of Aurash: Aurash questions the nature of who he is in response to his brutal treatment at the hands of colonizing nations and responds with a gesture of non-conformity and refusal to submit. Bénita’s monologue traces a similar struggle, and she resists being relegated to specific boxes according to her racial background.

Bénita’s Black heritage, especially as it relates to the social justice movement, Black Lives Matter, takes a role in her self-understanding in a theatre rehearsal practice. It seemed pervasive to me, as though it would for her entire life be a part of her

performance practice from the perspective of negotiating ethical space in theatre rehearsal practice, and yet it seemed that she wished to move beyond it in the expression of her totality as an artist:

Je viens de visionner les solos. C'est incroyable comme je les trouve vivants, émotifs, surtout très chargés ou remplis de d'empreintes et ou de particularité de tous et de chacun. C'est dur, mais libérateur. Ce projet m'a beaucoup enlevé de chaînes et m'a apporté plus de légèreté. Parce qu'après je peux aborder la vie ou la scène ou l'art sans moins de complexe et vraiment oser d'être moi avec mon identité réelle et non ce que je pense que l'autre aimerait voir. (Farbridge, "ATBE_Personal_Email_Communication_BenitaJacques", 7 Jan. 2022.)

The process of *All Things Being Equal* was a moment of time in which it was possible for Bénita to experience a moment of self-empowerment, and perhaps this is a lived experience of the search for relationality can engender.

4.3.5 Sina Suren: A discourse on creative freedom.

Sina chose to stage two verbatim scenes (with me as interviewer) from field research interviews that we held together, the first on January 14, 2021 and the second on March 5, 2021 (the second one was held with the purpose of preparing the scene, but actually brought forth new material). We arrived at his solo choice collectively, and it seemed appropriate, since Sina shared an appreciation for philosophical responses and personal anecdotes over corporeal or emotional responses to the work or his positionality within it. The two main subjects of Sina's two scenes were: 1) the tension between free speech and the politics of identity, and 2) the role of pragmatism when working with theatre actors who have experienced trauma.

In general, I see that Sina positioned himself in opposition to 'Woke' movements, whose ethos he characterizes in this way:

...if you say something that we don't approve of, we're going to boycott you, we're going to cut you, we're gonna throw you off your job, we're going to get you out of position, we're not gonna let you go on stage... you're free to say whatever you want... but these are the conditions if you say it..."-- I didn't travel an ocean to be a slave of censorship (Farbridge, "ATBE_Transcriptions_Interview#1_Sina", 00:17:00 - 00:17:31).

His second scene highlights conflicting notions of freedom of expression and exclusion in the theatre:

At the end of the day, we should not forget that we are an ensemble trying to do a project, and if someone's personal trauma is in the way, and they are unable or unwilling to get over that, then we just can't work with them... empathy is not the same as passivity (Farbridge, "ATBE_Performative Inquiry_FinalCut", 00:23:22 – 00:23:36).

Sina's thoughts recalled the exclusionary danger of internal power relations in the rehearsal process: the power of the director with respect to the actor. It is one thing to uphold an opinion on personal creative freedom; it's quite another to have decisional authority in relation to that opinion. Sina, as a leader, is both as an artist who can help an actor in the rehearsal space attain their performance, and a person who will need to question and yield that power if it has the potential to harm (also with respect to gender). I chose to write into the performative inquiry a verbatim scene of Sina directing during the performance of *Aurash* (Farbridge, "ATBE_Performative Inquiry_FinalCut", 00:16:29 – 00:16:58) to underline to the relationship between his speech in the interviews and his 'performance' as a director during the rehearsal period.

Sina's words in the interviews have impact, as they refer to a role in which he yields the power to define others' agency in a rehearsal process.

Sina's thoughts were controversial for some, and they initiated a reflection in me about to what extent conflicting ideas can exist in a rehearsal process. As a researcher, I felt a sense of duality; on the one hand, I recognized myself in Sina's desire to attenuate the polarity of debates on political identity, and to some extent, this motivates my research (I refer specifically here to the quotation by Carmen Aguirre in the introduction to this paper). On the other hand, I felt uncomfortable with the resoluteness of his opinions, and with some of his apologetic stance to colonialism, and wondered how that might draw him away from the self-questioning and doubt necessary to be able to grant agency in a situation that ran counter to his opinions. As challenging as that was at times, his perspective is an important one, and brought some important questions for me as to how its presence could find a balanced place in the process; in the fabric of *All Things Being Equal*, these scenes take significant temporal and psychic space, they tend to eclipse the rest of the solos, perhaps by virtue of the subject matter, their verbosity, or the at times artificial format of verbatim scene. I experimented in Sina's scene with addressing this as the scenes progressed, and by this action, I became the weaver making ethical decisions about the placement of Sina's thoughts— what to maintain and what to question. This was a part of the editing process of the video, but it began as a dramaturgical process of the live performative inquiry. In conjunction with Sina, I added sound to our presentation to add a level of nuance, a movement section, and other dialogue to indicate that my role in his scenes was editorial:

Peter: I ask myself this question: what is my power over you as a researcher who has invited you to be in this process? How can you be sure you have agency when I am scripting you right now?

Sina: What? Are you suggesting I can't be free in this moment?

Peter: *pause*. Improvise then....

Sina turns his chair away from Peter.

Peter: No, that was scripted, Sina. (Farbridge, "ATBE_Performative Inquiry_FinalCut", 00:23:45 – 00:24:20).

I told Sina early in the process of making his solos that I was in the process of reimagining his verbatim statements, as I knew this would also continue in the video editing process. His would be the solo whose content would challenge the agency of the artist with my authorship. What was my responsibility to comment on the value of his statements? Up until the final version of the video, Sina and I were in dialogue about the presentation of his scenes; it was a negotiated process in which his ultimate agency to choose the content of his solo was respected. He suggested questions to complement my own that emerged from my poetic inquiry into his solo (see fig. 14).



Fig. 14. Vallès, Helena. “Video still of Sina Suren and Peter Farbridge in *All Things Being Equal*”, 3 May 2021, Author’s personal collection.

4.3.6 Laura Gallo-Tapias: A Poetic Inquiry.

Laura and I decided late in the process (in April 2021) for her to present her own solo, as she became an active participant-observer in the process over the five months, and I wanted to recognize this in the final performative inquiry. For her solo, Laura wrote and performed a poem inspired by her autoethnographic writings about the rehearsal process of the performative inquiry. She sought to reveal her reactions to the research, to discover her evolving role, to relate her own positionality as a Colombian-born student living and studying in Canada. This is an excerpt of that poem:

This is how this part is done.

This is how you ask this question.

This is what research is supposed to look like.

This is a radical feminist perspective.

This is what academia expects.

It tends to be the opposite
of a feminist radical perspective.

(Farbridge, "ATBE_AllThingsBeingEqual_FinalCut", 00:25:13 – 00:25:39)

In her piece, Laura chooses to live in the messy in-between place of an observer's inherent biases.

It's not easy to stay focused

With all the textures in the room (Farbridge,

"ATBE_AllThingsBeingEqual_FinalCut", 00:26:56 – 00:27:00).

and yet, she notes the privileged position this put her in in her final interview:

...even though there was still a hierarchy, I still was in a position of power, or in a way something because I was not being the one measured, directed, judged, until the last little bit when it was like, do you want to perform your thing? (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Laura", 00:04:33 – 00:05:05).

And later, she analyzes her own ability to remove herself from a place of emotional vulnerability:

I think it's also one thing that maybe put me and put Sina in a position of power, the fact that we kind of could choose how to narrate our story in a way that could distance us a bit from it (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Laura", 00:36:10 – 00:36:33).

Laura's contribution was an instance of the reflexive thinking necessary in a theatre rehearsal process if it is to attain a level of ethical relationality, and more specifically, the possibility that self-doubt could be an important attribute of the intention to give agency to others. I added the sound and image of rain in Laura's piece as a kind of white noise of thoughts in the background, words of which I highlighted on the screen

behind her (see fig. 15). The rain is a life-giving metaphor, a purification, and a sign of melancholy.



Fig. 15. Vallès, Helena. "Video still of Laura Gallo-Tapias in *All Things Being Equal*", 3 May 2021, Author's personal collection.

4.3.7 Peter Farbridge: An Exploration of Self-Doubt.

Since my role as principal investigator and director of the performative inquiry led me into an observational role, I decided to dramatize some of my internal struggles as a researcher in a character that I called 'The Archivist'. This character appeared in two scenes, 'Scene 3: Krapp' and 'Scene 10: Lucky' of the performative inquiry. The titles and content of these scenes were inspired by the plays "Waiting for Godot" and "Krapp's Last Tape" by Samuel Beckett: the former had been produced by Modern Times in 2008 (I played Vladimir in the production) and the latter was an inspiration for a new devised creation being planned at Modern Times. The spoken material was drawn from my notes I took during the field research. The theme of "Scene 3: Krapp"

had largely to do with questioning my relationship to power and agency in the research process and examining my motivations. My relationship to Modern Times and its artistic director, Soheil Parsa, came to the foreground. As my research project was beginning, Soheil Parsa and I made the decision to step down as co-artistic directors of Modern Times and to seek for a new artistic leadership to take over. Part of this decision was linked to ongoing disagreements between us linked to our 38-year relationship together. From the perspective as a white person doing this research, this conflict put me into a reflexive mode of thinking that was much more critical of my decisions and potential biases in the rehearsal space.

This was the last show.

This is the rage I feel.

This is the hope that won't go away.

This is the noise of research

Why are they doing this?

Why are you doing this? (Farbridge, "ATBE_AllThingsBeingEqual_FinalCut", 00:05:30 - 00:05:51).

It was a period of personal mourning regarding the loss of a relationship that had been very important in my life. Part of this experience shaped my own solo contribution in the performative inquiry, and I made visible these feelings as influencing my outlook in the research. These emotions shifted during the process, and in response to this, during the poetic inquiry, I reduced some of the original script by cutting out sections that no longer felt necessary. Preparing and performing those scenes led me to places of vulnerability in terms of the enormity of the process that I had before me, and my own potential role in the colonality of power of Question # 1 of my research since elements

of power and agency that are present in any relationship became more pertinent in the two positionalities related to our different cultural backgrounds.



Fig. 16. Vallès, Helena. "Video still of Peter Farbridge in *All Things Being Equal*". 3 May 2021, Author's personal collection.

The enormity of my unspoken thoughts and emotions between us became apparent, and the need to find ways to process them (and circumvent them) to create the conditions for change. That silence found expression through the performative inquiry, and the presence of the unsolvable, those circumstances and relationships that will not be able to find their expression, created emotional textures that became the part of the performative inquiry. The Archivist returns in Sc10 as Lucky, a character inspired by Modern Times production of *Waiting for Godot* (2008), played by John Ng. Lucky's famous unpunctuated monologue, which (in some interpretations) questions and mocks academic discourse becomes a place for self-criticism. This time, I wished to string together the theoretical background of the ethically relational in a hurried,

breathless, and sometimes incomprehensible way to express what is ungraspable of this research.

4.4 Analysis of the Key Rehearsal Moment.

4.4.1 Introduction.

From the 70 hours of rehearsal and production that encompassed the field research, I chose one rehearsal moment to examine, henceforth known as ‘The Key Rehearsal Moment’ (the full transcription is available in “Annex 4: Key Rehearsal Moment – Transcription”). The event occurred in the rehearsal hall of Théâtre bouches décousues on the afternoon of April 21, 2021, during the third and final phase of the rehearsal period. We were less than two weeks from recording *All Things Being Equal* in Concordia’s Fine Arts Blackbox. I chose to analyse this approximately 30-minute exchange between the participants with a Constant Comparison Inquiry. As a guide to coding the text fragments, I used elements of all three research questions and their theoretical frameworks, especially Scharmer’s Model of Generative Dialogue.

4.4.2 Description of Key Rehearsal Moment.

On this day, April 21, 2021, we had been working for several hours to assemble the performative inquiry from the rehearsed scenes of *Aurash* and the participants' solos. Present in the room were four actors (Amir Sám Nakhjavani, Claudia Chan Tak, Bénita Jacques, Roxanne de Bruyn), director-actor (Sina Suren), research assistant (Laura Gallo-Tapias), and myself. We started to stage a scene from *Aurash* that we had not had time to address during Phase 1 of rehearsals. In this scene (“Aurash is Beaten”), Aurash is kicked and punched by his countryfolk to force him to assume the role of the archer and climb the mountain. The scene represents a form of ritualistic annihilation of Aurash’s

sense of self to transform him into the “hero” of the myth. I felt that this was an important scene to include in the performative inquiry, as I wished to juxtapose it against Sina’s Scene 8 in the performative inquiry, in which he spoke about the ability to work with or not work with those artists whose traumatic pasts affect/impede the creative process.

The actors performed the scene to determine how to dramatize a beating in which the performers could not be closer than two metres due to pandemic regulations. Since the theatricalized beating had not been choreographed, Bénita became more distressed by the repeated enactment of violence. This was recognized by Laura, Amir, Claudia, and Roxanne, but not by Sina and me¹⁵. After the scene’s conclusion, Sina offered some indications for a second attempt when Amir asked us to check in to see how Bénita was doing. After a moment’s silence, Bénita recounted her experience with violence in high school, in which she was bullied by her classmates after school. The scene also brought her into connection with the loss of a baby early in adulthood. There was a long conversation that ensued in which we discussed with Bénita how to best respond to her distress and how we could proceed further with the creation of the scene that was causing emotional harm. Amir, as well, noted the challenge of the scene for him, given his own history with violence. By the end of the event, the group had reached both a place of emotional support for Bénita (and by extension, Amir, who was also affected by the violence), as well as a new concept for the scene in which Bénita could be protected and the intent of the scene could be preserved.

¹⁵ Sina had come over to me to discuss the scene as the performers played the scene, and I reciprocated.

4.4.3 Ligre[©] Analysis of the Key Rehearsal Moment.

I chose to use the Leaf Cloud (see fig. 8 in Chapter 3) as a springboard to carry out a poetic inquiry of *All Things Being Equal*. With this visualization of the Key Rehearsal Moment, along with my reactions to the solos and interviews with the participants, I wrote a series of texts for the video edit of *All Things Being Equal* in the form of visual and textual poetry. What strikes me from the word cloud visualization in fig. 8 is the juxtaposition of 'New Ideas' and 'Oppression' as two of the most prevalent instances in the text fragments. In some way they are opposites, and so a binary scenario seems to be forming, which I did not expect. Perhaps this is representative of the belief systems that separated Sina and Laura. As well, instances of psychophysical awareness were less common than I thought they would be, indicating that the presence of the actor's body as a mitigating factor in building empathy might not be as important to the process, or at least something that is not expressed verbally.

a. Discussion.

The Key Rehearsal Moment could be an instance of how ethical relationality expresses itself in theatre rehearsal practice, and in this sense, the constant comparison inquiry is a tool that could help understand the relationship to Scharmer's Model of Generative Dialogue. There were a series of relationships that developed in the rehearsal process during those 30 minutes. There was tension between Laura, who advocated for a non-intellectual, caring response to how Bénita was feeling, and Sina, who advocated for a separation between what an actor experiences of personal trauma and what they might allow into their bodies so that performance can continue, and myself, who advocated for an objective 'research-minded' view of the situation.

Sina: But Bénita, that's great though. The same thing. I am not saying this is easy, guys, I'm not, but we are getting paid the big bucks to go there, you know... at the same time to both be there and make sure to separate ourselves. Remember, don't drown in it. Feel it but don't drown in it. Because if you drown in it, it's not healthy, right?

...

Laura: ...est-ce que on peut faire en sorte que ce soit plus facile pour toi, Bénita... pour que c'est plus facile pour vous- qu'on est encadré, pour qu'on sache qu'on est tous là, on est disponible, et que c'est pas qu'on va pas juste assumer que c'est comme la job et que c'est ça que l'on fait quand on est acteur. (Farbridge "ATBE_KeyRehearsalMoment_April21,2021", 00:36:09 – 00:38:10).

With reference to my theoretical perspective of my first research question in which I propose three criteria of exclusion in Euro-Canadian theatre practice, this conflict could be an example of Western performance aesthetics and internal power relations expressing a coloniality of power in the rehearsal process. Sina invokes the necessity of 'verisimilitude' asked from the actor from the perspective of Western method acting, which developed in the 20th century in the United States. In this acting technique, the actor is asked to draw upon personal histories to connect with their dramatic character's inner emotional life. But frictions exist between the exigencies of performance ('getting the job done') and what an actor might be experiencing that is linked to an experience of trauma. As Amir points out in the conversation, standard practice of rehearsal and theatre creation can also be the expression of power of those who are the decision-makers, in this case, Sina and myself:

Amir: It's tough.

Sina: It's tough but it's beautiful.

Amir: It's tough because professionalism and productivity can sometimes turn into oppression, you know... (Farbridge,

"ATBE_KeyRehearsalMoment_April21,2021", 00:47:19 – 00:47:40).

Bénita underlines the social, cultural, and historical context of the moment, as well as the challenge of speaking about personal trauma in the context of professional rehearsals:

Bénita: Mais, c'est culturel, il y a des choses... qu'on n'est pas fière d'en parler...

Sina: But that's the culture of censorship--

Bénita: Ben... disons que c'est plutôt le côté, plutôt africaine... c'est pas des choses dont on parle, le fait que on nous a battu, qu'on a perdu des enfants. C'est comme d'autres, une malédiction. C'est pas des choses qu'on va parler. Le fait de vous en parler comme ça... ha (*Laughs*) ça enlève une couche. (Farbridge,

"ATBE_KeyRehearsalMoment_April21,2021", 00:39:33 – 00:40:05).

Here there is a conflict between Sina's belief in free speech, which he expands upon in his scenes in *All Things Being Equal*, and the cultural context that Bénita faces as a Haitian woman living in Quebec. There are subjects that are very sensitive for Bénita and could not easily be brought forth without the help of deep listening. My own attempt to gain control over the emotions in the space, and provide a dispassionate exterior researcher's view of the process was also a kind of intellectualization and reduction of what was happening at that moment:

En fait, le moment qu'on vit maintenant, c'est le moment que je voulais dans un sens communiquer à travers la juxtaposition de notre scène [i.e. Sc8: Sina # 2] avec cette scène-là. On est en train de vivre une réalité dans une réalité (Farbridge,

"ATBE_KeyRehearsalMoment_April21,2021", 00:40:27 - 00:40:52).

It appeared that empathetic listening was made possible through Laura's 'caring' position to initiate a point of dialogue with Bénita. As a group we were then able to navigate Bénita's needs and the needs of the scene (Sina's needs, but perhaps also everyone's needs in terms of the reason we were in the process). This moment was demonstrative of Scharmer's Model of Generative Dialogue. We see evidence of the first field of the 'Talking nice to 'Talking tough' transition of field two, but specifically evident is the passage from the Third (Empathetic) to the Fourth (Generative). Scharmer's proposed Third Field of Generative Dialogue rests upon the quality of listening between the interlocutors and their ability to "put themselves into the shoes of the other". Certainly, this was expressed most vocally in the event by Amir in terms of his own experience of violence:

Amir: Et c'est vraiment dans ton expérience, je vois mon propre expérience, Bénita, sérieusement, et je pense qu'une leçon dans tout ça et on a une opportunité ici de trouver une autre façon de faire (Farbridge, "ATBE_KeyRehearsalMoment_April21,2021", 00:46:08 – 00:46:22).

But others as well, although not having the same lived experience, reflected an understanding of how the scene might be affecting Bénita as an artist.

Laura: Merci, Bénita, de partager ça. On est là pour toi.

Sina: That's... that's... and we all appreciate it... what you are doing... It's helpful to me, it's helpful to everyone... it's much appreciated. (Farbridge, "ATBE_KeyRehearsalMoment_April21,2021", 00:40:05 – 00:40:27).

What appears to be the turning point in the communication was Roxanne's suggestion that everyone hug each other (but just on the back to respect COVID protocols. It eventually set up a moment of The Hug (fig.17) that allowed everyone to join in a kind of human chain (Farbridge, "ATBE_KeyRehearsalMoment_April21,2021", 00:43:15 –

00:44:16). This instigated a unified physical presence that in my view permitted a genuine, felt, place of connection. It was a moment of generative dialogue, in which time, COVID protocols (institutional rules), intellectualization, and forcing gave way to a moment of complicity in which we could use to find new pathways in the scene work.



Fig. 17. Farbridge, Peter. Still photo of “The Hug” from rehearsal of *All Things Being Equal*, 21 April 2021, Author’s personal collection.

I cannot claim that this was specifically linked to the theatre artist’s psychophysical presence in theatre rehearsals, as I was examining in my Question # 3, but regardless, the physical contact (especially in the context of COVID restrictions) was key to changing the room from an empathetic to a generative posture in which the conversation could circle back to the creation at hand, and we could proceed in the rehearsal with giving more agency to the performers whose positionalities were compromised by the dramatic material or the process. Following the hug, the

conversation passed to finding new ideas and possibilities whereby the “Aurash is Beaten” scene could be re-envisioned so that Bénita as an artist could feel emotionally secure in the work. We fielded ways to continue the work on the scene while supporting Bénita and Amir’s request for an approach that could recognize and manage the effect of the scene on their emotional life. Many ideas were put forth, including Claudia’s:

Ce que je peux suggérer, c’est dans les cinq coups que c’est pas toi. Plutôt que ce soit nous qui te donne des coups, tu nous dis quand tu es prête à en recevoir un. C’est toi quand tu dis que tu es prête à en recevoir un: c’est ton *timing*.

(Farbridge, “ATBE_KeyRehearsalMoment_April21,2021”, 00:52:30 - 00:52:45).

The point here is not the type of solutions proposed, or even if they worked out in the end¹⁶. It seemed that an intersubjective space emerged in the process in which Bénita’s affective experiences (influenced strongly by her positionality as a racialized person) intertwined with the others’ affective experiences, and a new approach to the rehearsal practice was mutually established that not only answered Bénita’s needs but contributed to the creative life of the production. It felt to me at that moment in the rehearsals, that we had entered a relationship in which there was no one individual in a central position of authority, but as Thompson suggests, “the new spatial perspective contains one’s zero-point as simply one spatial point among many others (19).” Instead of a moment of closedness in which, as a group, we could have retreated into individual opinions, immobilized by our incapacity to see into the opacity of Bénita’s experience (i.e., her traumatic experiences), or instead of feeling obligated to make a top-down

¹⁶ Unfortunately, we were unable to record this scene in the final video of *All Things Being Equal*, due to time constraints.

decision in the hierarchy of the process that I had placed Sina and myself in the leadership position, the participants yielded to find commonality of purpose in commitment to the principals of the creative process. Following the second attempt to execute the scene, the actors spoke of the simultaneity of their experience as actors performing a role and being supportive co-workers:

Bénita: Le fait qu'ils étaient là, j'avais l'impression que c'est les guards qui m'ont amené à l'abattoir. Qui était là et qu'ils assistaient qu'on me fouettait. Ils sont aussi complices que ceux qui me battent.

Roxanne: Oui, à la fois c'est ça, et j'ai le sentiment aussi qu'on te soutient dans l'action.

Bénita: Vous n'êtes pas nécessairement d'accord, mais vous ne pouvez rien y faire.

Roxanne: Non, je veux dire qu'on est acteur de l'histoire, mais aussi qu'on est un groupe— on est là pour toi. On la ressent...

Claudia: J'ai le même feeling que de l'extérieur, on lit une histoire, mais sur scène on est avec toi. On est tourné vers toi et on n'envoie pas cette énergie-là.

Roxanne : inaudible... J'aime bien ça.

(Farbridge, "ATBE_KeyRehearsalMoment_April21,2021", 00:56:05 – 00:57:09).

I can see in these comments, a mixture of the body states as proposed by Zarrilli, in which the actor has (1) the "surface" body of the actor, or the actor's awareness of the body in space; (2) the "recessive" body, that is, the actor's awareness of the inner body; (3) the "aesthetic inner bodymind", meaning the awakened body in performance; and finally, (4) the "aesthetic outer body" or, the actor engaged in relationship to character in a performance.

Claudia and Roxanne's awareness of their duality in the scene as colleagues and actors in some ways also validates Sina's contention of the need to separate between

actor as storyteller and actor as witness to that story. Without the journey through a moment of non-hierarchical relationship of power in the process, this understanding of Sina's perspective might not have been possible.

Altogether, the Key Rehearsal Moment could be an instance of what I would propose as an example of ethical relationality in the rehearsal process. The proceedings resembled a kind of Third Space in which creativity was established through a multifaceted hybridization of subjectivities to create new opportunities that respect historical, cultural, and social contexts. It was messy, was not linear, and it took time; however, it was generated through a process in which the participants were able to present conflicting opinions coming from their many positionalities. This is my perspective only, and as such, I continue to have doubt about our ability to be honest in the moment, given the amount of the unsaid between participants that was evidenced in the interviews: How true to ourselves were we in the Key Rehearsal Moment? Did the director and actors need more time to process the situation, or were they just interested in making sure the group moved forward in the interests of time? Regardless, there seems to be a moment that was passed between us that could express what ethical relationality might look like, and perhaps its complete realization is never possible.

Roxanne expresses an element of this:

...je pense qu'il y avait énormément d'amour qui a fait que Bénita a pu sortir cette honte. Donc, je trouve que ça, c'était génial parce que, sinon, c'est elle a de nouveau ne pas le sortir, puis ça aurait été sorti en plein montage. Puis ç'aurait été comme je pense que l'amour de tout le monde était là, même s'il était maladroit ou pas, qui a fait que ça a pu sortir (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Roxanne", 00:30:57 – 00:31:28).

4.5 The Ethical Relationality of *All Things Being Equal*: A Schematic

4.5.1 Introduction.

To help focus the various streams of thought in the field research, I created a schematic (fig. 18) of how I believe ethical relationality might have functioned in the theatre rehearsal process of *All Things Being Equal*. It has been inspired by the participants' comments in their interviews and in the theatre rehearsal process, my analysis of the Key Rehearsal Moment, my lived experience in the theatre rehearsals, as well as the poetic inquiry during the video editing of the performative inquiry.



Fig. 18. Farbridge, Peter. "A Schematic of Ethical Relationality for *All Things Being Equal*", 15 Jan. 2021, Author's personal collection.

The schematic has three components: (1) The Theatre Rehearsal Practice (dark central oval), (2) the Intersubjective Field (lighter grey oval) and (3) the Contributing Influences (the multicoloured transversal shapes). These Contributing Influences, which cross through the intersubjective field, are negotiated in a relational process in which they shift and change. The negotiation of the Contributing Influences within the Intersubjective Field impacts the theatre rehearsal practice: when these contributing influences are brought forth and addressed (ideally, but not necessarily with everyone involved), they change the balance of agency in the room, which establishes the pathway towards ethical relationality. This is not a static process: it is dynamic and occurs over the set period of the theatre rehearsal. Using the performative inquiry as a heuristic to understand the different elements of my schematic, I will begin by defining its three main components and give examples from my field research that support my choices.

4.5.2 Theatre Rehearsal Practice.

The inner darker oval of the Theatre Rehearsal Practice represents the process of preparing the production at hand. In the case of this project, it was the preparation of the performative inquiry, which included rehearsing the existing text of *Aurash*, creating the solo material through improvisation, and execution a dramaturgical treatment to bring together these (and other) elements into the final production of *All Things Being Equal*¹⁷. The Theatre Rehearsal Practice appears at the centre of the schematic because

¹⁷ In some senses, the recording and editing of *All Things Being Equal* was also a part of the preparation, but for the purposes of this schematic, I am excluding those phases.

the relational process I am examining in the Intersubjective Field (which I will discuss now) serves the creative practice and not the other way round.

4.5.3 Intersubjective Field.

The Intersubjective Field is the conceptual and physical space of interactions between the different participants where roadblocks are encountered and where new potentials are found. ('Field', in this sense, differs from the notion of space, as it contains the idea of a conceptual space of contact as well as an embodied location (the rehearsal venue). Contributing Influences are transformed in the Intersubjective Field by the interplay of different subjectivities in a non-hierarchical arrangement; their impact on the Theatre Rehearsal Practice is thus reorganized through the outcomes of a relational processing in the zone of "embodied affectivity" (Fuchs & Koch 9) in which the participants interact, each of their fields affecting and transforming the other. It is a field of great uncertainty, the zone of the "...fluid and various and moreover uncertain (that is, ungraspable)..." (Glissant 137). It is within the Intersubjective Field that the Contributing Influences are given their moral value in the process depending on the specific needs of the Theatre Rehearsal Practice. Ethics are defined intersubjectively and fluidly in a confluence of moral perspectives and are introduced into the Theatre Rehearsal Practice as negotiated pathways that can bring about an ethically-derived state of practice. Perhaps Roxanne is expressing this experience in this excerpt from her final interview:

C'était quand-même sur la culture de la diversité, quand-même le projet sur le fait d'être moi, une fille blanche qui travaille avec d'autres, personnes de d'autres cultures et comment est-ce que ma posture est vis à vis aux autres... et comment je

donne aussi la place à l'autre à un moment donné... Comment, à un moment donné, j'avais juste à être là et que ma place était juste une présence. On devait– il ne fallait pas que je fasse plus (Farbridge, “ATBE_Interview#3_Roxanne”, 00:16:52– 00:17:54).

Roxanne’s feeling of existing as a “presence” in this Intersubjective Field is important. It could suggest that her agency was afforded by a process defined by the Intersubjective Field itself in that she did not have to force an outcome but allowed the outcome to come to her. Perhaps this is echoed by Claudia’s statement in her final interview:

Je sentais que j'étais plus approché en tant que personne dans sa globalité, en tant qu'artiste et en tant qu'humaine, avec mes préoccupations du moment. C'est ce qui fait aussi que ça empêche d'entrer dans des stéréotypes culturels parce que justement, je ne suis pas là pour jouer la femme asiatique... J'ai senti qu'on accueillait mon identité culturelle, mais on ne forçait pas à l'exploiter (Farbridge, “ATBE_Interview#3_Claudia”, 00:11:21– 00:11:52).

Agency was, in Claudia’s case, activated by a process in which the authenticity of subjective experiences was encouraged by the non-hierarchical understanding of differences.

4.5.4 Contributing Influences.

The Contributing Influences are significant factors that shape or alter relations between the artists during the rehearsal process, thereby reducing or increasing the relative agency of the artists. They might be external to the rehearsal process (such as current events or societal prejudices), or experienced internally (such as production timeframes, or leadership styles), but they all coincide within the conceptual space of intersubjective

relations. They are factors that limit or support the potential to which the Theatre Rehearsal Practice can exist in ethical relationality; for example, some artists might respond well to a top-down leadership style and others may function better in a horizontal relationship; some marginalization is experienced as strength in addition to oppression (hooks; Piper). Their ultimate value accorded in the intersubjective field is the result of a relational process in which the artists mutually decide that the theatre rehearsal practice needs to (at least) recognize and (perhaps better) adapt to them. The schematic is not meant to be exhaustive of all the factors that affected the theatre rehearsal practice of *All Things Being Equal*, but rather they focus on the major elements I identified and suggest ways and the extent to which they may have interacted. In the rehearsal process, I was able to identify the following contributing influences: the artists' positionalities, current events outside of rehearsal, the dramatic material, the style of leadership in the room, time constraints, and other unknown (unspoken) factors that might not have surfaced in the process. I weighed these factors differently, in the sense that I gave them greater or lesser impact on the Theatre Rehearsal Practice in the schematic, depending on how I interpreted their presence in the rehearsal process. In the following sections I will describe these contributing factors of *All Things Being Equal* in so far as I defined them.

a. Positionalities.

Positionalities refer to social-cultural perspectives of gender, race, physical abilities, or sexual orientation which may affect the rehearsal process due to unjust relationships of power that constrain individual agency. One of the major positionalities to consider in our rehearsal process was that of the racialized artists. Our field research took place in

Montreal, Quebec, where there are ongoing socio-political tensions surrounding the representation of immigrant and/or racialized populations in the performing arts (Pruneau; Pfeiffer Quiroz; Jeldi). These issues exist in all sectors of Quebec society and are not new. As Charles Taylor and Gérard Bouchard note in their 2008 report on “reasonable accommodation” of religious differences in Quebec, immigration in Quebec has led to:

...a counter-reaction movement that has expressed itself through the rejection of harmonization practices. Among some Quebecers, this counter-reaction targets immigrants, who have become, to some extent, scapegoats... We can conclude that Quebecers of French-Canadian ancestry are still not at ease with their twofold status as a majority in Québec and a minority in Canada and North America (Bouchard et al. 18).

More than a decade after the Bouchard-Taylor Report on reasonable accommodation, this twofold status still seems to cause a schism between neo-Quebecers and their French-Canadian hosts. The political reality in Quebec in terms of the relationship between the White Francophone majority and immigrants manifests itself in the Montreal theatre community’s interaction with the city’s diversity (Jeldi 1). Although there has been progress made, the Francophone theatre scene in Montreal is still criticized for its lack of representation of cultural minorities and cultural insensitivity (Garcia 1).

The racialized positionalities of the participants were brought to the surface in *All Things Being Equal* through their personal histories that were expressed in the solo material. Of the four racialized artists in the project (Amir, Bénita, Sina and Claudia), three noted that their professional lives or their perception of themselves in their industry was deeply affected by their place in Quebec society and the professional

milieu. These were not apparent in a rehearsal process as internal examples of racist behaviour that I was aware of, and yet the positionalities of these participants in terms of racial background emerged spontaneously at different times, especially during the rehearsal day on which Claudia expressed her feelings about the Atlanta Attacks on Asian women (to be discussed in the next section), and during the Key Rehearsal Moment (April 21, 2021), when Bénita reacted strongly to the staging of the *Aurash is Beaten* scene. Bénita, whose solo contribution specifically explored her positionality in *All Things Being Equal*, sums up succinctly what she is living in the process:

... d'abord, c'est la couleur qu'on va regarder, peu importe l'accent que tu auras, que tu proposeras ton jeu, c'est ta couleur, parce qu'on va comme ça: "Ô, il nous faut une femme noire, une femme-noire-chauffeur-de-taxi" (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#1_Bénita", 00:11:21 – 00:11:56).

This daily reality for Bénita was one of the reasons she stated that she was interested in the research study, as she stated that she to express her blackness as a part of the "palette" of her total self, and not "quelque chose qu'on nous impose" (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#1_Bénita", 00:24:48 – 00:24:49).

Positionality due to racial factors was not experienced in the same way in the performative inquiry. For example, Sina, who is a racialized artist of Iranian descent, made no mention of having experienced racism, and referred to himself several times as white presenting. There were still other factors of positionality present in the process that did not have to do with race. In the Key Rehearsal Moment, Amir spoke to his own history with violence. Amir, whose personal history I have mentioned in the description of the solos, understood something about the depth of experience that violence carves:

...it was a reminder of how deep the iceberg goes, and how omnipresent it is. And how we cannot ever take for granted that what we see is all there is, you know,

there's always something underneath.... It was just a reminder of that, and a healthy reminder of that for me, because I also get very results oriented, and I my, my empathy, I lose touch with my empathy very easily, because I want to get to thing, and: "I want", "I want" ... (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Amir", 00:42:44 – 00:43:21).

Although this is not a part of my study, other participants considered their positionalities in terms of gender: Laura Gallo-Tapias, for example, stated her petite stature and her gender as reasons that she can feel not listened to in society. (Farbridge, "ATBE_FieldNotes", 2 March 2021).

b. Current Events.

Current Events are political or social circumstances in the world that influence the Theatre Rehearsal Practice. I isolated two that I felt were particular to this process: the pandemic and the Atlanta Attacks on Asian women on March 16, 2021.

The field research transpired during the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in Quebec. During this time, between December 2020 and May 2021, there were various and evolving restrictions on our in-person rehearsals, ranging from hand washing, physical distancing, and mask-wearing, to an 8:00pm curfew every evening (from January 9 to June 7, 2021). This was a source of stress for the participants in their daily lives (loss of work, financial insecurity, isolation), and thus created an additional emotional stressor in the research. In addition, we were not allowed to perform in front of a public at our performance space (Concordia University's Fine Arts Blackbox) and needed to perform at two metres distance from each other. Although I did not explore the impact on the rehearsal process directly, anecdotally, I observed that feelings of

insecurity, isolation, fatigue and frustration were present in the room at various points. In contrast, there was also a sense of privilege to be rehearsing together amidst the closure of the theatres. Roxanne exemplified the issues for the recording of the performative inquiry when she commented on the difficulties of the work, given the limitations of persons in the theatre (maximum of seven persons):

...on pouvait être que sept dans la salle, et pas huit... Et puis, il fallait que Sina te rejoigne pour continuer, donc il y avait une personne qui devait partir, alors c'était moi, je pense. Mais tout cela est indépendant du processus, et c'est comme tout l'extérieur qui est venu s'immiscer à l'intérieur... normalement, l'extérieur ne rentre pas autant dans un processus (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Roxanne", 00:02:40 – 00:03:35).

Sina noted the difficulty of being a director in a process where the actors are masked to prevent transmission of the virus:

...as someone who is leading a group of people... it's hard when you don't have the most, I guess, expressive part of the face.... for everyone it just adds that element of insecurity because you don't know how people are reacting to what you're saying... (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#2_Sina", 00:12:32 – 00:13:16).

At the same time, there was also mention of the fact of how important it was for the actors to be in rehearsal together working creatively:

Honestly, I'm just left with mostly the feeling of relief, being in a space with artists again, and the sort of magical effect that that had on me... It was delightful. It was like water, you know, in an arid desert... (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#2_Amir", 00:00:56 – 00:02:03).

For myself, it was a source of constant stress, as my tasks for the project grew enormously in terms of the logistical and bureaucratic hurdles to overcome to be able to

work together physically. I spent hours of negotiations with university administrators to have the opportunity to continue that work. Clearly, the pandemic was a contributing influence to the ethical relationality in the theatre rehearsal practice, for it affected our physical relationships, our ability to communicate effectively and also our sense of being together in the space. It formed a part of the Intersubjective Field in which we met.

The second significant current event in my view was the Atlanta attacks on Asian women. On March 16, 2021, eight people were shot dead in Atlanta, Georgia. Six of these were Asian women (Swartz 1). This attack occurred in the third month of our field research and Claudia addressed it with us in the rehearsal on March 17th, 2021. Claudia expressed that she felt personally threatened by the event and physically targeted by this violence: “The women look like me.” (Farbridge, “ATBE Field Research Notes, 17 March 2021”). The events in Atlanta underlined the persistence of white supremacist violence affecting race relations across North America. Montreal at the time was also going through a spike in Asian hate crimes related to negative views of China driven by the question of the origin of the COVID-19 virus. Architecture in China town was defaced, and Asian people were harassed in the street, not only in Montreal, but across the world. Claudia’s reflections about her identity during the process shifted after this event in Atlanta, and this was reflected in her drawings that appeared in the performative inquiry. She represented this in one of her slides in the solo (see fig. 19), and characterized the effect on her in this way:

...j'ai beaucoup remis en question la pertinence d'être... pas 'la pertinence', mais le... qu'est-ce que c'est d'être une femme asiatique artiste? En fait, ça l'a juste toute chamboulée ça, comme... comme *statement* de vie, fait que, c'est sûr que ça l'a influencé la présence en studio, en fait, ça l'a déstabilisé... toutes mes bases

identitaires en fait... pis c'était frais, aussi... je pense que notre répétition était trois ou quatre jours après la fusillade. C'était encore frais, puis je n'avais pas été encore en studio depuis ce moment-là (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Claudia", 00:16:32 – 00:17:12).

Claudia's positionality in the rehearsal space was altered by this event, and she needed to acknowledge and express this in her work in her solo.

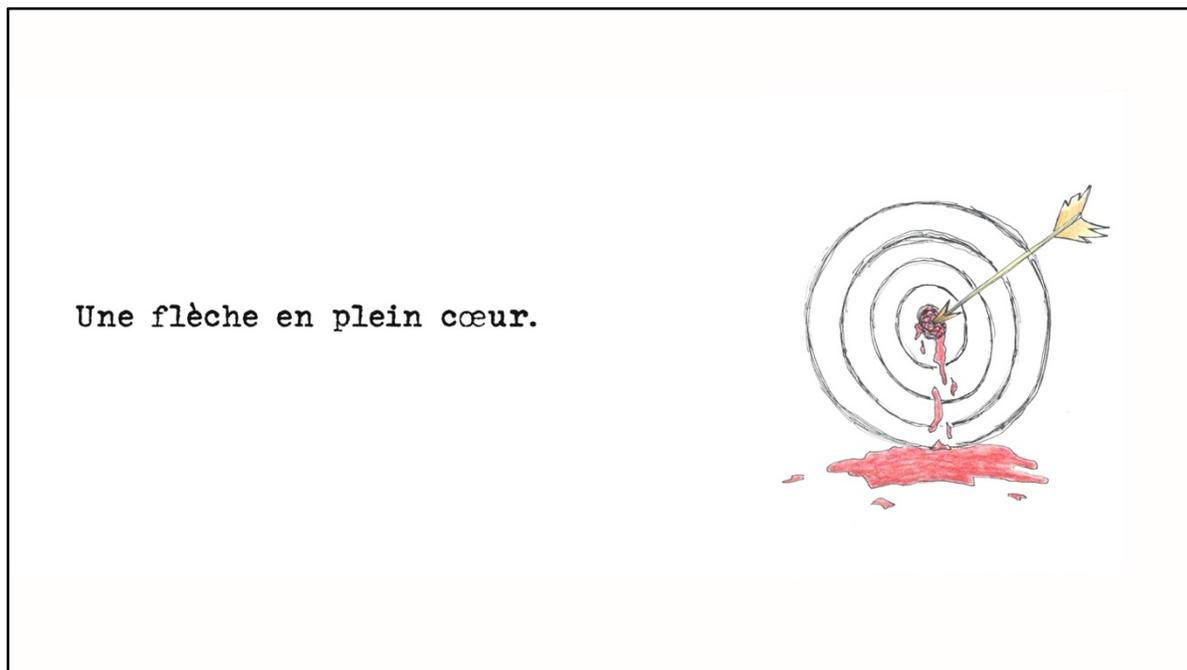


Fig. 19. Chan Tak, Claudia. Slide from Claudia's solo performance, 2 May 2021, Author's personal collection.

To conclude this section, during the time of writing this thesis, the killing of the Black American George Floyd at the hands of the police took place, resulting in a resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement as well as of an overall consciousness of discrimination against Black people (and other racialized persons) in the United States and around the world. In addition, movements of Indigenous peoples, including the

Indigenous movement, Idle No More, also became present in Canada in response to the killing of Indigenous women and further revelations of the brutal treatment of Indigenous children in Canada's Residential School System. In the Canadian theatre community, these issues (and others) created a particularly challenging environment for us to embark on research on ethical relationships between cultures, especially research led by a white researcher. This tension was present in me during this research period and is reflected in different places of the interviews and discussions during the field research.

d. Time / Duration.

This contributing influence refers to the economic and organizational parameters placed on the rehearsal process that shape the time allowed for the artists to rehearse, and/or affect the frequency of those rehearsals. This is not only about the *length* of time available to rehearse, but also the *management* of time by the project's leaders. Amir noted that he felt a sense of pressure in the time constraints of the process:

...there's a there's a time pressure that I feel, you know, because I know... that we only have a certain number of hours of rehearsal, and that, you know, we need to check off certain boxes in a way, you know, we need to block the thing, and we need to figure out this, we need to figure out that and so there's this... anxiety inducing sense of time pressure and the need to make decisions quickly... that that's an external pressure (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#2_Amir", 00:09:02 – 00:05:40).

As well as there being not enough money and time to complete the process of *All Things Being Equal*, it appeared that the sporadic nature of the rehearsals limited the capacity of

the participants to engage fully with their material. Roxanne noted this as a destabilizing element of the rehearsal process:

...ça a été vécu dans la construction et la déconstruction... Ok, je l'accepte, puis là, une fois que je l'accepte, OK, on me déconstruit parce qu'il faut reconstruire ailleurs ou différemment. Alors je sais, c'est comme si ce processus était là depuis le départ et que à la fin, dans les deux derniers jours, il s'est, comme chchchchc (*indicating a rapid hand movement of cutting*)... comme, mis ensemble très fort... (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Roxanne", 00:05:03 – 00:05:40).

Time became a factor in human relations in the sense of Husserl's notion of the totality of experience. The relationship to time and the participants' reaction to it affect the ability with which to make decisions that reflect the needs of everyone in the process. They inspire shortcuts and create frustrations. I noticed this in myself as well in the final days of recording, when lack of time and pandemic related constraints led me to a moment of voiced frustration with actors coming back late from breaks.

e. Dramatic Material.

The nature of the play or performance script—its emotional, intellectual, or moral content—impacts the artists' sense of purpose in the rehearsal process. The text of *Aurash*, with its altruistic message about a borderless world, remained as an overall tone to the rehearsals:

This particular story, story of Arash I mean, that's the story stays with me to this very day, you know... more than anything else, what I'm left with is just the imprint of the story of the person who-- it reminds me of this real quote, and I know I sound so cheesy when I say this, but this real quote that I came across

recently about love, essentially being the sort of the forgetting of the self, not not so much the denial of the self, but just the forgetting of the self... (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Amir", 00:05:58 – 00:06:32).

Amir voices the guiding moral in *Aurash* that was reflected consistently in discussions in rehearsal and in the interviews. As a play, *Aurash* expresses the hope for a world that will one day surpass political violence and renounce war. In *All Things Being Equal*, the story of *Aurash* instructed us about the morals of ethical relationality; the story also supported some of the more difficult moments in the rehearsal process by giving a dramatical model of an evolved philosophy of peace. This was conversely one negative aspect about the experience of *All Things Being Equal*; as we prepared its performance, we could only do ten scenes from *Aurash*, and these were spread out over the performative inquiry. It was difficult to get a sense of the journey of the play, which was frustrating for me.

f. Beliefs.

Beliefs refer to value systems that pervade the rehearsal process, whether as group agreements or individual points of views. Belief systems can be overriding ethical perspectives that support or limit the ethical relationality in a theatre rehearsal process. For example, in this process, there was an overriding sense of the social constructivist view of creating greater social capital through inclusive practices, expressed here by Roxanne:

Moi, je ne me suis jamais senti au service de ta recherche, ou, j'ai senti que c'était vraiment *cette recherche* qui était importante, et on était tous à son service. On était

au service de ce que tu nous as proposé... (Farbridge,
 "ATBE_Interview#3_Roxanne", 00:24:26 – 00:24:46);

and by Amir:

Je pense que c'est là la question est peut-être qu'on a l'occasion ici de trouver
 comme une autre façon de travailler de créer un show en étant respectueux envers
 nos expériences personnelles et en respectant le consentement.... (Farbridge,
 "ATBE_KeyRehearsalMoment", 00:45:04 – 00:45:23).

This value system expressed our collective desire to find an ethical approach to theatre rehearsal practice. Beliefs, as contributing factors can also be two or more strong opposing belief systems, represented most concretely by Sina and Laura. Sina's beliefs were apparent in his interviews and centred around the idea of the essential right of individuals to free speech.

You know, I might I definitely do not agree with a lot of... stuff people say under the guise of free speech, but I do fight for the right to say it because when this stuff are said... they are out in open, you know, there are there are open to be answered to, but when you don't let an idea be spoken out loud, well, of course, the idea is still going to exist– it's just going to go underground, and it's going to find people who all agree with it, and it's gonna become more extreme... (Farbridge,
 "ATBE_Interview#1_Sina", 00:17:32 – 00:17:57).

Laura, on the other hand, who was often more at odds with Sina's leadership style and opinions, felt a sense that his influence might not have had its place in the process. In her final interview, Laura stated her views of Sina after he presented a frontal lecture on Persian history and drama on the first day of rehearsal:

I would probably have been like, I'm going to stop working with Sina right now.
 ... And I know that... it doesn't resemble any more, a classical theatre space, or

like a rehearsal process, but I know that's what I would do, and maybe also where the conflict was for me, because I was like, I know, it's not my call. But I also know how I would try to handle it. And it might not be the best way either (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Laura", 00:21:40 – 00:21:48).

The difference in perspectives between Laura and Sina, which was expressed in the Key Rehearsal Moment demonstrates the challenge of negotiating across seemingly intractable positions of the Intersubjective Field, or at least suspending those positions in part to move into a more generative psychological (and emotional) space.

g. Leadership Style.

One of the most important contributing influences was the relationships that were established during the rehearsal process between Sina as a director and the other participants. Sina was given the task to bring the *Aurash* scenes to a performance level within a relatively short period of time (roughly 30 hours of rehearsal), which required a higher speed of decision-making in the rehearsal process. As a result, I had made several notes on what I considered to be Sina's vertical approach in the rehearsal hall, which he considers to as a collaborative (if top-down approach) to deal with the practical limitations of time:

...at the end of the day, of course, the director or someone needs to make the final choice, but I love to have as many ideas as possible, you know, to kind of mix them– just take one and go with that one or just you know, make hybrid or just listen to them– and I think it's that's the healthy environment of creativity when working in a group, I think again, in the practical sense... (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#2_Sina", 00:22:06 – 00:22:33).

Below is a series of comments from the actors on Sina's leadership style as a director:

Claudia: ... j'ai beaucoup aimé les périodes d'exploration au tout début où on devait participer avec des images, des inspirations, les animaux d'inspiration, tout ça ça m'a beaucoup parlé de défricher un texte de ses débuts de cette façon-là, je trouvais que ça se rapprochait plus d'un travail chorégraphique, d'un travail en studio de danse. Fait que ça m'a plus parlé, oui, ce moment-là que j'ai une seule espèce d'ouverture, puis je pense ça a un peu teinté aussi toute la suite. Même si on n'a pas du tout de garder ça, ça teinte la discussion puisqu'on propose après ça. (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Claudia", 00:04:17 – 00:04:57).

Bénita: Mais je me dis qu'il y a un metteur en scène. Bon, on va avoir des directives de jeu et tout, et puis je trouvais que... il y en avait pas, du moins par rapport à ce que je m'attendais ou que j'avais l'habitude de faire diriger. Et là, je me dis ben, au pire, allez, je vais attendre Les directives et les instructions qu'on mord, que le metteur en scène m'aura donné, et puis je veux travailler là-dessus, mais là je me suis rendu compte qu'il n'y en avait pas tant. (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Bénita", 00:04:12 – 00:04:48).

Amir: I think Sina maybe could have... adjusted his approach slightly to maybe be a little bit more accommodating. ... he's clearly a talented guy... but I think that a lot of things ended up becoming sacrificed on the altar of his desire to show what he's capable of. I think it's really just... giving permission to everybody to be able to say "No", at any time to be able to say, "I disagree", and "What about this"-- it really started to feel like it was sort of slipping into a 'directocracy' very quickly,

where we were simply enacting a particular vision (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Amir", 00:01:53 – 00:03:10).

What strikes me the most in these reactions to Sina's leadership style is the remarkable variety—in some ways contradictory—of their experiences. Bénita sought for a more hands-on approach, Claudia took advantage of what resonated for her as an artist in the work, while Amir felt uncomfortable in what he felt was an authoritative directorial style. Here I must return to address Bharucha's belief that the working conditions of theatre rehearsal practice might impede the freedom in the creative process; the performative inquiry adds an intersubjective component to his contention, shifting perhaps the inevitability of failure of an ethical space of creation. These three actors had subjective relationships with Sina, depending on their expectations as artists. Creating the conditions of ethical relationality might require allowing for and negotiating with perspectives that are significantly different to our own, and that leadership styles are an important factor of that negotiation. It brought to the surface questions about how this power is shared in a rehearsal process, and how these relations of power are established differently between individuals. This supports Michel Foucault's sense of power as "a network of relations, constantly in tension, in activity, rather than a privilege that one might possess" (31). There were differences, however, between what some participants reported, and what Sina himself perceived happened in the rehearsal process:

...when it comes to, you know, work outside of the little bubbles of either exploration spaces, or schools, or all this stuff, you know, you need to be pragmatic, which is, which is, which is a beautiful part... but I think, I think we had a very good as a whole give and take, I think there was a good respect... (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Sina", 00:26:36 – 00:27:02).

This dissonance between Sina's view of the process and some of the other participants might indicate a sense of the unspoken, or, a loss of agency experienced among individuals that prevents them from stating their needs and feelings in the rehearsal process.

h. The Unknown/The Unspoken.

This Contributing Influence is indiscernible in the process and relates to Glissant's quality of 'opaqueness' in which it is impossible to completely know the other or what they are experiencing. These unknown factors are persistent mysteries in the process that affect the Intersubjective Field, and that affect the rehearsal practice in ways that might not be understandable. The presence of the unspoken was evident in the interviews with the participants. There was a gap between some of the participants' views of Sina's directing style and Sina's understanding of their complicity, as noted above. Another example occurs in the Key Rehearsal Moment, when Bénita mentioned that she would have never dared talking about her difficulty in the scene, 'Aurash is Beaten', if not for Amir's intervention: "Merci, Amir. J'aurais jamais eu le courage" (Farbridge, "ATBE_KeyRehearsalMoment", 00:44:20 – 00:44:28). In the Key Rehearsal Moment, Bénita states that her reluctance to speak up came from an internal shame she felt from inside her own cultural group (Farbridge, "ATBE_KeyRehearsalMoment", 00:39:43 – 00:40:05). This loss of agency resulting from unspoken feelings and needs might be the most significant of all factors to be addressed in a future communication approach for an ethical relationality in theatre rehearsal practice, since, over time, silence, and the unspoken shapes the possibilities of intersubjective exchange in ways that are unpredictable.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The emerging sketches of what 'happened' during the performative inquiry do not need to be perfectly defined; the messiness and subjectivity of a heuristic are its strengths, especially if one imagines theatre rehearsal practice as a free and creative space. In this respect, the process was very personal to me: my own history with Modern Times and the context of the company's transition during this research study played a significant role in this journey. Examining how I respond to a leadership position (as principal investigator) and its accordant power and agency, generated a significant personal risk in the study's outcomes. For example, I understood through this process the impact of the 'unspoken' in shaping intersubjective relations between individuals, but I also struggle at times to overcome the barriers to self-expression; I recognized, in the unspoken moments between the participants that were revealed in this study, my own inability to navigate my unspoken affective life (e.g., the fear to offend, the fear to take up space, the fear to be ridiculous) that reduce my agency in situations and can cause misunderstandings. This is a human predicament, I believe, in the sense that human lives are woven with unfinished stories and unrequited desires. It followed that there would be no panaceas nor easy pathways to finding the ethical relationality of theatre rehearsal practice, as the approach is dependent upon everyone's ability for self-reflection and openness to change.

I will begin my concluding thoughts by reviewing the intent of the study. The research objectives were: (1) to explore how social norms driven by a 'coloniality of power' manifest in theatre rehearsal processes; (2) to examine if and how a posture of ethical relationality can disrupt these social norms and lead to rhizomatic connections of *Tout-monde* (Glissant); and (3) to evaluate if the psychophysical nature of theatre

rehearsal process facilitates pathways towards intersubjectivity, empathy, and generative dialogue. Embodied research proved indispensable to my study. The performative inquiry (*All Things Being Equal*) is a visual and aural testament to the interconnectedness of method, theory, and praxis in theatre performance studies, which can best be experienced in performance contexts. My conception of the performative inquiry was of an iterative, intuitive, sometimes frustrating, and very personal experience of the thoughts, feelings, and sensations that we (the participants) went through during the process. It was not meant to be a manifestation of ethical relationality in practice, but rather an attempt to isolate some of the ingredients that constitute it. Still, as a manifestation of the desire to find an ethical practice of theatre rehearsals, we went far together towards that sensation of this utopia, whose spirit is manifested by Amir's words:

I think an ethical space is a space where [for example] we recognize in somebody's accent... the fact that they have invested the effort to learn another language and are communicating it with sounds that are unfamiliar to the ear...its the... sonic embodiment of a desire to go and reach out and connect to another human being, using a palette and a mouth shape that is unfamiliar with these specific words– it's so powerful as an idea. Every single one of those sound waves contains the tiniest little imprint of a loving impulse and a desire to connect across the boundary of a different culture and a different language (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#1_Amir", 00:39:14 – 00:40:40).

There were certain boundaries to my research that I should note. First, although I conceived *All Things Being Equal* as a professional rehearsal practice (from the perspective of a structured process of text analysis, physical exploration, character development, dramaturgical editing, and repetition), it was mainly a research study.

This had a feedback effect on the rehearsal practice itself. As participants, we all knew we were part of an investigation into ethical theatre rehearsal practices, and we were asked to bring elements of our private lives into the process to that end. We were aware of the observation going on, and this reflected itself back into the rehearsal process. Secondly, although the fieldwork emerged from a collaborative process, the research inquiry was not co-designed, in that the questions were developed prior to the fieldwork and without the input of the other participants. As well, the participants were not involved in the process of editing the video of the performative inquiry, where many layers of discoveries were woven together. A next step of this study could expand the process of *All Things Being Equal* as a co-creation of a new performative inquiry based on discoveries from the current study.

There were several important discoveries that emerged in the process that touched upon the three research questions. Addressing Question # 1 (“How are colonial norms manifested in a rehearsal process that involves theatre artists from different ethnocultural backgrounds?”), the most predominant influence emanating in this particular study was my third criteria of exclusion, ‘internal power relations’. Narrative analysis of the Key Rehearsal Moment and the ethnographic interviews would seem to indicate that power relationships surrounding Sina’s role as a director began to develop very early in the first phase of the project (the rehearsal of the scenes from *Aurash*). These were reflective of the institutional power structures that exist in Euro-Canadian rehearsal practice in which the role of the director is decisional. Although many styles of leadership in directing are available to directors (often intrinsically linked with specific theatre rehearsal practice, e.g., lateral decision-making in ‘collective creation’ or devised performance), the short production time frames of Euro-Canadian theatre rehearsal practice often encourage vertical structures of power. The style of leadership

in this project, which favoured a top-down approach (my own and Sina's), brought to the surface questions about how power is shared in rehearsal processes. On the other hand, contradictory statements by the participants about their experience of leadership in the rehearsal process of *Aurash* would seem to indicate that these power relations are also established intersubjectively. This supports Michel Foucault's definition of power as "a network of relations, constantly in tension, in activity, rather than a privilege that one might possess" (31). The performative inquiry indicated that systemic power structures that limit agency of artists in a theatre rehearsal process are most clearly understood from the perspective of relationality. Each participant's understanding of their agency vis-a-vis the other participants was shaped by time, the influence of current events, positionalities, the dramatic material, the context of the research study, and perhaps other unknown factors that were overlooked in this study (or not revealed by the field research). Coloniality of power (Quijano), therefore, is expressed in an intersubjective field of relations between artists. Although it can be represented by social norms, in the sense of my criteria of exclusion that I proposed for Question # 1, it cannot be fully understood by such limiting terms. Shifts of agency caused by a coloniality of power are experienced as part of a dynamic relationship between the participants that is shaped by the context (Contributing Influences) of the rehearsal practice.

From the perspective of Question #2 ("In what ways, if any, can ethical relationality be established in a theatre rehearsal process to allow artists from different ethnocultural groups to share power and agency?"), the performative inquiry (rehearsals, performance, and video editing) demonstrated the braided nature of the participants' personal lives and the theatre rehearsal process. In a sense, everything is relational in a theatre rehearsal process, in that "identity and conditions of work"

(Bharucha 184) will inevitably bring the artists into a multipronged relationship with the human (other professional colleagues) and more-than-human (things like place, time frame, current events, dramatic material, unknown) elements. It could be that the act of searching for the ethical in those relations is the actual experience of the *Tout-monde*, or the closest approximation we could find under the circumstances. Still, the spectre of Bharucha's sense of hidden authority remains as a call to assess what is the moral perspective of the leadership in the theatre rehearsal practice. The Glissantian notion of 'worldmentality' entangles individuals in a chaotic process of the valorization of differences, moving towards an imperfect future in which we are still responsible for casting our moral perspective: "La Relation n'infère aucune de nos morales, c'est tout à nous de les y inscrire, par un effort terriblement autonome de la conscience et de nos imaginaires du monde (Glissant "Philosophie de la relation", 73). In this sense, the process of *All Things Being Equal* brought forward a first sketch of the kind of influences that will need to be addressed if theatre rehearsal practices are to move towards an ethical relationality of being-in-the-world. There is no one pathway by which a process of ethical relationality can be established, since every theatre rehearsal practice, ethnocultural or not, will have its own set of contributing influences and thus its own thread through the labyrinth of morality; but it is only through acknowledging the inequities that emerge among the conditions present in the rehearsal process that one can start the dynamic process of establishing the moral approach of the practice. In the words of Laura Gallo-Tapias, "I wouldn't assume that an ethical space can be created; I would assume that any space can become more ethical and that I would try to do everything I can to actively make it more of that" (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Laura", 00:19:54 – 00:19:59). This might be the sense of what Dwayne Donald saw as a possible process to establish a moral view in which the

historical, cultural, and social factors could be addressed openly. How though? To start, a process of seeking an ethically-relational theatre rehearsal practice does not permit the compartmentalization of artists' positionalities into predefined and static identities (e.g., BIPOC, disability, d/Deaf, LGBTQ2S+), since static identities will be disrupted by the dynamic and chaotic influence of intersubjective space. It is through the "interactional or interbodily resonance: [the] dynamic mutual feedback between two bodies" (Fuchs and Koch 5) that the historical, cultural, and political contexts of rehearsal practice are negotiated, not simply as intersecting political interests but as parts of an interconnected and complex process. Within this convergence of resonances, ethical stances can be attained by viewing the 'opaque' in others as opportunities for letting go, "as openings instead of absences" (West, 00:03:25 – 00:03:29). These openings are calls to be vulnerable, to share our perplexity at the difficulty of human relations, and to be at peace with the not-knowingness of human experience.

To complete this discussion on Question # 2, I would say that ethical relationality is perhaps something we can move towards, but never attain. The process of approaching an ethical relational theatre rehearsal practice requires embracing the pre-existing and evolving conditions (what I have termed 'Contributing Influences') to reach an equilibrium of individual needs and expressions. Affective experiences linked to positionalities surfaced and resurfaced in the work, for example, in reactions to others' belief systems (e.g., Sina and Laura), to current events (e.g., Claudia), and to the dramatic material (e.g., Amir and Roxanne). The Key Rehearsal Moment was an litmus test of the possibility of negotiated outcomes between the affective experiences of the artists (their positionalities) and the nature of theatre practice (aesthetics/professional ethics) and creative process (the staging of the scene 'Aurash is Beaten'). As was witnessed, navigating moral dilemmas was a dynamic process shaped by the contexts

of time, place, and people. Agency was addressed relationally, rather than through institutionalized notions of EDI that adopt gold standards of 'professional' behaviour. On the other hand, there was an initial agreement (a form of social contract) regarding how the rehearsal process would welcome differences, and the confidence that this openness would ultimately be possible irrespective of the way in which power was distributed in that theatre rehearsal practice. In this context, the act of negotiation and sharing of agency between the participants of the study in this moment was the principal outcome of ethical relationality. Giving agency, in my view, does not mean that every participant was able to have complete creative freedom in the process at every step. Agency was established through a negotiated process of intersubjective experience that serviced the overall process of rehearsals (and research).

For Question #3 ("How can theatre artists' psychophysical processes facilitate a common intersubjective space where artists can engage in generative dialogue?"), I could not determine if there is a particular notion of embodiment specific to theatre practice that favours the generation of empathy. Theatre is a necessarily psychophysical process, one in which the actors' presence, as a fundamental (but not fixed) state, can provide greater empathetic preparedness (Moore). But whether this is particular to the theatre is hard to pin down and may not be material, after all. What was most informative to me from an investigation of this question was the application of Scharmer's Model of Generative Dialogue during the Key Rehearsal Moment. It traced a progression of conversation evolving from a passive view of empathy (i.e., one involved in understanding the point of the other, but not engaged in transformation) to a forward-thinking, creative space of possibilities of generative dialogue and change. Whether that particular day in rehearsal on April 21, 2021 was unduly influenced by the nature of the academic study surrounding is an important caveat, but not one that invalidates the

process that occurred. The physical moment of hugging between the actors allowed expansion from a perceived empathy shared between the participants to a generative dialogue that produced a voluntary (and unforced) shift in the rehearsal process. The Key Rehearsal Moment demonstrated a communication mode in which ethical relationality is possible in the presence of social, historical, and cultural contextual factors. It instantiated a notion of “embodied affectivity” in which the participants were operating in converging fields of subjective relations far more nuanced than oppressor–oppressed or right–wrong binaries. It was a kind of active empathy that created solutions to creative problems with the agreement of the group.

As I discussed in the introduction in chapter one, I began this research with an overall objective to develop an understanding of the theory and praxis of the neologism, ‘postmarginal’. At this point, I would offer that postmarginality is a process of using ethical relationality to establish greater human agency in contexts where there is significant moral ‘stakes’, for example, in theatre rehearsal practice situations in which there is a risk of unhealthy relations of power¹⁸ among the participants. Conceptually, postmarginality suggests that the borders of marginality and the concomitant centre–point to which they refer can yield to allow the sense of existing as one individual among many without a hierarchy of difference¹⁹. It is a consciousness in which the chaos of rhizomatic connections is a call for improvisation and creative responses. Postmarginality exists as an intentionality rather than an end goal of a perfectly ethical

¹⁸ Theatre is my professional background, and hence my field of study, but there could be other performing arts practices for which postmarginality could have an impact, for example, dance, music, and the circus arts.

¹⁹ Although postmarginality might be more suited to the higher moral stakes of theatre rehearsal process that involve multiple positionalities, it could also be useful in contexts where there is more homogeneity, for example, a theatre rehearsal process with all white cisgendered and physically abled artists.

space of relations; it is an aspirational notion, one that attempts to acknowledge and include all narratives in a process. More practically speaking, postmarginality offers a mode of generative dialogue in which the socio-political, historical, and cultural context of individuals takes its place among many other factors to instigate a sensation of being-in-the-world together in a state of complexity.

Further studies of postmarginality in a performance praxis setting of a theatre rehearsal process could help to generate communication tools for this relational approach to building ethical theatre rehearsal practices. This study could involve a plurality of positionalities, such as ethnocultural, disability, d/Deaf and LGBTQ2S+ to establish co-created pathways to ethical relationality that could build a fluid and responsive approach that can shift with the context of the theatre rehearsal practice. This could help establish the parameters for transitory moments of shared authority in whatever context of decision-making structure of theatre rehearsal practice. It might not matter that the rehearsal practice employs a vertical power relationship between participants if the communication modes in the rehearsal practice use an approach of ethical relationality to build a moral framework. Such an approach in theatre rehearsal practice would require less emphasis on structuring rehearsals around hard-coded notions of ethics and instead embrace the dynamic, shifting nature of relational processes in a way that generates agency and preserves the creative spirit of theatre practice.

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ANNEX 1: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview # 1

1. Qu'est-ce qui vous a amené à vous intéresser à un projet de recherche de cette nature? Quels sont les moments clés de votre vie qui ont contribué à développer cet intérêt?
2. Qu'est-ce qui vous rend intéressant en tant qu'artiste ? Quatre mots.
3. Quels sont les défis auxquels vous avez dû faire face dans votre carrière théâtrale, que ce soit au Québec ou ailleurs ? Quels éléments de vous-même (pratique artistique, votre genre, votre formation, votre origine ethnique ou raciale) ont joué un rôle à cet égard ?
4. Quelles influences de votre culture / formation avez-vous utilisées par le passé dans votre vie artistique ? Quels éléments souhaitez-vous apporter à votre pratique artistique dans l'avenir ? Quel effet pensez-vous que le fait d'intégrer ces expériences dans votre travail pourrait avoir sur votre travail ?
5. Qu'est-ce qu'un espace éthique pour vous ? Si la salle de répétition pouvait être un espace éthique, un lieu où les besoins des personnes marginalisées seraient complètement intégrés, comment imaginez-vous cela ? Avez-vous une histoire que vous pourriez raconter sur l'expérience d'un espace éthique ou pas si éthique dans lequel vous avez travaillé dans le passé ?
6. Comment aimeriez-vous documenter et raconter votre histoire dans le cadre de cette enquête performative ? Journal intime, entretien, audio, vidéo, mouvement, dessin ?

Interview # 2

1. What are your personal opinions and impressions about the work we did in Aurash?
2. What was your experience like when exploring the autoethnographic exercises?
3. What was it like on a physical, emotional and/or intellectual level?
4. Do you feel that there were instances when you had to minimize your personal expression? Can you give me one or two examples?
5. In every shared social / workspace, there are certain hierarchies among the people involved. Can you tell me about the ones that have been present / relevant to you in the space? How are they evolving?

6. In what ways are your feelings of belonging to the group shifting during the process?
7. What conversations/moments informed that change? Do you feel that there are conversations that need to be had?
8. Why do you think they have not happened yet? What would be a generative way of having them?
9. Do you feel that this project is changing your perceptions of your work, your process or your training? If so, in what ways?
10. Any final thoughts that you would like to share?

Interview #3

1. Quelles sensations ou quelles émotions avais-tu ressenties pendant les répétitions d'Aurash ? As-tu des réflexions à partager ? Est-ce qu'il y avait des choses qui ont évolué pour toi ?
2. Quelles sensations ou émotions avais-tu eues pendant les répétitions et performances de l'enquête performative ? As-tu des réflexions à partager ? Est-ce qu'il y avait des choses qui ont évolué pour toi ?
3. Est-il arrivé un moment d'incertitude ou d'anxiété lié avec une à priori extérieure ou intérieure ? Comment as-tu réagi ? Ressens-tu encore qu'il y ait des émotions non résolues liées au processus ?
4. Lors de la répétition du 4 mars, il est arrivé un moment clé avec la répétition de la scène dans laquelle Aurash est battu. Pourrions-nous en parler ? Quelles sensations et émotions avais-tu ressenties ?
5. Au cours du processus, tu as été témoin.e aux traumatismes, aux insécurités et aux peurs d'autres membres de l'équipe. Cette expérience, a-t-elle bougé de quoi en toi en ce qui concerne ton travail d'artiste ou ta personne ?
6. Est-ce que nous avons manqué, oublié, ignoré ou négligé quelque chose dans le processus ? Il y a-t-il d'autres choses que tu veux mentionner ? (Tu peux toujours m'écrire plus tard, si quelque chose arrive.)

ANNEX 2: PARTICIPANTS AND PRODUCTION TEAM

Project Performers (Participants)

Principal Investigator (himself).....	Peter Farbridge
<i>Aurash</i> Director.....	Sina A. Suren
Actor # 1 (Corporal, <i>Aurash</i> 's Father, Various).....	Amir Sám Nakhjavani
Actor # 2 (<i>Aurash</i>).....	Bénita Jacques
Actor # 3 (Mountain).....	Claudia Chan Tak
Actor # 4 (Enemy King, Various).....	Roxanne de Bruyn
Research Assistant (herself).....	Laura Gallo-Tapias

Production Team

Space Design.....	Cassandre Chatonnier
Lighting Designer.....	Audrey-Anne Bouchard
Sound Design.....	Avi Caplan
Video Recording.....	Helena Vallès Escuela
Videographer.....	Andrew Shriver
Technical Director	Heather Ellen Strain

ANNEX 3: PARTICIPANTS' BIOGRAPHIES

Amir Sám Nakhjavani.

Amir was born to Iranian parents but grew up on the Mediterranean Island of Cyprus. He and his family made their home in Montréal when Amir was 9. Amir speaks four languages: English, French, Farsi and some Azerbaijani. Amir first became interested in theatre at École FACE in Montreal, an arts-focused high school with a strong drama program. After CEGEP, he studied to be a lawyer and articulated for some years in the United States and Canada before returning to his first love of theatre in his early 30s. Amir now works as an actor in English and French, performing in film, voice, and theatre projects in Montreal. He has written one theatre play, called "My Main Man". He was also the translator of the play *Aurash* from English to French for the purposes of the performative inquiry.

I also think that that trauma, psychologically, sometimes manifests itself as a, as a defensiveness, and a closeness, which gets in the way of my ability to do this work. But it's very reasonable and why I need to do this work. So it's a paradox, I'm drawn to the work for the very reason that it's the thing that I'm the least inclined to do in the wake of trauma (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#1_Amir", 00:26:13 – 00:26:35).

Claudia Chan Tak.

Claudia is a multidisciplinary artist trained in visual arts (Concordia University, BA 2009), and in contemporary dance (UQAM, BA 2012 and MA 2017). She practices dance, video, and theatre in Montreal and internationally. She has also been working to improve the representativeness of BIPOC artists for several years, but much more

actively and publicly since 2019, by producing, among other things, the Bottin artistique et asiatique du Québec highlighting numerous Asian artists from her community.

... je considère que... ma famille est multi à la base parce que je suis né à Québec, ma famille, ils sont Chinois de Madagascar, élevés par des missionnaires français, avec des pratiques catholiques taoïstes--fait que déjà toute ma famille, toute mon enfance, et multi dans cet aspect là. Pis c'est ce pour quoi je pense que je m'intéresse tellement à la quête identitaire parce qu'elle est tellement riche par sa multiplicité (Farbridge. "ATBE_Interview#1_Claudia", 00:31:41 – 00:32:18).

Bénita Jacques.

From the age of 11, Bénita began to write and act in buffoon sketches that she would perform to her local community in Haiti. Bénita immigrated to Canada with her family in 1997 at the age of 14, where she began her own theatre company Vivr'art. She went on to receive a DEC in Arts and Lettres (Acting) at College Marie-Victorien and then a bachelor's in arts dramatiques at UQAM. She works principally in film and television as an actor and makes documentary films. Bénita is working on a documentary film in her ancestral home of Senegal.

Parce que pour moi, s'exprimer sur scène est beaucoup : c'est se permettre ce qui... m'a poussée vers ces métiers que mes parents m'interdisaient (je dirais plutôt mon père). C'est pouvoir dire ce qu'on n'oserait pas dire normalement (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#1_Bénita", 00:20:48 – 00:21:13).

Sina Suren.

Sina is a multidisciplinary performance artist, specializing in writing, directing and acting. Born in Iran to a doctor family, he spent time as a child in Paris and Tehran

before moving to Montreal with his family at 17. He received a technical degree in acting from John Abbott Theatre program and deepened his training at Sheridan College and English Literature at University of Toronto, and he finished his Bachelor's Degree at Concordia University in Performance Creation.

I'm a huge fan of stuff when it comes to myths, legends, history, and like just people's movement, people's connection between different tribes of people befriended between different groups. And so working on something like this was very triggering for me from the start. I love the research of it. I love the symbolism involved in it. So all the stuff just just even like researching on this plane, for me, it's just a joy. So putting it on, it will be amazing (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#1_Sina", 00:01:17 – 00:02:28).

Laura Gallo-Tapias.

Laura Gallo-Tapias is a feminist interdisciplinary researcher and mental health consultant who was born in Bogota, Colombia. She recently received a master's degree from the Psychiatry Department at McGill University with concentrations in transcultural psychiatry as well as feminist and gender studies approaches to refugee mental health research. She is also interested in performance (and performance as therapeutic method), writing/poetry, and grassroots political advocacy -particularly with respect to migrants. She is currently living in Berlin, where she is enrolled in a program in Expressive Arts Therapies.

I didn't bring any, like, a pure a priori, formed thoughts. Throughout the process, I've been very straightforward and vocal about how I felt, and yeah, those moments when I felt uncomfortable, when I felt anxious. I was always like, Peter,

I'm feeling this way. I don't know if it's this. I don't know if it's that. I don't know if I agree with that (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#3_Laura", 00:04:05 – 00:04:26).

Roxanne de Bruyn.

Roxanne is a Quebecer of Belgian origin. After studying theater at the Brussels Conservatory, she involved herself with creations that aim to abolish the boundaries between art and life, notably with *L'esclave F*, by Robert Filiou. Moving to Montreal in 2008, she began to perform in environmental theatre, in private places, such as a bedroom, a kitchen, the roof of a building. Following this experience, she dedicated a large part of her work to research, to combine the theatre actor with the dynamics of the circus and the theme of incarcerated women with *Greta the Prison Guard*. She has a great interest in projects which "reinvent the gaze on difference". She currently works in the collective *Les feuilles déchirées*, exploring the intersection of cultures and artistic disciplines.

Mon côté farfelu qui veut dire justement quelque chose que j'ai à l'intérieur. Puis je dis, c'est bizarre, ce n'est pas perçu de l'extérieur, c'est perçu un peu comme... farfelu là. Pour moi, c'est très sérieux. Alors il y a un décalage, puis je me sens aussi par rapport au vivre ensemble ou vivre avec l'autre, aussi décalé par rapport à l'autre, ou je me dis, "Tiens, mais pourquoi j'ai cette pensée-là envers l'autre alors que je ne le connais pas..." (Farbridge, "ATBE_Interview#1_Roxanne", 00:07:12 – 00:07:42).

Peter Farbridge.

Peter began acting in high school, and received professional training at York University, with further professional training in Shakespeare, movement, bouffon, and scene study.

As a producer, adaptor/translator, actor, and co-founder of Modern Times Stage company, he participated in over thirty rehearsal processes with artists of different cultural backgrounds. He works principally in theatre in Montreal in English and French.

ANNEX 4: DETAILED REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Month	Activity	Methodology	Total Hours Per Participant	Instruments
January 2021	Entrance Interviews (1 hour)	Ethnographic Interview	1	Interview Questions (See Appendix III: "Interview Questions", Audio-Visual Recording)
	Introductory Meeting (1 x 3 hours)	Performative Inquiry: Initial explorations of theatrical text	3	Journaling, Drawing, Oral Feedback, Audio-Visual Recording
February 2021	Rehearsals Research-Creation (3 x 6 hours)	Performative Inquiry, Narrative Inquiry, Autoethnography, Ethnography	18	Journaling, Drawing, Oral Feedback, Audio-Visual Recording
	Mid-process Interview (1 hour)	Ethnographic Interview	1	Interview Questions (See Appendix III: "Interview Questions", Audio-Visual Recording)
March 2021	Rehearsals Research-Creation (4 x 6 hours)	Performative Inquiry, Narrative Inquiry, Autoethnography, Ethnography	24	Journaling, Drawing, Oral Feedback, Audio-Visual Recording
April 2021	Technical trials, Recording (4 hours)	NA	2	
	Rehearsal Performance Inquiry + Technical Exploration (1 x 8 hours)	Performative Inquiry, Narrative Inquiry, Autoethnography, Ethnography	6	Journaling, Drawing, Oral Feedback, Audio-Visual Recording
May 2021	Performances (two) (2 x 2 hours)	NA	4	Audience survey
	Exit Interviews/Debrief (1 hour)	Ethnographic Interview	1	Interview Questions Audio-Visual Recording
			70	

ANNEX 5: KEY REHEARSAL MOMENT - TRANSCRIPTION

Date: April 21, 2021 @ 4pm

Place: Théâtre Bouches dé cousues

File: ATBE_Recording_KeyRehearsalMoment_Apr21_audio (00:27:50 to 00:57:45)

(27:49) Peter: Ici on peut s'arrêter pour Aurash is Beaten.

(27:55) Sina: Ah ok, yeah, yeah.

(27:59) Peter: C'est ça. L'idée ici c'est une rupture comme l'autre fois, et on va voir la scène de Aurash qui est en train d'être battu en arrière. Donc, puisque on est vraiment à distance, moi je voyais Aurash en fait plus haut... c'est négociable-- on fait ça à distance. Donc, Bénita reçoit les coups comme ça (*indique les coups*) mais les autres vont taper comme soit avec les pieds, ou...(*indique les coups*)

(28:58) Bénita : La c'est la deuxième partie, c'est ça.

(29:00) Claudia: Page onze

(29:10) Amir : Si on veut faire ça, on peut faire des knap... I don't know how to say it. We can knap it. You know that kind of thing. *He indicates stage combat hits.*

(29:18) Sina : You can even do this because that way it's as if you are trying to hit her. But you are definitely not going to hit her. But it can be even more stylized. *indicates hits*

(29:31) Peter : On peut rester dans le non-réalisme parce que vue la situation et la pièce. On va jouer ça. On va prendre la fin de la réplique: "I didn't travel an entire ocean to be a slave of censorship." And I say haha and I say whoops and on whoops is the cue.

(30:06) Roxanne: Tu penses que les trois, est-ce que ça pourrait être les deux.

(30:11) Peter : Je pense que les trois, ça pourrait être intéressant. (pause) Est-ce qu'on va essayer ça ? On va jouer la musique stp Laura, et on va entendre...

(30:26) *Problèmes techniques et puis la musique commence. 30:40 They begin hitting and stomping the stage. Bénita fait des petits cris. 31:33 Sina comes to talk with Peter. 32:38 La scène se termine. Peter et Sina continuent à se parler. Voix indistinctes. 32:40 En arrière fond, on entend Bénita qui parle d'une agression physique qu'elle a subi à l'école secondaire.*

(33:55) Bénita : C'est violent.

Sina: So guys...

(33:59) Bénita : Je trouve ça violent.

(33:00) Sina : Guys, while we're doing this... can I have all of you kind of on the edge of the risers... So you can be just in the back. And you can be... ok. (Claps)... start with like kind of this Terminator. "I'll be back... because I'm Terminator." And when you're coming at her, face her... you're facing her... and the thing is, it's this... when are.. Right it's pointed. *Claps*. And Bénita when you are getting hit, it's not just here, here. It could be here (*indicating different parts of his body*). It could be here. It's everywhere, because if you just... they're going to hit you a lot, and if you focus on one place it's going to be repetitive, so explore different places, you know..

(34:05) Bénita : OK.

(34:06) Sina : The whole body can be hit. So this this way we have a kind of a build up to the moment. And then you can start... shall we... we say we start hitting on the vocals.

(34:19) Peter : Mmmhmm.

(34:23) Sina: So you kind of walk in, walk in, take your time, there's kind of an opening, and as soon as the guys starts the vocality near the end, you can hit.

(34:34) Claudia : (*indicating walking forward*) Donc, on avance...

(34:38) Roxanne : C'est ça, mais on ne fait plus le pied, juste les mains?

(34:42) Sina : Vous pouvez faire les deux. Faites les deux. *Inaudible*... three people to walk.

(34:49) Amir : Ummm... est-ce qu'on peut juste avoir un petit check-in pendant deux minutes que tout le monde est correct avec ça... juste pour... je ne sais pas... c'est un peu violent. Et je veux juste m'assurer que tout le monde est correct et c'est pas trop intense...

(35:17) Sina : (*doubtful*) Well...

(35:18) Amir : Je ne sais pas. I just want to make sure everybody's chill. Everyone's cool. (*indicating Bénita*) You know, if I was in your position... I don't know. I just wanna ask that question. I, as you know, I am a victim of severe violence and I'm happy to go there but I just want to make sure everyone's cool.

Silence. Everyone waits for Bénita to talk.

(35:35) Bénita: C'est beaucoup de choses. Même le bébé mort—j'ai perdu un bébé – euh c'est... en fait, c'est très difficile... c'est... Et donc, visualiser les choses, je m'aurais fait... c'est moi. C'est très dur. (*Sina essaye de parler*) À l'école, cette scène, je vois juste les enfants. Ils me cernaient après l'école et pour me battre à l'école... ils me cernaient après l'école.

(36:09) Sina : But Bénita that's great though. The same thing. I am not saying this is easy, guys, I'm not, but we are getting paid the big bucks to go there, you know. I mean it's not easy. It's not easy, but it's good, it's really good, but feel that, yeah, but at the same time to both be there and make sure to separate ourselves. Remember, don't drown in it. Feel it but don't drown in it. Because if you drown in it, it's not healthy, right? So it's good that you feel like a kid, and that sensation comes back, there's this energy, that I can feel it over here, I love it, it's good, it's good acting. But at the same time remember, it's just a bunch of guys just standing there and hitting the air, you know its.... *Imitating movement of hitting*. So you need to have a duality, and that's the tough thing of being an actor. You have this duality. This part is real but this part isn't. I am safe, but I can explore. No one is going to hit you, I will protect you.

(37:10) Peter : Thank you Amir. This is a moment of research, actually. So let's pause for a moment to talk about this. Because it's interesting. I think Laura, you have something to say.

(37:20) Laura : Est-ce que je le dis en français?

Peter : Oui oui, en français.

(37:23) Laura : Je pense que le geste d'Amir c'est très important... que ce n'est pas aussi évident que on a vécu une événement traumatisant de simplement séparer les choses, et je pense que moi, ce que j'aurai la tendance à proposer c'est--vue que c'est difficile, vue que c'est déjà énoncé, on a nommé le fait que ça, ça reprend des souvenirs difficiles--qu'est-ce que on peut faire pour faire en sorte que ce soit plus facile pour toi Bénita ou ça... pour que c'est plus facile pour vous qu'on est encadré, pour qu'on sache qu'on est tous là, on est disponible, et que c'est pas qu'on va pas juste assumer que c'est comme la job et que ca que l'on fait quand on est acteur. Qu'est-ce qu'on peut t'offrir, ou qu'est-ce que je peux t'offrir si je parle pour moi-même ?

(38:20) Bénita : Je dirais merci à Amir, parce que le fait d'en parler, j'ai déjà les pieds plus "loose". Les jambes me tiennent mieux. Parce que le *Inaudible*... pourquoi c'est difficile de parler de l'enfant, parce que j'en ai perdu deux... et euh... je me suis faire battre à l'école en sortant de l'école. Puis ils se vidaient sur moi, ils me battaient, c'est ce que je voyais, ben, disons que j'ai recommencé à transpirer quand Amir à demander de s'arrêter. Et le fait d'en parler.... haaa (*émotion*).

(39:01) Sina : But Bénita, I appreciate that and that's the freedom of speech and I thank you, you are opening that gate already in that space.. this is a safe space because you can say whatever you want and we won't judge you.

(39:13) Laura : But you haven't asked the question...

(39:21) Sina : Exactly, that's what I'm saying, that it's good, we need to have... I want all of you to be comfortable to talk whenever you want... and I thank you for opening the door. But you yourself, you have freedom. You have total freedom... I love that... please, relax.

(39:33) Bénita: Mais, c'est culturel, il y a des choses... qu'on n'est pas fière d'en parler...

(39:39) Sina: But that's the culture of censorship--

(39:43) Bénita: Ben... disons que c'est plutôt la coté, plutôt africaine, ou on c'est que on veut c'est pas des choses dont on parle le fait que on nous a battu que on a perdu des enfants. C'est comme d'autres un malédiction. C'est pas des choses qu'on va parler. Le fait de vous en parler comme ça... ha (*Laughs*) ça enlève une couche.

(40:05) Laura : Merci, Bénita de partager ça. On est là pour toi.

(40:15) Sina: Thats.. thats... and we all appreciate it... what you are doing, I know it's helpful to me it's helpful to Roxanne. It's helpful to me, it's helpful to everyone... it's much appreciated, it really is, and.

(40:27) Peter: En fait, le moment qu'on vit maintenant, c'est le moment que je voulais dans un sens communiquer à travers la juxtaposition de notre scène avec cette scène là. On est en train de de vivre une réalité dans une réalité. Parce que je pense que c'est vrai que on est des professionnels, et qu'il faut jouer des choses au théâtre qui sont difficiles. Mais comme je voulais explorer dans ces processus, on est aussi un tas d'histoires et un tas de bagage émotionnel, très personnel, qui fait en sorte que oui on est aussi des êtres humains, avec des moments des faiblesses, et des choses que on se cache parce qu'il faut que on se cache parce que c'est notre histoire, parce que c'est pas pour vous, parce que j'ai trop peur de me dire, parce que je me censure aussi. Mais, c'est ça que je voulais savoir aussi quand j'ai décidé de faire notre scène, j'ai dit que « Ah oui, c'est quoi l'autre côté de ça » et en fait c'est ce que vous nommez ici. C'est ça, exactement, c'est ça. Moi, je n'ai pas de réponse, mais comment faire passer à travers de ça dans un processus, sans pour autant écartier le travail, ou l'art, ou le risque, mais aussi pour accueillir la possibilité qu'on a pas besoin de tout faire, on a pas besoin de faire les choses qui sont dangereux pour nous et on a pas besoin d'être licencié pour ça. Je pense que on a besoin de trouver une façon créative de passer à travers de tout ça de passer autour et de travailler avec.

(42:31)Sina: That requires an openness to oneself and to the group where you are comfortable and where you aren't, you know and doesn't expect that the group has a problem.

(42:45) Laura: Est-ce que je peux proposer que l'on peut essayer de ne pas trop théoriser ou intellectualiser ça, mais juste de reconnaître s'il y a des besoins dans la salle, si tu as besoin de prendre cinq minutes, si tu veux continuer à parler as besoin de communiquer d'autre choses.

(43:04) Bénita: Je veux juste de l'eau.

(43:05) Sina: Non, non. Take your time guys and exactly as Laura said anyone... feel free to say it, just let it out.

Bénita cherche de l'eau.

(43:15) Roxanne: *inaudible*. Si tu as besoin d'un câlin ? On peut faire un calin de...

Peter: ...fais le à distance

Roxanne donne un câlin de dos à Bénita.

(43:25) Bénita: Ahhhh de dos !

(43:40) *Laughter, inaudible.*

Peter : C'est sécuritaire!

Sina : Oh that's smart why didn't I think about it.

(43:30) Bénita : C'est vrai, j'avais pas pensé à ça.

(43:40) *They all join in hug... inaudible. Awws.*

Peter : C'est intéressant.

Laura : Moi aussi je m'en doutais.

Sina joins.

(43:59) Tout le monde : Awwwwwww.

Peter : This is totally unsafe, but that's alright

Laura : It's gonna take two seconds. Just two seconds.

Peter : It's time, it's time isn't it?.

Inaudible.

(44:16) Laura : Si tu veux en discuter après la répète. On est là, je suis là.

Bénita: Merci, merci, Amir.

(44:25) Amir: Merci à toi, Bénita.

Bénita : J'aurais jamais eu le courage.

Sina : Merci à tout le... c'est tout le monde ensemble. Parce que c'est vraiment important.

(44:30) Amir : Peut-être qu'il y a un moyen d'intégrer tout ça dans le show en faisant ça autrement, en décrivant cette histoire d'une façon plus saine, plus humaine.. ummm... parce que moi aussi, je trouve ça un peu pas facile comme acteur de mettre mes expériences personnelles dans mon travail, et de tout le temps essayer d'instrumentaliser mes expériences personnelles puis de créer des « boundaries » autour de mon travail

professionnel et ma vie personnel. Je pense que c'est là la question est peut-être on a l'occasion ici de trouver comme une autre façon de travailler de créer un show en étant respectueux envers nos expériences personnelles et en respectant le consentement, finalement. Est-ce qu'on... I dunno... c'est toute une question, mais uh... Moi aussi, je pense que c'est une question avec laquelle je « grapplait » beaucoup parce que j'ai décidé pour une tonne de raisons différentes de faire un mouvement qui traiter d'une histoire personnelle, d'une violence que j'ai subi, et en travaillant je me suis rendu compte que c'est peut-être un « mistake » de ma part de le faire ça parce que je n'ai fait pas mon "boundary" d'une façon claire, et c'est quelque chose qui... il fallait y penser avant. Et c'est vraiment dans ton expérience, je vois mon propre expérience, Bénita, sérieusement, et je pense que une leçon dans tout ça et on a une opportunité ici de trouver une autre façon de faire.

(46:26) Sina : And may I say everyone I really thank you and appreciate you for creating this space and its really nice to see this, this idea that people are free to speak out their minds and those words that are respected. Doesn't even have to be agreeing with each other, but this idea that we are doing something that Amir has this idea brings it out. This idea is there. We'll see how others react to that and at the end of the day, and at the end of the day everyone is closer with each other. There's more understanding with ourselves. It's beautiful guys, and it's not something that you really can't ...*inaudible*... and I appreciate it. *Inaudible*... It's beautiful, it's really beautiful.

(47:19) Amir : It's tough,

Sina : It's tough but it's beautiful.

Amir : It's tough because professionalism and productivity can sometimes turn into oppression, you know, and it's the---

(47:30) Sina : Yeah, the thing is it's just that so often that they have been lied to us that these two things are oppression. That someone wants to oppress you and... *Inaudible*...

Amir : No, I know.

(47:43) Laura : But it's being experienced as that and...

(47:46) Sina : Yeah exactly, but we need to separate it at the same time as we are experiencing it. At the same time as we are oppressing. It's not one or the other. I'm not saying it's not true. I've been there and I've lived. If someone or the other accept. I understand; I am not saying it's not true.

Amir : No for sure.

(48:04) Sina : I think it's true, but at the same time. Because if someone sells you a bad chair, it doesn't mean that all chairs are bad, and doesn't mean you should be comfortable without chairs.

(48:20) Peter : Maybe I could propose a way forward, because I hear a call in what you are saying, like can we try something different, est-ce qu'il y a une autre façon de le

faire. Est-ce que tu veux dire comme dans la construction de cette enquête, tu veux enlever ce que tu as fait avec Jang.

(48:43) Amir : C'est pas que je veux l'enlever. Non, j'assume la décision et je suis content avec le travail qu'on a fait. C'est pas que je veux retirer. C'est juste que dans cet espace ici avec Bénita je pense qu'il y a peut-être il y a une façon de faire ça autrement.

Peter : Aha.

Amir : ...il y a peut-être une façon de faire ça autrement. Je ne sais pas... je pense que..

(49:04) Peter : Tu veux dire faire Aurash is Beaten d'une autre manière.

Amir : C'est plutôt Bénita qui peut gauger ça, mais ça nous appartient tous

(49:19) Peter: Donc, Bénita, est-ce que tu veux faire ça d'une autre manière ou...

(49:25) Bénita : Moi, je me suis dit que j'allais perdre connaissance pour le bébé, les enfants, mais le fait d'en parler j'ai arrêté de tremblait, mais la maintenant on en a parlé, moi j'ai l'impression parce que même avec mes proches avec mes parents, ma mère même, c'est des choses qui se dit pas nécessairement, à moins que ta vie soit en danger, tu vois parce que c'est la pression sociale, bref, le fait d'arriver en parler de le dire, de pointer, de parler, déjà je respire, et j'ai arrêté de transpirer, de tremblait, peut être la barrie est *inaudible*.

Peter : Est-ce que tu te sens prête alors de continuer avec la même scène avec cette nouvelle information et comme artiste on est plus conscients.

Bénita : Mais la, ca va mieux

Peter : Est-ce que tout le monde se sent à l'aise avec ça?

(50:45) Laura: Je pense que si tu veux que ça soit un peu plus court pour que ça soit moins intense. Parce que la en fait n' était pas très conscient que tu étais ça duré très longtemps, puis ça continuait ça continuait, et maintenant on va essayer de ne pas le faire comme s'élargir.... si tu veux arrêter à un moment. Maintenant puisque on sait tout ça, on va être juste présent pour porter ça.

Peter : Moi je suggère Sina--

(51:13) Sina : If you want for now, this is a new offering this all happened to all of you we said just do it now.. Let's do it right now. I understand that especially when it's tough you need some time to kind of digest it and feel on your own. If you want, we could... I think we could maybe leave it for today, and come back at it tomorrow or something, or if not, for now, we don't even have to put you in the spotlight. I can think of ways that we could have multiple people put you on the spot. It doesn't have to be you on a pedestal, everyone on you that's a pressure three people all coming at you on the spot, you know. That's... I want you to feel free. If you say Sina I don't want to be put in the spotlight we won't do that, just tell me

(52:05) Peter: Sinon, on pourrait avoir cinq coups. On donne cinq coups en total. Pas nécessairement "timé" avec la musique, mais on pourrait avoir cinq coups. Et ça c'est tout, et c'est plus intéressant en fait, ce que on faisait était juste improviser, en fait, et peut-être pas bien mené.

(52:30) Claudia : Ce que je peux suggérer, c'est dans les cinq coups que c'est pas toi. Plutôt que ce soit nous qui te donne des coups, tu nous dis quand tu es prête à en recevoir un. C'est toi quand tu dis que tu es prête à en recevoir un: c'est ton timing.

Des sons d'accord général

(52:55) Peter : Essayons ça ! C'est super intéressant. Nous on fait rien, on te voir réagir. Peut-être, l'inverse des coups et l'action, les coups et l'action, pour faire...

(53:15) Sina: Even there could be a delay in between them and that could enhances it. Oh now there is that. This is good.

(53:26) Peter : Donc, est-ce que on peut faire ça? On peut essayer?

Bénita: On peut essayer...

Peter : On peut essayer? Et puis quand tu entends la voix de femme qui chante, c'est la ou tu peux commencer à avoir des coups. Ca va prendre du temps. On va entre la musique et on va la raccourcir après.

(53:51) *Musique. Ils tentent l'idée de Claudia.*

(55:03) Peter : Interesting.

Sina: Yeah it's really interesting, I think

Peter: Yeah.

(55:06) Laura: Comment est-ce que tu t'es sentie?

Bénita : Ça va mieux. Je vais mieux avec ma respiration.

Sina. Bénita, you could come down from there.

(55:21) Peter: Et qu'est-ce que tu vois, Sina de l'extérieur? Les autres, qu'est-ce que les autres font?

(55:25) Sina: To be honest, they don't even have to do the hitting. If they kind of create that strength in the body that Amir and.... *inaudible* Yes. I think just having the energy. You don't have to do anything to her. It's like stage combat, you know. When you do stage combat the person who is being beaten is the one in control, it's never the person.

(56:13) Bénita: Le fait qu'ils étaient là, j'avais l'impression que c'est les guards qui m'ont amené à l'abattoir. Qui était là et qu'ils assistaient qu'on me fouettait. Ils sont aussi complices que ceux qui me battent.

(56:24) Roxanne : À la fois c'est ça et j'ai le sentiment aussi qu' on te soutient dans l'action.

(55:30) Bénita : Vous n'êtes pas nécessairement d'accord, mais vous ne pouvez rien y faire.

(56:34) Roxanne : Je veux dire que on est acteur de l'histoire la mais aussi que on est un groupe. on est là pour toi. On la ressent...

(56:50) Claudia : J'ai le même feeling que de l'extérieur, on lit une histoire mais sur scène on est avec toi. On est tourné vers toi et on n'envoie pas cette énergie-là.

(57:04) Roxanne: On reçoit ce que tu.. on est l'énergie du groupe. J'aime bien ça.

Silence.

Peter: Merci Bénita.

Bénita laughs, Sina applauds.

Sina : Merci tout le monde, c'est un moment juste que nous avons trouvé. *inaudible*

Peter : Donc...

(57: 37) Sina : Bénita, you want to get some fresh air, we can...*inaudible*

(57:42) Amir : On peut prendre une pause.

ANNEX 6: LIGRE[®] CODING - INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Root: Dialogue

Inclusion Criteria: Verbal and physical language in the space about the topic.

Exclusion Criteria: Verbal and physical language extraneous to the topic

Branch: Impasse in Rehearsal

Leaf: Expressions of Politeness or Avoidance

Inclusion Criteria: Diffusing situations or giving input which does not lead to greater awareness.

Exclusion Criteria: Attempts to make others feel better

Leaf: Discomfort

Inclusion Criteria: Directly confrontational with other participants or the process.

Exclusion Criteria: About structures or institutional considerations.

Leaf: Feelings of Shame

Inclusion Criteria: Statements in which the participant expresses a societal pressure that reduces their agency.

Exclusion Criteria: Those statements that have to do with emotions that are not limiting to their agency.

Leaf: Statements of Oppression

Inclusion Criteria: Forcing, incomprehension, assumptions which exhibit a failure to witness the emotions of the other participants, or which demonstrate institutional power

Exclusion Criteria: Expressions of needs

Branch: Naming things

Leaf: Identifying Problems

Inclusion Criteria: A clear statement that a problem exists.

Exclusion Criteria: A statement that infers a problem but doesn't name it

Leaf: Revealing Secrets

Inclusion Criteria: Mention of a significant past event that is linked to an emotion in the process.

Exclusion Criteria: Mention of other past events that are not significant to the topic

Leaf: Listening: Recognition of needs in the self or in others

Inclusion Criteria: A statement that expresses another participant's desires or emotions.

Exclusion Criteria: Statements that have to do with caring, an expression of desire to change the participants' emotional state.

Leaf: Psychophysical Awareness

Inclusion Criteria: Expressions of sensations in the body

Exclusion Criteria: Expressions of a purely analytical or psychological level

Branch: Empathetic Connections

Leaf: Deep Understanding

Inclusion Criteria: A high level of awareness of the affective experiences of the other

Exclusion Criteria: Recognition of the other, without significant knowledge

Leaf: Caring

Inclusion Criteria: Expressions that demonstrate a willingness to improve the emotional state of the other without forcing

Exclusion Criteria: Just recognition of the problem

Branch: Transcendance

Leaf: New Ideas

Inclusion Criteria: A suggestion that is offered to find a new path forward

Exclusion Criteria: Attempts to shut down or circumvent the problem with a quick fix

Leaf: Moments of Complicity

Inclusion Criteria: A moment in which two or more participants express deep understandings that bring them into a state of togetherness

Exclusion Criteria: Moments that resemble deep understanding, but without the feeling

Leaf: More-than-human Elements

Inclusion Criteria: Reference to time, events, environment,

Exclusion Criteria: A reference to a human or a quality of a human.

