



Critical
Approaches
to Arts-based
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ABOUT THE E-JOURNAL

The UNESCO Observatory refereed e-journal is based within the Graduate School of Education at The University of Melbourne, Australia. The journal promotes multi-disciplinary research in the Arts and Education and arose out of a recognised need for knowledge sharing in the field. The publication of diverse arts and cultural experiences within a multi-disciplinary context informs the development of future initiatives in this expanding field. There are many instances where the arts work successfully in collaboration with formerly non-traditional partners such as the sciences and health care, and this peer-reviewed journal aims to publish examples of excellence.

Valuable contributions from international researchers are providing evidence of the impact of the arts on individuals, groups and organisations across all sectors of society. The UNESCO Observatory refereed e-journal is a clearing house of research which can be used to support advocacy processes; to improve practice; influence policy making, and benefit the integration of the arts in formal and non-formal educational systems across communities, regions and countries.

Critical Approaches to Arts-Based Research

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THEME

Arts based research (ABR), its products, processes and critical theorising have come a long way in recent times. Nuanced distinctions indicate the development of the field, as arts-informed research, arts-based research, practice-led research, applied research, and creative participatory action research all claim different relationships with the art and criticality present in such innovative scholarship. Finally, it seems, we are moving away from a defensive stance regarding arts based research and its 'validity', and toward a celebration of this proliferation of diverse ways of knowing, theorising and doing research. This 'coming of age' is evident in this special issue, which urges readers to move beyond binarised notions of scientific 'versus' arts based research that still at times dominates academic research environments and conversations, and outmoded practice/theory divides. For we co-editors and for the authors here, theorising is indeed a creative practice, and goes hand-in-hand with the epistemological and ontological potential of arts-making methods. This issue celebrates the opening of new doors in theorising innovative arts based research from a range of global contexts, theoretical and epistemological frameworks, and inter/disciplines. We avoid any attempt to codify or limit the parameters of what contemporary arts based research is or can be. Indeed, we seek the opposite: to highlight its ever-expanding possibilities.

The essays here aim to encourage critical analysis and dialogue about the objects and subjects of arts based research for contemporary times, poststructuralist, posthuman and other critical approaches to arts based research, and the interdisciplinary application of performative and practice-led research in transferable methodological models. We are pleased to be able to include digital assets with many of the articles in this special issue. Indeed, the layered and multimodal complexity of arts based 'outputs' or artefacts is one of its rich distinguishing features, and it requires commitment from editors and publishers to not always demand a 'reduction' back into text-based forms, a diminishment of many forms of ABR. For this we thank the UNESCO editorial and production team, and hope you enjoy this contribution to the critical development of the arts based research field.

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The search for a dyadic dramatic qualitative method to generate data

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ABSTRACT

I attempt to theorise how a dyadic embodied encounter can be used within drama education research and begin to contemplate whether this method could work in other fields. I describe the disillusionment I feel with traditional qualitative interviews when faced with researching the stories of key drama education

practitioners. Inspired by the work of arts based researchers including George Belliveau, Joe Norris, and Johnny Saldaña I wonder how I can generate embodied, rich stories to enable me to create an ethnographic performance. Exploring the work of theorists and drama practitioners from both academia and the world of theatre I find clues along the way that help me create a possible solution to my conundrum.

KEY WORDS

Embodied reflections, ethnographic performance, drama, education

THE SEARCH FOR A DYADIC DRAMATIC QUALITATIVE METHOD TO GENERATE DATA

The search begins

*Figure 1
performing
the drama*



I am standing on a chair centre stage at the University's Musgrove studio theatre performing the first scene of my ethnographic performance or data drama:

Jane: [Addressing the audience] Victor Turner says through performance we come to know ourselves. Nicholson believes we archive our lives performatively. [love and stand on chair] So I create a dyadic encounter in which key drama in education practitioners and I will use Stanislavsky's 'Magic If' and imagine the creation of a Museum of educational drama. We will see what lies on the battlefield and beyond the barricades. We will use metaphors and maps, monologues and movement, symbols, and images. We will embody our stories of passion and melancholia in practice. [Step slowly off chair SL] John says the museum must be interactive because drama is not static; it is live and visceral... evanescent and embodied. (JaneLuton/Exposure, 2013)

Drama compresses time and in a few sentences I speak about what took many months to develop. Setting out on my doctoral research I am faced with a conundrum. I am embarking on a doctoral journey to research the difficulties faced by drama education practitioners in their practice. I have been inspired by seeing George Belliveau perform his research at the *First Critical Studies in Drama in Education International Symposium* held at Auckland University in 2010. I know that drama has to be incorporated within my research. As a drama educator it makes sense to use drama for as Saldaña (2006) suggests 'what could be more compatible than employing the art form to exhibit research about a participant's relationship with the art form?' (p. 184). I decide that the dissemination of my research will be in part through an ethnographic performance, but finding an approach to generate the data (Norris 2009) is not as straightforward. I have a sense that the typical traditional qualitative interview seems to lack possibilities for generating rich data. This article describes the difficulties I encounter and the discoveries I make as I search for what will become my doctoral research method, *embodied reflections* (Luton, 2014) inspired by Victor Turner's

(1988) opinion that we ‘come to know [ourselves] better through acting or enactment’ (p. 81).

During my Master’s research I use qualitative interviews with my participants, sitting at one side of a table while they face me on the other. I listen to their words, nod, smile, ask questions and take notes. It is informative but somehow routine and mundane; something is missing from these interactions. Looking back with hindsight I wanted to see my participants move, enact, imagine and retell their stories actively. Joe Norris (2009) considers that drama can be used in all aspects of a research project for the generation, mediation and dissemination of data and this implies that research does not depend on using traditional forms of qualitative interviewing. Interviews are a popular and ‘most important data gathering tool’ (Myers & Newman 2007, p. 2) but they have their limitations (Kvale 1996; Myers & Newman 2007; Amis 2005). There is the possibility that interviews using ‘a predetermined set of questions limits the research’ (Norris 2009, p. 24) and the intrusion of the interviewer into the interview has the potential to impose answers or opinions upon the participant (Amis 2005; Myers & Newman 2007). Steiner Kvale (1996) suggests that the immobility of the participant can prevent them from, ‘acting in the world’ (p. 292) so stillness may prevent some data from being generated and recorded. The traditional interview does not necessarily lead to, ‘vividly enacted and performable stories’ (Langellier & Peterson 2006, p. 154) which might be a significant issue for me as a researcher intending to create a drama performance.

Attending the *Second International Drama Symposium at The University of Auckland in 2011*, I listen as Joe Norris explains that data can be generated from group interactions. For Norris (2009) ‘playbuilding’ offers a more collaborative approach to research which through the act of storytelling and narrative can generate emotionally richer stories (p. 24). Much important material lies within the unspoken language; the use of body, movement and space. As a drama educator I am familiar with

the language and processes of drama and so the idea was exciting but I am still faced with my conundrum; I have to meet each of my participants in a dyadic interview. Norris's work involves a group process, but my method will not be group based. Each participant will be alone in their own drama space watched only by me and my video camera. This is in part due to my participants being situated across the world and because I want each story to be untouched by any other in the generation stage. I ponder and consider and research. How can I generate stories dramatically in a dyadic interview situation; A situation that will not enable the participants to collaborate with others? There must be a way to capture more than just words. Without a dramatic approach I feel I will miss layers of information that may provide some richer dramatic enterprise. I am not alone in this as Anna Deveare Smith seeks questions that may 'evoke more dramatic performance in interviews' (Langellier & Peterson 2006, p. 154). There is a chasm to cross between wanting to carry out this form of research and actually making it happen.

FINDING CLUES ALONG THE WAY

Then in a serendipitous moment, which frequently occurs in my research, I am sitting in a seminar with a group of students. A drama practitioner is addressing the class and begins to tell the story of a significant moment from his work in schools. I become entranced by what is happening in front of my eyes and realise that I have found a clue to my 'drama as research' puzzle. Reflecting on the moment I later write:

The retelling took place in a classroom where I along with other students sat at desks, pens in hand, listening, ready to write. The story concerned the presentation of an Applied Theatre performance in a school which had been attended by a Member of Parliament, invited to watch the work. They held the power to give

or withdraw funding for the continuation of the project. The MP was short on time but remained at the performance longer than initially planned.

As P. retold the story he began to use gestures, movement and space, his voice increased in pace and intensity. He moved downstage, narrating, walking briskly beside the imagined Member of Parliament. He appeared to be attempting to hand the MP something; the narration told us it was a research document concerning the project. The audience, of which I was a member, were no longer just listening but were now observing. We could sense the MP was rushed; that she was not looking at the practitioner. I observed P's hands outstretched holding the imagined document, eyes looking up as if the MP held a higher status, the physical and vocal pace was fast. P addressed us in the present and spoke to the imagined MP in the past; suddenly I felt the 'goose-bump effect' (Probyn 2004, p 29). Clive Barker (1977), calls this kinaesthetic sense or 'body think', a kind of sixth sense or a, 'je ne sais quoi' moment (p 29). I was experiencing the emotion of the moment as if I had been there. In Brechtian terms, the practitioner was standing outside the action, narrating it in the past yet re-enacting as if it was happening at that moment. The narration contained analysis of feelings, the importance of this meeting for the other actors and a description of the MP. The 'gestus' (Brecht 1964, p 42) or attitude of pleading as the document was held in two hands, revealed to the audience the tension, the excitement, on which rose or fell the dreams of the company.

P. had chosen that one scene to highlight; it stayed with me; I revisited it, replaying the scene in my head. I had an understanding of how dependant the work was on political and financial support and it resonated with me for all those times I have battled to get funding within a school. This embodied moment stirred my own sense of knowing the value of what we do and the frustration as we seek to share that knowledge with someone else. Here was a barricade we shared heightened by the re-enactment of the moment which resonated in the felt sense of a watching practitioner.

In this moment I know I have to capture my data through embodied means and that I have to develop a method which enables my participants to enact their stories alone, with me as facilitator and audience. Drama will be more than a tool of dissemination it will be integral to the entire research process (Norris 2000). A dramatic representation of data calls for a different way of generating data beyond the traditional qualitative interview.

Myers and Newman (2007) describe qualitative interviews as an, 'artificial situation' as they tend to be an encounter between strangers in a possibly unfamiliar location. The interviewee is asked to 'create an answer' (p. 3) within the constraints of time which they suggest is an act of 'improvisation' (p. 12). Improvisation is a fundamental part of theatre and drama education inviting exploration and leaps of imagination through vocal and physical embodiment. Bert Van Dijk (2011) sees improvisation as an, 'extremely powerful tool' which 'can be used to investigate the emotional depth of a situation' (p. 23). Norris (2009) believes that improvisation can help articulate ideas. Improvisation does not require a 'right' answer at the first or successive attempts. Rather, the participant is encouraged to experiment and reflect; a final answer may not be forthcoming. Perhaps I can embrace and harness this act of improvisation. The final answer is not necessarily the data that I seek as it may be the process rather than the final product that contains the richest data.

An interview can be regarded as a dramaturgical event which employs Erving Goffman's notions of social performance (Myers & Newman 2007). Goffman (1969) implies that people change their performance according to their situation and audience. Since the qualitative interview is already regarded as artificial, then perhaps it is an act of theatre as Myers and Newman suggest (2007). The participants re-enact their lives, or aspects of them. The words they speak are a monologue or dialogue and they choose what roles to play, as does the researcher (2007).

The theatre director Tyrone Guthrie (1960, p. 313) believed that:

Action on the stage is a stylized re-enactment of real action, which is then imagined by the audience. The re-enactment is not merely an imitation but a symbol of the real thing.

Perhaps using drama may acknowledge that the interview represents and symbolises real action but is not actually 'real' life. Perhaps the interview is real life only in as much as it is a real event in space and time. Interviews usually invite participants to recall past events or ideas but these are re-shaped by the participants as they are re-called and expressed. The participant's answers still require the researcher to imagine the original context or situation. This imagination according to Eisner (1998) is, 'an absolutely essential resource in the conduct of any kind of research' (p. 186). I wonder if my participants are willing to tell their stories through a stylised re-enactment, which both researcher and participant could re-imagine and interpret through a shared understanding of the language of drama. This embodiment may also enable me to capture their reflective process more clearly.

Victor Turner (1988) embraces drama in his ethnographic research believing that man is a 'homo performans' who 'reveals himself to himself' (p. 81) through performance. The process of reflecting and exploring the question or stimulus may be an interesting aspect of the data. Within drama education, 'metaxis' (Boal 2002) allows participants to reflect on the process while being involved in the drama. As a drama teacher I remain aware of my audience in a classroom and monitor my own performance. I hear the small voice over my shoulder, critiquing and encouraging and I alter my performance accordingly. It is possible to reflect on both the process and the product at the same time. It is one of the strengths of drama, the thinking that surrounds the doing. Norris (2009) invites his participants in a group context to, 'imaginatively reenact, to explore their tacit knowledge of the issue' (p. 107). I need to

find a way to give my participants the opportunity to reenact and reflect on their stories drawing on their drama expertise in a solo performance. Another advantage of using drama would be to bring participants' stories into the present and as Neelands (2004) suggests, 'to show life as it is being lived rather than to report on events that have already been lived' (p. 33). This may bring vibrancy to the stories and enable the audience and me to have a sense of a 'flesh and blood actual presence' (p. 33).

SO CLOSE AND YET SO FAR

However my critical brain questions whether drama can be a solo act. One of its greatest strengths is its ability to encourage group work and cooperation. On the shelf in my office sits a copy of *The Empty Space* (Brook 1968), reaching out for it another clue falls into my hands. Peter Brook believes that all that is required for an act of theatre to take place is for one person to walk across an empty space and for another to observe (1968). Theatre at its most basic stripped down to one actor, one audience, one action in one place. I see a great deal of theatre during this time including solo performances and I revisit chapters I have written about solo performance (Luton, et al. 2013; Hood, et al. 2014). My drama students often create solo work for senior assessments and this implies that there must be a way to develop a solo version of a drama workshop. I feel my method is tantalisingly close and yet still so far. I need to create a drama workshop for my participants in which they can play with ideas and tell their stories. I return to drama education resources and to the collection of drama conventions by Jonathan Neelands (1990) to help construct a data generation tool. I am going to invite the experts to use the methods they have developed to tell their stories. I do this by analysing my research questions and thinking about the best way to inspire an embodied response. I may want to find out what sustains my drama practitioners in the difficult times of drama education

but first I need to know what it is about drama that so enthralls them. I need to find metaphors and images inspired by drama education discourses to stimulate story telling. These resources must invite interpretation and allow my participants to use them in imaginative and unique ways. For as Van Dijk (2011) states, ‘an effective improvisation task has the actor jumping up, eager to play’ (p. 24).

It is vital that my process does not resemble a collection of disjointed and random activities. Neelands (2010 p. 49) suggests that a drama teacher should act as a ‘dramaturge’ and create a lesson like a play which:

...needs to be as subtle and crafted as any other dramatic sequence that is planned to unfold its meanings or themes in time and space and which moves the audience, progressively, towards a new felt understanding of the human issues and themes that are being dramatised.

Nora Morgan and Julianna Saxton (1989) believe that each drama lesson should be constructed using, ‘the four stages of the well-made play’ (p. 5). This structure has been used by playwrights for centuries to construct their dramas; exposition, rising action/complication, climax/crisis, and denouement. My developing method attempts to follow that shape beginning with the creation of a symbol of drama. The participants then deepen my knowledge of their character through the creation of a family tree and a role on the wall. The rising action and complication arises from the embodiment of the battles and barricades within drama and education praxis. The tension lowers to explore significant artefacts, building again in the exploration of the juggling metaphor. The denouement presents an opportunity to explore the hopes and dreams for the future of drama education.

After trialling the method it becomes apparent something is still missing. Stephen Daldry (2002, p. x) suggests that although

'drama can be used as a tool ... that is rather like watching a magnificent mask being used to carry cups of coffee'. I feel my method is still a coffee carrier rather than the magnificent mask. It lacks a purpose beyond that of doing drama for a piece of doctoral research. It needs the glue that holds the stories together. It needs a frame or context which will give the method a dramatic purpose. Dorothy Heathcote describes this as, 'the frame of reference in which you want the problem to be seen' (Johnson & O'Neill 1984, p. 151). It is as if we metaphorically place a picture frame around the subject under investigation allowing the participants to 'have to think from inside the responsibility of a situation' (p. 142). This frame according to Bowell and Heap (2001), 'propels the participants into discourse' (p. 56) so I decide to frame my workshop inviting my participants to enter and create the imagined world of the Museum of Educational Drama and Applied Theatre [MEDAT]. They begin by walking the space and imagining the building before creating their symbol of what drama education means to them.

The use of the frame encourages the imagination and allows my participants to be aware that what they share will be for public consumption. They have permission to shape their stories according to the context of MEDAT. As they re-enact their stories using props that I provide, they are not rushed onwards to the next question but can consider, reflect and to take their time to draw on their own experience and knowledge of drama education. I give the participants the right to refuse any task and confirm that not every section has to be accomplished. They have the right to remove data at the transcript stage. I listen and observe and remain open to altering the order of events. I decide to play a role, that of the Archivist's assistant, who sets up each 'point of departure' (Van Dijk 2011, p. 12) and remains beside the camera to observe and act as an audience. I decide on this role to allow me the flexibility to move between it, and my own persona. The resources that I use to stimulate the stories are derived from dramatic conventions, metaphors and visual

images inspired by some of the discourses surrounding drama education. The participants are invited to bring along two or three artefacts to share and to exhibit in the imaginary museum.

REVIEWING THE METHOD

The embodied reflections resonate with Brecht's (1964) description of Epic theatre in which he detailed a 'street scene', which could happen anywhere one might find, 'an eye witness demonstrating to a collection of people how a traffic accident took place' (p. 121). The witness to the accident plays the roles of different people involved and rather than 'becoming' his role, the actor demonstrates and describes the events. Brecht believed that the, 'demonstration would be spoilt if the bystanders attention were drawn to his powers of transformation' (p. 122). In the same way my participants are not called on to perform in depth characters but rather demonstrate the stories using a wide range of dramatic conventions. Seemingly simple incidents like a clash of personality within a school can become, through a dramatic focus, 'something striking' (p. 125). Their retelling invites the audience to listen, observe, reflect and possibly connect.

Drama in the classroom often involves the making and using of items to inspire improvisation and communicate stories. Each of the participants is provided with a few props which change and develop throughout the course of the research influenced by responses from the participants. Most of the participants take the opportunity to play and experiment with the resources. Episode two of my performance opens with a recorded montage of voices played by actors mediated from my participants' responses to the props.

- *Don't you ever play old women in your dramas? You've got to have a scarf.*

- *The wool- it's all so neat and tidy and I don't want to upset you by unravelling it.*
- *You don't have any books in your selection... Why is that?*
- *I find choosing items too restrictive.*
- *[Picking up a piece of red paper] This is a flag.*
- *What's it like to be an orange person? Okay move as a yellow person. If you had a green voice what would a green voice sound like?*
- *This is lovely, what a fun thing to do I think everyone should do this is a form of therapy.*
- *I like this very much, it's horribly self-indulgent ... I can see and feel things in three-dimensions - I can start making links.*
- *I knew I'd all the work it's a very good methodology.*
- *Wow this is amazing this is very fun. [Voice over ends]*

Figure 2
Props used by
the participants



I juxtapose the comments to immerse the audience in an auditory experience where they can hear both enthusiastic and uncertain responses to the props.

Kvale (1996) suggests that as researchers set about gaining information this, ‘puts strong demands on their craftsmanship, their empathy and their knowledge’ (p. 288). This process will draw on my own ‘connoisseurship’ (Eisner 1998) and my understanding of theatre forms and drama lesson planning. My participants are also connoisseurs being key drama education practitioners and theorists who have helped formulate drama education praxis. They are, ‘elite respondents’ (Burke & Innes 2004, para.4) chosen because they ‘can communicate information that is not available from any other source, from the vantage of his/her personal involvement in the source material’ (para.12). They understand drama processes intimately which is challenging and stimulating. Ackroyd & O’Toole (2010, p. 55) remind us that:

There is often a problem in the power dynamics between the researcher and the research participants, especially if the participants perceive themselves as less empowered and carry less cultural capital.

This method will attempt to use the participants' cultural capital to generate data, but as I begin this research I am conscious of their expert status. I feel a sense of being less empowered than my participants and in the early stage of research this affects my confidence. I am nervous about using my process with key published drama education practitioners. These are practitioners who inspire my own work and the drama education community through their praxis. However I am approaching this research through a lens of 'melancholy' (Gallagher, et al. 2010) feeling exhausted and frustrated about the role of drama education in schools. I am not in the mood for a hero discourse deliberately choosing as my metaphors 'battles and barricades'. My participants embrace the possibilities and I capture over seventeen hours of embodied material which reveal stories through action, narrative, song, use of space, props and even multi media. Drama studios are disrupted and transformed with balls of wool and chairs. Doors are opened so that participants' can enter as other characters. One participant creates a PowerPoint show, another, barricades from chairs. Others show their drama journeys through world maps, family trees and wobbly crucibles. They create monologues and speeches to imaginary audiences. Only one participant says they feel uncomfortable with using the props and choose to stay seated in the centre of the studio. The participants interpret the resources in many different ways and each reflection is different. This offers rich data for analysis which continues to this day.

As the Archivist's assistant I manipulate the dramatic forms and guide my participants through the dramatic process. As the researcher I try to remain as an observer rather than an intruder. As the audience I laugh and cry in response to the enactments. In terms of the data's validity and reliability the

methods make explicit the use of drama to capture the stories for a public audience. In the mediation and performance stage the stories are juxtaposed and synthesised, compared and contrasted. I believe the process has benefits for my research. Using an embodied reflective method my participants are given permission to play and reflect and to draw on the skills at the heart of their practice. The method celebrates artificiality and captures a process as well as a product. The participants are mobile and active in the space, bringing their stories alive, which leads to unspoken signals being as significant as spoken ones. The method frees me as the researcher from being too present in the data generation. It acknowledges that the interview situation is a specific construct which results in a presentation by both interviewer and interviewee with some kind of theatrical staging. I hope the embodied reflections make the shaping more transparent, through the agreed use of dramatic methods. Norris (2011) does not describe his work as making claims for truth but rather being, 'full of truths' (p. 30). Perhaps this construct will enable truths to be found and shared.

I find that the method lets me work as both researcher and artist using my drama skills. Patricia Leavy (2008) considers arts based research as a bridge, 'between the artist-self and the researcher-self' (p. 2). The research also acts as a bridge to connect me to my participants through our shared familiarity with the language of drama. This particular framed context may be new to my participants but they have a tacit knowledge of drama processes and conventions which becomes very apparent during the research. They are able to frame their thoughts, reflections, stories and responses within a dramatic context. They understand the importance of presenting themselves and putting on their best front (Goffman 1969). They are more consciously aware perhaps than non-drama practitioners of the importance of their vocal and physical demeanour. Burke and Innes (2004) suggest that, 'one of the serious drawbacks of using published interviews is that a reader is unable to enter the 'spirit'

of the interview and the interview context' (para.26). But John O'Toole (2006 p. 42) suggests that using drama in research may give back:

...some of the real-life energy, and visual and visceral impact of the original community. Interviews, dialogue and transcribed stories can spring back to life with the subtexts restored in full.

I hope that by using drama to generate and share the research it will help bring these drama educators alive lifting them from the page to the stage. My audience may also have a fuller sense of the original context. I am already conscious when I rehearse my 'data-drama' of how much more alive my performance feels to me as it attempts to capture the vocal and physical aspects of the stories. Thus the interview process and the dissemination may complement each other and draw closer to Norris' (2000, p. 45) view that, 'drama becomes a complete research activity when data is collected, analysed and presented in dramatic fashion'.

Later, after the data generation is accomplished I transcribe my videos using voice recognition software and I find myself re-speaking every line aloud, re-enacting gestures and including the participants' movements and vocal intonations as stage directions (Saldana 2011). This helps me connect more deeply with my participants' embodied stories. In the past few months some of the 'golden moments' (Saldana 2011, p. 28), those which particularly appealed to my own aesthetic and emotional senses, have been transformed into an hour long drama. I have distilled, synthesised, mediated and played with the stories, juxtaposing them with my own embodied reflection. The embodied responses seem to have provided layers of data as words, actions, gestures, use of space, symbols and images inspire the drama. There are contradictions and confirmations within the data. I play and re-imagine scenes comparing them with my own experiences of drama education. The act of research, using my method begins to bring me from the melancholic state. I feel stronger having engaged with my participants experiencing

their praxis and personalities off the page and on the stage. Using a different framing device, The Interactive Centre for Academic Researchers' Untold Stories [ICARUS] I carry out workshops with postgraduate students in Applied Theatre. Later I return to MEDAT again, and invite drama teachers to participate. Although these are carried out with several people in the space, each participant works alone embodying their reflections on practice. I find they play imaginatively with the resources, embodying and creating installations to share their thoughts and ideas. The space is disrupted yet alive with symbols and stories.

I am left wondering whether this method can be developed further and tried with non-drama practitioners. Would other participants be as embodied and as open to playing with props and resources to tell their stories in a framed context? One evening I am captivated as my teenage son, a non-drama person, recounts his own 'street scene' (1964), a story of an 'almost' accident in his car on the way home. He gesticulates and describes the action using a vibrant intonation to recount his emotions. He describes the weather and the road conditions and voices strong opinions on who was to blame. He is embodied and performative and I am engaged and emotionally involved in his story. Perhaps, as Helen Nicholson (2003) says, we all 'archive[s] our lives performatively' (p. 90).

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