

AusAct

The Australian Actor Training Conference 2023

Crisis and Creativity

**Arts Academy
Federation University
Ballarat**

January 27 - 29

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Schedule

DAY 1: Friday January 27	
	Venue: Arts Academy
12.00pm	Arts Academy Tour Meet in the Foyer Building C, Old Law Courts Building & Lecture Theatre C002
4.00pm	Registration opens SMB Campus, Building A
4.10pm - 4.30 pm	Afternoon Tea - SMB Campus, Building A, 2nd Floor Breakout Space
4.30pm	Venue SMB Campus, Building A Room: A102 Conference opening, welcome to the Arts Academy (Professor Rick Chew), Welcome to AusAct (Dr Robert Lewis).
5.00pm	Keynote: Professor Julian Meyrick: 'Walking the Story Back: Drama Teaching & the Politics of Nihilism'
6.00pm	Break
7.00pm	Conference Dinner – The Forge (14 Armstrong St Nth, Ballarat Central. Booked under AusAct)

- Metered Parking on Camp Street or Car Park in Field Street off Camp Street
- Metered Parking Armstrong St Nth if Required – Walking distance from SMB Campus / Camp St.

DAY 2: Saturday January 28	
8.00am	Conference Registration : SMB Building A
8.30am – 10.00am	Workshops
	ROOM: C108, Media Arts - Camp St Campus ROOM: L201, Heaven - Camp St Campus
	Workshop A Workshop B
	Luzita Fereday Steph Kehoe Phonetic Pillow: Tuning into Resonance Clown for Resilience and Wellbeing within Actor Training Programs
10.10am	Morning Tea - SMB Campus, Building A, 2nd Floor Breakout Space
10.30am – 12.30pm	Presentations
	Room: SMB Campus Building A, Room: A102 (Teams meeting) Room: SMB Campus Building A, Room: A211 (Teams meeting)
	Chair: Tahlia Norrish Chair: Dr Gabrielle Metcalf
	Session A Session B
	Dr Angela Campbell and Christina Koch Speaking from the body/mind: Linklater voice work as a practice of inclusion in the Voice studio, in rehearsal, and beyond
	Associate Professor Kim Durban Crisis? What Crisis? The Meaning of Time in Artistic Training
	Christina Koch The Heritage Language Project: A tool for integrating voice work with practical decolonisation in the classroom.
	Dr Bernadette Meenach Silence in Times of Crisis: the languaging of actor trainers
	Dr Melanie Beddie Activating the psycho-physical imagination in contemporary student bodies
	Dr Jo Loth and Dr Jeremy Neideck Power and Joy: Developing resilience in voice and movement class (an interactive paper)
	Nicole Stinton Recitativng the song: Empowering the singing actor
	Dr Robert Lewis and Dr Soseh Yekanians How to bring performing arts training out of the compounding clouds of crisis?
12.30pm - 1.30pm	Lunch –SMB Campus, Building A, 2nd Floor Breakout Space

1.30pm – 3.00pm	Presentations	
	Room SMB Campus Building A, Room A102 (Teams meeting)	Room: SMB Campus Building A, Room: A211 (Teams meeting)
	Chair: TBA	Chair: TBA
	Session C	Session D
	<p>Dr Angela Campbell and Anthony Crowley If music be the food of love ... finding music at a time of crisis to create abundance, surplus and pleasure in Shakespeare's <i>Twelfth Night</i></p> <p>Mark Radvan A Learning Model for Future-Focused Actor-Training</p> <p>Associate Professor Richard Chew and Anthony Crowley [Courthouse Theatre] Momo: A new music theatre work based on the novel by Michael Ende Music by Richard Chew, book/Lyrics by Anthony Crowley</p>	<p>Dr Vanessa Byrnes, Michael Miller, Alexandra Whitham, Will Wallace, Elizabeth Hawthorne, and Pedro Ilgenfritz [online] Tertiary education reforms challenge the Conservatory: Actor Training at Unitec and the Creative Agency of Change (Auckland, Aotearoa/ New Zealand)</p> <p>Simon Peining Artists and the task of audience development</p> <p>Dr Mark Seton Crisis in the enactment of morally questionable characters: Negotiating moral and spiritual values within actor identity formation.</p>
3.00pm – 3.30pm	Afternoon Tea - SMB Campus, Building A, 2nd Floor Breakout Space	
3.40pm – 4.40pm	Panel Room A211 – 'Disability, Neuro – Diversity, Access and Equity in the Performing Arts'. Professor Kate Ellis (Chair), Professor Bree Hadley, Associate Professor Eddie Paterson, Dan Graham. [online presentation]	
4.50pm – 6.20pm	Workshops	
	Room: L201, Heaven– Camp St Campus	Room: L106, Secret Room – Camp St Campus
	Workshop C	Workshop D
	<p>Faith Hibbs-Clark How Film Auditions Changed Forever in response to the Covid Lockdown</p>	<p>Nicole Stinton Monologuing the Music: Uncovering musical clues to characterise with authenticity</p>
7.30pm - 9pm	Drinks / Nibbles – Hop Temple, 24 Armstrong St N, Ballarat Central	

- **Parking SMB Campus All Day - Free**

DAY 2: Sunday January 29	
	Venue: SMB Campus, Building A
8.30am	Conference Registration
9.00am -10am	Panel 3: Student Panel
10.00am	Morning Tea - SMB Campus, Building A, 2nd Floor Breakout Space
10.30am – 12.30pm	Presentations
	Room: SMB Campus Building A, A102 (Teams Meeting)
	Room: SMB Campus Building A, A211 (Teams Meeting)
	Chair: TBA
	Chair: Dr Melanie Beddie
	Session E
	Session F
	Associate Professor Andrea L Moor [online]
	Associate Professor Andrew Lewis The Actor as Entrepreneur

	<p>Adaptation in crisis: Creating new methodologies for quicker absorption of essential acting skills.</p> <p>Tahlia Norrish Sports psychology: An unexpected solution to the actor training crisis</p> <p>Dr Tiffany Knight & Dr Christopher Hurrell Collaboration in response to crisis: centring the student in actor training</p> <p>Dr Dominique Sweeney Interdisciplinary performance/social work-groundwork [Hybrid Presentation]</p>	<p>Dr Gabrielle Metcalf Crisis as Revelation and Opportunity: Consent-based pedagogies for the Acting Classroom</p> <p>Tom Heath Mindsets in actor training: fostering a growth mindset in training actors</p>
12.30pm - 1.20pm	Lunch- Building A, 2nd Floor Breakout Space	
1.30pm - 3.30pm	Workshops	
	Room: C108, Media Arts - Camp St Campus	Room: L201 Heaven – Camp St Campus
	<p>Workshop E Susan Bamford Caleo Embodied and Extended Voice and Text Exploration</p>	<p>Workshop F Amy Hume and Colin Sneesby Training in a time of ongoing crisis: developing resiliency in pandemic-era student cohorts</p>
3.30pm - 4.30pm		
4.30pm - 5.00pm	Wrap up and discussion SMB Campus Building A, Room: A102	

- Parking SMB Campus All Day - Free

Keynote

Professor Julian Meyrick

Walking the Story Back: Drama, Drama Teaching & the Politics of Nihilism

In this keynote, I will talk about the problem of disengaging a nihilistic and monetized view of the tertiary education system, and re-engaging core pedagogical motives and missions. First, I will discuss Australia's historical and economic "big picture"; second, the relation of drama to knowledge, particularly the idea of university research; third, the challenge of teaching drama now, which I will argue involves a recommitment to first principles and grounding ourselves in drama's essential disciplinary identity, not its supposed external benefits. The path to the future lies in our past. We will not be able to articulate the future until we have come to terms with the past, and the hold it has on our soul.

Professor Julian Meyrick

Julian is Professor of Creative Arts at Griffith University. He is Literary Adviser for the Queensland Theatre, General Editor of Currency House Press's New Platform Paper series, and a board member of Northern River Performing Arts. He was Associate Director and Literary Advisor at Melbourne Theatre Company 2002-07 and Artistic Director of kickhouse theatre 1989-98. He has directed over 40 award-winning theatre productions, written the histories of five Australian theatre companies, and published numerous articles on Australian arts and cultural policy, including 90+ pieces for The Conversation. He was a founder member and Deputy Chair of PlayWriting Australia 2004-09, and a member of the federal government's Creative Australia Advisory Group 2008-10. He was Chief Investigator for Laboratory Adelaide, an ARC project studying the problem of culture's value from 2013-21, and Chief Investigator of the AusStage performing arts database 2012-19. His book [Australian Theatre after the New Wave: Policy, Subsidy and the Alternative Artist](#), was published by Brill in 2017. [What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture](#), co-authored with Robert Phiddian and Tully Barnett, was published by Monash Publishing in 2018. [Australia in 50 Plays](#), his latest book was published by Currency Press in March this year.

Papers

Session A

Dr Angela Campbell and Christina Koch

Federation University

Speaking from the body/mind: Linklater voice work as a practice of inclusion in the Voice studio, in rehearsal, and beyond

Voice training in conservatoire and University settings is undergoing a transformation informed by current debates, indeed crises, around equity, inclusion, and diversity. Awareness of ‘sonic whiteness,’ explored by Daron Oram (2021), Jane Boston (2022) and others is central to understanding the ‘hidden curriculum’ (Peck, 2021) within actor training those privileges white, cis-gendered, male, educated English speaking voices. It might be observed that within a *colonised* Voice studio difference is judged as problematic and must be modified through the study and production of acceptable sounds, accents and language. In such an environment it is not OK to speak and to sound just as you are.

This paper explores the emergence of similar debates in an Australian context and draws on the authors’ own teaching and professional experiences. Our shared understanding of Voice is based on the teaching of Voice specialist, the late Kristin Linklater, who proposes that “the voice communicates the inner world of the psyche to the outer world of attentive listeners both on the stage and in life.” (8) As the current debate reveals, this can for some more than others, be a risky business.

The authors ask; what does it mean for someone who is neurodiverse or from a marginalised community, or who identifies as trans, gender-diverse or non-binary to be asked to develop a free, natural and/or authentic voice? How safe is it within current pedagogical settings, or in society at large, to express that voice, and what does pedagogical success and/or failure mean in this context?

Dr Angela Campbell

Angela is a Senior Lecturer in Performing Arts at Federation University. Her teaching, research and published work has been both practical and theoretical and has investigated performance from the archives, site-specific theatre, the politics and poetics of place, intercultural theatre, Indigenous theatre and contemporary paradigms and practices in theatre and performance. Her research interests have developed from 15 years as a freelance actor and theatre creator in a range of industry environments from mainstream to independent production. She co-founded Hildegard Theatre, a company that worked with culturally specific material and intercultural collaboration to create award winning new work that toured nationally and internationally. On being awarded the EJ Barker Fellowship, she studied at the Kristin Linklater Voice Centre in Orkney, Scotland in 2018 and again in 2019 and is applying this in her work as a director of both devised and classic texts with students.

Christina Koch

Chris is Lecturer in Voice at Federation University's Performing Arts conservatoire program. A Linklater voice teacher since 2012, Chris has previously taught voice to students in the BFA Acting at the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne, and the Performing Arts program at Deakin University. Since being designated she has also developed an extensive practice with business clients as a voice and performance coach. As Lead Consultant in Sydney for the Cornell Voice Advisory between 2016-2020, she delivered coaching to a range of law firms and financial institutions, and extensive training programs for the Bureau of Meteorology. She is a regular performance coach for the Australian Bar Association's trial advocacy courses. She has a Masters of Dramaturgy from the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne.

Christina Koch

Federation University

The Heritage Language Project: A tool for integrating voice work with practical decolonisation in the classroom.

The seismic shifts currently evident in our social structures and communities have come with deep implications for education. In focus are decolonisation and cultural safety, neuro-diversity, and workplace safety in rehearsal and on stage/set. Evidence suggests that the need to respond to these welcome and critical developments can best be achieved with a student-centred approach. As a contribution to the many tools being developed to this end, this paper offers up for discussion an example of a class project which integrates Linklater voice work with an exploration of heritage languages. The aims of the project were to: offer an approach to exploring cultural identity which dismantles any sense of a 'default vs other' binary; create an opportunity for student practitioners to reflect on their positioning in relation to First Nations land, and the implication of that on their acting/making/creative activities; and to give students an opportunity to experience the impact of the above on their voices. Specifically, when applying Linklater exercises for sounding and exploring the text, to investigate how the outcomes differed from their similar English language work.

A survey of students' responses to the work indicates that the project's aims were realized in their self-reported experience, and provided other useful insights. Participants generally reported a sense of deepening awareness and ownership of their own heritage, a delight in encountering that of others, and discoveries of new aspects of their voice they had not experienced previously.

Christina Koch

Chris is Lecturer in Voice at Federation University's Performing Arts conservatoire program. A Linklater voice teacher since 2012, Chris has previously taught voice to students in the BFA Acting at the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne, and the Performing Arts program at Deakin University. Since being designated she has also developed an extensive practice with business clients as a voice and performance coach. As Lead Consultant in Sydney for the Cornell Voice Advisory between 2016-2020, she delivered coaching to a range of law firms and financial institutions, and extensive training programs for the Bureau of Meteorology. She is a

regular performance coach for the Australian Bar Association's trial advocacy courses. She has a Masters of Dramaturgy from the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne.

Dr Melanie Beddie

Activating the psycho-physical imagination in contemporary student bodies

Everywhere actor trainers seem to express similar concerns about their current student's diminished connection to their bodies and physical impulses due in part to the experience of Covid restrictions and lockdowns and partly due to a culture of screen-based learning and entertainment. Now that teachers and students are back in the physical space of the studio there is both the need and opportunity to experiment with how to reinvigorate the psycho-physicality of trainee actors who are rightly aware of the need for boundaries but also at times fearful of the liberation than can occur when engaging in a creative state.

In this paper I ask: How can we ignite imagination and conquer that enemy in performance – self-consciousness (Soto-Morettini, 2022)? How do we prepare students to select and to shape material in a way that allows them to feel safely challenged within their perceived limitations? I will discuss my use of Impulse Work in the teaching studio and consider these questions in the context of contemporary university degree training where increased class sizes mean that students often have a range of aptitudes and aspirations. Our teaching needs to acknowledge this and allow students to engage in a range of ways.

Australian theatre practitioners, particularly those in Melbourne, use the term Impulse Work to denote a type of physical and spatial improvisation. Impulse Work allows the body to become an instrument of interpretation rather than transferring what is known cognitively to the body after the fact (Knebel 2016: 130). This offers the trainee actor multiple opportunities to develop imaginatively and make offers within their capabilities.

Dr Melanie Beddie

Dr Melanie Beddie is a graduate of Sydney University and the VCA (Victorian College of the Arts) where she trained as an actor. She is an actor trainer, dramaturg and theatre director including artistic direction. She was a co-founder of the \$5 Theatre Co. and is artistic director of the independent theatre company The BRANCH. She has directed over 50 stage productions within mainstream and with independent companies and has collaborated on the writing and devising of many new Australian plays. She has a PhD from La Trobe University. Her areas of research include contemporary actor training, cultural and gender diversity within the Australian theatre, dramaturgy for new writing. From 2010-2016 Melanie was Lecturer in Acting at VCA School of Theatre. Most recently she has been teaching at Federation University, Arts Academy and at WAAPA and creating site specific works in Victoria and Tasmania. In October 2022 she directed All That Fall by Samuel Beckett at La Mama HQ . In November 2022 she presented a paper at The S-Word Conference in Prague. Her publications can be found on ResearchGate.

Nicole Stinton

National Institute of Dramatic Art

Recitativizing the song: Empowering the singing actor

Conservatoire actor training is currently facing crisis in many forms. The need for instant gratification and the pressures of product-focused commodified training can cause young artists to train at an incredibly rapid pace with negative consequences (Smith, 2018, 47). Traditionally, training has relied largely on the separation of voice and acting classes, which may be one reason as to “why voice training can impede authenticity in performance” (Moor, 2018, 264). A recording from an original production is often the only source material to quickly learn a new song, resulting in students copying recordings. Whilst some vocal coaches, such as Guro von Germeten, assert that this aural based mimicking can lead to “a desired vocal aesthetical output, resolving technical vocal challenges” (2021), I argue that the vocal muscle-memory this process creates dominates so strongly that the actor’s creative, imaginative interpretation is impeded. Music theatre relies on audiences suspending their disbelief and accepting that the characters in front of them are “authentic” (Cuny on Deer & Dal Vera, 2018, 7-8), yet if the actor’s vocal technique is not operating organically, it is likely to “impair the truthfulness of the moment” (Cuny, 2018, 12). Given these challenges, how do conservatoire teachers follow the advice of experts like musical director Professor Millie Taylor and enable students to learn more holistically with, through and in their creative, imaginative bodies (2013)? At the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) by borrowing from the opera genre’s recitative convention and combining it with Stanislavski, Spolin and Donnellans’ acting processes, students are able to live within the given circumstances, even whilst singing, and be believable for the audience.

Nicole Stinton

Nicole Stinton has worked as a director, actor and vocal coach for three decades across the Asia-Pacific, specialising in music theatre. Throughout her professional performance and creative team career, she has also trained conservatoire student actors and is currently the Head of Music at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA). Nicole has also taught and directed at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) and LASALLE College of the Arts in Singapore. She has conducted masterclasses and given conference papers globally, including in New York, London and across Asia. Nicole has published journal articles, textbooks and book chapters extensively, and is an External Expert for TEQSA. A current PhD candidate, Nicole is developing an acting technique for the singing actor that utilises music to holistically inform acting and creative choices.

Session B

Associate Professor Kim Durban

Federation University

Crisis? What Crisis? The Meaning of Time in Artistic Training

RICHARD I wasted time and now doth time waste me.

(Richard 3, 5.5.49)

...timing is not a technical tool; it belongs in the realm of art, and is, therefore, a highly individual matter. ("Time and Space in the Theatre", Walther R. Volbach, *Educational Theatre Journal* Vol. 19, No. 2 (May 1967 pp. 134-141))

I am obsessed with time in the theatre. I can drive my collaborators mad as I check the running time, cut the play and speed up the transitions. But I know that art takes time; beats, minutes, minims, notes, movements, breaths and silences. These details can be measured in the play, in the dance, in studio, in class and in the theatre, and they are valuable. But Time is also Money for some: the cuts and reductions made to the timing of training are endemic and causing burn-out in lecturers and students alike. The history of our art form can be referenced through the practice of peers and mentors, but the crisis of time confronting actor trainers in the present is like the recent blood moon, a relentless action towards the dark that suddenly releases a sliver of light again whenever actors manage to graduate. I propose a model of recovery. Taking inspiration from nature, in this paper I will challenge myself to suggest some ways that Time can be reclaimed as the central principle of professional practice in arts training.

Associate Professor Kim Durban

Associate Professor Kim Durban trained as a teacher in South Australia, then as a director at the Victorian College of the Arts. Over the last thirty-three years she has built a strong reputation as a director of both new plays and classic texts for theatres across Australia, including Melbourne Theatre Company, State Theatre of South Australia, Queensland Theatre Company, Playbox, La Mama Theatre and Red Stitch Theatre. In 2001, Kim was appointed Senior Lecturer in Performing Arts at Federation University Australia, situated in the regional city of Ballarat. There her productions have included Margaret of Anjou, Machinal, Ant + Cleo, The Tempest, A Little Touch of Chaos, Much Ado About Nothing, Murder on the Ballarat Train, The Hatpin and Kiss Me, Kate. She is currently the Program Coordinator of the Bachelor of Acting for Stage and Screen and Bachelor of Contemporary Performance Practice undergraduate degrees. Kim is the winner of a 2015 Vice Chancellor's Citation for Teaching Excellence, the 2012 EJ Barker Fellowship, a 2010 Australian Learning and Teaching Council Citation, the Yvonne Taylor Award for Directors in 2002 and joint winner of the 1990 Ewa Czajor Memorial Award. She has a current entry in the Who's Who of Australian Women, and her PhD on Caroline playwright Richard Brome, completed at La Trobe University, included Australian premieres of Brome's plays The City Wit, The Antipodes, A Jovial Crew and Covent Garden Weeded (re-named for Australian audiences as Garden City Weeded.)

Dr Bernadette Meenach

BMEG

Silence in Times of Crisis: the languaging of actor trainers

Training actors throughout the centuries has resulted in acting methods, methodologies, processes, approaches, strategies, techniques, and even tricks. Myriad terms have evolved to help define and describe what it is the trainer actually does when they train actors. In turn, there are terms, nomenclature and jargon that trainers have learned in order to maintain or sustain their practice within the ever-changing arts education funding ecosystem. Yet, there are some terms, words, ideas and expressions that trainers leave unuttered.

This paper emerges from an ongoing longitudinal study into actor training in Australia. Drawing on interviews with Australian trainers as well as my own experience as a trainer, it posits that terms such as crisis, resilience and wellbeing are used in relation to the actor and the training but rarely in relation to the self. It investigates the silence inherent in crisis and the possibility of post-crisis narratives that can be uttered to inspire current and future actor trainers.

Dr Bernadette Meenach

Dr Bernadette Meenach is a graduate of NIDA, QUT, and USQ. She has been a proud member of the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance since her first professional acting gig in 1990. Over her thirty-year career she has been an actor, a founding member of an artist run initiative, the chair of a regional youth theatre, a director, and a voice coach. She has dedicated many years to mentoring young actors through her work in training programs at NIDA Open, QTC Youth and Education, QUT, JCU and USQ. Bernadette's research interests include languaging, actor training, and auto/biographical performance.

Dr Jo Loth and Dr Jeremy Neideck

National Theatre Drama School, The University of the Sunshine Coast & Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts

Title: *Power and Joy: Developing resilience in voice and movement class (an interactive paper)*

Recent Australian studies have recommended that actor training addresses psychological well-being to redress actors' significantly higher levels of depression, anxiety and perfectionism (Maxwell, Seton, and Szabó 2015; Robb, Due, and Venning 2018).

This interactive paper draws on qualitative data gathered during research workshops exploring embodied learning through the Suzuki Method of Actor Training and Linklater Voice and proposes forms of resistance to neoliberal educational trends by developing actors' well-being and artistry through a methodology of Reflective Appreciative Education. The presentation will include some interactive voice and movement activities to provide an embodied experience of the techniques.

The aim of these techniques is 'to develop actors' mental health and well-being alongside artistry' (Loth and Neideck 2022, 285). Analysis of participant data gathered during our study revealed a shift from what Mather and Hulme (2013) describe as a 'Performance Model' to a 'Mastery Model'. Participants also began to value and focus on their experiences within the exercises and draw insight from their own experiences.

Suzuki states that the goal of his training is 'to make the actor newly aware of the physical sensibilities that have atrophied in his or her everyday life...' (Suzuki 2015, 57). One of his most famous exercises, The Stomp, is drawn from 'ancient dances of foot stamping ...designed to create a sense of peace and harmony' (Suzuki 1986, 14). Linklater's exercises aim to develop 'an open-minded state of pleasurable expectation' with breath as 'the pathway to 'a deeper authentic self' (Linklater 2006, 44, 103).

Works Cited

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Dr Jo Loth

Jo Loth has taught voice, movement, and acting in tertiary settings for over twenty years and specialises in Linklater voice and the Suzuki method. She has taught for USC, WAAPA, QUT, Griffith University, La Trobe University and The Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts. Jo has trained with Kristin Linklater, The Suzuki Company of Toga, Howard Fine, Shakespeare & Company, Pantheatre (France), and P3/East (Seattle). From 2013 – 2019, Jo established and led the development of the Drama major at USC. She has worked in the independent performance sector for over 25 years as an actor, director and cabaret writer/ performer and is a recipient of The Brisbane Lord Mayor's Performing Arts Fellowship. Career highlights include performances for Tadashi Suzuki's Theatre Festivals in Japan, The Brisbane Festival and The Brisbane Cabaret Festival. Jo is The Director of Drama at The National Drama School (Melbourne) and an Adjunct Lecturer at USC.

Dr Jeremy Neideck

Jeremy Neideck is a performance maker and academic who has worked between Australia and Korea for almost two decades, investigating the interweaving of cultures in performance; the intersection of queer identities and theories in performance; and the modelling of new and inclusive social realities. Jeremy is Course Coordinator of the Bachelor of Performing Arts at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) at Edith Cowan University. Jeremy holds a PhD from Queensland University of Technology, where he taught across the disciplines of drama, music, and dance, and led movement training and direction in the BFA (Acting) program for a decade. Jeremy regularly consults on the architecture and facilitation of collaborative projects and programs of institutional and community transformation.

Dr Robert Lewis and Dr Soseh Yekanians

Charles Sturt University

How to bring performing arts training out of the compounding clouds of crisis?

'Crisis' can be described as an emotionally significant event or radical change of status in a person's life, it is also an unstable situation of extreme danger or difficulty. Athletes undergo rigorous training programs to increase their personal best and improve on their general performance. This is a form of crisis as the body's threshold is challenged, resulting in a certain level of physical trauma therefore testing the athletes' stamina. This is not dissimilar to the type of 'crisis' actors may go through in certain training. Expanding the lens, adding to this form of 'crisis', there is a larger 'crisis' that affects student actors and institutions alike.

It is evident that in the past two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, performing arts training across most major universities and institutions has been heavily affected. Not only through cuts in government and private funding but also through the deficiency of student engagement and physical attendance. Compounding shifts in the social consciousness have also impacted on training, such as inclusivity, gender identity and cultural diversity being at the forefront of decision making and program development. Although this may not be a 'cloud' as such, rather a parting of clouds, it adds another layer of complexity and consideration when designing content.

The question now is, how do we now pull ourselves out of this cloud and stay resilient as an industry? Can we use the adaptive methods of online training and performance implemented over the past few years to move forward and create new methodologies in performer training or does performer training only exist if we are all physically together in the room?

'Crisis', however, may be used to our advantage as nothing great has ever been achieved with some form of struggle. Successful traits of innovators are evidenced in their *error recovery* as opposed to their *error avoidance*. Successful people and successful programs are ones who have failed and recovered; those who have seen failure and learnt how to turn it into something positive. Solving a real problem that hasn't been solved before is about resilience and adaptability.

Dr Robert Lewis and Dr Soseh Yekanians reflect on their experience having gone through multiple course changes which includes the dismantling of various creative disciplines, merging of performing arts programs and learning to adapt in challenging times.

Dr Robert Lewis

Robert Lewis is a Course Director of Creative Industries and Lecturer in Performing Arts at Charles Sturt University. He previously lectured in the Theatre Program at the University of Tasmania (UTAS) from 2004 - 2016. He has studied theatre at UTAS, Honours at Monash University, Education at RMIT and Voice Studies at NIDA. His PhD focused on integrative practices and intercultural performance training aesthetics. Robert recently completed a Certification in Integrative Studies at the One Voice Centre, New York. He is a director, writer, theatre maker and voice and movement teacher who trained with Cicely Berry, Frankie Armstrong, Rowena Balos, Mike Alfreds, OzFrank Theatre, as well as Butoh with Yoshito Ohno in Japan and is a Nobbs Suzuki Praxis member. Robert has published theatre performances and training films through Contemporary Arts Media (Artfilms) and has also published various academic articles on the subject of voice and movement integration. He is the director of Persona Collective, a performance group focusing on integrative practice and research

Dr Soseh Yekanians

*Dr Soseh Yekanians is a graduate from the Australian Academy of Dramatic Art in Sydney and The Atlantic Theater Company Acting School in New York. In 2012, she was awarded an Australian Postgraduate Award Scholarship to embark on a Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) in Perth. Her practice-led research titled, *Creatively Pursuing Persona: Finding Identity through Directing*, investigated how theatre directing and the performing arts could provide a culturally displaced individual with a sense of identity and belonging. Her practice-led study, specifically provided new insights into how theatre directing allows an individual to (re)discover their identity through leadership in a non-judgmental forum and how the theatre as a space for communal exchanges and conversations can initiate dialogue about cultural differences. In 2016, as a result of her specialisation to the field of performing arts and directing, Soseh was awarded a fellowship by the National Academy of Dramatic Arts (NIDA) for their inaugural MFA in Cultural Leadership. Following her doctorate, a major career highlight for Soseh has been the publication of her children's literature book, *The Special Team Elite*. Inspired by her own upbringing, the story follows a young girl who is faced with the struggles of loving her individual qualities or conforming to the pressures placed upon her by others. The question for her is: what is the "ideal norm"?*

Session C

Associate Professor Richard Chew and Anthony Crowley

Federation University

Momo: A new music theatre work based on the novel by Michael Ende'

The Lessons of Momo: How adapting the novel Momo by Michael Ende into a new Australian music theatre work provides innovative pedagogical opportunities, a synergy of creative practice and improved educational outcomes.

The NeverEnding Story (1979) is Michael Ende's most famous book, but Momo - published six years earlier – is an intergenerational fantasy novel that first won him widespread acclaim.

As the mysterious Grey Men stalk the streets of an unnamed city, convincing the inhabitants to invest their allotted time on earth in a Time Savings Bank, a young orphan girl with a talent for listening embarks on a quest to rid the community of the malevolent strangers and return the stolen time to its rightful owners, restoring their capacity for creativity, empathy and wellbeing.

Momo has been adapted variously as a film (1986), starring John Huston and Radost Bokel; an animated film (2001) directed by Enzo D'Alò and most recently as an opera, Momo and the Time Theives (2015) by Ukrainian-Dutch composer Svitlana Azarova (Royal Danish Opera).

This new version of the story, performed as a music theatre work, has been devised as a core-curriculum production course for the 2nd year cohort of students in the Bachelor of Performing Arts at the Arts Academy, Federation University. A company of 36 actors have explored the story and themes of Momo through a process which integrates skills-based practice and research. Working with the composer, writer and director (all of whom are ongoing staff members of the performing arts team) and benefitting from input from movement and voice lecturers, Momo represents an evolution of our pedagogy towards a team-teaching approach which is artist-led, community- focused and industry-engaged.

Anthony Crowley

Anthony Crowley is the Lecturer in Contemporary Performance Practice (music theatre, stage and screen) and Joint Program Coordinator of the Bachelor of Performing Arts Program, Federation University, Ballarat.

As a theatre-maker, composer and writer his body of work includes musicals, opera, cabaret, plays, devised theatre, artist-in-schools residencies and community projects.

He is the recipient of several major commissions and awards including The Wal Cherry Play Of The Year Award, The Malcolm Robertson Prize for Drama, The Sumner Locke Elliot - New Dramatists Award, An R. E. Ross Trust Award, An Australian Musical Foundation Grant, An Opera Australia

Young Artists Residency, The Pratt Prize For Musical Theatre and The Victorian Premier's Literary Award For Best Music Theatre Script.

Previous positions include Head of Music – NIDA, Artistic Director St. Martins Youth Arts Centre, Artistic Director Roola Boola Festival and Short + Sweet Playwriting Festival.

Associate Professor Richard Chew

Associate Professor Richard Chew is Director of the Arts Academy, Federation University Australia. Richard is an acclaimed composer and pianist. His music encompasses instrumental works, chamber, opera, choral and music for theatre and film. Significant commissions include works for the Adelaide Festival, Adelaide Cabaret Festival, RIAus, Vienna Festival, English National Opera, Welsh National Opera, Festival of Arts and Ideas (USA), Lyndsay Quartet, Southbank Centre London, Young Vic Theatre Company (Barbican Theatre London and New Victory Theatre, Broadway), Bath International Music Festival, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Three Choirs Festival, Salisbury Cathedral and Wonderful Beast Theatre Company. Recent projects and performances include Hiraeth, for piano trio, featuring international concert violinist Dunja Lavrova, Solitary (song cycle for mezzo-soprano and piano – Australian Digital Concert Hall/Chamber Music Adelaide) and Lifelines, for a cappella vocal ensemble (The Lab @ The Light, Adelaide, SA Museum/Chamber Music Adelaide)

Dr Angela Campbell and Anthony Crowley

Arts Academy, Federation University

If music be the food of love ... finding music at a time of crisis to create abundance, surplus and pleasure in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*

Shakespeare throws us into a volatile world of poetry, music and sensation in *Twelfth Night*. Shipwrecked on Illyria's shore, we follow twins Viola and Sebastian, in crisis, as they stumble into the households of Count Orsino and Lady Olivia, and from one unplanned party moment to another. No matter reason, decisions are made before any thought of consequence. Love abounds, but in every pleasure, there is pain and in wild Illyria, darker forces bubble beneath.

This Federation University 2022 production, adapted by Anthony Crowley for our second year Company 2023, brought Shakespeare's words together with post-punk music and a shared urge to play, celebrate and reaffirm what life has to offer. We asked in production and again in this paper, what can we learn from Shakespeare about attending to crisis?

Our production conversation began with the idea that these people are not afraid of life. At a time of crisis, they make decisions and launch in. There is an irresistible jouissance at the heart of the play (a term used by French feminist writer Helene Cixous to embrace "explosion, diffusion, effervescence, abundance...takes pleasure (jouit) in being limitless") that drives the characters and beckons the audience to follow.^[1] Some fall willingly into excess, others seek to control. We imagined that our Illyria exists after an apocalypse and that these people are survivors and are ruthless in their survival. Maybe there was a nuclear explosion, maybe it was climate change, maybe there was a pandemic that wiped

out 99% of human life. Whatever happened, what is left in Illyria is the detritus of Western society patched and put together in motley form.

If the characters in Twelfth Night were remnants of a failed society, how might they cannibalise and reconstruct their own version of the play? How might that act of reconstruction reflect the universe they now inhabited? What music, what old records and recordings, rock posters and symbols of youth and empowerment might be important to them? In the shadow of an apocalypse what kind of music might express their emotional state?

We felt drawn to music that captured passion, sex, sensuality and pleasure. The rebellious vigour of post-punk proved to be a visceral and emotionally charged genre.^[2] This in turn established a musical benchmark for expanding into genres such as pop, electronic, and hard-edged rock. The concept of post-punk allowed us to follow the musical trail to kindred artists and bands from the 1980s such as The Angels^[3] and Tears For Fears.^[4] It allowed us to juxtapose contemporary lyrical abrasiveness with Shakespeare's timeless language and imagery. The ambiguity generated by this disruption had to be interpreted by the audience.

Song lyrics took on new meaning and context. The thrashing of guitars and electrified energy encapsulated the desire of the characters, while also offering the opportunity to be counter-intuitive, to turn hard edged rock into ethereal ballads. Post punk provided an opportunity to reinvent the music. It became important not to choose songs that were too literal to the moment. A lyric that required interpretation, in turn could create both mystery and melancholy. It gave the actors freedom to explore their emotional state with integrity. This did not exclude moments of comedy, but we discovered these moments were best manifested by being faithful to character. When Malvolio sang "Love Shack" by the B52's to express his love for Olivia, it became both funny, and passionate.^[5] With a specific musical treatment of the melody, harmony and instrumentation, the song allowed the actor to emphasise Malvolio's lust. The effect became both funny and tragic.

In our production we asked how might society work post apocalypse, post crisis? What happens next? In rehearsal and production, we workshopped via Shakespeare and via a collection of post punk musical reminiscences, what works best to prepare our students for an industry, a profession indeed a calling that is known for shifting and tracking moments of crisis both on a lived, personal level, but also on the level of society at large.

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Dr Angela Campbell

Angela is a Senior Lecturer in Performing Arts at Federation University. Her teaching, research and published work has been both practical and theoretical and has investigated performance from the archives, site-specific theatre, the politics and poetics of place, intercultural theatre, Indigenous theatre and contemporary paradigms and practices in theatre and performance. Her research interests have developed from 15 years as a freelance actor and theatre creator in a range of industry environments from mainstream to independent production. She co-founded Hildegard Theatre, a company that worked with culturally specific material and intercultural collaboration to create award winning new work that toured nationally and internationally. On being awarded the EJ Barker Fellowship, she studied at the Kristin Linklater Voice Centre in Orkney, Scotland in 2018 and again in 2019 and is applying this in her work as a director of both devised and classic texts with students.

Anthony Crowley

Anthony Crowley is the Lecturer in Contemporary Performance Practice (music theatre, stage and screen) and Joint Program Coordinator of the Bachelor of Performing Arts Program, Federation University, Ballarat.

As a theatre-maker, composer and writer his body of work includes musicals, opera, cabaret, plays, devised theatre, artist-in-schools residencies and community projects.

He is the recipient of several major commissions and awards including The Wal Cherry Play Of The Year Award, The Malcolm Robertson Prize for Drama, The Sumner Locke Elliot - New Dramatists Award, An R. E. Ross Trust Award, An Australian Musical Foundation Grant, An Opera Australia Young Artists Residency, The Pratt Prize For Musical Theatre and The Victorian Premier's Literary Award For Best Music Theatre Script.

Previous positions include Head of Music – NIDA, Artistic Director St. Martins Youth Arts Centre, Artistic Director Roola Boola Festival and Short + Sweet Playwriting Festival.

Dr Mark Radvan

Queensland University of Technology

A Learning Model for Future-Focused Actor-Training

As Australian arts programmes are increasingly absorbed into post-covid tertiary structures that are focused on maximising efficiencies through standardised teaching, learning and resourcing patterns, traditional less generic methods for preparing young people to make their way into their respective professions have been placed under levels of stress that many will have experienced as intolerable. This is what a crisis feels like, and it comes about when new problems overwhelm older ways of thinking.

This is surely the case for acting, where the learning models underpinning actor training have remained largely unchanged for over a century, and as Zazzali has argued, have been sanctified by tradition, and protected by a systematic accretion of social and cultural capital. Developed by Stanislavski from the latest in nineteenth century pedagogical and epistemological thinking, it is not difficult to argue that these learning models still influence the way we think about acting and actor-training, and even how we think about the acting profession. It is a way of thinking that is codified into how acting is taught in drama schools, public and private, it permeates the language of curriculum, it informs the publication policies of professional journals, and it colours the expectations of potential students.

If new problems call for new ways of thinking, surely this is the moment to revisit the learning theories associated with acting.

In this short paper, the author briefly reviews a selection of current learning theorists, including Illeris, Whetherell, Elkjaer and Lave and Wenger, identifying contemporary concepts and principles that seem most relevant to the domain of acting. Adopting a combination of these he proposes a revised learning theory for acting that draws on their ideas about how theoretical and practical knowledge and skills can be structured, how students learn, and how learning can be understood.

To be useful, a revised learning model for acting should potentially enable us to rethink how acting practice can be taught, learned and researched in a post-conservatoire tertiary environment. It should be compatible with the learning assumptions encoded into contemporary tertiary teaching and learning policy, and should enable refreshed thinking about content, teaching and the goals and methods of assessment. It would need to be pragmatic and take account of the art form's unique ways of knowing and doing. Above all, it should enable students to meaningfully contribute their skills and abilities to, and flourish within future artistic and professional environments.

The endeavour of the learner is to construct *meaning* and *ability* to deal with the challenges of practical life and thereby an overall personal *functionality* is developed.
(Illeris 2018, pp3-4)

The author proposes the first draft of such a model, outlining how it could be applied, and seeking feedback from conference participants in terms of its clarity and potential utility.

Contemporary Theories of Learning : Learning Theorists ... in Their Own Words, edited by Knud Illeris, Taylor & Francis Group, 2018. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/qut/detail.action?docID=5323092>.

Dr Mark Radvan

Dr Mark Radvan is a Brisbane-based theatre academic and director. His areas of expertise are in actor training, theatre directing, and in making theatre for children. He was the founding artistic director of Imaginary Theatre, and his adaptations of Anna Fienberg's Tashi stories have been seen all over Australia, and have also been performed in South Korea. He was the 2006 and 2008 artistic director of QPAC's Out of the Box Festival for children aged 8 years and under. He has directed over 80 theatre productions, the majority of which were for actor training purposes, but making works for children remains a key enthusiasm, and a site where he believes the essential act of theatre is most powerfully revealed. At QUT he is currently the Discipline Leader for Dance, Drama, Acting, Technical Production and Music in the School of Creative Practice, and was also the creative director of the 2018 CreateX Festival of Creative Industries.

Session D

Dr Vanessa Byrnes, Michael Miller, Alexandra Whitham, Will Wallace, Elizabeth Hawthorne, and Pedro Ilgenfritz

Unitec Institute of Technology, Auckland

Tertiary education reforms challenge the Conservatory: Actor Training at Unitec and the Creative Agency of Change (Auckland, Aotearoa/ New Zealand)

Aotearoa/ New Zealand is a small country that creates a disproportionately large amount of creative content and talent for its population, but tertiary funding metrics and educational design frameworks are changing rapidly. There are currently only two three-year professional Actor training degree programmes in the country. Our programme at Unitec (Auckland) has a successful legacy of more than thirty years of professional Actor education, but as part of the newly-formed national entity Te Pūkenga (New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology), the programme has recently faced particular swathes of challenge that clash with the very core of conservatory-based andragogy as first positioned by Michel St-Denis. Our future is in a state of crisis within a professional market that is growing. Current Neoliberal factors driving tertiary education reforms – on top of the pandemic – are challenging our understanding of ‘best practice’ education frameworks for Actor Training. As a reflective case study, this paper offers an analysis of the need for sustainable, culturally-responsive, long-term frameworks that are equipped with the relative design and resources to successfully support professional actor education. This is in a protean tertiary funding environment that simultaneously favours market-oriented notions of 'employment' and 'in-work' training. Actor training is familiar with setback, given that it is essentially inducing acts of disruption where cardinal points of obstacle are encountered, met, and overcome. This paper is an attempt to meet the current crisis points and positively advance the dynamic and evolving story of our whakapapa (legacy/genealogy). It reflects on the impact of changes implemented by Te Pūkenga and the national sector changes towards a more instrumental view of education which disregards the social value of teaching arts to the detriment of a more utilitarian, accessible, and equitable view of education.

Associate Professor Vanessa Byrnes

Vanessa Byrnes is currently Head of School: Creative Industries at Unitec, Auckland, New Zealand. She is an award-winning director, actor, producer, and performance teacher who's worked extensively in film and theatre in New Zealand and overseas. Vanessa has led and collaborated on more than 150 theatre and screen productions during the past 30 years in everything from independent, self-funded works to major international productions. This includes numerous feature films, short films, television commercials/drama, radio, and theatre. She is a passionate advocate for the power of creativity, the significance of the role of the artist in society, and the quality and innovation of Aotearoa/ New Zealand work.

*Vanessa was the first Australasian to assistant-direct at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London, staging *The Two Noble Kinsmen* for the Globe's main stage with director Tim Carroll and the Red Company in 2000. In tertiary environments (including Toi Whakaari: NZ Drama School, Victoria*

University, and Unitec) and professionally, she has directed many classic, contemporary, devised, and text-based theatre productions. She has worked in China, London, Canada, the USA, and Singapore in multiple mediums, and has led various arts education bodies. She is a past Governance Board Member of Downstage Theatre, PlayMarket (NZ), the Shakespeare Globe Centre (NZ), and TAPAC: The Auckland Performing Arts Centre.

Michael Miller

Michael Miller is currently the Academic Programme Manager for the Bachelor of Performing and Screen Arts at Unitec, Auckland, New Zealand. Michael is an award-winning film writer and director and has worked in as an editor and producer in the New Zealand Film and Television industry and has a decade of experience teaching film and television production and film theory.

Michael has worked in Japan, China and the United States on a variety of narrative and documentary productions. Michael's short film *Parasites* (2016) won the Geoff Evans Prize and screened at the Berlin Down Under Film Festival. His short documentary *Inked in Tradition* (2016) was produced in Beijing, China as part of the Looking China programme. Michael has developed courses and programmes in practical screen production across several film schools with a strong emphasis on industry preparedness, student-led creative practice and the value of specialisations collaborating.

Alexandra Whitham

Alexandra Whitham is the Discipline Leader of the BA (Acting) Degree, and Lecturer in Voice in the Performing & Screen Arts Program at Te Whare Wānanga o Wairaka/ Te Pūkenga – New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology, Unitec in Auckland, Aotearoa NZ.

She is an award-winning theatre director, teacher, and voice & dialect coach. She holds an MA in Voice Studies from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, a BA in Drama & Cultural Studies (Flinders University), an Advanced Diploma in Acting (AIT Arts), and is a Designated Linklater Teacher. Originally from South Australia, Alexandra has since lived and worked in the UK, USA, Sweden, and Aotearoa New Zealand. Her credits as a dialogue coach include; *A Mistake* (GFC Films), *Joika* (Four Knights Film), *25 April* (GFC), *Our Flag Means Death* (HBO Max), the 2019 Xero Software multimedia campaign, and *Once* (Peach Theatre Company). Credits as a theatre director include *The Freedom of the City*, *Orpheus Descending*, *The Crucible*, *The Laramie Project* and *Blackrock* (Unitec), and *My Name is Rachel Corrie* and *The Vagina Monologues* (Shapeshift Collective). Alexandra also runs workshops for clients such as The Auckland Theatre Company, The Actors' Program, Toi Whakaari, and Equity Australia & NZ. She was a faculty member and assistant to Kristin Linklater for the 2021 International Linklater Teacher Designation Training Program, and is the Associate Co-Chair of the Educore Committee (International Voice & Speech Trainers' Association). Alexandra has dedicated her life to excellence in teaching & learning in the arts, creating value in the lives of her students and colleagues, and being an agent for positive change in the communities in which we live.

Will Wallace

Will Wallace is an internationally and locally experienced actor having worked extensively over the last 28 years, appearing in Hollywood blockbusters King Kong, Emperor and Yogi Bear and local staples Shortland St, Westside and Step Dave. He has had the pleasure of working with Peter Jackson, Tommy Lee Jones, James Caan, Peter Webber to name a few.

A graduate of UNITEC with a Bachelor of Screen and Performing Arts in 1999, he has been trained by internationally renowned acting coaches, Larry Moss, Jeremiah Comey as well as New Zealand's finest practitioners. he's passionate about giving back which led him to teaching the next generation of actors at UNITEC, where he has been a lecture in acting technique since 2009.

Pedro Ilgenfritz

Pedro Ilgenfritz is a Brazilian-born theatre director and senior lecturer at Unitec Performing and Screen Arts Department in Auckland. He teaches movement for actors, masks, improvisation, history, and theatre theory. He is also a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Auckland, and his research examines the genealogy of Jacques Lecoq theatre pedagogy in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Elizabeth Hawthorne

Elizabeth is a .5 lecturer at Unitec Performing and Screen Arts Department. She teaches text analysis and tutors in contemporary and classic scene study.

Dr Simon Peining

Arts Academy, Federation University

Artists and the task of audience development

In recent decades, one of the most significant developments in the cultural sector has been the rise of the 'creative industries' – an approach to cultural policy that seeks to bring together creative workers with those who have the knowledge and resources to monetise their creative output.

With its focus on markets and marketing, the creative industries has introduced enormous tensions in the way arts organisations conceptualise and undertake the critical task of *audience development*. Today, responsibility for managing the pivotal relationship between arts organisations and their audiences falls increasingly to the marketing department. But the way the marketing department conceptualises the audience relationship, may be very different to the way that artists understand their relationship with the audience.

My study examined the relationship between arts organisations and their audiences from the perspective of the artists themselves. As gatekeepers to the arts experience, artists and arts organisations play a critical role in shaping the audience's' understanding of, and relationship with, the arts. So what *is* the relationship that artists want with their audiences? And what role do artists play in developing audiences for the performing arts?

In light of the devastating impact of the Covid crisis on the performing arts sector, how might artist training contribute to a reimagining of the task of audience development that looks beyond the marketing and management needs of arts organisations to consider the needs and desires of the creative professionals, whose work surely sits at the very heart of any relationship with an audience.

Dr Simon Piening

Dr Simon Piening recently completed his PhD at the School of Performing Arts, Federation University Australia. His thesis, "The Idea of Audience: audience development and the creative industries in Australia's small-to-medium performing arts sector", examines how artists and arts professionals in Australia conceptualise their relationship with the audience, and how they understand the role of the performing arts in their communities. Simon has a background as an actor and director, and is the founder of Australian Stage Online – an online media outlet for the performing arts in Australia.

Dr Mark Seton

University of Sydney

Crisis in the enactment of morally questionable characters: Negotiating moral and spiritual values within actor identity formation.

In 2020, during the COVID pandemic, an Australian study was conducted by Courtney Patten among professional actors to explore their distressing experiences of playing roles that generated a crisis in their own beliefs and values. Certain inferences about which dimensions of empathy may manifest at each stage of an actor's process were identified. Reported symptoms of distress for the actor could be understood as possible moral distress or injury with regard to dissonance when creating and performing amoral or immoral characters. Moral distress or injury can manifest in various ways such as in emotions of shame, guilt, grief, or anger or as secondary symptoms such as depression, anxiety, trust issues, and social isolation.

The performing arts mantra that 'the show must go on' seems to still minimise or negate individual lives, deeply held values and significant relationships. However other professions such as law and medicine dealing with moral distress have found that a lack of open engagement in training institutions concerning moral and spiritual values of students can have detrimental outcomes for wellbeing. The interviews by Patten have revealed how actor training may neglect to help actors address potential moral and spiritual distress and injury.

Healthy Conservatoires (<https://healthyconservatoires.org/framework/>) includes spiritual (defined as 'exploring beliefs, values and ethics and creating a sense of purpose and meaning in life') as one of eight key dimensions in its online wellbeing framework. Could drama schools explore ways to incorporate considerations of moral and spiritual development in tertiary level curriculum?

Dr Mark Seton

Dr Mark Seton is an Honorary Research Associate in the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies at The University of Sydney, Australia. He teaches actor wellbeing in several drama schools and also coaches actors, dealing with highly vulnerable and potentially traumatising roles, through the Actors Wellbeing Academy that he has established online. He was awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 2009 to conduct a study tour of actor training healthcare practices in the UK. Arising from this study, the Equity Foundation, in collaboration with the University of Sydney, initiated an internationally ground-breaking Actors' Wellbeing Study (AWS) in 2013. Mark is also a founding member of the Australian Society for Performing Arts Healthcare.

Session E

Associate Professor Andrea L Moor [online]

Queensland University of Technology

Adaptation in crisis: Creating new methodologies for quicker absorption of essential acting skills.

With the tightening of purse strings in most Australian universities, the time-consuming studio practices of the conservatoire are being challenged. Less hours of teaching one cohort frees up staff to teach across a wider spectrum of subjects, cuts down sessional staff costs and frees up spaces for other student activity. Decisions made by university executives hold little concern for the skill outcomes of young actors, leaving dedicated staff to attempt to uphold professional standards in their programs by inventing and adapting methodologies in the hope that students will still progress to industry employment.

This paper will explore a combined methodology of *Practical Aesthetics (Bruder et al)*, *Viewpoints (Bogart) and Active Analysis (Sharon Carnicke)* as a template for establishing good habits in the student actor. Practical Aesthetics builds on Stanislavski's later work and encourages the student to ask complex questions of the script to arrive at a simple scene action. Influenced by the work of Sanford Meisner Practical Aesthetics places the reality of 'doing' as the central pedagogy, making the moment-to-moment realisation of the scene habitual. Supporting this analysis is the breaking down of each scene into workable 'chunks', borrowed from the tenets of active analysis. In order to maintain a constant and active physical exploration of the scene the space is 'mapped' using the principles of Viewpoints.

This combined methodology will be analysed for the benefits and challenges in establishing a simple effective, quickly learnt, and repeatable methodology in the time poor studio of the modern university.

Associate Professor Andrea L Moor

Andrea is Associate Professor in Acting at QUT (Queensland University of Technology), a past board member of Queensland Theatre and an active actor and director. Andrea's acting credits in theatre are extensive and include working with Sydney Theatre Company, Queensland Theatre, Griffin Theatre Company, Belvoir, NIDA company, The Ensemble, Marian St, Playbox, Melbourne theatre Company and La Boite.

Andrea's film credits include Elvis, Misteltoe Ranch, A Royal in Paradise, Subdivision, Travelling North, Round the Bend, Oscar and Lucinda, Strange Planet, The Man Who Sued God, Bitter and Twisted and many award winning shorts. Her television credits are extensive and include Passion, All Saints, Flying Doctors, GP, Country Practice, H2O, Mortified and her on-going role as the School Principal in the original Heartbreak High.

For QTC Andrea directed Quartet, Grounded, Boston Marriage, Australia Day, Venus in Fur and Water Falling Down. Other directing credits include The Ladies, Detroit, 3 Winters, The Laramie Project (QUT), The Roaring Girl, Furious (NIDA), Intimacy (JUTE), Tender, Ghost Writer and

Beautiful (...and moor theatre), Festen and Top Girls (WAAPA), The Tempest (USQ), Mad Forest and A Dream Play (NIDA Young Actor's studio) and Lysistrata (QUT Performance Studies).

Andrea holds a doctorate in Creative Industries (QUT), is a NIDA acting graduate and has studied at East 15 in London and with The Atlantic Theatre Co in New York. Andrea is a Churchill Fellow and HEA fellow. Andrea is an intimacy Coordinator under mentorship (IOS UK). Her research passions are actors' wellbeing and consent-based actor training.

Tahlia Norrish

The Actor's Dojo

Sports psychology: An unexpected solution to the actor training crisis

As a young actor, I spent four years in conservatoire training, so experienced this first-hand. Today, as an actor coach, I continue to face this fact on an almost daily basis. Yet, this crisis marks a tremendously exciting moment in history. For it's *from* this crisis that actor training will inevitably regenerate — like a phoenix rising from the ashes. Our traditional, Stanislavski-based training has proven highly effective at cultivating dazzling talent. This we can't deny. However, while the industry — the working actor's context — has evolved beyond comparison since the early 20th century, our training has largely remained the same. The result? Several generations of highly skilled actors with little-to-no skill in actually *being* an actor in today's world. My solution to this problem has been to integrate elements of sports psychology: have traditional actor training provide the compelling and reliable framework for *acting* in practice, and have sports psychology provide the same for being an actor in practice. My genuine excitement is due to the ease of transference and efficacy experienced thus far. This crisis isn't exclusively Australian. I trained in the UK, and actors come to our coaching platform from around the world. That said, Australia is in a rare position: our industry is, and has always been, remarkably resilient and adaptable. It's these two qualities, I believe, that see us better placed than any other country to pioneer the necessary next wave of actor training.

Tahlia Norrish

Tahlia Norrish is an actor, writer, and actor coach from Perth, Western Australia. After breaking out as 'Tilly' in the award-winning drama, The Owl, Norrish moved to the UK to train at The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (Distinction, Acting & Musical Theatre) and Rose Bruford College (First Class Hons, Acting). In her final year, Norrish wrote her graduate dissertation on integrating elements of sports psychology in actor training — a response to the gaps in our traditional approach. Since then, Norrish has continued research and regularly writes for several publications on the topic, such as Backstage, The Stage, Spotlight, ScreenHub, and StageMilk. Encouraged by the response to these pieces, Norrish founded a coaching platform, The Actor's Dojo, to translate this innovative theory into an accessible practice.

Dr Tiffany Knight & Dr Christopher Hurrell

Flinders University

Collaboration in response to crisis: centring the student in actor training

In 2020, the Bachelor of Creative Arts (Drama) at the Flinders University Drama Centre was placed under review, and the student intake was paused for the first time since formal actor training began in 1973. In the context of theatre and performance programs around Australia grappling with Covid restrictions, budget cuts, and a profound international reassessment of the way student actors should be trained, this action was received by students and the arts community as signalling an existential crisis for Drama at Flinders. Many feared that South Australia's only university-based actor and director training program would be disbanded.

On release of the review report, the University convened a committee of students, staff, alumni and industry stakeholders to reimagine the full-time acting degree and the pedagogy underpinning it. This facilitated a collaborative, student- and industry-led response to a host of issues, including the accelerating demands for the decolonisation of curricula and the reverberating lessons from #MeToo. Likewise, the consultations revealed that the intense pressures of traditional actor-training on student financial and mental well-being have ceased to be an acceptable price to pay for professional-level performance skills. As a result of this process, the University reaffirmed its commitment to professional actor training in a research environment, and reinvested in Drama.

This moment of crisis thus became generative: an opportunity emerged not only to consider how crisis might shape training for students entering an arts industry constantly itself in crisis, but also to explore the alternate routes that crisis makes visible. In these dual papers, we use the Flinders crisis to extend Sara Jane Bailes's contention that "although ostensibly it signals the breakdown of an aspiration or an agreed demand, breakdown indexes an alternative route or way of doing or making" (1). We examine how Flinders has responded to shifting generational perspectives on actor training by centring students' experiences and values at the heart of their creative practice. From consent-based training, wellbeing protocols and intermedial performance training, to a radical revision of the 'showcase' model, Flinders University Drama Centre has used a moment of crisis to redraw its commitment to nurturing the next generation of autonomous performers.

In this pair of papers, two Flinders actor trainers will discuss key case studies from the revised programme that illustrate the new student-centred pedagogy that bookends their training: Hybrid live-and-digital performance making in the virtual production facility The Void.

A new model for delivery of the Honours programme, leveraging developments in non-traditional research practice, to furnish emerging actors with the skills to work conceptually as well as interpretatively.

Dr Christopher Hurrell

Dr Christopher Hurrell is Lecturer – Drama at Flinders University, where he has responsibility for professional training of actors and directors at the Flinders Drama Centre. He is a stage director,

dramaturg and teacher who has worked nationally and internationally over a twenty-year career in the areas of new writing, Shakespeare, actor-training and musical theatre.

He has directed and trained acting students in Australia at NIDA, the Actors Centre, James Cook University and the Australian Theatre for Young People, in the United Kingdom at Rose Bruford College, Arts Educational Schools and Anglia Ruskin University, and in Singapore at La Salle College of the Arts.

He has recently returned from the United Kingdom, where his PhD at Goldsmiths, University of London investigated archival records of the acting of Shakespeare at the Royal Shakespeare Company, The National Theatre and Shakespeare's Globe, and his original practice-based research developed new techniques for actors working on late Shakespeare.

Dr Tiffany Knight

Dr Tiffany Knight is an actor, director and lecturer in Drama at Flinders University, where she specialises in screen acting. She has performed on stages across Australia and Canada, including State Theatre Company South Australia, Queensland Theatre, Manitoba Theatre Centre and eight seasons with Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival. She originated the multi-award-winning solo show 19 weeks by Emily Steel and has been nominated for four Jessie Richardson theatre awards. Her screen credits include Battlestar Galactica, Stargate SG-1, Red Dog, Wanted, and ANZAC Girls. Tiffany has taught acting at Adelaide University's Elder Conservatorium, Adelaide College of the Arts and the University of British Columbia. Her practice-led PhD examined the status of the actor in contemporary independent theatre and received the Flinders University Vice Chancellor's Prize for Doctoral Thesis Excellence. Tiffany is currently National Vice President of the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (Equity Section).

Dr Dominique Sweeney

Interdisciplinary performance/social work- groundwork [Hybrid Presentation]

The Think Big multinational collaboration project developed participatory research projects with children that involved adult and child coresearchers from Australia, Chile, Colombia, and the United Kingdom. The aim was to build solidarities between adult researchers from different countries and disciplines. In Wagga Wagga working with Wiradjuri children the researchers' intent was to act as mentors, adding value to the inclusivity credentials of the project, and be of benefit to the local Wiradjuri (people of the three rivers) community. Wiradjuri are the largest Aboriginal Nation in New South Wales. Wagga Wagga, a Wiradjuri word meaning 'dancing place', or 'place of many celebrations' (Wagga, 2021).

Dr Dominique Sweeney

Dominique is a performer, teacher, creator and film-maker specialising in documenting performance practice. He researches and documents traditional Aboriginal public performances and works with how to best manage digital archives with Traditional Owners. Dominique played Albert Facey in the Ch 9 miniseries "A Fortunate Life" and Dally Messenger in the BBC film "The

First Kangaroos". He is a core member and chair of the board of Theatre Kantanka and cofounder of [Lichen Collective](#). Dominique studied for two years at [L'École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq](#). He taught acting at Sydney Theatre School, Griffith, Charles Sturt, ANU, UWS, Macquarie and Sydney Universities and at the [St.Petersburg State Theatre Arts Academy](#).

Session F

Associate Professor Andrew Lewis

Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts

The Actor as Entrepreneur

Is there a crisis for actors in the Australian arts industry? One could argue that there has always been a crisis. There have always been far more actors than jobs and there are numerous statistics to prove it. Perhaps it is not the industry that needs to change but the training of actors. The graduating actor can no longer just wait for their agent to call. Graduating actors now have to be agents of change and create their own work and build their own brand. I suggest there is room in acting training to enhance employment prospects, foster collaboration and encourage resilience in the next generation of actors through the creation of devised work. I conducted research examining the pedagogy of many conservatoires from around the world complemented by interviews of 11 established actor trainer/educators who reflect on devising as a way to encourage and foster agency for student actors. I propose, that by developing the necessary skills to generate their own work actors can become empowered as artists who are not waiting for that one big break to occur. By becoming self-motivated entrepreneurs they can generate their own work.

Associate Professor Andrew Lewis

Andrew Lewis has recently completed a PhD (ECU) investigating the need for devising and collective creation practices to be taught within Conservatoire Actor training. He has extensive experience in directing film, television and theatre and has directed numerous stage plays and short films. Andrew is a directing graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) and holds two Masters degrees, in Film and TV Directing (AFTRS) and the other in Film and Theatre Studies (UNSW). He is currently a Senior Lecturer in Acting and Directing at WAAPA and Associate Director of the WA Screen Academy.

^[1] Quoted in E. D. Ermarth, *Sequel to History* (1992) p. 160

^[2] Reynolds, Simon. (2005). *Rip It Up and Start Again. Post Punk 1978 – 1984*. Faber and Faber. ISBN 9780571215690.

^[3] Bidstrup, Graham. Neeson, Doc. (1980) *No Secrets* from the album *Shadow Boxer*. Epic Records.

^[4] Orzabal, Roland. (1982) *Mad World* from the album *The Hurting*. Phonogram and Mercury Records.

^[5] Pierson, Kate. Schneider, Fred. Strickland, Keith. Wilson, Cindy. (1989) *Love Shack* from the album *Cosmic Thing*. Reprise Records.

Dr Gabrielle Metcalf

Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts

Crisis as Revelation and Opportunity: Consent-based pedagogies for the Acting Classroom.

The past decade has seen a plethora of movements that have challenged the status quo and forced not only society but the Conservatoire to confront systemic forms of discrimination embedded in their policies and processes. With #metoo, #Black Lives Matter, #Enough is Enough, the threat of Climate Change, together with Covid19, one could argue we have been in crisis for quite some time.

Our students' call for greater diversity, equity and inclusion is a revelation, an historic moment in time for arts educators to respond to their demands by examining our own pedagogical practices. By 'accessing our ignorance' (Isaacs, 1999) and confronting the role that we as teachers and directors may play in perpetuating discriminatory practices inherent in white, hegemonic institutions, we have the opportunity to consider the lens through which we are educating others.

This paper argues that in response to 'crisis' a turning point has revealed itself - we have the chance to move towards more ethical practices in actor training. Drawing on the emerging philosophies of Intimacy direction, ways in which consent-based pedagogies can be used in acting classes and rehearsals are described. Interrupting the power imbalances that exist in the Conservatoire and looking to what Jean Baker Miller (2008) has referred to as power-to is crucial in this movement towards equality and inclusion.

Dr Gabrielle Metcalf

Gabrielle Metcalf (PhD) is a teacher, director, intimacy director/co-ordinator and actor. She lectures in acting and directing at The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA). Gabrielle has a special research interest in leadership methodologies, in particular those that challenge traditional hegemonic structures (often found in the rehearsal room). She coaches Executive Leadership Teams across Australia in the construction, mining, health and arts industries. She is currently collaborating on a work exploring the life of Yallagonga, leader of the Whadjuk Noongar people at the time of colonisation.

Tom Heath

Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts

Mindsets in actor training: fostering a growth mindset in training actors

In recent years, Australian actor training has been in a state of flux. Lockdowns, budget cuts, and program closures have dramatically shifted the Australian actor training landscape since AusAct's first conference in 2018. These changes create uncertainty for both actor trainers and student actors and engender trepidation in both parties. This research focuses on facilitating optimal conditions within workshop contexts that foster brave spaces in contemporary Australian actor training. To do so, this paper explores the integration of Carol Dwek's mindset principles into actor training contexts using data gathered from interviews with graduate actors from WAAPA's diploma of acting 2022 cohort.

Dwek posits that learners can adopt one of two mindsets: *growth* or *fixed*. A person with a fixed mindset believes qualities such as intelligence, talent, and ability to be predetermined and unalterable. In contrast, people with a *growth* mindset believe the aforementioned qualities can be cultivated through continuous effort – that people can change through practice and experience. These principles

were presented to learners enrolled in WAAPA's diploma of acting course and reinforced throughout the yearlong training. The findings of these interviews suggest that Dwek's model provides a useful framework for student actors that encourages them to take risks within a supportive training environment. Participants indicated that mindset principles were most useful in times of high stress as well as receiving and implementing feedback.

Tom Heath

Since completing actor training at the VCA in 2012, Tom has worked professionally across the mediums of film, television, and theatre. He has taught acting at VCA, Monash University, and WAAPA. Tom's PhD research examined how actor trainers can facilitate the optimal conditions for learning in conservatoire training, focusing on the creation of the flow state through impulse and game. Tom has coordinated WAAPA's Diploma of Acting programme since 2020.

Workshops

Workshop A

Luzita Fereday

Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts

Phonetic pillows: Tuning in to resonance

Level of participation: helpful if you have an understanding of phonetics, but not essential. Can be for beginner or intermediate level.

In response to the Black Lives Matter movement the ground has shifted dismantling the white supremacist educational values and a crisis as a turning point in voice training for the Actor. Jane Boston states that the task of de-colonizing the voice by means of an expansion of auditory social and cultural reference points can provide ways to challenge assumed starting points for the development of spoken vocal range and its sonic qualities. As a trainer I seek to engage inclusive practices. I aim to create an environment of empathy and trust so that risk taking is encouraged.

“Sound helps define identity and is deeply connected to one’s world view” (McAllister-Viel 2009, 437).

Aims and objectives of the workshop:

This workshop is an opportunity to get out of the analytical brain and down into the body. It’s a series of imaginative investigations and the leading sensory stimulus will be phonetic pillows that can form the basis of a more inclusive starting point. This workshop explores how the performer works with resonance, embodying the sound of vowels to inspire your breath and galvanize your voice. The resonance ladder activates your body, generates presence and encourages a body that is responsive to sound. The aim of the workshop is to claim the right to make sound. Mills and Stoneham (2020) suggest that voice work in a voice training studio, can benefit from the cultivation of a range of options in order that the individual can make active contributions to their own sound/meaning making.

Influences and inspiration behind the work:

As a certified Colaanni Speech teacher, the workshop will be drawing on the principles of Colaanni Speech and Kristin Linklater’s Resonance ladder. The work looks at a continuum of vowels to focus on a) training the performer’s creative access to their instrument and b) extending freedom from voicing into speech and c) playing with our own sound.

“Playing with our own sound is beyond any binary. We may initially judge the sounds emerging as not beautiful or tuneful. However, they are body sounds and have intrinsic value”. (Mills and Stoneham 2020, 99.)

Other requirements needed:

- Wear loose comfortable clothing.
- Bring a text, could be a monologue or poem. You will use this text primarily to notice any change in how you speak after the exercises.

Luzita Fereday

Luzita is a graduate from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA), Central School of Speech and Drama (CSSD) and holds a Masters from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA). Luzita has worked as Dialect coach on: Once (Black Swan and Darlinghurst Theatre) Hecate, (Yirra Yaakin) The Tempest, Oklahoma, Unsung Heroes, The Torrents, Water, In the Next Room, HIR, I Am My Own Wife, Angels in America, Extinction, Blithe Spirit, A Perfect Specimen, Glengarry Glen Ross, Dinner, The Damned (Black Swan State Theatre). Jasper Jones, Driving into Walls, ONEFIVEZEROSEVEN, Fully Sikh (Barking Gecko), Mimma The Musical (Orana Productions), Annie The Musical (Gordon Frost) The Wolves, Grounded, An Almost Perfect Thing, Joey: The Mechanical Boy (Blue Room). Luzita currently teaches Voice to Acting and Music Theatre students at WAAPA and also works as a Freelance voice and dialect coach. She has a passion for the infinite variety of ways in which people speak. Her research and interest in the Australian voice has led to her be included in a feature for the Edith Magazine published by Edith Cowan University, interviewed on the ABC Perth News, and ABC Radio.

Workshop B

Steph Kehoe

Victorian College of the Arts

Clown for Resilience and Wellbeing within Actor Training Programs

When a BBC reporter asked how many clowns he has trained over his 50 year teaching career, Phillippe Gaulier answered "maybe 2, at most. There are only 1 or 2 true clowns in every generation!" Whilst on one level Gaulier's response is typically provocative, it is nonetheless true that 'the clown' is a very unique and rare type of performer. For that reason, amongst others, it remains quite rare to see red nose clowning on stage in Australia and the majority of students at universities and conservatories in Australia do not aspire to work professionally as red nose clowns. How then does one pedagogically justify the use of clown training within tertiary actor training programs?

This workshop proposes that clown training within the tertiary sector can be incredibly beneficial when it is focused on the playfulness, lightness and openness that are fundamental to the creative state itself, and when the training is intentionally used to foster the wellbeing of students in training. So rather than using clown to train in 'being funny', this workshop will explore how clown can be used pedagogically and pastorally to support the wellbeing of students and exercise the much needed muscles of curiosity, pleasure and resilience. Inspired by the pedagogy of Jacques Lecoq, participants in this workshop will explore how clown work can support students to succeed and fail with both openness and lightness. Though there will undoubtedly be much laughing, this workshop will focus less on 'being funny' and more on the broader benefits of the clown state for artists in training.

Steph Kehoe

Steph is a Lecturer at the Victorian College of the Arts and was awarded a Faculty Teaching Excellence Award in 2020 for her work in designing and co-ordinating the BFA Theatre (2017-2020). Steph trained with Jacques Lecoq at Ecole Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq and completed her teacher training in the Lecoq pedagogy at the London International School of Performing Arts where she then taught for several years. Steph also taught at the London Academy Music & Dramatic Arts (LAMDA) and Rose Bruford College as well as for companies and festivals across Europe, South America and Asia. In Australia, Steph has worked with the John Bolton Theatre School, Born in a Taxi, Zen Zen Zo, Circus Oz, Women's Circus, Rawcus, St Martin's Youth Theatre, ArtPlay, Union House Theatre, QUT, University of the Sunshine Coast and the Melbourne Theatre Company.

Workshop C

Faith Hibbs-Clark

Communication Method for Actors

How Film Auditions Changed Forever in response to the Covid Lockdown

When the film industry paused and the world went into lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020, actors wishing to work were forced into producing their own self taped auditions at home.

Although self-taping an audition was something that actors did prior to lockdown, the practice became the norm. The virtual format is now mainstream, creating a crisis for actors who have to adapt to this new challenging environment. Older actors find this adaptation to new technology particularly challenging.

The virtual world of auditions and the new technology that accompanies it, has many pros and cons, but film industry leaders agree that these types of auditions are here to stay. This creates a unique environment that actors are now forced to adapt to.

In my **NEW POWER OF GAZE 45 minute workshop**, I will draw from my www.actingscience.com method called the **Communication Method for Actors** to show how an actor can transition from the freeze, flight, and fight survival function into the evolutionary function using the power of imagination to encourage neuroplasticity in the actor brain and greater connectivity to the audience despite the change in medium.

The eyes are a driving force to this evolutionary trigger and I will teach **advanced actors** how to use the power of gaze to communicate in a way that will neurally couple with the receiver of their communication.

Now that actors have to create their own reality, the power of gaze can be used to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles in this new digital performance world.

Faith Hibbs-Clark

Faith Hibbs-Clark is the creator and founder of the Communication Method for Actors, known around the world as the Acting Science Method. She has 20-plus years of experience as a professional casting director for film & television, including projects for major studios such as Universal Studios, Lionsgate, and Paramount. Prior to casting, Hibbs-Clark was known as a body language expert and specialized in deception detection. She created her method by combining the two careers and now empowers actors of all levels with this unique science-based acting method. Hibbs-Clark has coached thousands of actors around the world, including celebrities such as Academy Award winner Emma Stone. www.actingscience.com

Workshop D

Nicole Stinton

National Institute of Dramatic Art

Monologuing the Music: Uncovering musical clues to characterise with authenticity

Music theatre composers, like lyricists and book writers, choose with deliberateness, specificity and great care what goes into a musical's score and what does not (see Clark 82; de Mallet Burgess and Skilbeck 150-151; Ostwald; Major and Laing; Pickering and Henson; Deer and Dal Vera 55-56; Moore 96-99). Whilst the practice of divorcing the lyrics of a song from its music and "monologuing the lyrics" is frequently employed as an acting technique (see Clark 84; Craig 1; Dunbar 66-67; Henson and Pickering 55-56; Kayes 175; Lucca 42; McWaters 49-50; Moore 160-164; Richardson 12-13), seldom the reverse focus on the music occurs. A failure to balance text exploration with a comparable musical investigation can lead to the singing actor's over-reliance on "What am I saying?" at the expense of "How am I saying it?" which, I argue, contributes to inauthenticity in performance. Yet, given that so many actors find the reading and writing of music an inaccessible foreign language (Bond, 2010; Poirel, 1998; Sondheim, 2020; Stern, 2015), how do conservatoire teachers equip students with skills and processes to be able to interrogate musical text and embody their findings when characterising? In this workshop, I will demonstrate how students can effectively uncover compositional clues without needing music literacy by undertaking a process I have come to term *monologuing the music* (Stinton, 2018). In the session I will coach students on how they can find and then use musical insights to characterise creatively and, ultimately, be more believable for the audience.

Nicole Stinton

Nicole Stinton has worked as a director, actor and vocal coach for three decades across the Asia-Pacific, specialising in music theatre. Throughout her professional performance and creative team career, she has also trained conservatoire student actors and is currently the Head of Music at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA). Nicole has also taught and directed at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) and LASALLE College of the Arts in Singapore. She has conducted masterclasses and given conference papers globally, including in New York, London and across Asia. Nicole has published journal articles, textbooks and book chapters extensively, and is an External Expert for TEQSA. A current PhD candidate, Nicole is developing an acting technique for the singing actor that utilises music to holistically inform acting and creative choices.

Workshop E

Susan Bamford Caleo

Body and Voice Awareness

Embodied and Extended Voice and Text Exploration

This dynamic and playful session offers participants the opportunity to explore the expressive potential of their voice. Dive into a new piece of text or revive a well-known piece through an approach influenced by the Voice and Body Work of Zygmunt Molik (Grotowski Theatre Laboratory), and the Extended Voice Work developed by Alfred Wolfson and Roy Hart.

Susan Bamford Caleo

Since the mid-90s Susan's focus has been to explore the expressive potential of the voice and the body. She is fascinated by the intersection of spoken and sung voice and has created performance works both in live production and recordings. Her experiments with extended voice have been deeply influenced by her past and ongoing association with exploratory voice practitioners internationally and in Australia. She is an award-winning artist and established teacher with a passion for both pure and applied practice and believes in the power of visionary art for community-building. Susan has taught Voice privately and at institutions including Victorian College of the Arts, Federation University, JMC Melbourne, La Trobe University, Victoria University, and the National Theatre. She is completing her International Accreditation as a Roy Hart Voicework Teacher and is an Artist in Residence at the Body Voice Centre.

Workshop F

Amy Hume and Colin Sneesby

Victorian College of the Arts

Training in a time of ongoing crisis: developing resiliency in pandemic-era student cohorts

In the context of the pandemic, climate change, political extremism and other societal stressors, we are moving into a period of ongoing crisis. Our students are enrolled in full time, practical, studio-based training at a time when the cost of living is rapidly increasing, which brings with it the pressure to sustain work outside of their studies. How do we as practitioners acknowledge these world-changing events and continue our training? How do we teach students to value their time at drama school when pressures on them are so high? How do we keep them engaged in their training amidst ongoing crisis?

The aim of this workshop is to explore tools, techniques, and strategies for developing resilience in actor and performance-making cohorts. The facilitators will draw on their experiences teaching voice and movement over the last three years, both online and in-studio, and share learnings and discoveries that have informed curriculum ideas and led to the redesign of assessments to deepen the engagement of students in a time of ongoing crisis.

Participants will investigate a strengths-based approach as being key to learning, not just in voice and movement, but across all aspects of actor-training. The facilitators will explore using the VIA Inventory of Strengths (Peterson and Seligman 2004) as a framework for helping students identify their strengths to create a foundation for their training. Participants will also engage in exercises to experience the difference between eustress and distress in the learning environment and consider its impacts on training. Additionally, we will present the idea of 'breaking free' from the studio, giving examples of taking students outside the drama school to accelerate their embodiment of voice and movement training and highlight for them the value of acting and performance skills in non-performance settings.

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Amy Hume

*Amy Hume is a Lecturer in Voice at Victorian College of the Arts and a voice and dialect coach for theatre and television. She previously taught BFA Acting and MFA Voice students at NIDA. Her research interests include decentring practices in actor-voice training, specifically in an Australian context. Recent credits include *Jungle and the Sea*, *Blue(Belvoir)*, *New Gold Mountain (SBS)*, *Six the Musical*, *Billy Elliot the Musical (both LWAA)*, *Cyrano*, *The Sound Inside*, *Fun Home (MTC)*, *White Pearl (STC)* and *Fangirls (Queensland Theatre/Belvoir)*. Amy is a Designated*

Linklater Teacher and is on the Board of Directors of the Voice and Speech Trainers Association (VASTA), the international organisation for voice practitioners.

Colin Sneesby

Colin is currently the Lead Tutor in Movement at the Victorian College of the Arts Drama School. He comes to this position after a 20+ year career as a performer and maker in theatre and dance. He brings to this position experiences he gained from working as a community development worker, with a wide variety of populations, and an athletic coach and trainer.

Over the last ten years Colin has coached and trained thousands of clients. He is obsessed about uncovering the latest science backed, evidence-based training and integrating the knowledge from this into training young artists.

Panel

‘Disability, Neuro – Diversity, Access and Equity in the Performing Arts’

Professor Kate Ellis (Chair), Professor Bree Hadley, Associate Professor Eddie Paterson, Dan Graham

In the nearly 20 years since the publication of Carrie Sandahl’s oft cited “The Tyranny of Neutral Disability and Actor Training” (2005), much has been written about the way in which conventional stage and screen acting training, casting, production, industrial relations and representational practices exclude d/Deaf, disabled, and neurodiverse artists. From training programs that accommodate only those bodies perceived to have the capacity to achieve the ‘neutrality’ required to slip reality behind the veil of theatrical illusion, to training methodologies that question the career commitment and potential of those cannot commit to intensive project based work, to casting practices that continue to display “cripping up” that recalls “the outdated practice of white actors “blacking up” to play African American characters” (Sandahl 2010, 236), the work required to start creating culturally safe actor training programs for diverse body minds has and continues to be extensive (Sandahl 2010, 2005; Johnson 2019, 2016, 2012; Hadley 2014; Hadley et. al. 2022a; Hadley et. al. 2022b). In this Q&A style panel, we draw on findings from a range of practical, empirical, and historical research projects with d/Deaf, disabled, and neurodiverse artists, access arts organisations, funding agencies and other stakeholders to consider what change in the current actor training landscape means – and may in the future mean – for d/Deaf, disabled, and neurodiverse artists. Nearly 15 years after Australia’s first National Arts & Disability Strategy (2009), in a country where nearly 20% of the population identify as d/Deaf, disabled, or neurodiverse (ABS 2016) – and of the 80% who do not, nearly 20% identify as having a long term medical or mental health condition – only 9% of Australia’s 48,000 practicing artists, and 3% of arts leaders, identify as disabled (Australia Council 2022). Is change in conventional paradigms that have produced this underrepresentation really a ‘crisis’ – or a chance to consider new, culturally safer paradigms for the future.

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Professor Katie Ellis

Katie Ellis is director of the Centre for Culture and Technology at Curtin University and Professor of Internet Studies in the school of Media, Creative Arts and Social Inquiry. She was previously a DECRA Senior Research Fellow in the Internet Studies department at Curtin (2013-2018) where she established the Critical Disability Research Network in the Centre for Human Rights Education. In 2020 Katie won the John de Later Award for Research Leadership – Curtin University Researcher of the year.

She is an internationally recognised expert on disability, media and digital access. She is the author or editor of 17 books with another three under contract. This includes two agenda setting handbooks and one major works series. As the series editor of Routledge Research in disability media studies she is curating a series of books that set the agenda for the next era of disability media studies.

She has been involved in securing more than \$4 million for funded research projects and actively works in all her research projects to bring together the insights from community, industry and policy to ensure real world benefits for people with disability. For example, Katie worked actively with the community, broadcasters and governments to introduce audio description to Australian television.

Professor Bree Hadley

*Professor Bree Hadley is a recognised international authority on diversity, inclusion, and access in the arts, and arts education. She is editor of *The Routledge Handbook of Disability Arts Culture and Media* (2019, with Donna McDonald), author of *Theatre, Social Media, and Meaning Making* (Palgrave 2017) and *Disability, Public Space Performance & Spectatorship: Unconscious Performers* (Palgrave 2014), and has written dozens of articles on representation and access in the arts for *Disability & Society*, *CSPA (Center for Sustainable Practice in the Arts) Quarterly*, *Performance Research*, *Australasian Drama Studies*, *Brolga: An Australian Journal About Dance*, and other journals. She has also written extensively on newspapers and online platforms such as *The Australian*, *ArtsHub*, and *Australian Stage Online*.*

Hadley currently leads The Evolution of Disability Arts In Australia, an ARC funded project co-designing an archive documenting 50 years of disability arts in Australia with performing, visual, and media artists around Australia (<https://www.arc.gov.au/news-publications/media/research-highlights/constructing-first-australian-archive-disability-arts>). As Chief Investigator on three ARC LIEF grants, she has also made information about a range of underdocumented performance practices – including disability performance, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander performance, and independent performance in Queensland – available through the AusStage database (www.ausstage.edu.au).

*In her practice-based research, Hadley has been investigating interest in ‘creative integration’ of sign language, captioning, and audio description into performing and visual arts works – for example, in the 2020 Museums & Gallery Association Award winning Vis-Ability collaboration with Dr Janice Rieger (QUT Art Museum <http://www.artmuseum.qut.edu.au/whats-on/2019/vis-ability.php>). Her performance text, The Excentric Fixations Project, has also recently appeared in *At the Intersection of Disability and Drama: A Critical Anthology of New Plays* (McFarlane <https://mcfarlandbooks.com/product/at-the-intersection-of-disability-and-drama/>). Prior to joining QUT in 2007, Hadley worked as a writer, dramaturg, director, arts facilitator, and administrator for independent theatre companies, and for the Glen Eira City Council. Hadley is a past President of the Australasian Association for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies (ADSA), a past Director of Performance Studies international (PSi), and has served as a committee member and consultant for youth, community, and disability arts organisations. She is currently Study Area Coordinator for Acting & Drama in the Faculty of Creative Industries, Education, and Social Justice at QUT.*

Associate Professor Eddie Paterson

*Eddie Paterson lectures in scriptwriting for theatre, contemporary performance, new media and games at the University of Melbourne. His research explores intersections between performance and everyday life - with a focus on radical writing practices, disability arts and climate politics. His books include *The Contemporary American Monologue* (Bloomsbury, 2015), *Once Upon a Pixel: Storytelling and Worldbuilding in Videogames* (co-authored with Tim Simpson-Williams and Will Cordner, CRC Press 2019), and *Redactor* (Whitmore Press, 2017), which was shortlisted for the Victorian Premier's Awards and the John Bray Award.*

His current ARC funded research is 'The Evolution of Disability Arts in Australia', a collaborative SRI project led by A/Prof Bree Hadley (QUT). Eddie was the lead CI on 'The Last Avant Garde', working in a team of disabled and non-disabled artists and scholars to explore notions of aesthetic innovation in Australian arts and disability performance. He is Secretary of PSi (Performance Studies international).

Dan Graham

Dan Graham is a Theatre Director and a Disability Advocate with a particular interest in access support for neuro-diverse performing artists. Dan has a neuro-diverse disability and accompanying neurological challenges that impact his daily life including his creative ability. His directing and access work have seen him travel all over Australia and the world to research and explore access and inclusion. Dan has engaged with companies across Australia such as Bell

Shakespeare, Sydney Festival, Sydney Fringe, Antipode Theatre Company, and the Ensemble Theatre. His recent collaborations in the US include the [Atlantic Theatre Company](#) and Pasadena Playhouse and in the UK the Globe Theatre.

Dan is a fellow of the Australia Council's [Future Leaders Program](#), an Ian Potter Foundation scholarship, and [Create NSW fellowship](#) recipient. He has a stellar director resume and uses his success to advocate for other artists who identify as neurodiverse.

Dan studied BA (Communication) and MCA (Theatre, specialising in directing) at the University of Tasmania and Honours in Performance Studies at the University of Sydney. His Honours paper focused on the playwright's intent and how this is realised in the director's vision. Dan also holds a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. Dan is a board director of Arts Access Australia and a regular peer assessor for the Australia Council for the Arts. He is the co-chair of the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance's (MEAA) artists with Disability Board and on the LGBTQIA+ disability advisory group for ACON. He is a board member of the Hickson Road Group Accessible Arts, and a member of Accessible Arts NSW Artists Advisory Group. He previously was a board member for Arts Access Australia and a committee member for the Hobart Fringe Festival.

Dan is also the Australian Fellow for ISPA and at present is in New York. He has directed Teenage Dick in October 2022 for Curtin University and has have been Awarded a Churchill Fellowship which will take him to The US & UK to Investigate Access & Opportunities for Professional Performing Artists whom are Neuro – Diverse.

Important Contacts

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Thank you for attending the

***AusAct: Australian Actor training
Conference***

We hope to see you all again next time!