Through ‘the Gauntlet’: creating multi-representative practices of community and ‘dialogic gaze’ using compassion-based exercises in a feminist actor training

by

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Abstract

This thesis explicates a practice as research exploration of how we can create multi-representative ('inclusive') practices in ensemble actor training through the use of compassion-based practices.

The main argument is that compassion-based practices in ensemble actor training create community as a transformative entity per bell hooks's and Audre Lorde's definitions. The understanding of self and others' similarities and differences are necessary for community and enabled through reciprocal exchange, which Mikhail Bakhtin calls 'dialogic'. Understood in this way, community both enables and requires a practice I offer called the 'dialogic gaze', a critical perspective that interrogates rehearsal and performance communications and interactions on behalf of the representation of the identities and experiences of all members.

My practice-based methodology explores compassion-based exercises for their potential to create community and dialogic gaze. The through-line of these explorations is 'the Gauntlet', an exercise focusing on voiced acknowledgments of similarity that I have adapted to also recognize difference. I locate myself as a pedagogic practitioner-researcher and thus facilitate these practices in three different training workshops with three various ensembles. Using qualitative methods, I garner and analyse behaviours, communications, and feedback from ensemble members during rehearsal and performance of a subsequent group devised piece.

Through moments of dialogic gaze and community, these practices support multi-represented ensemble work towards autonomy in theatre making that challenges ingrained patterns of cultural production and process, and aid practice in the dissolution of wider social oppressions that may evidence in rehearsal and training rooms.

My research has both conceptual and practical contributions: in the dialogic gaze as a named, multi-representative practice, and in the compassion-based practices that create and perpetuate both dialogic gaze and community in ensemble actor training. These can be extrapolated to ensemble practice in industry and societal groups beyond.

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Dedications

This research is dedicated to the legacy of Ruth Bader Ginsburg. I can, because she did.

This research is dedicated to the memory of Gary Peake, who taught me that gentleness is strength, and compassion can be easy.

This research is dedicated to the revolution for Breonna Taylor, and all Black women in America still awaiting justice. #SayHerName #BlackLivesMatter

And finally, this research is dedicated, as ever and always:

For the good of all sentient beings

Chapter One

Compassion-based practices for community and dialogic gaze; concepts and methodology

This thesis explicates a practice as research (PaR) exploration of compassion-based practices in an ensemble actor training carrying aims for social transformation. The video documentation of these explored practices can be accessed via the link given in the above key called, ‘Video Documentation’. The content of the videos analysed in this exegesis are also detailed in the description and in subtitles therein. To focus this inquiry, I conceptualised and explored three research questions using compassion-based practices. My primary research question asks how we can create multi-representative (‘inclusive’) practices in ensemble actor training through the use of compassion-based exercises. I define multi-representation as the normalisation of the representation of all identities in performance works made and experienced; rather than a typically cis-het, able-bodied, white male subject and cis-het, able-bodied, white female object (hooks, 1999, p. 125). The main conceptual argument is that compassion-based practices create community in ensemble actor training, as well as a concept I offer called the ‘dialogic gaze’, a chosen, trainable perspective and practice that critiques works made and experienced for multi-representation. Dialogic gaze is created from community and allows for those within it to take action for the radical release of oppressions via multi-representative performance making practices, through taking on the ‘perspective of the most marginalized’ as intersectional feminist author and professor Kimberle Crenshaw advocates (1989, p. 166). Dialogic gaze is one contribution this research makes to existing practice and theory in ensemble actor training. I also offer compassion-based practices that I have adapted for the purpose of community creation and dialogic gaze. I will contextualise and describe dialogic gaze and these practices in more depth in the following chapter.

My secondary research question asks how we can create community in actor training ensembles that seek to be multi-representative. ‘Black, lesbian, warrior, poet, feminist, activist’[1] and theorist Audre Lorde, and feminist theorist and democratic educator bell hooks

[1] Lorde introduced herself using her multiple identifications to make it clear who she was, and to ‘assert her existence in a world that made her existence difficult’ (2017a, p. v).

similarly define community as both a tacit sense of, as in 'connection'[2], and an intentionally built entity that acknowledges similarity and difference for the purpose of social transformation,[3] which I formulate as multi-representative practices in this research (hooks, 2003, p. xv, p. 197, Lorde, 2017a, pp. 14-18). I use Audre Lorde and bell hooks's similar notions of community as primary sources to conceptualise it towards social transformation through an intersectional feminist lens, recognizing the necessity to liberate those most marginalized. I align myself as an intersectional feminist pedagogic practitioner with respect to hooks and Lorde, while recognizing that I am a white, educated, queer American woman. I seek to engage compassion-based practice in an intersectional feminist pedagogy as one way to enact the concepts of community and social transformation via multi-representative practice. The outcomes of this research show that compassion-based practices facilitate community and dialogic gaze as multi-representative practices; and consistently so, when both similarity and difference are recognized and celebrated, as I will describe in the following.

My tertiary question asks how we can facilitate an ensemble in training to develop *perpetual* multi-representative practices. To support multi-representation as a habitual practice, I use Mikhail Bakhtin's 'dialogic', the 'constant interaction of meanings' that affect and 'condition' each other through mutual exchange in reciprocal dialogue (1981, p. 426). I used this concept as a tool for the adaptation of a compassion-based practice called 'the Gauntlet', a dialogic exercise consisting of verbal acknowledgements of similarity, adapted to facilitate acknowledgement of both similarity and difference, as I will describe and can be seen in (**Chapter One, Video 1,** The Gauntlet, **Chapter One, Video 4**, The adaptation for difference: 'What you may not see in me is'). Through this adaptation, I found that the understanding of self and others via the recognitions of similarity and difference in community can be enabled through 'mutual exchange in reciprocal dialogue' (1981, p. 426).

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[2] The value of connection is widely discussed in actor training, from Knebel's emphasis on the role of 'connection' with a partner in enacting the etudes of Active Analysis, to Michael Chekhov's 'ensemble feeling', which Chekhov defines as an 'open hearted contact', or connection with fellow ensemble members (Knebel, 2016, p. 125, Chamberlain, 2013, p. 84). Like Chekhov and Knebel, I am interested in the effects of this connection on actors in training, as well as in performance, however this research focuses on training as an initial area of inquiry.

[3] hooks and Lorde interchangeably refer to 'social transformation' as 'liberation from oppressions' 'liberation' (Lorde, 2017a, p. 14, p. 18) and simply 'transformation' (hooks, 2003). I will also use these terms interchangeably to give the wider context to my specification of social transformation as 'multi-representative practice'.

This exchange allows participants what Bakhtin calls an 'inner transformation' based on the understanding of self and others' experiences that enables new perspectives on behalf of each other (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). In Workshop Three, these new perspectives facilitated and perpetuated an activation on behalf of others through the understandings incorporated from dialogic recognitions of similarity and difference, and show them to be trainable as a critical perspective towards multi-representation. I recognize that perpetual practice is difficult to determine in a one-off workshop, thus my reference to 'perpetual' describes the practice throughout the workshops themselves. I also note that the potential for habitual practice of dialogic gaze and community beyond these workshops is possible with further engagement and adaptations of compassion-based practices for daily use, as I will describe.

To support dialogic gaze as a trainable practice that can be used to critique works made and experienced in actor training, I use bell hooks's notion of the 'oppositional gaze', a critical perspective Black female spectators take from the alienation experienced in viewing film and art that typically posits a white male as active subject and white female as passive object (1999, p. 122). The oppositional gaze critiques works made for their technical aspects and for Black women's under and misrepresentation. For hooks, the power of the oppositional gaze lies in its definition as a 'point of resistance' to the white male supremacist, sexist institutions perpetuated in these works (1999, p. 123). Inspired by both hooks's and Crenshaw's calls to perceive from the view of those most marginalized, my research shows that a similar perspective of resistance can be trained to address under and mis-representation in works made or experienced on behalf of all marginalised ensemble members (1989, p. 166, 1999, p. 122).

This trainable, critical perspective of resistance that encompasses all marginalised members and arises from activation on behalf of each other after dialogic exchanges celebrating similarity and difference is what I call the 'dialogic gaze'. This critical perspective interrogates rehearsal and performance communications and the content thereof on behalf of the representation of the identities and experiences of all members, and arises from the dialogic 'fusion' of understanding others' expressed experiences (Bakhtin 1981, p. 426). The dialogic gaze arises from, and also perpetuates community, through continual developments in understanding and celebration of each other's similarities and differences.

To create the dialogic, reciprocal communication exchange towards community and dialogic gaze, I offer two compassion-based practices, 'the Gauntlet' a dialogic exercise consisting of verbal acknowledgements of similarity, that I describe below, and the 'I' exercise', consisting of individual participants taking space in the group as a celebration of self with others. I define these exercises as compassion-based using my interpretation of David R. George's definition of compassion through the lens of Tay & Diener's development of Maslow's hierarchy of needs: compassion is the inspiration to action based on the recognition that while identifying in a multitude of ways, humans have the same basic needs (George, 1999, p. 97, Tay & Diener, 2011, p. 355). I further conceptualise compassion as being elicited from 'empathy' which author Lindsay Cummings defines as the feeling elicited from the imagined sense of another's experience, with awareness of our own fallibility in the interpretation (2016, p. 43). I use these definitions to position compassion as an action and to clearly delineate the role of empathy. Empathy has been extensively explored in actor training, from Thalia Goldstein's body of research, notably 'The Effects of Acting Training on Theory of Mind, Empathy, and Emotion Regulation' (2010), to Bruce McConachie's *Theatre and Mind* (2013), to Lindsey Cumming's *Empathy as Dialogue in Theatre and Performance* (2016). However, while related to empathy, compassion has not specifically been explored in actor training. In this, my research addresses gaps in the knowledge of compassion's potentially active role in training ensembles towards aims of social transformation via multi-representative practice. The compassion-based practice I focus on is 'the Gauntlet', which I have adapted to facilitate acknowledgement of both similarity and difference, enabling community creation per Lorde and hooks's definitions of it, and an understanding of others' experiences with which to 'fuse' and condition one's perspective (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). I utilized the Gauntlet in either original or adapted form in all three workshops for the exploration of community creation and dialogic gaze. The 'I' exercise is unique to Workshop Three and is described and analysed in Chapter Four of this thesis.

In a dialogic, compassion-based practice facilitating community and dialogic gaze, ensemble members work together towards equity and perpetual multi-representation in the making and critiquing of work in actor training. The perpetual practice of multi-representation has the potential to positively impact ongoing dialogues and practices concerning representation, often referred to as 'diversity', and 'inclusion' within actor training institutions and the industry beyond. These conversations can be seen in the advent of the Diversity School

Initiative[4] (2017), in recent discussions around the lack of representation of women in industry leadership at annual Theatre and Performing Research Association Conferences and ongoing Sphinx Theatre's *Women Centre Stage* symposiums (2018, 2019), and in discussions of race, class, underrepresentation and misrepresentation on screen and in performing arts and actor training industries at Shakespeare's Globe / Royal Central School of Speech and Drama's *21st Century Acting: Race and Inclusivity-What Now?* and *Shakespeare and Race* conferences[5] (2019). Perpetual multi-representative practice at the training level can engender habitual practices for the same in wider institutional levels, and create an expectation of and demand for the same in the performing arts industries beyond.

I qualify 'diversity' with inverted commas as it is a term that has often been problematized in conference panels on representation, recently and notably at Shakespeare's Globe / Royal Central School's *21st Century Acting: Race and Inclusivity-What Now?* and *Shakespeare and Race* conferences. 'Diversity' is problematic as it assumes a central node from which to be diverse *from,* which is typically conceived of as white, cis-gender, heterosexual (cis-het), able-bodied, and male (Kanu, 2019). In *On Being Included; Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*, Sara Ahmed problematizes the use of this word in institutions as a buzz word that 'replaced more critical terms like "equality" and "social justice" (2012, p. 1). 'Diversity' is a 'comfortable word' that can be seen by predominantly white institution as 'inclusive because it does *not* have a necessary relation to changing the organization's values' (Ahmed, 2012, pp. 65-66). The way this term is typically used gives the illusion of institutional change without the danger of actual transformation, thus perpetuating 'racism and inequalities to be overlooked' (2012, p. 14). Ahmed necessitates an examination of 'diversity' and a redefinition of commitments to and actions towards making institutional diversity 'a given' (2012, p. 30). While Ahmed works within the general higher education

[4] The Diversity School Initiative is a multi-level partnership organization that 'was set up to address under-representation and diversity in UK drama schools' (The Diversity School Initiative, 2021). They partner with drama training institutions to change outreach and recruitment, curriculum and staffing, and encourage 'equality of presence' of Black, Asian, Latinx, Global Majority, working class, and disabled students and lecturers (The Diversity School Initiative, 2021).

[5] These are but a few of the recent events discussing multi-representation. Each of these listed incorporated at least one panel discussion giving voice to the same question; why is there still a need for conversations about multi-representation in industry and training institution staff and leadership, as well as in student populations? In answer to this question, Oval House Artistic Director Stella Kanu put it, 'We still need a damn revolution' (2019). I wholeheartedly agree.

institutions and I in the ensemble, a micro-community within drama training institutions, Ahmed's critiques of diversity can be applied to this research. These are applicable in facilitating critiques of my own practice as multi-representative, and in the necessitation of commitments that are actionable, active, and transformative via compassion-based practices for multi-representation at the training level (Ahmed, 2012, p. 175). I agree that uncritical use of the term 'diversity' in the institution or training room perpetuates white, cis-het, able-bodied, male supremacy, obstructing efforts to dismantle these systems. However, like Kanu, I agree that terms such as 'multi-ethnic', 'pluralistic', 'multiply-identified', and 'multi-represented' better connote an embracing of our varying human identities with more equity and less hierarchy. As such I rely on these terms throughout this PhD to convey my meaning in this regard.

I also qualify the term 'inclusive' as it is contentious in its potential to be marginalizing itself through positive exclusion, and the assumption that there is, again, a 'normative centre' who includes 'others' (Graham & Slee, 2008, p. 280-283). It is with the notion of deconstructing this normative centre that I use and practice the term 'inclusive'. I will use this term interchangeably with 'pluralistic' or 'multi-represented' for a less hierarchical understanding of the all-embracing meaning of 'inclusive'.

Ahmed interrogates the often-blurry link between 'inclusivity' and 'diversity' as they are currently used in the institution. She explicitly writes of these terms as ones that obscure the necessity of recognizing our differences, which is a focal point of this PhD. Ahmed writes,

> Diversity is often used as shorthand for inclusion, as the happy point of intersectionality, a point where lines meet. When intersectionality becomes a 'happy point', the feminist of color critique is often obscured. All differences matter under this view. (Ahmed, 2012, p. 14).

Ahmed is discussing the necessity of making differences matter through picking apart 'diversity' and 'intersectionality' in their terminologies and associated practices. Diversity is more often equated with race, which obscures intersectionality when used as a 'shorthand' for inclusion (Ahmed, 2012, p. 14). Ahmed necessitates the unpicking of intersectionality, which is associated with all protected characteristics that include but are not limited to race. While Ahmed's focus is on institutional policy, her perspective is necessary here to describe

my purposes in recognizing difference for the purpose of facilitating community and dialogic gaze as multi-representative ensemble practices. These practices can create the commitment and actions Ahmed necessitates by fostering habitual practice of multi-representation in the ensemble, and by creating a demand for the same from students within the institution towards the institution itself, subsequently creating an expectation of the same in the performing arts industries (2012, p. 15). This inner-institutional ensemble demand can be combined with wider institutional policy, as well as staffing and curriculum changes that practice multi-representation. This would enable the 'transformation of an institution' Ahmed advocates as the true work of diversity practices (2012, p. 175).

In the following chapters I will detail and analyze my exploration of compassion-based practices with three ensembles over the course of this research, each group of increasing variance in experience and training as well as in social identifications. While I discuss and analyse these compassion-based practices, I position the Gauntlet as a through-line in this research; as I have facilitated it with all three ensembles, in three separate one-off workshops over the three-year span of this PhD. To further contextualise my analysis of these workshops I will first explicate and connect the key terms and concepts of feminist ensemble, community, the dialogic, compassion, oppositional gaze, and finally, the dialogic gaze introduced and defined above.

Key Terms and Concepts

Feminist ensemble practice

'Ensemble' is arguably impossible to define with precision. While there are recorded historical events in Egypt from 2000 BC, the ancient 'passion plays', it is not until Greek chorus in 700 BC and Sanskrit theatre in 500 BC that actors are written about as having been part of an *ensemble*, which, in theatre practice, can be generally defined as performance makers working together (Baumer & Brandon, 1981, p. xvii, Richmond, 2002, p. 517). Ensemble has developed from these originally documented forms in a multitude of ways, and attempts to define it must consider the varying availability of historic documented practice, seen in the lack of primary sources on classical Greek chorus and ancient Sanskrit theatre. Though these are the first documented, they are likely not the first instances of ensemble practice, as they are preceded by at least 1300 years of theatre history. It is important to consider the breadth of cultural diversity in the development of ensemble practices, the

ensembles' locations in the context of these varying cultural histories, the influence of shifting artistic paradigms, and ensemble practitioners' continuing developments.

As my ensemble actor training practice is located in England, it is here that I will situate my discussion, with reference to multi-cultural practices as necessary to contextualise myself. In this, I pull from John Britton's *Encountering Ensemble* (2013) and Dûska Radosavljevic's *The Contemporary Ensemble: Interviews with Theatre Makers* (2013). In his introduction, Britton analyses the multiple ways that ensemble is currently conceptualised and practiced, as discussed by the plurality of practitioners writing on ensemble practice in his edited collection (2013). Britton specifically references what he calls 'distinct "families" ' of metaphors' used to describe 'this elusive phenomenon' (2013, p 11). These metaphors are of music, with reference not only to 'the inner rhythm' as Joseph Chaikin of the Open Theatre writes (1991, p. 59), but also to the ensemble as a collective group of musicians, 'an orchestra' as Peter Brook discusses, in which 'each sound keeps its identity while merging into a new event' (1989, p. 106). Brook is describing a group of distinct individuals working together (towards the 'new event' of performance creation), an idea that is repeated throughout these metaphors and which I will analyse below.

The ensemble is also referred to as a 'social structure', with its most relevant reference being a 'community', described by Chaikin (1991), who defines the community as forming 'in relation to the work they are performing' (Chaikin, 1991, p. 28). This metaphor also includes references to ensemble as a 'family' by Director Giorgio Strehler (qtd. Delgado and Heritage, 1996, p. 266-267). This reference was made in my own training with Mischa Borokov at the Moscow Art Theatre School Summer Intensive (2014). Borokov referred to us as a 'family', with each member 'a cousin, a sister, an uncle, a mother' (Borokov, 2014). In this metaphor, each ensemble member has an individual role within the overall group, or 'family unit'.

Finally, ensemble has been defined according to metaphors 'of the body' in a variety of ways by practitioners including Maria Shevtsova (2004), and Phillip Zarilli (2009). This metaphor is perhaps best encapsulated by Britton himself, in naming ensemble as 'a single body built from the individual bodies of the performers' (2013, p. 11). In this conception of ensemble, each member maintains their 'individual body' while remaining unified in work together.

The conception of ensemble as a group of individuals in work together for a unified purpose lies within all three metaphors, and is further interrogated by Radosavljevic in *The Contemporary Ensemble: Interviews with Theatre Makers* (2013). In the introduction, Radosavljevic sums up the theatre making processes of her interviewees as 'the ensemble way of working' and describes them having a 'work ethos that is collective, creative, and collaborative' whether the ensemble is shifting responsibilities in the process of devising a piece, or working set roles (director, actor, tech team) in a text-based performance; or any combination thereof (Radosavljevic, 2013, p. 12). In this, Radosavljevic expands on the conception of individuals in work together to make explicit the collective, collaborative nature of contemporary ensembles, and names *all* those involved in creating performance as part of it: stage managers, lighting, set and costume designers, and props keepers, as well as performers and directors.

This group of individual theatre makers working together describes the aims of my practice, which is framed by bell hooks's notion of work together in community as a 'unity in diversity, diversity in unity' (hooks 2003, p. 109). This describes a similar necessity of 'individual' (diversity) working towards a common goal with 'others' (unity). These notions are recognised in Britton's ensemble practice of 'Self with Others', in which 'ensemble emerges from the relationship of each individual to each other individual', again necessitating individuals in unity with others (2013, p. 314). While the perspective of individual self in work with others is like my own, Britton and I differ in how and why we facilitate this sense: I through compassion-based practices for intersectional feminist aims of community and dialogic gaze, and Britton through a training regimen that seeks *via negativa*, or to 'deconstruct blockages' to impulse, and to 'shape responses' in a way that communicates clearly to an audience (2013, p. 316). I will contextualise my intersectional feminist practice in the following section.

Intersectional feminism

Up until recently, feminism has broadly been understood by its overwhelming focus and action towards women's equality[6], a common core tenet across a multitude of feminist

[6] Though relatively rare, there are methodologies and perspectives of feminist thought that advocate women's dominance, such as gynocentric feminism, which seeks to address women's oppression by arguing for 'the superiority of values embodied in traditional women's experiences' over that of men's (Young, 1985, p. 173).

perspectives. The contemporary feminism I locate myself in is best understood as intersectional, meaning that it accounts for an understanding of the complex ways in which humans are identified and oppressed; not only by gender, but by race, socioeconomic status, sexual preference, gender identity, ability, age, and other factors that are marginalized according to a white, cis-het, able-bodied male standard (Lorde, 1984, p. 10, Crenshaw, 1989, p. 165, hooks 2000, hooks, 2003, p. 197, Ahmed, 2012, p. 14, Lorde, 2017a, p. v). It is the understanding that the intersections of these identities can lead to complex, multiple marginalisations that characterizes intersectional feminism's approach to the fight for equality as all embracing. It is necessary that intersectional feminism is in fact, a practise, otherwise its material aims for overturning structures of oppression are negated; oppressions cannot be dissolved with theory and understanding alone.

Radosavljevic's definition of the 'contemporary' ensemble can be linked to intersectional feminist practice, though the theatre makers she interviews do not all explicitly identify as feminist. Radosavljevic defines the contemporary ensemble as one of 'shared authority, multi-ethnicity, cultural mobility, multilingualism, and interdisciplinarity' and that uses 'collaboration as strategy' (Radosavljevic, 2013, p. 12). In this, I recognise feminist pedagogic practices of 'shared authority' in which there is as level a hierarchy as possible between facilitator and student (hooks, 2003). I also recognise the intersectional feminist practice of assuming a group's multi-ethnicity, cultural mobility, and multilingualism, an assumption that characterises multi-representation as inclusive in these regards (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 165, Ahmed, 2012, p. 14, Radosavljevic, 2013, p. 12). While my practice is set in England, the students come from a variety of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. As a white, educated, American, native English-speaking woman working in a British intersectional feminist practice, it is necessary that I assume the students have a plurality of backgrounds different to my own. In practice of this, I continually interrogate my own experience for the ways I may be perpetuating and benefiting from racist and culturally marginalising systems. This may show up in my research workshops in the ways that I speak to students, which students I pay attention to, and in what ways I pay them attention: negatively, neutrally, or positively. I attempt to disrupt my own perpetuation of hegemonic systems by using inclusive verbal and physical languages, including parity of eye contact, generalised pronouns in reference to a general human, and use of the student's personalised pronouns (hooks, 2003, p. 44).

I use hooks's, Lorde's, and Crenshaw's conceptualisation's of intersectionality, marginalisation, and community as primary theoretical sources for my practice. However, it is important to frame this research in contemporary intersectional feminist thought, particularly as we are situated in a resurgence of social justice movements that are calling for radical institutional change. In the year of this writing, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black American man, was murdered by police in Minneapolis, Minnesota, during a heightened and necessary period of mainstream media coverage of police violence, brutality, racism and murder of Black Americans.[7] Floyd's murder ignited the existing Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, resulting in demands for the dissolution of multi-level and cross-industry white supremacist structures, practices, and policies, from Defund the Police[8], to We See You White American Theatre.[9] These movements have crossed over to England, seen in like Black Lives Matter uprisings, the removal of public monuments to historical figures that built their legacy on slave trade, slave labour, and racism, and similar calls for radical personal and institutional reform that centres anti-racist policy and action. My research has been influenced and ignited by these movements and seeks practical actions for multi-representation from within the ensemble to address oppressions that may evidence in the training room. I aim to facilitate the actors a personal, habitual practice of multi-representation, and crucially, an expectation for the same in their institutions and the wider industry they are training for to address these oppressions on a wider scale.

To reflect contemporary developments of intersectionality and marginalisation, I pull from Sara Ahmed's aforementioned *On being Included; Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life,* which describes the necessity of recognizing all marginalised identities in 'diversity work' within institutions, and calls for a critique of 'doing diversity' towards a 'narrative of repair, as [this] allows us to "recover" from racism by recovering the very signs of injury' (2012, p.

[7] In 2020 alone, globally publicized cases include Breonna Taylor, Elijah McCain, Ahmaud Arbery, and Tony McDade, among many others.

[8] Which calls for the abolition of police departments, or at least to cut and redirect police funds to increase social services rather than often-racist law enforcement practices and training (Bushey, 2021).

[9] Which is a pluralistic collective of 'Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) theatremakers that are 'exposing the indignities and racism that BIPOC, and in particular Black theatremakers, face on a day-to-day basis in the theatre industry' (We See You WAT, 2021).

17). I offer compassion-based practices for community creation and dialogic gaze as ways to 'do' diversity with aims for transformation (Ahmed, 2012, p. 17).

I also link Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou's *Dispossession; The Performative in the Political*, as developments of Crenshaw's ideas of 'marginalisation' in the authors' discussions of precarity (2013). Butler and Athanasiou describe precarious identities as 'those whose proper place is non-being' (2013, p. 19). Precariousness is related to 'socially assigned disposability' and describes 'modalities of valuelessness' which include racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, and ableism as well as conditions of oppression, such as impoverishment, sexual assaults, malnutrition, and governmental militarism and fascism (2013, p. 19). In this I relate intersectional feminism's 'marginalised identity' and 'multiply marginalised identities' to the precarious identity, as these concepts describe a 'socially assigned disposability' to identities that do not cross over with dominant characteristics of white, cis-het, able-bodied, middle-class maleness (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p. 19). Precarity does not necessarily directly address the intersection of these identities and the compounding marginalisation these intersections bring. I choose to use 'marginalised' as it is more clearly and primarily associated with the nuances of Crenshaw's, Lorde's and hooks's interrogations of intersectional identities (Lorde, 1984, Crenshaw, 1999, Lorde, 2017a, 2017b, hooks, 2000, 2003, 2018).

Community and ensemble

Through the lens of intersectional feminist practice, I define ensemble as a community that works together towards social transformation via multi-representative practice. While community can be created in any group with aims for social transformation, my work is specific to actor training and theatre practice and entails the making of work using pluralistic practices in ensemble communications, castings, and choice of text/performative content. My intersectional feminist actor training necessarily carries aims for community creation towards social transformation. Though I am situated in ensemble actor training, the concept of community and aims for social transformation are also recognized in applied theatres. In *The Politics of Performance: Radical Theatre as Cultural Intervention*, Baz Kershaw describes applied theatre as 'a theatre of social engagement, a theatre primarily committed to bringing about actual change in specific communities' (2002, p. 6). In *Applied Drama: The Gift of Theatre,* Helen Nicholson expands on this to delineate that there are multiple applied theatres,

and their commonality is that they 'link social and personal change to dramatic practice, and articulate a commitment to using theatre to break down social hierarchies and divisions' (Nicholson, 2014, p.10). As Kershaw discusses, I am also interested in 'actual change' in communities (2002, p. 6). Per Nicholson, the breakdown of 'social hierarchies and divisions' is part of my feminist practice, where I mitigate the potential for a hierarchical student teacher relationship as much as possible. The breakdown of social divisions is part of multi-representative practices, with the facilitation of ensemble members' individualities through the recognitions of similarity and difference towards community and dialogic gaze.

Kershaw goes on to specify that 'Always [applied theatre's] starting point was the nature of their audience and its community' (2002, p. 6). According to Kershaw, the point of change lies within the impact of performances on the audience and its community. As I am located in actor training, this research is focused on transformation within the *ensemble itself*, rather than the audience. I utilise training techniques that are typically facilitated as foundational to English actor trainings, such as the Moscow Art Collective[10] techniques, and Michael Chekhov's techniques including Psychological Gesture (Chekhov, 2002). These techniques also call for a practice of ensemble and connection, which I specifically facilitate through a feminist lens, for aims of social transformation via community and dialogic gaze. My aim in this training is for individual and ensemble performance skills rather than for specialization in applied theatre skills.

In setting this in actor training, my aim is to address feminist conceptions of social transformation as necessarily radical in practice. Though this research carries a transformative feminist pedagogic perspective, aims for social justice are not and should not only be associated with applied theatres. Nicholson writes that applied theatre is 'problematic if it is seen to stand in opposition to drama/theatre/performance as an art form' (2014, p. 7). Nicholson discusses this as a tendency to view applied theatres as less than other dramatic

[10] I am using the term 'Moscow Art Collective' as a feminist interrogation of actor trainings that typically refer to Konstantin Stanislavsky as the sole author of such (Radosavljevic, 2013, p. 12). Stanislavsky was ground-breaking in his quest for recreating real life on stage through the exploration of his own and ensemble acting techniques and text analysis, as well as the practical merging of various influences including the Beijing Opera, The Meininger Theatre, and Ayurvedic Yoga among many others at the Moscow Art Theatre exploratory training studios. However, Stanislavsky was not working in a vacuum, and many of his influences came from his colleagues, collaborators, and notably, his students. The ensemble explorations of the Moscow Art training studios informed Stanislavsky's thought and eventual writings, and I use the term 'collective' to encapsulate this.

forms. I argue that placing applied theatre in opposition to other forms is additionally problematic in the implication that aims for social change can only be transmitted through that medium. Here we run the risk of sidelining transformative aims into niche trainings when they are necessarily far-reaching, as Lorde, hooks, and Crenshaw position for true liberation (Lorde, 1984, Crenshaw, 1999, Lorde, 2017a, 2017b, hooks, 2000, 2003, 2018). By bringing my focus on feminist aims for social transformation and community creation into institutional ensemble actor trainings, I am intentionally making this change radicalised, and reviewing the notion that theatre is a function of community and is thus capable of transforming it. Compassion-based exercises may be engaged in applied theatre trainings for purposes similar to my own, and would work effectively within curriculums that specifically focus here. I will briefly describe this in Chapter Five of this thesis.

I have conceptualized community using an intersectional feminist lens that necessitates practice. The definition is based on Audre Lorde and bell hooks's similar notions of it as defined above; a tacit sense of and an entity intentionally built that acknowledges similarity and difference for the purpose of social transformation (Lorde, 2017a, pp. 18–19, hooks, 2003, pp. 197). For hooks, community is a feeling or sense, as well as an entity that can be created. We do the work of building community together through connection with each other in our similarities and our differences (hooks, 2003, p. xv, p. 197). She calls community 'a source of hope', which is present when 'we are truly teaching and learning' in ongoing dialogue with each other, our students, and the world (2003, pp. xv–xvi). Within community is 'a shared commitment and common good' that recognizes every voice, focuses on risk rather than safety, and dialogue in conflict (hooks, 2018, p. 40).

Lorde recognizes community as necessary for liberation from oppression. She writes:

> Without community there is no liberation, only the most vulnerable and temporary armistice between an individual and her oppression. But community must not mean a shedding of our differences, nor the pathetic pretence that these differences do not exist. (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18)

Community is togetherness, and it is only through community that self and other's oppressions are transformed into true freedom (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18). Community allows us the security to enact the 'chaotic process' of envisioning the future and the 'concomitant

power to effect those changes which can bring that future into being' together (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18). Both Lorde and hooks recognize that within the process of community creation is a necessary 'finding what connects us' in similarity (hooks, 2003, p. 197). hooks speaks of this in terms of finding similarity of 'universal yearnings'[11] to create a 'shared world' (hooks, 2003, p. 110, p. 197). Through these shared yearnings we recognise likeness at the base of our humanity despite identity differentiations. Lorde speaks of shared joy which 'lessens the threat of difference' (hooks, 2003, p. 110, Lorde, 2017, p. 10). Connection can be a joyful celebration of how we are alike.

However, community is not solely based on sharing similarity in togetherness. What marks community via both hooks's and Lorde's perspectives is the necessity to recognize similarity *and* difference in its creation, enabling the ensemble to be one that works together, embracing all members' identities and representations. hooks writes, 'finding out what connects us, revelling in our differences, this is the process that brings us closer, that gives us a world of shared values, of meaningful community' (hooks, 2003, p. 197). Awareness and acknowledgement of difference as a 'dynamic human force' allows a whole recognition of the definitions of each individual, facilitating a full participation in community based on their differing, celebrated strengths (hooks, 2003, p. 197, Lorde, 1984, p. 45). Celebrating difference allows for a joyful sense of autonomy within the collective, the 'unity within the diversity' that hooks speaks of (2003, p. 110). This acknowledgement and celebration of difference benefits group work through the useful application of varying strengths and the unviolated autonomy in participation. The processes of recognition and celebration of similarity and difference allow us to create a shared 'world' together from which, in Lorde's view, we collectively enable the vision for and actions towards liberation (hooks, 2003, p. 197, Lorde, 2017a, p. 18).

In her discussions with Judith Butler, Athena Athanasiou interrogates difference in her relation of community to 'precarious relationality', which describes the interrelation between 'those whose proper place is non-being' which is related to the 'socially assigned disposability' of the precarious identity described above (2013, p. 19). They also call those 'whose proper place is non-being' the 'dispossessed', which I liken to marginalised

[11] In 'universal yearnings', hooks refers to common human needs (2003, p. 110, Tay & Diener, 2011, p. 355). It is from this perspective that I use the term 'universal' throughout this research.

communities (2013, p. 19). Akin to Lorde and hooks, Athanasiou poses the question ‘can we think of community without eradicating difference, and in which…people share precisely a certain impossibility of being-in-common’ (2013, p. 117).

Taking this further for those who are attempting[12] allyship, Athanasiou asks ‘How can “we” then figure modes of response and solidarity that do not reify the ‘dispossessed’ ….and allow for a separateness that works as an invitation to a (political) community?’ (2013, p. 136). As a cis, white, queer feminist pedagogue I often find myself in the position of attempting allyship and solidarity with students whose experiences are not reflective of my own. I interrogate how I may do this without remarginalizing students, while also encouraging differences in community. I respond to this ethical question with the previously mentioned practices of interrogating my position in the room, parity of attention and eye contact, using inclusive terminology and accurate names and pronouns (p. 20). Additionally, I offer the use of compassion-based practices as a way to embrace similarities and differences towards practices that represent the identities of all members.

Dialogism and community

The dialogic gaze arises from and perpetuates community to create a framework for multi-representative practices and perspectives. Dialogic gaze is built from Laura Mulvey’s male gaze theory, bell hooks’s oppositional gaze theory, and Mikhail Bakhtin’s ‘dialogism’, all of which I will contextualise in the following.

Bakhtin defines dialogism as:

> The characteristic epistemological mode of a world dominated by heteroglossia. Everything means, is understood, as a part of a greater whole-there is a constant interaction between meanings, all of which have the potential of conditioning others. (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426)

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[12] I use the term ‘attempting’ allyship, as it is not for me to determine whether or not I am the ally of those whose social identifications and privileges are different to my own. My allyship (or lack thereof) is determined by those I am attempting to ally with, not by myself.

Dialogism is the way of knowing in a world of 'heteroglossia', which Bakhtin describes as *'another's speech in another's language*, serving to express authorial intentions but in a refracted way' (1981, p. 324). Bakhtin is saying that all speech and language have incorporated within them other speeches and languages that create heteroglossia, 'hetero' meaning 'different' as a scientific prefix, or 'another' from the Greek root word 'heteros', and 'glossia' meaning 'language' or 'tongue'. Within every language are other languages, there is no one pure language, or 'monoglossia' (1981, p. 291). Bakhtin analyses the use of language in the novel, specifically in Dostoevsky's works, to conceptualise heteroglossia. He uses the widely distributed written word to interrogate the idea that heteroglossia is 'pre-figured in language itself' (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 326). As language is central in a society and transmits that society's culture, heteroglossia is also then a central part of society and the transmission of culture, which Bakhtin calls 'social heteroglossia' (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 326). Heteroglossia 'serves two speakers at the same time', and each may have different meanings and expressions to their speaking that affect and change each other in a dialogic relationship. Bakhtin's notion goes beyond 'utterances' to subvert the hierarchical notion of 'foundational knowing' in broader contexts. Dialogism implies this lack of hierarchy in the 'constant interaction of meanings, all of which have the potential of conditioning others' where no one meaning, linguistically, culturally, or otherwise, can be prioritised over another (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). The relativity and processual, mutual affectation ensconced in the 'dialogic' is the central way of knowing in a heteroglossic world containing multiple meanings.

Bakhtin has notable contentions with theatre as a 'monologic' entity, and a hierarchical one. He interprets the footlights to separate the audience and actors in relationship and in importance, and sees the text as prioritizing the author's voice, rather than an equal representation of character and author found in Dostoevsky's novel (1981, pp. 265-266, p. 405). However, Bakhtin's contentions can be easily refuted or even expanded on, as Marvin Carlson does in *Speaking in Tongues*: *Languages at Play in the Theatre* (2006). Carlson examines multiple ways that heteroglossic practices exist in theatre: primarily by reflecting linguistic diversities in performance, through text translation, adaptation, and access, and in the subversion of dominant political agendas, as in post-colonial and anti-racist works (2006, pp. 95-100).

In 'Theatre as a "translation zone": multilingualism, identity and the performing body in the work of *Teatro delle Albe'*, Cristina Marinetti diverges slightly from Carlson to see

'theatrical heteroglossia as a subversive space where linguistic and performative practices challenge the monologic lens of authorial vision' (2018, p. 5). Marinetti describes the utilization of the performer's body in translation of performance to subvert the author's 'politics of language', particularly in terms of the mediation of their different identities and experiences (2018, pp. 5-6). My use of Bakhtin holds similar aims in the capacity of actor training. The pluralistic training practices I offer extend Marinetti's examination of performance into actor trainings that can help facilitate the dissolution of dominant oppressive structures at a primary level. The habitual, multi-representative training practices this research has generated can help to fully realise Marinetti's performance practices towards challenging the 'monologic lens' of the author's vision. Thus, Marinetti and Carlson's subversion of Bakhtin's contentions of theatre as a monologic practice lay a foundation to further support my research and extend its reach from training to performance, which I will describe as the next steps in the conclusion of this thesis.

Because there is a 'constant interaction between meanings' in the dialogic, there is no concrete foundational meaning that can be referred to as authorial (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 425). Thus, dialogism is a recognition that there are a multiplicity of perspectives, voices, and meanings (Robinson, 2011). Because there are multiple standpoints, meanings cannot be judged by the same standards, and any sense of 'truth' is relative and shifting. Hence, it involves a world which is fundamentally irreducible to unity (Robinson, 2011).
Author Esther Pereen writes, 'Dialogism proposes a relation not of equality or even contingency, but of a simultaneity able to accommodate difference and distance as well as similarity' (Pereen, 2008, p. 14). Because the world cannot be reduced to a unity, it must consider both similarity and difference. In this way, dialogism is closely linked to Lorde and hooks's notions of 'community' through the like necessity of recognition of similarity and difference and the notion of honouring 'multiple voices' (hooks, 2003, p. 40, Lorde, 2017a, p. 18). For Lorde and hooks, these recognitions are necessary for true community in aims for social transformation (Lorde, 2017, p. 18, hooks, 2003, p. xv). For Bakhtin, this is a state of being, rather than an intentional construction.

The community Lorde and hooks describe and that I aim to facilitate can then also be understood as a 'dialogic community', while 'autonomy' and 'individual' can also be understood as part of an 'intersubjective self'. Bakhtin's notion is that our identity is formed through our dialogic and reciprocal relationship with other people, as we affect and change

ourselves and each other (Pereen, 2008, p. 14). Identity formation necessitates a social world, and for Bakhtin and arguably Lorde, dialogism is the specific way that we form a social identity, through the communicative exchange with other people. Pereen writes of dialogism 'as a particular ethics of intersubjectivity that relies on the preservation of alterity in identity' (Pereen, 2008, p. 14). This can be likened to Lorde's call for the necessity of difference in defining who we are (Lorde, 1984, p. 10). Simply put, through our dialogic relationship with others we define who we are (I), and who we are not (you), through reciprocal exchange. Dialogism means 'responding to alterity without negation or assimilation' (Pereen, 2008, pp. 17-18). This supports Lorde's idea that the recognition of and acceptance of difference preserves the boundaries of ourselves as individuals in relationship to each other (Lorde, 2017a, p. 8). Bakhtin, like Lorde, is saying that difference is supported by acceptance, and it is not necessary to assimilate what is different about someone nor to shift either likeness or differences towards homogenization (Pereen, 2008, pp. 17-18, Lorde, 2017a, p. 8).

For Bakhtin, Lorde, and hooks, the understanding of others' experiences in the world through the 'recognition' of similarity and 'revelling' in difference allows for true 'togetherness' to take place, in that each member remains a self-defined individual while working together in the group (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426, Lorde, 1984, p. 10, Lorde, 2017a, p. 14, p. 18, hooks, 2003, p. 197). This connects with contemporary notions of ensemble, and in my practice, awareness of each other's similar and unique experiences in the world allows ensemble members a broader perspective towards feminist actions of de-marginalisation and multi-representation through affectation from the dialogic exchange (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426, Britton, 2013). If we can connect with our similarity and know what we are looking for in terms of the way others are oppressed that may be different from our own oppressions, we can better act to together transform oppressions that may arise in the work. This is the start to the concept of 'dialogic gaze', which I will contextualise and describe in the following section. First, I will discuss Laura Mulvey and bell hooks's notions of 'gaze' and the applicability of these in actor training. Then I will describe how I extend these ideas with the dialogic, and how a dialogic gaze can be trained in the creation of community through compassion-based exercises.

Notions of 'gaze'

The white male gaze and the oppositional gaze

In her 1975 article 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', Laura Mulvey discusses a concept she calls the 'male gaze', in which women in cinema are seen as the object 'of the

combined gaze of [male] spectator and all the male protagonists in the film' (Mulvey, 1975, p. 13). The gaze is considered the active perspective, and the gazers as pleasure-taking subjects rather than pleasure-giving objects. The cinema is typically aimed at a white and male spectator, and those conceiving, producing, and represented in it are often white men. Mulvey problematizes this by recalling Lacanian development theory. As children develop, we begin to identify the reflection in the mirror as a more 'ideal version of who we are' (Lacan, qtd. Mulvey, 1975, pp. 9-10). This identification becomes extrapolated to human images seen outside of the mirror, including in cinema, allowing cinematic images to also become our 'ideal version' of self (Mulvey, 1975, p. 9-10). As the usual maker, producer, and assumed consumer of cinematic works, the cis-het, white male notion of 'ideal self' is more often the representation transmitted, and on screen they are both more visible and more positively represented (hooks, 1999). Peggy Phelan writes, 'Representation follows two laws: it always conveys more than it intends; and it is never totalizing' (2005, p. 2). The representation of usually white, cis-het males conveys more than just the representation of this demographic, it conveys it as the ideal standard; which marginalises and alienates those that do not see their race, gender, or sexuality in this model. This is additionally problematic as an audience is compelled to identify with the cis-het, white male perspective as the 'ideal version of self', what Mulvey calls 'the spectator's surrogate', regardless of their gender or race (1975, p. 12). Therein also lies a power dynamic in that men are seen as the subjects, the active 'lookers', while women are seen as the passive object, to be 'looked at'. There are multiple layers to this power dynamic as there is a distinct 'pleasure taking' in looking at another as an object (Mulvey, 1975, p. 10). The power dynamic of the male gaze then doubly privileges white men as both the ideal subject who takes pleasure in looking at the white woman object, who is responsible for being pleasing to look at. This is coupled with the representation of white women as passive and white men as active (Mulvey, 1975, p. 11). The perpetual media representation of the active white male, the assumption of an active white male viewer, and the reified, hierarchical distance between male and female perpetuates white supremacist patriarchy (hooks, 1999, p. 124).

In her discussions of the male gaze, Mulvey misses a crucial aspect of the male gaze and its problematic effects when she does not specifically discuss Indigenous, Asian, Latinx and

Global Majority women.[13] bell hooks interrogates this point in 'The Oppositional Gaze; Black Female Spectators' (1999). Black female spectators are doubly alienated from typical cinema in both gender and race: white men more often make, are represented in, and expected to be a typical viewer (Mulvey, 1975, p. 13, hooks, 1999, p. 123). Nor can Black female spectators identify with the usually white woman who is typically objectified on screen (hooks, 1999, p. 121). From this exclusion comes a critical view that hooks calls the 'oppositional gaze', a Black female spectator's active choice not to identify with these typical characters and to take pleasure in interrogating the work in 'aspects of content, form and language' (hooks, 1999, p. 122). This perspective disrupts Mulvey's binary of active/male and passive/female and exposes it as only partially inclusive in describing the experiences of female spectators in general (Mulvey, 1975, p. 11, hooks 1999, p. 123). The oppositional gaze subverts the male gaze by empowering Black and Global Majority female spectators who find pleasure in their own looking and in deconstructing the work looked at (hooks, 1999, p. 126). hooks writes that 'black women must actively resist the imposition of dominant ways of knowing and looking' in order for this gaze to become a 'site of resistance' (hooks, 1999, p. 128). The resistance is in the active choice to reject the dominant and marginalising cultural confluence of the white male voice with power and authority, and as the only 'active, pleasure-taking subject'.

Bakhtin's concept of a 'monologic world'' can be likened to the primacy of the active white male subject.[14] In a monologic world, everything is an 'object' in a 'dominant perspective' (Robinson, 2011). Mulvey and hooks would call the dominant perspective the 'white male gaze'. Political theorist Andrew Robinson explicates Bakhtin's idea of 'object' saying, 'since other subjects have value only in relation to the transcendent perspective, they are reduced to the status of objects' (2011). This is easily likened to Mulvey's subject/object dichotomy, in

[13] hooks applies this theory to Black female spectators, and I add Indigenous, Asian, Latinx, and Global Majority viewers as those who are not Black that are equally alienated from identifying with the primarily white characters shown on screen at the time of hooks's writing. 'Global Majority' is a commonly used term for Black, Brown, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and People of Colour. This is a problematic term that does not accurately transmit the multiplicity of racial and cultural characteristics therein. I have used it here as a means to address the alienation of people who do not identify with the white people and narratives overrepresented on screen.

[14] It should be noted that Bakhtin himself was white, heterosexual, disabled, and male. I pull from his work as a primary source for the dialogic, which gives value to this research in the dialogic notions of radical relativity, mutuality, inner transformation, and intersubjectivity, and as a support to Lorde and hooks's notions of community.

which female objects are positioned relative to the 'transcendent' male subject (1975, p. 64, Robinson, 2011). Robinson's transmission of 'value' inherent in Bakhtin's 'monologic world' also describes the tension hooks problematizes in discussions of Black women's critical gaze (hooks, 1999, p. 121, Robinson, 2011). This gaze arises from a forced evaluation in relation to the white female object and white male subject on screen (hooks, 1999, p. 121). As there is little value to be found in the absence of representation, Black women are thus alienated, and can choose to resist the imposition of relation to either typically white representation by adopting an oppositional gaze (hooks, 1999, p. 121, Robinson, 2011).

Bakhtin writes in regards to his socio-cultural context of the novel as the point of departure for influence on a society**,** 'As such they encounter one another and co-exist in the consciousness of real people - *first and foremost*, in the creative consciousness of people who write novels' (1981, p. 292). Bakhtin is writing in a time where mass media was limited to the written *and* performed word. Bakhtin's contentions with the theatre may have limited the scope of the ways in which he posited that we encounter and coexist, from the 'creative consciousness' of the playwright, to the performance makers in dialogue with each other and the audience (1981, p. 292). It is arguable that Bakhtin did theatrical audiences a disservice by not acknowledging their own 'creative consciousness' and autonomy in interpreting works experienced. As such, he neglected the dialogic impact theatre has on varying levels of society beyond the stage, via the audience. Though he avoided this argument, his ideas can be linked to theatre and its societal impact, including contemporary theatre as a point of departure for influence. For Mulvey and hooks, the focus is on the influence of the screen, the definition of which has been expanded from television and cinema to computers and mobile phones since the time of their writings. These are the mass modes of influence we are training actors for now, which is why perpetual multi-representative practices in training are crucial towards the mass multi-representation itself that is necessary in these modes for radical change.

The dialogic gaze

Athanasiou describes a community that is 'centered on considering the vulnerability of others and recuperating collective responsibility for the lives of one another' (2013, pp. 135- 136). It is the resistance and deconstruction inherent in the oppositional gaze that I argue can be taught to all students for actions towards a collective responsibility of social transformation via multi-representative practice. To enact Crenshaw's call for centring the perspective of the

most marginalised in order for true, radical liberation, a gaze inclusive of all marginalised can be trained as a perspective for all students (1989, p. 166). Students in British actor trainings claim multiple intersecting identities that are marginalised according to the white, cis-het, male standard hooks speaks of (1999, p. 121). These include those identifying as disabled, as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, or asexual (LGBTQIA), of varying class systems, ages, accents, facilities with English, and with a range of religious beliefs, as well as varying races and genders. These can be likened to the 'multiple voices' that Bakhtin articulates as part of the dialogic (1981, p. 368). I argue that it is necessary then to widen the critical gaze to encompass all identities that are typically marginalised (hooks, 1999, p. 121). Like the oppositional gaze, this all-encompassing critical gaze would be a site of resistance to structures of oppression that Phelan says 'name…arrest and fix' those who are 'other', and hooks and Phelan conceive would open up the 'possibility of agency' towards the recognition and naming of self as an active subject (hooks, 1999, p. 116, Phelan, 2005, p. 2). Like the oppositional gaze, it would be actively critical of representation and inclusivity in works that they see and create regardless of gender, racial, sexual, abled, lingual, or religious identifications. This critical gaze would work in conjunction with Robinson's notion of intersubjectivity, which counters the objectification of subjects when they are only valued 'in relation to the dominant perspective' through relinquishing a 'dominant perspective' and valuing everyone in relation to each other (2011). This is accomplished through the active recognition of everyone as a subject.

Robinson writes, 'A dialogical work constantly engages with and is informed by other works and voices' (2011). This critical gaze recognises all as subjects, and activates the community's aims for the radical release of oppressions through the understanding of each other's 'voices' via intersubjective dialogue (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 426-427). The dialogic exchange is a 'constant interaction of meanings' through which people are 'transformed' in the 'fusing with parts of others' discourses' (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426, Robinson, 2011). We can incorporate another's perspective through engagement in dialogic exchange, which transforms us (Robinson, 2011). This transformation affects the way that we then perceive the world, allowing us to critique it on behalf of others' experiences that may not be like our own, based on our understandings of such from dialogic exchange. Grounded in actor training, this transformation allows us to critique our own training and performance practices and works experienced for multi-representation. As Robinson states, 'Even within a single perspective, there are always multiple voices and perspectives' because we borrow from

others (Robinson, 2011). From this borrowing, our perspective becomes multiple, and dialogic gaze becomes practice.

Thus, as Lorde and hooks argue for the necessity to work together in community for social transformation and promote dialogue as the method for manoeuvring through this work together, Bakhtin's notion of the dialogic explicates the effect of this engaged dialogue towards a practical framework for the radical release of oppressions, through the transformation of our perspectives in understanding others' experiences. This enables us to 'look out' on behalf of others whose experiences may not be similar to ours, and to practically 'take on the perspective of the most marginalised' to transform oppressions for all (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 166). The perspective and practice of looking out on behalf of others for the radical transformation of all oppression is the 'dialogic gaze'.

Like oppositional gaze, the dialogic gaze is a site of resistance through the choice of it as a way of critiquing; although with an expanded perspective based on the understanding of others' experiences rather than solely our own. As it is a choice and a tool for action and seeing, the dialogic gaze can be trained through structured dialogue. I offer the dialogic gaze as a trainable aspect of community and a radical site of resistance to all oppressions, particularly those that we may not personally experience. Audre Lorde writes that 'without community there is no liberation' (2017a, p. 18). To transform oppressions perpetuated by the cis-het white male gaze, we need community, which is built on both the recognition of similarity and celebration of difference; a necessity in our 'multi-voiced' world of actor training (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 368, hooks, 2003, p. xv, Lorde, 2017a, p. 18). I offer dialogic gaze as one way community can do this.

Dialogic gaze examples

To help clarify this concept, I have delineated a non-exhaustive list of potential ways in which the dialogic gaze can be activated:

- Getting a chair for an ensemble member that has disclosed a hidden mobility issue
- Calling attention to an unheard, overlooked, or ignored ensemble member in group communications

- Making physical space for all (shifting the room, or physical positions so that all are easily included, taking a step back after speaking as an invitation for others to speak)
- Making emotional space for all (allowing ensemble members to feel, inviting ensemble members to express in communication verbally or physically)
- Making sure that the content of the conversation is multi-representative (using correct or generalised pronouns, using language that is inclusive of identities and easy to understand)
- Making sure the structure of the conversation allows room for expression for all who choose to (giving time for responses, making sure views are heard before moving on to new topics)
- Making sure the content of the performance is multi-representative
- Making sure the performance is structured to be multi-representative (equitable time on stage, conscious casting, accessible and multi-represented themes and narratives)

In this research I sought the potential to train dialogic gaze as a tool by fostering community through structured recognitions of similarity and difference facilitated by dialogic, compassion-based practices (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18). I found evidence of community and dialogic gaze utilising celebrations of similarity in Workshops One and Two, however these were inconsistent in light of occasionally gendered communication patterns. I found more clear and perpetuated practices of community and dialogic gaze in Workshop Three, where I utilised celebrations of both similarity and difference, providing compelling evidence of the necessity of recognising both of these. I describe these workshops in Chapters 2-4 of this thesis. First, I will describe the compassion-based practices I utilised to achieve these results.

Compassion-based practice

I am using compassion-based communication practices to create community and dialogic gaze as they have been shown to facilitate cooperation and conflict resolution amongst disparate social units of people; from couples in partnership to rival gangs, as described in Marshall Rosenberg's *Non-Violent Communication* (2015). This was also shown across multiple disciplines, from Communications to Cognitive Science, where compassion training was found to increase 'prosocial behavior', awareness of other's emotional states, and 'emotional processing' in self (Goetz et.al, 2010, Condon et.al, 2013, Lutz et.al, 2008, Rosenberg, 2015, Weng et.al, 2013). These findings were consistent across groups of people

with multiple identities, which supports hooks and Lorde's calls for embracing the similarity and difference that will inevitably arise in multi-represented community (hooks, 2003, p. xv, Lorde, 2017a, pp. 14, 18). As actors are in 'social relationships', compassion-based practices directly impact a multi-represented ensemble's ability to maintain autonomy within the unity, use conflict as a creative force and their disparate strengths for radical transformation of oppressions via theatre practice (hooks, 2003, p. 109, Lorde, 2017a, p. 14). In this research, I have found that this appears more apparent when compassion-based practice facilitates celebration of similarity and difference, as I will describe.

I define compassion using David R George's definition; the recognition that there is no 'difference between [self] and others' (George, 1999, p. 97). While this appears to contradict Lorde and hooks's calls for celebrating difference, the 'lack of difference' in this definition of compassion is akin to the similarities hooks describes as 'the unity within diversity…yearnings that have to do with universal spirit' (hooks, 2003, pp. 109-110). I liken these 'yearnings' to Louis Tay and Ed Diener's expansion of Abraham Maslow's set of universal human needs, listed in 'A Theory of Human Motivation' as a hierarchy of physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization needs[15] (Maslow, 1943). These needs have been expanded by others to include cognitive, aesthetic, and transcendence needs (Ryff & Keyes, 1995, Ryan & Deci, 2000). Most relevantly, 'connection with others' was added as a qualification to social needs, which is an aim of this PhD and a frequently mentioned positive feedback from participants. Tay and Diener also confirmed other studies that suggested these needs are universal across countries, although access to fulfilment of basic needs varies by country (2011, p. 354).

Through this lens, George is saying that underneath our identity differences, all humans need security, sustenance, shelter, sex, love, respect, connection, beauty, and intellectual provocation (1999, p. 97, Tay and Diener, 2011, p. 354). The recognition of this is at the heart of compassionate response: knowing that a person who is different from us still wants and needs what we do, but may be forced to go about attaining it differently depending on

[15] Tay and Diener are among many who also problematize the structure of these needs as a hierarchy, saying, 'Although the most basic needs might get the most attention when you don't have them, you don't need to fulfil them in order to get benefits' (2011, p. 354). They are saying that needs can occur concurrently with each other, rather than are contingent upon each other. I use this interpretation in my formulation of 'needs'.

their social identifications and privileges, which may serve to ease, limit, or obstruct their attainment of these needs. The feeling that arises from the imagined needs of others, with the understanding that our interpretation is fallible, is empathy, which motivates compassionate action on behalf of others (Cummings, 2016, p. 43). The feeling of empathy and activation of compassion can help us understand how to work with each other for the radical release of oppressions.

Work with compassion is a particular sticking point for feminist practice, due to gendered constructions negatively associating 'the feminine' with 'feeling'[16] (Ahmed, 2014, p. 3). In *Affective Relations; the Transnational Politics of Empathy*, Carolyn Pedwell positions empathy and compassion as 'affective relations and practices' (2014, p. 2), having already defined 'affect' as 'emotions, feelings, and affect' in her co-authored article, 'Affecting feminism: Questions of feeling in feminist theory' (Pedwell and Whitehead, 2012, p. 115). Sarah Ahmed also links compassion to emotion in her interrogations of affect in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*[17] (2014). Both authors interrogate the links between emotions and power, Pedwell referring to affect as a non-linguistic part of intersubjectivity and examining the 'links between affect and gendered, sexualised, racialised and classed' power dynamics (Pedwell and Whitehead, 2012, p. 115). Ahmed writes that 'emotions are bound up with the securing of social hierarchy' as emotions are attributes of bodies that exhibit identifications with structures of power (2014, p. 4). Emotions like compassion are bound up with 'the

[16] In this, I have found tensions in myself as a feminist pedagogue, sensitive to perceived behaviours from particularly male students from which I interpret that my attempts at non-hierarchical positioning are seen as 'weak'. I must make clear that it is *my perception*, one more often sensed from male students that hail from areas where gendered relations are more explicit, i.e., religious and conservative. There is an emotional labour here in mitigating my perception of this which can be particularly frustrating; a feeling that is not useful or productive to show unless it is for a pedagogic purpose. This seems positioned as something a feminist pedagogue must endure with patience and without complaint, lest we damage the education of our students and our own credibility. In this, I am offering the idea that pedagogies that position themselves as 'egalitarian' or with a level hierarchy must also consider the pedagogue themselves as an equal participant in all ways, and allow ourselves the same compassion afforded our students. While we see our students as colleagues and treat them with respect and compassion, we must to do the same for ourselves or risk burn-out.

[17] Ahmed prefers the term 'emotion' rather than 'affect', which she suggests better connotes the kinetic quality of emotions as 'the feeling of bodily change' (2014, p. 5). This also serves her focus on 'body', which she uses to describe our socially constructed selves: bodies are automatically politicized for existing in the social sphere in the gender/race/colour/ability/class-posture/age and combination thereof that they carry. I use 'body' and 'emotion' in this thesis through Ahmed's lens.

feminine'[18] as well as the 'less white' due to identifications of both emotion and melanin with 'a more primitive form of social life' (Ahmed, 2014, p. 3).

Both authors express a dual interrogation of compassion here; compassion and affect/emotion are 'soft' in their association with the feminine (Ahmed, 2014, p. 3), but also carry points of privilege as, according to Pedwell, compassion 'is a choice' (2017, p. 156). Pedwell critiques the enabling of, 'Decision[s] on the part of privileged subjects concerning whether or not to extend compassion or empathy to less privileged "others" ' (2014). For Pedwell, privilege lies in the ability to choose to extend these emotions to those with less privileges and choice. Because of this, Pedwell sees empathy and compassion to 'frequently function to shore up (rather than disrupt) existing social and geopolitical boundaries and hierarchies' (Pedwell, 2014). Ahmed also critiques compassion as a hierarchical emotion, as it 'may sustain the violence of appropriation, even when it seems to enable a different kind of proximity to each other' (2005, p. 74). Ahmed writes in reference to communities suffering the legacy of English-speaking Anglospheric colonisation, a violence that is both perpetuated and concealed when colonising countries 'give aid' to communities that they are responsible for damaging. While this wider lens may or may not exhibit itself in the actor training room, there is potential that ensemble members carry the legacies of this colonisation in their cultural heritage which can exhibit as oppressions in the room.

I recognise the potential for empathy and most relevantly, compassion to 'shore up' social hierarchies; however, I differentiate my work from this debate in that I position compassion not as feeling but as an action on behalf of others, based on the recognition that we share needs, though may be forced to address them differently (George, 1999, p. 97). I also position compassionate action within a level hierarchy that assumes equal choice, rather than the false generosity Ahmed and Pedwell interrogate. Considering the plurality of social identifications in the room, participants are invited to choose their participation in these compassion-based exercises. The nature of these exercises facilitate recognitions of similarity and difference in a reciprocal exchange that gives an equitable invitation to express and receive self and others'

[18] As an intersectional feminist woman exploring compassion, I walk a complicated line is this regard as I must continually mitigate my own emotional labour regarding student and institutional responses to my gender. I do this by practicing compassion for myself as I do the students and participants, taking breaks when I need to, maintaining my own health as I encourage them to do, and speaking kindly to myself as I do them.

vulnerabilities towards a deeper understanding of self and others' experiences. Not only did this exercise generate this understanding, participants noted a 'want' to understand each other (PFBF, W3, P1). Pedwell states, '… it is often at the intersections …that we encounter the productive force of affective technologies of power but also critically examine how they could be otherwise' (Pedwell, 2014, p. 2). The intersectional feminist framework of this research lends itself to a critical, practical examination of the power dynamics that exist in the room in multiple ways, including who has the right to express and receive compassion. This is positioned as an egalitarian right, supported by the mitigated hierarchy and assumed right to consent, dissent, or self-differentiate at will. This is most apparent in Workshop Three, and will be discussed further in Chapter Four of this thesis.

In the following section, I will describe and analyse the main practice I have adapted for community creation and dialogic gaze: 'the Gauntlet'. While I utilised various other compassion-based practices concurrently, or in preparation for this exercise, the Gauntlet provided a through-line and focus of interrogation in all three workshops. In Workshops One and Two, I also facilitated a *metta,* or loving-kindness, meditation. *Metta* is the Sanskrit term for the English concept of 'loving kindness', which is used interchangeably with the term 'compassion' in English transmissions of this practice. *Metta* meditation is a structured expression of blessings to self and others that elicits a sense of loving kindness. I describe this meditation in Chapter Two, and my delivery of it can be viewed in (**Chapter Two**, **Videos 1a-e,** *Metta* meditation). I facilitated this as a way to generate loving kindness, and then invited participants to embody this sense in a psychophysical gesture. This gesture is based on Michael Chekhov's Psychological Gesture; however, I facilitate it as a sense emanating from within and transmitted out, rather than Chekhov's outward embodiment for generating an inner drive (2002, p. 54). I called this the 'reverse Psychological Gesture' and it is described in depth in Chapter Two, and can be viewed in (**Chapter Two**, **Video 2**, Reverse Psychological Gesture). In Workshop Two, I facilitated elements from Marshall Rosenberg's Non-Violent Communication (NVC) framework as a way to create a compassion-based shared language. I am not a trained NVC facilitator and was not confident in my transmission of it, so I did not further pursue this framework towards my research. As such, I do not include this as a necessary part of this contextual writing. In Workshop Three, I offered and adapted the 'I' exercise, a public celebration of self with others. I offered this as a way to celebrate self with others, and was surprised to find its usefulness in community creation as a physicalised way to celebrate similarity and difference. I describe and analyse

the 'I' exercise in Chapter Four, and it can be viewed in (**Chapter Four, Video 4**, The 'I' exercise). I detail and theorize the Gauntlet here as the primary compassion-based exercise of this research.

The Gauntlet

Bakhtin writes that 'Dialogue may be external (between two different people) or internal [between an earlier and a later self]' (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 427). The un-adapted Gauntlet is a structured external dialogue entailing the use of unfinished acknowledgment clauses that target similarity, as described below. I first experienced this exercise in a personal development workshop called The Living Course (TLC), which seeks to help people 'live happier lives' (Hosler, 2019). I experienced this exercise to facilitate the first connections amongst participants of this course, and utilized the original version in my pedagogic practice for a similar effect in a variety of ensembles that held a plurality of social, cultural, racial, gendered, abled, and age identities and set within in a variety of institutions: conservatoire training, adult evening acting courses, and in community organizations that provide drama training for older children and elder actors. I facilitated the un-adapted Gauntlet in these disparate groups and observed that most of these ensembles continued to create work together post training, and to reflect on the exercise as 'where we came together', or 'where I learned again why I love these people'. This was initial evidence of the connections this exercise facilitated, leading me to wonder about its efficacy as a tool for community creation and social transformation as conceptualised in feminist practice. This unanswered question regarding the Gauntlet as a socially transformative practice led to my adaptation of this exercise to recognize both similarity and difference.[19] It is the Gauntlet's adaptation towards community creation and as a tool to create dialogic gaze that I offer as part of the new, practical knowledge emerging from this research.

I facilitated the un-adapted Gauntlet in Workshops One and Two as a 'finding connection' through recognitions of similarity. My intention was to explore its efficacy in community creation, ease of communication, and in the potential for the ensemble to sustain their work together post-training. Over the course of this research, I adapted the Gauntlet as a dialogic practice towards community creation and dialogic gaze through reciprocal recognitions of

[19] It is important to note that I had not already facilitated this exercise with the ensembles in Workshop One and Two, whom I had taught previously (Workshop One) or was teaching at the time of the workshop (Workshop Two).

similarity and difference. These adaptations developed within the praxis of a practice-based research methodology. Authors Estelle Barret and Barbara Bolt discuss this as a praxis of theory, practice, and reflection, saying **‘**practice merges from a reflexive practice at the same time as practice is informed by theory’ (Barret and Bolt, 2010, p. 29). My adaptation of the Gauntlet to acknowledge similarity and difference in order to create Lorde and hooks’s community came to fruition during extensive research and reflection after the first and second workshops and during the second year of this PhD. At this time, I had a need to more clearly place myself in a lineage of feminist pedagogy. This drew me to shift my aims towards multi-representation while locating myself in intersectional feminist theories, with practices and perspectives for democratic, collaborative processes, a level, equity-based hierarchy, practices for encouraging autonomy and difference, and perhaps most markedly, overall, practical aims for social transformation (Lorde, 1984, p. 40, 2017a, p. 14, hooks, 2003, p. xv, p. 40). Difference is sometimes expressed as ‘dissent’, which I interpret as a way to self-differentiate in group collaboration by choosing their own ways of participating. As Lorde states, this is how difference can be a ‘creative function’ that can be productive for the group, particularly, as hooks advocates, when there is ‘the power of dialogue’ (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18, hooks, 2003, p. 111). For Bakhtin, dialogue and difference are a natural part of the social heteroglossia (1981, p. 429).

As my shift towards multi-representation took place after Workshop Two, Workshop Three is where the adaptation of the Gauntlet was first facilitated and is analysed as a practice towards community creation and dialogic gaze in Chapter Four of this thesis. An example of my adaptation of the Gauntlet with students from Workshop Three can be seen in (**Chapter One, Video 1a,** The Gauntlet). I also describe the Gauntlet in the following. Students sit in two rows of seats facing each other in close proximity. One is ‘Side A’, the other ‘Side B’. Maintaining eye contact, each side has 30 seconds to complete a clause that facilitates acknowledgment of the listening side in as many different ways as they can. They can use what is true about themselves for this; what is true for one, may be true for another. This is the ‘recognition of our lack of difference’ George describes in defining compassion and hooks speaks about as universal ‘yearnings of the spirit’ (George, 1999, p. 97, hooks, 2003, p. 110). I prompt the students that they are free to choose how they complete the clauses, and whether or not they take in what is said to them. The recognition of similarity and difference that is exchanged and ‘taken in’ during this external dialogue can be incorporated as an inner

habit, or a way of seeing the world, creating the dialogic gaze through direct recognition and understanding of self and others' experiences (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426).

The acknowledgment clauses are:

1**). *Of similarity in general: 'What I see in you that I see in me is'…***

This is done first to connect to each other through a recognition of similarity. I prompt them with examples; 'what I see in you that I see in me is someone who is passionate about acting', 'what I see in you that I see in me is someone who sometimes needs support.' This is both an admittance of self, and an acknowledgement that this may be a shared yearning, need, or state (hooks, 2003, p. 110). In this admittance/acknowledgment comes an extension of vulnerability from the speaker and a gentle invitation of the same for the listener. This can be seen in (**Chapter One, Video 2,** Vulnerability in 'What I see in you that I see in me is') when one participant can be heard to say 'What I see in you that I see in me is someone with a lot of love', which elicits an emotional response and similarly vulnerable exchange from the listener when it is their turn to speak.

Bakhtin does not seem intent on interrogating similarity so much as difference, as dialogism describes a 'multiplicity of perspectives and voices' in a world which is 'fundamentally irreducible to unity' (1981, p. 368, Robinson, 2011). Supported by hooks's notion of 'shared yearnings' and developments of Maslow's 'universal needs', I contend that some of the ways in which we may be 'transformed through dialogue' are also in the validation and reification of a common need, such as love or sustenance (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426, Tay & Diener, 2011, p. 354, hooks, 2003, p. 110). In all three workshops, the acknowledgement of similarity has 'built a bridge' through the shared connection of common recognition, supported by all three ensembles' similar feedback of this exercise as 'connecting', detailed in Chapters 2-4 (Lorde, 2017, p. 10).

2*). Of constructive critique; 'I suggest'…*

This is done to progress the recognition of similarity in ways that acknowledge areas of desired development in self, which may also be true for the listener. This clause facilitates experience with clear, constructive feedback; useful for actors in training to give and receive as seen in (**Chapter One, Video 3,** I suggest). In this clip, the actors at the fore can be heard to give constructive feedback 'I suggest you get in the time to work in the studio, 'I suggest you have confidence that you are loved', 'I suggest you stop being afraid' 'I suggest you eat

better'. This clause helps them to practice listening and responding in difficult conversations and allows for the potential to connect through the risk of speaking and listening when vulnerable (hooks, 2003, p. 40). I invite them to speak without editing and ask that they be specific and honest; 'I suggest' is relatively confrontational. This is not 'I suggest you keep your pretty smile'. This is 'I suggest you be on time', 'I suggest you focus in rehearsal'. I ask those listening to take in what they hear with the prompt, 'see if this fits/resonates for you'. I remind them that they have the choice to apply this feedback or not.

As the primary adaptation of this exercise towards difference I replace '*I suggest…'* with,

2). '*What you may not see in me is…*' 'What you may not see in me is…' is a recognition of difference; where we may diverge in experience from the listener. Esther Pereen writes;

> Dialogic intersubjectivity is about…respecting the other as different and taking responsibility for this difference. The other does not become an object but is recognised as another subject. (Pereen, 2008, p. 17)

This acknowledgement clause allows the participants to respectfully recognise each other's differences and maintain their own and each other's subjectivity. The terminology allows the speaker to reveal experiences they have that might not be common without blame or judgement, and enables the listener to hear the speaker's experience with openness and curiosity. This can be seen in (**Chapter One, Video 4,** What you may not see in me is). In this clip, the actors at the fore can be heard to share experiences that are not common, 'What you may not see in me is a fear of the industry', 'What you may not see in me is that I am transgender', 'What you may not see in me is that I worry about how "un-Nigerian" I am', 'What you may not see in me is that I have dual voices in my head and sometimes they argue.' When we recognise where we are different, we see where we do not own something in another and where the other has an intersubjective self as an autonomous and different individual. We lay no claim on them or their experience, which opens up doors of curiosity and a desire to understand, enabling connection and supporting our want to look out on others' behalf. The connections emerging from the 'shared joy' of 'What I see in you that I see in me is…' and their prolonged eye contact 'lessens the threat of difference', allowing for a sense of safety in speaking and listening to the completions of this clause (Lorde, 2017a, p. 10). This clause was developed after the focus on similarity recognitions in Workshops One and Two delivered connection and community, though inconsistent dialogic gaze. These were

consistently created in Workshop Three, during which this clause was facilitated, as I will describe and analyse in Chapter 4.

3). *In loved qualities; 'What I love about you is'…*

This is done to openly celebrate self and others. It is done last to connect and reenergize the group; I model this clause in an energetic and uplifting manner and tone of voice to shift the room from the depth of vulnerability and critique of either second clause, and facilitate a positive, joyful feeling. The completion of this clause can be seen in (**Chapter One, Video 5,** What I love about you is). This clip exhibits the tone of voice and energy I use to introduce this clause, and in it the students can be seen to have created a joyful group transition song and dance, and be heard to say 'What I love about you is how genuinely kind and positive you are', 'What I love about you is your willingness to enjoy life', 'What I love about you is your passion for art, and your passion for life, and just how you approach it no matter how tough it gets'. The students can be seen to physically respond to this dialogue, leaning towards each other, laughing with, and reaching out to each other. Audre Lorde writes:

> the sharing of joy, whether physical, emotional, psychic, or intellectual, forms a bridge between sharers which can be the basis for understanding much of what is not shared between them, and lessens the threat of their difference. (Lorde, 2017a, p. 10)

This phrase is a way to 'form a bridge' between the students through joy-filled recognition. This phrase also acts as a structural bridge through the difference or critique suggested in the second clause. Together the acknowledgement clauses facilitate a deeper understanding of self and other, and a desire to understand differences, which become a reduced 'threat' (Lorde, 2017a, p. 10).

There is one acknowledgement clause completed per round. It is a 'round' when each side has had a chance to both speak and listen. I run each clause for 2-4 rounds, or about one clause per third of the group, depending on size. After every round ends, they stand, shift left, and sit, all at the same time (**Chapter One, Video 1b,** Gauntlet transition). They are asked to do this silently, and without moving the chairs. This gives the group a common challenge and a sense of the whole as they move together.

The role of vulnerability

The Gauntlet is the given name of this exercise in TLC, and I have kept it as such because it alludes to not only its physical obstacles but also the emotional risk; we're often taught to edit ourselves in communication, and these are intimate and provocative acknowledgements to say to others. This vulnerability is part of the risk involved in creating trust through this exercise (Govier, 1992, p. 17, hooks, 2003, p. 40). Students are encouraged to speak from the gut in response to provocations that may elicit personal admissions. They practice listening to personal statements and/or constructive feedback. It is their choice to be vulnerable in sharing and taking in what is heard. I remind them of this throughout the exercise, so they are aware of their autonomy. The group's choice to risk vulnerability in voicing and hearing potentially challenging information is deeply connecting in community creation (hooks, 2003, p. 40, Lorde, 1984, p. 44).

In the context of precarity, Athanasiou and Butler discuss vulnerability as,

> …the abiding and vital potentiality of being affected by others and of owing ourselves to others. But it is also always about the potential for injuring, the potential for unevenly distributed and experienced injuries of injustice. (Athanasiou and Butler, 2013, p. 158).

In this they discuss the dual nature of vulnerability in the context of social relations; there is vital potential in vulnerability via affecting and being affected by others, and in the ethical responsibility 'to resist social conditions of inequality' on behalf of self and others arising from this affectation (2013, p. 107). Vulnerability also carries the potential for harm, via the uneven distribution of social privileges and injustices. I further problematize this as a pedagogue who is facilitating an exercise in which vulnerability plays a key role. In this lies the potential for the hierarchical power dynamics between facilitator/researcher and student/participant to compound the dual nature of vulnerability, particularly when facilitating an exercise that invites it. The student/participants may feel compelled to be vulnerable because the facilitator/researcher is suggesting it.

I attempt to mitigate this hierarchy and support the participants' choices to risk vulnerability by modelling it myself. I give examples illustrating the structure of completing the clauses from my own experience. My participation in this way potentially helps to offset the

hierarchy that lies within my role as facilitator.[20] I also support the participants' choices to be vulnerable by fostering connection, as a way to build a foundation of trust in community (hooks, 2003, p. xv, pp. 109-112). I begin this by inviting them to partake in a silent greeting exercise, using eyes only. This can be seen in (**Chapter One, Video 6,** Eye greeting exercise). Eye contact has been shown to heighten a sense of self and other awareness, a foundation for the connections in community (Conty et.al, 2016, hooks, 2003, p. xv). I suggest that the students risk maintaining an eye connection for longer than they may be used to. I then invite them to pause while maintaining eye contact, only to separate when they sense to. I do this to facilitate connection and awareness with each other by sensing others' unspoken decisions to stay in contact or move on. Having looked into each other's eyes for an extended time lays a foundation for not only connection but trust, from the shared risk of vulnerability in making these connections beyond a usual time frame (Conty et.al, 2016, hooks, 2003, p. 40). In Workshop Two, the role of vulnerability becomes particularly evident as a route to conflict transformation after the Gauntlet exercise. I will describe and analyse this in Chapter 3.

The Gauntlet is a ready tool for reciprocal exchange directly targeting similarity and difference. With this dialogic framework we can 'fuse with parts of the others' discourse' through affecting and being affected by the exchange of acknowledgment clause completions (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). Pedwell would call this fusion a 'binding', which compels us 'to inhabit the sensorial intensity of our encounter', embodying the sensation of the exchange for deep affectation (2017, p. 152). Lindsay Cummings names the process of mutual affectation 'dialogic empathy', and expands on it as 'both cognitive and affective, that involves the imaginative recreation of the other's experience' (2016, p. 43). We are affected by our imagined experience of the speaker's narrative, which enables a deeper understanding of their circumstances. Our affectedness 'engages the possibility of transformation at the level of habit—alerting us to the blips and gaps in habitual perception and conduct that may act as "actionable spaces" for material change' (Pedwell, 2017, p. 152). Affect as a 'binding technique' in the Gauntlet allows us to inhabit the encounter, making the feeling active in a way that enables transformation, particularly through acknowledging our own habitual

[20] This hierarchy is potentially difficult to overcome, and I use my participation here and in warm-ups, group conversations and decision-making, and training exercises when I can in order to mitigate this as much as possible.

perspective as an 'actionable space' for change via dialogic gaze. We then take the incorporated understandings of others' experiences to shift the way we perceive the world. In actor training and performance, we shift the way we make work and experience works made. In this way, we make and experience work with a wider lens, on behalf of ourselves as well as others, through the incorporation of others' differing experiences and marginalisations. Using dialogic gaze, we practically take the 'perspective of the most marginalised' for ensemble community transformation of oppressions via multi-representative practices (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 166).

Bakhtin-based theorist Esther Pereen proposes the notion of 'identities-as-intersubjectivities' (2008, p. 17). In this, identities are 'co-productions, taking place between self and other' (Pereen, 2008, p. 17). The Gauntlet also acts as a direct route to these co-productions through the given acknowledgement clauses and opportunity for choice in completion and application of feedback. The acknowledgment clauses are co-productive statements that necessitate the connection between speaker and listener, who often surprise themselves by speaking something impulsively, arising from the trust generated in this connection and opening new awarenesses of self as well as other. This often resonates with those listening, who may also be surprised at how they are 'seen' and 'recognised' and reinterpret themselves based on this dialogic exchange (PFBF, W3, P7).

Adaptations of the Gauntlet to perpetuate community

The Gauntlet facilitates an intersubjective dialogue and can perpetuate community when adapted for daily use. In my pedagogic practice, I have facilitated 'I suggest' as a language for delivering feedback during daily scene shares to affirm the 'shared world' developed from 'doing the work of creating community' (hooks, 2003, p. 40, p. 197). 'I suggest' connotes choice for the listener to embody the feedback in the use of the word 'suggest'. It connotes ownership for the speaker to critique from an empowered place; when they use 'I', they take responsibility for the observation that follows. Students readily use it in this manner. After completing the Gauntlet, 'I suggest' becomes a commonly understood phrase in the ensemble, a shared language that affirms their sense of community (hooks, 2003, p. 40).

I have also adapted 'What I love about you is…' and 'What I see in you that I see in me is…' for a joyful end of class ritual to affirm the work together (Lorde, 2017a, p. 10). I invite the class to walk around the room, balancing the space. On a hand clap, they find whoever is

closest, and together have 30 seconds for each to complete the acknowledgment. This is done three times, giving the students a chance to engage across the ensemble. They leave with a palpable good feeling about their work for the day. There is an energetic shift that takes place; hugs, laughter, complimentary conversations, and a palpable sense of joy. My aim is to 'build a bridge' amongst the ensemble and generate a shared excitement to meet in community again (Lorde, 2017a, p. 10).

Methodology and methods

I use a practice-based research (PbR) methodology for this research and qualitative research methods, which I will describe below. PbR is often used interchangeably with Practice as Research (PaR). PaR is fluid in its definition as it describes a praxis in which 'the researcher follows their own creative practice or practice-based process' and then reflects on it (Allain, 2016, p. 487). As such, PaR has been applied in a variety of practice reliant disciplines: education, nursing, musical composition, and performance making (Nelson, 2013, Haseman, 2006, p. 104). The position of the practice within the research is not formulaic either; the research can be driven by practice, as in 'practice-led research', or can be research 'into or through' practice, as in practice-based research, or the practice itself encompasses the research, as in practice-as-research (Smith & Dean, 2009, p. 5). Author Brad Haseman simply describes this methodology as one in which 'practice is the principal research activity' and the outcomes are 'research findings in their own right' (Haseman, 2006, p. 104). However, my inquiry can be best described as practice-based research, in that I am activating concepts of community creation and dialogic gaze *through* compassion-based practice, the dialogic gaze itself arising as a practice through the creation of community from the adapted Gauntlet exercise for similarity and difference.

In describing the process of practice-based research, author Estelle Bolt discusses 'a double articulation of theory and practice, whereby theory emerges from reflexive practice at the same time as practice is informed by theory' (Barret & Bolt, 2010, p. 29). *Practice as Research in the Performing Arts* author Robin Nelson similarly describes it as 'a practice of ideas in action' (2013, p. 76). These accurately describe my research process as I moved from questions of compassion-based practice's effect on an acting ensemble's ability to sustain work together post-training towards the intersectional feminist theoretical framework that gave these compassion-based practices a new aim for multi-representativity. This shift manifested from the imbrication of intersectional feminist theories of community with the

Gauntlet, and the need to place myself in a theoretical lineage, which Nelson necessitates as part of this process (2013, p. 34). My intent became enacting multi-representative practice and Crenshaw's notion of 'taking the perspective of the most marginalised' into trainable practices by creating community from dialogic, compassion-based practices; most relevantly, the difference-adapted Gauntlet, and the 'I' Exercise, as these explicitly recognise similarity and difference as hooks and Lorde advise (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 125, Lorde, 2017a, p. 14, hooks, 2003, p. 197).

Pedagogic practitioner/researcher/field worker

In this practice-based methodology I locate myself as a pedagogic practitioner-researcher. This can be likened to what *Qualitative Researching* author Jennifer Mason calls 'field work', in the sense that I was 'participating, interrogating, listening, communicating…managing and orchestrating social interactions' as well as facilitating and planning the workshop (Mason, 2018, p. 12). As such, I delivered these compassion-based practices in the structures and settings that represented the field work of actor training, with half-day and day long, one-off workshop frameworks, in actual actor training and rehearsal rooms, and with three different, varying ensembles (Mason, 2018, p. 12). Robin Nelson supports my identification as a pedagogic practitioner/researcher/field worker in relation to the ensemble in his discussions of the juxtaposition of 'insider' with 'outsider' accounts as particularly effective (2013, p. 88). My identification in these ways arguably encompasses both of these perspectives; I am 'inside' as I facilitate the workshop and participate in some compassion-based practices; however, act as outsider during the Gauntlet and observation of the 'task-based', ensemble devising communications, rehearsal, and performance.[21] As such, I have utilised writings, feedback, and observations from myself in the context of being 'mostly outsider' with the view of the students as 'insiders' (Nelson, 2013, p. 88). It is their feedback and interpretations of their experiences in the compassion-based exercises, generated as data in qualitative terms, that I am most interested in. This is necessarily combined with my literal, interpretive, and reflexive reading of this data, as is common in qualitative research and as I will describe below (Mason, 2018, p 189). The position of myself as pedagogic practitioner/researcher/field worker/mostly outsider and the students as

[21] You will note my positioning in this way in the videos of the practice; where I am seen moving in and out of the role of practitioner/facilitator: leading exercises, and in and out of the role of practitioner/researcher: taking notes, managing feedback forms, and group interviews, and working with the recording equipment.

insiders allows for robust analysis of several differing viewpoints that show validity when they support each other; i.e., when student feedback from 'inside' corresponds with my 'outside' observations (Mason, 2018, p. 31).

Methods for data generation

I used qualitative research methods to generate data, most notably 'task-based' methods, ensconced in the ensemble's task of carrying out group rehearsals and devising (Mason, 2013, p. 9). Though my aim here is training rather than performance, the task of group rehearsal and devising are measures for Nelson's 'key method', the PaR practice itself, here being the compassion-based practices (2013). I also used semi-structured group interviews, feedback forms, participant observation, and video recordings with included audio recordings. I used written accounts including participant reflective writing via the anonymous feedback forms, as well as my own workshop-immediate/documentary writings, which I align with Mason's notion of 'field notes' (2018, p. 12). I combine these methods with my reflective and critical writings as part of the praxis of this PaR methodology and this written thesis. The correspondence between these methods allows for validity, as this shows the data 'can be identified, observed, or "measured" ' the way I claim they can (Mason, 2018, p. 31). These methods were all concurrent with each other and provided multiple routes for analyses of the efficacy of these practices in creating community and dialogic gaze. I will describe and analyse them in more depth below.

The data I generated through practice includes the ensemble's relational dynamics, individual and collective behaviours, and literal and interpretive verbal, physical, and tacit communications throughout the workshop and exercises. Here, I paid particular attention to communications during rehearsal and performance of a group devised piece, and video/audio recorded, written, and verbal feedbacks from the ensemble members (Mason, 2018, p. 2). To read this data, I used literal methods; looking for text they use, such as the word 'connection', or gauging who speaks first and makes the decisions in group negotiations. I also read the data in an interpretive way, analysing for what I thought they could mean: i.e., interpreting 'universality' in the quote 'we're all going through it' (Mason, 2018, p. 52). My interpretations were made through the lenses of community and dialogic gaze, which I understand as fallible and have thus utilized multiple routes for both data generation and my readings of such to aim for validity.

Task-based data

To generate data regarding the ensemble's transmission of the effects of the compassion-based practices into their rehearsal communications and performance practices, I used a task-based approach and invited them to rehearse and devise a group performance piece on the theme of 'metamorphosis'. In designing rehearsal communications as a method for task-based data generation there is potential to add communication-specific frameworks to the small amount of research regarding rehearsal processes, as Paul Allain problematizes in 'Thick Descriptions/Thin Lines: Writing about Process in Contemporary Performance' (2016). Allain discusses the 'many cans of worms' that are yet to be opened in taking a wider view of what companies *do* in rehearsal and training (2016, p. 487).

Allain sets his inquiry in professional companies, with industrial aims that differ from that of an ensemble in training. I have chosen to focus this inquiry on student ensembles for multiple reasons. First, the practices I am exploring are trainings, which suits the educational nature of the student ensemble and feminist aims for industry change. As ensemble trainings are generally geared towards work in the professional industry, habitual practices for multi-representation in the training ensemble can create a demand for the same in the industry, via the influx of actors with a background of compassion-based practices for multi-representation. Their habitual practice in this regard gives them a frame to affect the industry with their own performance making practices, and also gives them an expectation of the same in performance practices they participate in. I have also chosen to focus within actor training for practical reasons, as this is the current field I work in, and in which I aim to develop my own compassion-based and feminist practices for community, connection, and multi-representation.

While my focus is on an acting ensemble in training rather than a professional company, the compassion-based practices explored here can arguably be extrapolated to and equally affect a professional company's rehearsal process and communications, including the Gauntlet's surprising effect on conflict transformation, as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 of this exegesis. While compassion-based practice's effect in a professional company is just out of the scope of this current PhD, it does provide a worthy route for development in post-doctoral research.

I chose metamorphosis as a topic as it has a variety of meanings and interpretations that could be personalised as both individual transformations or those common to the ensemble, as

heard in Workshop Two's decision to focus on their common journey in drama school (Chapter 3, **Chapter Three, Video 3,** Overall collaboration). Metamorphosis could also be related to previous works such as Kafka's *The Metamorphosis,* or Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, or generalised as a 'universal' human experience via the commonality of 'change' (hooks, 2018, p. 110). The multiple ways of interpreting this concept could and did lead to provocative discussions in the ensemble's devising processes, and complex ensemble negotiations that necessitated group decision-making and prioritisation of ideas. I used this in all three workshops as a common thread for some comparison; this task-based approach shed light on inconsistently gendered and multi-representative communications in Workshops One and Two, and on communications evidencing community and dialogic gaze in Workshop Three, as I will describe. While I invited them to perform their devised piece, my interest was in their devising communications. As such, I will not analyse their performance work in this thesis apart from where it is relevant in Workshop Three, in which key moments of dialogic gaze contributed to performance. There is potential for further research regarding compassion-based practice's effect in performance, as I will describe in the 'Further developments' section of Chapter 5.

Participant observation methods

Researcher/authors Catherine Marshall and Gretchen Rossman defined observation as 'the systematic description of events, behaviours, and artefacts in the social setting chosen for study' (1989, p. 79). In this research, the social setting is the training room, and the ensemble the 'society' being observed. While participant observation methods are most common in sociological and anthropological research inquiries, they have been increasingly seen in the field of education 'as a way to collect information' (Kawulich, 2005). Like Mason, I prefer to use the more active term 'generate' rather than collect data or information, as the compassion-based practices are actively serving as generative tools towards community and dialogic gaze (2018, p. 2).

Participant observation methods are useful as these allow for the 'generation of multidimensional data' of the group's social interactions, which is the main component of observation (Mason, 2018, p. 7). This 'multi-dimensional' data includes textual, physical, and verbal feedbacks, my own tacit sense of the relationship amongst ensemble members, and, crucially, observations of the 'dynamics' between people (Mason, 2018, p. 4). This is crucial as the aim of this research is multi-representative practices, which include tacit dynamics of a

sense of community and connection, as well as relations in communications during the exercises themselves and in rehearsal and performance. Despite the video/audio recordings, this tacit, sense-driven data about their interactions and what researcher Barbara Kawulich calls ‘non-verbal expression of feelings’ are not going to be available in other forms, which necessitates participant observation as a method (2005, Mason, 2018, p. 10). The field-work nature of this research as pedagogic practitioner/researcher arguably enables participant-observation methods organically, particularly as this research is grounded in the intersubjective relations amongst participants. As a pedagogic practitioner/researcher using participant observation methods I was able to experience tacit information and ‘non-verbal expression of feelings’, as well as to closely observe their physical enactment and engagement with each other during the exercises, rehearsal communications, and performances (Kawulich, 2005).

Writing and reflection

Nelson discusses questionnaires as useful ‘to establish “impact” of the praxis’ (Nelson, 2013, p. 98). In order to establish the impact of compassion-based practices on community and dialogic gaze, I have utilised and analysed participant feedback forms for thematic narratives, via the participants’ written responses to a set of open-ended questions designed to ascertain multiple facets of their experience in each exercise and in devising, rehearsal, and performance communications. I invited the participants to respond to these questions in a three-page questionnaire distributed at the end of every workshop (Nelson, 2013, p. 98). These can be found in (**Appendices A**: Participant Feedback Forms). In-text references to these are coded to indicate a Participant Feedback Form as the source (PFBF), to show the corresponding Workshop (W), and to indicate which Participant form, which are numerically coded (P1). A citation from these forms from Workshop 1, Participant form 1 is then notated as ‘(PFBF, W1, P1)’.

I also used these forms to accommodate those with a learning style more suited to writing. Crucially, these were a form of data generation corresponding to the semi-structured interviews. As these interviews were ‘co-productions’ of the workshops, the feedback was generated in the presence of the group and may be fallible in interpretation (Mason, 2018). The anonymous feedback forms were useful to mitigate any publicly influenced co-production of their experience in the exercises, and enabled those that would rather feedback privately to have the opportunity to do so anonymously (Mason, 2018, p. 3). As such, I pull

heavily on their written feedback forms in my analysis of the impact of the exercises in each workshop, gleaning their written responses for literal readings and interpretive readings of common themes and concepts, analysed through the lenses of community and dialogic gaze. From these I found consistent evidence of the efficacy of compassion-based practice to create a sense of community via connection, as well as written evidences of practices and perspectives of dialogic gaze and community, particularly in Workshop Three, described in Chapter Four of this thesis.

I also wrote reflectively, in and after each workshop as part of the iterative praxis of 'doing-reflecting-reading-articulating-doing' (Nelson, 2013, p. 31). These reflective writings were incorporated into each workshop analysis, to support the unfolding praxis narratively and to corroborate or contradict the feedback from students. The immediate, documentary writings or 'field notes', during the workshops provided brief, live reflections that I expanded on in the reflective writings (Mason, 2018, p. 12). These field notes are sometimes posed as jottings, reminders, and signifiers for future analysis of significant moments during the workshop. This is most notable in Workshop Three, where I transcribed Participant C's experience of the Gauntlet as a 'symphony in three movements', as I will describe in Chapter Four and as can be seen in (**Appendices D**: Field Notes). These writings can be paralleled with the video documentation, described below, in their similar natures of catching ethereal yet significant moments that contributed greatly to a more holistic understanding of the multiple strands of data.

Semi-structured interviews

I used semi-structured group interview sessions which I framed as reflection sessions with every group after each exercise where able; sometimes it was necessary to move on to the next exercises due to time constraints. I used thematic questions, pulling from prepared provocations that targeted each exercise, as well as their experiences both in general and specifically in communication during devising, rehearsal, and performance (Mason, 2018, p. 3). In-text references to these reflection sessions are notated to reflect the workshop number (W) and the participants' numerical coding (P). A citation from Participant 1 in a reflection session from Workshop One is thus notated as '(W1, P1)'. I used a semi-structured approach so that I could 'follow up their specific responses' in ways that are 'highly organic' as Mason suggests, creating the questions as launch points to reflective group conversation (2018, p. 10). I wanted varying streams of data to gauge their experiences and validate the efficacy of

the compassion-based exercises, and semi-structured interviews were a necessity; some of the data gleaned here, including tacit engagement in the conversation, were not available in other forms. These interviews yielded data that I read both literally in terms of words used, i.e. 'community', 'connection', as well as interpretively, mining their responses for evidence of community, connection, ease of communication, and dialogic gaze (Mason, 2018, p. 52).

Robin Nelson discusses these 'post-presentation interviews' as a way to 'readily capture a range of responses' (2013, p. 88). As we moved through a variety of exercises, immediate capture of responses when possible given time restrictions seemed important for their 'ready' responses (Nelson, 2013, p. 88). I also recorded these interviews, so that I could review the participants' observable tacit and verbal responses in conjunction with their written reflections. As noted above, Mason posits interviews as 'coproductions of an event that just happened', so it was important to gather data from other sources in analyzing these (Mason, 2018, p. 3). This created concurrent strands of data with which I could gauge validity. I framed these as 'reflection sessions' rather than 'semi-structured interviews' as this terminology better elicited autonomously given, critical reflection. I also facilitated an end of day, collective feedback session for all groups, to gain an overall understanding of the content and structure of the workshop as a whole. I was interested in ascertaining which exercises stood out to them, and in what way, so that I could apply the feedback towards developing future workshops.

Video documentation

I used video/audio recordings of each workshop to work in conjunction with the methods of data generation listed above: task-based, semi-structured group interviews, field notes, my own reflective writings, the students' reflective writings via feedback forms, and additional material outcomes described below, such as Workshop Three's group-created manifesto, analysed in Chapter Four of this thesis and found in (**Appendices B:** Manifesto). Mason discusses the use of video/audio recordings as a way of 'observing, recording, and representing' qualitative research, all of which articulate my purposes in using video/audio recordings here. These make a primary recording and, after participant observation on the day, a secondary observation of the practices and processes of each workshop: including the

exercises themselves, group semi-structured interviews (reflection sessions)[22] and, crucially, 'representations' of their devising, rehearsal, and performance communications and relational dynamics for analysis (Mason, 2018, Chapter 7, pg. 12).

Video/audio recordings were crucial in this research for multiple reasons; first, because reliance on memory alone is fallible for a rigorous analysis in support of my arguments. While I had the aforementioned data-generating writings and materials to support my memory, my analysis is more fallible without the actual video/audio representations of the event remembered, though I acknowledge that these representations have their own fallibilities, as I interrogate below. Mason discusses that video/audio recording may 'enable exploration of situational dynamics and rhythms' that the researcher may not be present for (Mason, 2018, Chapter 7, pg. 12). This is also crucial as I could not observe all relational dynamics relying on participant observation methods, due to varying factors: from my position in the room to the impossibility of focus on multiple tacit relations at once. From these visual/audio representations, I was able to re-witness moments I missed that often corresponded to written feedback such as 'connection', or moments of conflict transformation described on participant reflection sheets. I was also able to juxtapose my memory of moments to the same observed on camera, where I occasionally found my memory was critically different to what actually happened. I was also able to better observe and validate previous, immediate observations of patterns of unacknowledged gendered communications in Workshops One and Two, and to study relational dynamics for evidence of community and dialogic gaze in all three workshops; an understanding of the 'archive through the ability to play it back' as author Matthew Reason advocates (2006, p. 80). It was crucial for me to combine video/audio documentation with the additional methods of documentation as a failsafe for all methods; the cameras failed in Workshop Two leaving me without footage of the Non-Violent Communication workshop and enactment of reverse Psychological Gesture. As these compassion-based practices served as part of the development of this research rather than a main focus, here I can rely on my participant observation and my own and the participants' reflective writings and interview feedback.

[22] The recordings from the relevant reflection sessions from Workshops One and Three are included in each chapter's video documentation. Reflection sessions from Workshop Two were not recorded due to technical failure. As such, I rely on Workshop Two participant's feedback forms and rehearsal collaborations for my analysis of this workshop.

I use Mason's term 'representations', as video/audio recordings are presenting formerly immediate events on screen (Mason, 2018, Chapter 7, pg. 12). The gap between the immediate workshop event and the representation of it opens this method up to problematisation in practice-based and qualitative research. There are a range of arguments regarding video recordings as an 'interpretive gap' between the event and the archive of this event, and a 'preservation' of something that otherwise would be 'unavailable and inaccessible' as Reason states (2006, p. 80). Phillip Auslander supports Reason's view of recordings as vital, adding the argument that the 'television image' itself is a 'performance in the present' (1999, p. 15, qtd. Kershaw and Nicholson, 2011, p. 164). Theorists Peggy Phelan and Angela Piccini argue an almost an opposing view, that video documentation is 'problematic', as it cannot '*be* the thing it documents' (Piccini, 2003). For Piccini the 'thing' in question is the live performance, stating that while video can represent the performance, it cannot 'stand in for the performance itself' (2003). For Phelan, liveness of the event 'relies on the presence of the unmediated body', which it is not when transmitted through recorded mediums (1993, qtd. Kershaw and Nicholson, 2011, p. 164).[23]

By referring to these recordings as representations, I acknowledge the loss of multi-sensory perceptions that are immediate during the event itself, which I attempt to describe in this thesis and portray in my video editing as much as possible (Mason, 2018, Chapter 7, pg. 12). To describe my aims in observing these representations, I look to Peter Hulton's notions of documentation in training and rehearsal (2002). Hulton discusses looking for the 'thickness of the exchange' in recorded documentation of creative practice (Hulton, 2002, p. 14). While he talks specifically about this 'between elements' of creative practice, the 'thickness of the exchange' I seek to address is between participants, in communications and behaviours that evidence community and dialogic gaze (Hulton, 2002, pp. 13-14). I seek this during the exercises themselves, although most emphatically during rehearsal communications, and any apparent effect of community and dialogic gaze that evidences in collaborations. My editing work and videography helps to transmit the thickness I observed by focusing on, describing, and transcribing key moments and discussions as they are relevant.

[23] The above theorists seem to be focusing their arguments on the documentation of performance specifically. While these are important interrogations to consider, the focus of my documentations are the compassion-based *trainings* I am using as a tool for the creation of community and dialogic gaze.

In practice, I sought to mitigate the gap of the video/audio recordings as representations, not only with the additional data generation methods described above, but also through careful consideration of camera placement in the workshops themselves. Mason discusses the ever-present issues of 'what the camera (or the eye) cannot see…because of issues of perspective, gaze, choice, and selection- where, when and how you point the camera' (2018, p. 24). In consideration of this, in Workshops One and Two, I used two stationary cameras to encompass the whole of each rehearsal from two different angles. Because of difficulties with camera equipment in Workshop Two, in Workshop Three I increased to four stationary cameras set up on all sides of the rehearsal room. In every workshop, I positioned the stationary cameras as unobtrusively as possible at the margins of the spaces in which we worked, in order to see as much of each room as possible. We used the whole of the rehearsal spaces as we would in any class, which meant that I had to mitigate the opportunities for students to go outside of frame, supporting my decision to put the cameras in corners or against walls. This distanced placement then meant opportunity for the focus to shift and the footage to blur. To ensure that I caught apparent moments of intimate relational dynamics, I also used the video camera on my phone, carried in my hands at ribcage level as I moved around the room. This positioning and mobility allowed me to catch intimate moments, follow movements of the group, and record these clearly while still being as unobtrusive as possible. My aim was for the camera to appear as more of a personal accessory of mine, rather than an obtrusive or even violating presence. It was evident that some students became distracted by it, however this appeared momentary and rare, and I did not receive feedback to this effect.

Use of the audio recording on my mobile phone became particularly important for recording data generated in the intimacy of the Gauntlet and ensuing rehearsal communications, as much of my analysis comes from what was actually spoken. This method was more effective in capturing sound and text than the stationary cameras, which was particularly necessary as the Gauntlet entails multiple pairs of students simultaneously exchanging verbal acknowledgments, and rehearsal communications often involved participants speaking all at once and with varying levels of projection; some softer and some louder. With the mobile recording device, I could move in closer to hear and record these Gauntlet and rehearsal communications. However, again, this was also imprecise as there was often ambient noise that obscured entire rehearsal communications, as in (**Chapter Two, Video 13**, P.G. Group collaborations) in which I struggled to pick-up certain parts of the conversation. To mitigate

this, I hired an editor to turn the ambient noise down and listened to the recording repeatedly to distinguish their actual words.

I also mitigated the difficulties of ‘representation’ by alerting the students to the presence of the cameras via the informed consent documents as well as verbal direction on the day (**Appendices C**: Informed consent forms). I did this for ethical reasons as well as pragmatic ones, particularly for the student ensembles in Workshops One and Two who were used to the training room environments but were not accustomed to the cameras. I alerted them so that they could adjust more easily to the presence of the cameras, and relax into the work to the point where they forgot they were there. I am not sure if I achieved this, as I did not ask the question. However, there are notable moments where participants did seem to forget their presence to an arguably detrimental effect; at worst, standing, eating, and whispering in front of the camera while the group devises (**Chapter Four**, **Video 12,** Verbal devising negotiations, **Video 13**, Physicalisations/dialogic gaze). As a practitioner/facilitator I am pleased that the cameras were disregarded in this way, however as practitioner/researcher, this was obtrusive at times.

Mason states,

> There are always issues about what the camera (or the eye) cannot see… what you think is of interest to film in the first place, what you select and what you exclude, what is observed, what is in and out focus. (2018, p. 24)

Here Mason is describing the issue of the researcher’s choice of camera placement and focus, and interpretation of what is important for analysis. While the camera is often seen as ‘objective’, this is a fallacy given the researcher’s interpretation bias. My recordings are for the purposes of documentation and analysis of the efficacy of compassion-based practices in creating community and dialogic gaze, and also act as the primary dissemination of this research. This dissemination includes the ensemble’s engagement with the exercises, notable moments in reflection sessions about the practices, and their relational dynamics in rehearsal and performance as analysed in this thesis. My observation and interpretation of these are literal; in terminology used and conversational dynamics such as the identification of who is speaking first, most, and making decisions, and who initiates the devising and acts as a leader (Mason, 2018, p. 52). My readings of what is observed are also frequently interpretive, in the

meanings I give to communication exchanges in terms of what is evidence of community and dialogic gaze or processes thereof, and what are not (Mason, 2018, p. 52).

Issues of interpretation are also interrogated by Ledger, Ellis, and Wright's notion that all forms of documentation are 'interpretive to the interests of the researcher' (2011, p. 165). I am analysing the behaviours, communications, verbalisations, and relational dynamics of the ensembles through the lens of my research interests in community and dialogic gaze. The behaviours, verbalisations, and communications amongst ensemble members that I have chosen to analyse here are palpably in support of each other, and I have shown notable examples of dialogic gaze, in the practice of their looking out on each other's behalf. These behaviours are open to interpretation, which is often one of outward support for others, occurring even when the support was not in line with the personal experience of the supporter. This is a frequent, beneficial behaviour that can be seen in societal interactions and can be defined in a variety of ways and contexts as altruism, kindness, or awareness. In terming this 'dialogic gaze', I have focused and named this practice as specific to intersectional feminist pedagogy and defined it specifically as a perspective that interrogates representation and acts on behalf of others, combined with intersubjective, dialogic group formation, communications, and community creation. In this, and along with the aforementioned supporting methods I feel justified in my interpretations of these documentations as valid, despite my inherent bias.

Additional documentation

I include some of the material outcomes of our group collaborations as archival material: the 'group contract' made during the third workshop as part of building community (**Appendices B:** Manifesto). I use these group contracts in my pedagogic practice, as done in the ensembles of Workshops One and Two previous to their workshop date. Sometimes called a 'manifesto' or 'group principles' depending on the inclination of the group, these are democratically designed group principles that formulate the collaborative working space. The relevance of this document lies in Workshop Three's addition of 'accepting the no' towards a focus on enabling self-differentiation and dissent as well as similarity. I describe this in more detail in my analysis of Workshop Three in Chapter Four of this thesis.

As they were helpful to the formulations of the practice-based research process and the development of these compassion-based practices, I have also included sections of my field

notes written during Workshop Three that have pointed out moments for deeper analysis and observations of the group in practice (Mason, 2018, p. 12, **Appendices D:** Field Notes). I have included the signed informed consent and ethics forms that enabled student and volunteer participation in each workshop (**Appendices C:** Informed Consent Forms). The students' reported experiences, understandings, and feedback are vital data in this research that I rely on in support of my analysis of the creation of community and dialogic gaze. These are necessary for inclusion as they explicate the practice and aims of the workshops as the students have understood them to be (Mason, 2018, p. 189).

Limitations

The limitations of this research emerged primarily in the make-up of the ensembles, and in the practices utilised. The ensemble in Workshop One came from the same country, same university, and had clear prior relationships with each other from their three year-long common training. This may have contributed to the intensity of their experiences in the exercises and the homogeneity of some of their positive responses. I also had previous connections with them as a facilitator. It was obvious that they were eager to support me in carrying out my research; there were few critical questions asked of me, few instances of critical feedback in the anonymous feedback forms, and a tacit sense of the need to 'be good' at this. I had no strategies in place to mitigate this. In fact, I did not practically anticipate this. I aimed to mitigate this in the next workshop by engaging with a disparate group I had little or no previous relationship with.

Workshop One students were also previously trained together. Their common language and previous working relationships may also be a contributing factor to their feedback and engagement. From this came the question: how do compassion-based, community-creating practices work in groups who identify from a wider range of cultures, ethnicities, races, genders, sexualities, ages, abilities, class systems, languages, accents, religions, and more? To help answer this, in the next workshop I explored the Gauntlet and the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination with a relatively multi-represented, recently formed ensemble that had significantly less history together and generally less experience in training. I was able to accommodate this easily in my pedagogic practice at an institution where I often work closely with first year drama training students.

This easy accommodation also meant that they had a brief but common training history, something I aimed to mitigate after the first workshop group's similarity in response and engagement. However, the group in Workshop Two had a common training history of only four months, and throughout this time they were split into disparate, smaller training groups and had not all worked together with any intensity. This group was relatively more represented in social identity than the first workshop's group, however there were still commonalities, as the majority, though not all, of their cultural backgrounds was either in or closely associated to the United Kingdom. In light of this, and Workshop One's relatively culturally homogenous group, I decided to engage an ensemble of disparate cultures, languages, ages, social identities, and experience levels in both actor training and as professionals in the industry in the next and final workshop.

In Workshop Three, I was able to engage with an ensemble that had no previous working relationship with each other or with me by utilizing my own institutional connections, as well as actor training and industry specific networks, such as the Standing Conference of University Drama Department's email list. The limitations to garnering this multi-representative group were mainly ethical, in how to frame my advertisement to gather a multi-representative group without alienating potential participants through any indication of tokenism. To mitigate this, I worded the advertisement with care, and made participation more accessible by offering a disbursement of £40 and a simple lunch. I describe these limitations in more detail in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Practice limitations

In Workshop Two, I decided to facilitate Marshall Rosenberg's *Non-Violent Communication* (NVC) to explore the effects of a framework for compassionate communication on a relatively new ensemble's ease of communication in rehearsal and performance (2015). This differs from the *metta* mediation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination and Gauntlet exercises by focusing on verbal frameworks for communication and compassion-based perspectives. I was interested in facilitating a language based on this framework for ensembles in training which would benefit their sense of community, help create ease in daily communications, and facilitate their ability to resolve uncreative conflict. However, I was not trained as a facilitator of NVC, nor was I confident in my expertise with the training I did have at that point. The students did not appear to engage with this framework nor use the

language within their communications. I did not continue to facilitate this technique and as this facilitation did not contribute to my research questions, I will not analyse it further.

In Workshop Two, my facilitation of the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination was limited as the students had not been trained in Michael Chekhov's Psychological Gesture technique. Their engagement here was physically restrained and disengaged, which I attributed to a lack of understanding of the concept the reverse Psychological Gesture adapts. As I will discuss in Chapter Four, I did not continue to facilitate the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination in Workshop Three due to time considerations. I chose to budget the shorter time I had there for in-depth work on acknowledging difference as well as similarity, rather than for facilitating training in Psychological Gesture, the *metta* meditation, and reverse Psychological Gesture.

Chapter Summary

In the following three chapters, I will analyse my use and development of compassion-based practices in my three research workshops, with the Gauntlet as a through-line. Through the use of the Gauntlet in each workshop, several concepts and practices became apparent; in the first workshop I combined the un-adapted Gauntlet exercise with the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture for compassion. Here, the Gauntlet was focused on similarity recognition and my inquiry concentrated on social transformation via ease of communication and potential ensemble sustainability, rather than multi-representative practice, an aim which developed through the theoretical-practical-reflective process of practice-based research (Nelson, 2013). In this workshop, the Gauntlet and associated practices manifested moments of community as 'connection', notable moments of dialogic gaze, and inconsistently multi-representative and gendered communication practices. I was also surprised to see its effectiveness in conflict transformation. This workshop showed compassion-based practices and the un-adapted Gauntlet to have some effect on multi-representative practices, although inconsistently so when the focus was on similarity, rather than similarity and difference. I detail and analyse this workshop in Chapter 2.

In the second workshop, I combined the un-adapted Gauntlet with the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture, and review of Marshall Rosenberg's *Non-Violent Communication* framework for compassionate communication (2015). In this workshop, the Gauntlet's focus was again on similarity recognition, and manifested notable moments of

community, connection, and dialogic gaze. This workshop also showed the Gauntlet's effect on conflict transformation and evidenced the potentially key role of vulnerability in this exercise. Like the first, this second workshop also evidenced inconsistent multi-representative practices through often-gendered communications patterns. I detail and analyse this workshop in Chapter 3.

In the third workshop, I paired the adapted Gauntlet with the 'I' exercise described above as an embodied celebration of self with others (p. 14, p. 39). Crucially, in light of the previous two workshops, I adapted the Gauntlet to recognise difference as well as similarity, and facilitated dissent and difference from the beginning, leading to notable moments of self-differentiation that benefitted group work together. This workshop's focus on similarity and difference facilitated consistent community, connection, and perpetuated practices of dialogic gaze. I describe and analyse this workshop in Chapter 4. I then summarize key concepts and practices, draw conclusions, and detail further developments in Chapter 5.

Chapter Two

Workshop One; Compassion-based practice, community, and conflict resolution

On May 19, 2018, I ran the first workshop exploring compassion-based practices at Canterbury Christ Church University. In this chapter I will describe and analyse this workshop's exploration of my three research questions; first, my primary research question of how to create multi-representative practices in ensemble actor training through the use of compassion-based practices. I will detail and analyse three compassion-based practices in exploration of this question; first, the *metta* meditation paired with the 'reverse' Psychological Gesture (**Chapter Two**, **Videos 1a-e,** Metta meditation, and **Chapter Two**, **Video 2,** Reverse Psychological Gesture). I will show these to be indicated for bridging uncreative conflict and thus enabling work in community. Second, the exploration of reverse Psychological Gesture conjoined with the Gauntlet's clauses, which led to democratic practice in communication and fluid, equally represented ensemble work (**Chapter Two**, **Video 8,** Reverse psychological gesture/Gauntlet prep**, Video 13**, P.G. group collaborations, **Video 14,** P.G. group dialogic movement). And third, the un-adapted Gauntlet, as shown to positively affect democratic communication, and evidence dialogic gaze (**Chapter Two**, **Video 7,** The Gauntlet, **Video 12,** Group collaboration). In this, however, gendered communication patterns were still present in group rehearsal negotiations (**Chapter Two**, **Video 11,** Gendered communications). The un-adapted Gauntlet was also indicated as a practice for conflict transformation (**Chapter Two, Video 4**, Hybrid gesture). The participating students overwhelmingly attributed their renewed connections, ease of communication, and conflict transformation to this exercise; however, this exercise was limited as we did not acknowledge difference. This less robust formulation of the Gauntlet did serve many useful purposes for effective group work together that positively impacted aims for social transformation via multi-representative practice. This formulation was repeated in the second workshop with similar results. It is important to note that Workshops One and Two showed less evidence for perpetual practice of dialogic gaze in comparison to Workshop Three, where we also acknowledged difference. As I will describe, the ensembles in the first and second workshop were somewhat more homogenous than those in Workshop Three, which may also account for this difference. Nonetheless, this initial workshop showed

the Gauntlet's positive impact on communication and conflict when utilising recognitions of similarity.

This chapter also serves to analyse this workshop's explorations of my secondary research question of how to create and perpetuate community in ensembles in actor trainings that seek to be multi-representative. According to participant feedback, both the *metta* meditation/reverse Psychological Gesture pairing and the original Gauntlet facilitated 'community' as a perpetual 'sense of', also expressed as 'connection' (PFBF, W1, P1-9). Community creation in the Gauntlet was reliant only upon the acknowledgment of similarity. After undertaking a similar structure and feedback in Workshop Two, the question arose of whether the community created from the original Gauntlet in these workshops was socially transformative, as hooks and Lorde's definitions necessitate recognitions of similarity *and* difference. This question led to the necessity to adapt the Gauntlet's clauses for acknowledgement of similarity and difference, in order to draw more robust conclusions about its efficacy for community and dialogic gaze. In Workshop One, community was referred to as a sense of 'connection' by the students (PFBF, W1, P4, P5, P9), accounting for only part of its definition and lending support to the notion that community was only partially created here. While there was also evidence of dialogic gaze in this workshop, it was less frequent and less evident than in Workshop Three, where both similarity and difference were explicitly acknowledged.

Finally, I will also describe this workshop's exploration of my tertiary question of how to facilitate actors in an ensemble in training to develop perpetual multi-representative practices. Multi-representative practice was manifested in the students giving each other space to speak in both working groups. This was also evident in that those that typically spoke first, spoke the most, and took up the most space stepped back from these behaviours, albeit inconsistently (**Chapter Two**, **Videos 10,** Recognising voices**, Video 12,** Group collaborations). Multi-representative practices were evident and attributed to the day's exercises, however were inconsistent given their occasionally gendered communication patterns. It is arguably difficult to shift ingrained patterns of gendered communication in a one-off workshop, and difficult to ascertain perpetuated practice in this amount of time. However, there were shifts in their communication that indicate the potential for habitual multi-representative practice, as I will describe.

In this workshop I formulated the exploration of compassion-based practice towards the facilitation of ease of communication and potential sustainability of the ensemble post-training, rather than towards multi-representation, as my research questions now ask. I undertook this workshop before my ideas regarding dialogic gaze were fully developed, and so focused on creating connection through similarity. While ease of communication and ensemble sustainability are linked to multi-representation, I was not satisfied with the practice positioned as anything other than socially transformative. I began to locate myself more firmly in an intersectional feminist lineage, where the necessity of acknowledging similarity and difference towards community, as hooks and Lorde recognize it, became apparent (2003, p. 197, 2017a, p. 14). This shift came to fruition just before Workshop Three, which is where the adaptation of the Gauntlet was first facilitated, as analysed in Chapter Four of this exegesis. Despite the sole emphasis on similarity recognition in Workshops One and Two, these do evidence notable moments of community creation and dialogic gaze, although less consistently so than in Workshop Three, as I will describe.

Responding to gaps in research

Workshop One also arose in response to gaps in research on actor training around compassion-based trainings in general, let alone towards community creation for social transformation. The original Gauntlet and the *metta* meditation has not specifically been explored in actor training at the time of this workshop or this writing. The workshop was also conceived to explore an archetypal gesture for compassion. Compassion has been shown to have a significant effect on communication and connection in social relationships (Condon et.al, 2013, Weng et al., 2013, Goetz et al., 2010). I wanted to explore how one can embody compassion as a habit towards improving communication. I used Michael Chekhov's Psychological Gesture as a primary source for facilitating the embodiment of often archetypal drives, as I conceived 'compassion' to be from my research. I conceptualized an exploration of a 'reverse' Psychological Gesture, a non-archetypal Psychological Gesture following thoughts/feelings rather than vice versa as Chekhov intended. I explored this after engaging in *metta* meditation myself, making a Psychological Gesture but in reverse; from the inside out (**Chapter 2, Video 6**, Archetypal gesture). I wanted to gauge my ability to embody the sensations of compassion and to easily elicit the sense of it when I made the gesture later, just as Psychological Gesture is used to recall a character's intention when embodied in a gesture (Chekhov, 2002, p. 63). In his article 'Neurology in art and literature' published in *Neurological Medicine*, Toyokura describes a gesture of giving out, with open hands

positioned supine, and arms opening wide from the heart outward (1991, p. 650). The gesture I made after the meditation was similar to this, although I had not come across this text prior to my physicalisation (**Chapter 2, Video 6** Archetypal gesture). From this arose the question: is there an archetypal gesture for compassion? And, what effect does a loving kindness meditation have on other actors' bodies when invited to physicalize a gesture expressing compassion? To address these questions, I decided to create a series of case studies to practically explore both the Gauntlet and the *metta* meditation into reverse Psychological Gesture to gauge any effects these may have on an ensemble's communication.

Participants

The workshop was comprised of nine student actors from a university in Chicago on a term abroad program at Rose Bruford College, where I taught them for several months prior. I chose this group because I saw opportunity for exploring the effects of compassionate practice; their often-broken group communications led to conflicts that affected their ability to work together. I also chose them as they were available and willing. To mitigate my mixed relationship as facilitator/practitioner at one institution and facilitator/researcher at another, I made sure that our teaching time together and assessments were complete before the workshop date.

This group were all American, one identifying as African American, one as Asian American, two as Latin American, and five as Caucasian American. Two were native bilingual Spanish and English. One identified as queer, and all identified as able-bodied. I do not have information about their class identifications. While there were some pluralistic identities represented in this group, all were from the same culture and the same training program, which gave a homogeneity to their devising strategies. Their rehearsal collaborations exhibited common training techniques, seen in a common 'soft focus' that suggests Viewpoints (Bogart & Landau, 2005, p. 23). Their similarities in these aspects may have led to some commonality of responses, revealing the necessity to mitigate this homogeneity by facilitating these exercises in more pluralistic groups, as seen in Workshop Two and even more so in Workshop Three.

Prior to the workshop, the ensemble had come into conflict that was destructive, rather than a constructive tension as a source of creativity (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18). A conflict created a rift between group members early into my teaching time with them, dividing them down the

middle. Relatively polarized social groups later formed within these larger groups to the exclusion of other members. Evidencing the importance of dialogue, and Lorde's call that 'only our silences can immobilise us' there was a significant lack of communication among and between these social groups that affected their ability to work together (1984, p. 44). Eventually they were not able to fulfil required assignments, necessitating two group mediation sessions with myself, both unsuccessful in conflict transformation. The group reported that it was not until the completion of this workshop that they were able to work successfully together, with both working and personal relationships starting to repair.

***Metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture**

To begin, I led the ensemble through the loving kindness meditation, excerpts of which can be seen in (**Chapter Two, Videos 1a-e,** '*Metta* meditation'). I extended a *metta* meditation from thirteen minutes to twenty-five, so that they had time to embody the sensations of loving kindness and compassion.[24] I invited the students to sit in a comfortable position of their choice, to practically prepare them but also to begin to reiterate the notion of 'choice', which is emphasized in the Gauntlet in terms of what is shared, as well as in feminist practice (Veltmand and Piper, 2014, p. 1). I invited them to take three deep breaths into the root *chakra*[25] (perineum) to relax their bodies and introduce the reliance on breath that this meditation entails. I then suggested that they observe their breath as it comes into the nose and is exhaled through the mouth, in order to focus their minds while staying in relaxation. These are common preliminary practices in meditation in general, and observation of breath can be utilized as a meditational practice in and of itself.

I then introduced the first part of the five-part structure of this particular *metta* meditation by asking them to bring awareness to their own heart *chakra*, and to say to themselves, 'May I be well. May I be happy. May I be peaceful. May I be loved' (**Chapter Two, Video 1a**,

[24] There are multiple formats for loving kindness meditation, some including elements of sending well wishes to the world or envisioning everyone you love around you throughout. I chose this format as it is clear and involves the typical steps of this meditation: well wishes to self, to a loved one, to a neutral person, and to someone one is having difficulty with.

[25] *Chakras* began in India around 500 BC when early Yogic texts were written (Schneider & Cooper, 2019, p. 21). In its original Sanskrit, *chakra* means 'wheel', and details a system of 'wheels of energy' running along the human spine (Schneider & Cooper, 2019, p. 22). These are described as a system of 'regulatory micro-networks' in the human body that are connected to spiritual development. The 'western world' typically recognises seven chakras, although some Indian oral traditions list twelve and even 114 (Schneider & Cooper, 2019, p. 21).

Metta meditation, first invitation). This phrase is a common blessing in *metta* meditations, and creates a text-based structure to which students can easily return should they lose focus. The phrase is typically repeated three times. I then invited them to imagine that someone they love and feel comfortable with is seated in front of them. They say to this person, 'May you be well. May you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be loved' (**Chapter Two, Video 1b**, Metta meditation, second invitation). This is again done three times, to practice extending loving-kindness to someone they know and love, and to whom this extension comes easily. This step acts as a 'heart-warmer' in preparation for the next layers of this meditation.

I then introduced the third part of the meditation, which is to imagine someone they see regularly but do not know very well. For example, this person may be a cashier they see often, or a regular on their bus. I invited them to visualize this person and say three times, 'May you be well. May you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be loved' (**Chapter Two, Video 1c**, *Metta* meditation, third invitation). This is done to practice giving loving-kindness to someone they feel 'neutrally' towards, training the idea that even those we may not know well still deserve loving-kindness, and that it is possible to extend that to them.

We then began the fourth section of this meditation, which is to imagine someone they are having difficulty or conflict with. I asked that they envision this person in front of them as best they can. I gave prompts that this person may be a family member, a roommate, or a friend. I invite them to say to this person three times, 'May you be well. May you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be loved' (**Chapter Two, Video 1d**, *Metta* meditation, fourth invitation). This is done to practice giving loving-kindness to people we may have negative thoughts or feelings towards. For me, this is a crucial aspect of this meditation in that we rewire our conflicts with this person in the expression of *metta* to them. This can act as a practice towards conflict resolution and forgiveness, and may help lay a foundation for the notion of celebrating, rather than fighting our differences (Lorde, 2017a, p. 14).

Fifth, and finally, I asked them to envision the world and all of the above, including themselves, and repeat 'May you be well. May you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be loved' **(Chapter Two, Video 1e**, Metta meditation, fifth invitation). This is done to give a visual representation that they themselves, the people they love, are neutral towards, in conflict with, and indeed all around the world are all equally deserving of loving-kindness. After this I invite them to slowly come back to the room by opening their eyes and stretching

their bodies. I emphasized that they carry with them the sensations of love, kindness, and compassion. This is typically suggested in metta meditation as a way to maintain the positive effects of this meditation. My purpose for this suggestion was to enable the students to transmit those feelings and sensations into the next exercise: the reverse Psychological Gesture.

Reverse Psychological Gesture

I then invited the group to take the sensations and feelings of loving kindness into a whole-bodied gesture that allowed them to fully express those feelings (**Chapter 2**, **Video 2,** Reverse Psychological Gesture). When each student appeared to find a gesture, I invited them to 'converse', or dialogue with each other using that gesture, sending out their own and receiving others' gestures in a reciprocal exchange (**Chapter 2**, **Video 3**, Gestural dialogue, Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). Some students appeared to enlarge or shift their own gesture in response to receiving another student's gesture, as can be seen in (**Chapter Two**, **Video 3,** Gestural dialogue) where one participant grows her gesture in response to her partner, as well as in (**Chapter Two, Video 4,** Hybrid gesture) where two formerly conflicting participants adapt their gestures in response to each other, and in (**Chapter, Two, Video 5,** Group gesture conversation) where a group of participants grow gestures in response to each other. These evidence a physicalised dialogic relationship of affectation, incorporation, and response. Bakhtin writes that in reciprocal exchange, 'Which will affect the other, how it will do so and in what degree is what is actually settled at the moment of utterance' (1981, p. 426). There is evidence that they are 'affecting the other' through their gestural exchange, the gestures themselves likened to 'moments of utterance' (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). There is evidence of amplification of their gestures in this way, showing affectation by the others' 'degree of utterance'. Some began to mimic their partner's gesture, in a literal affectation of others' gestures (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). Robinson discusses Bakhtin's dialogic as 'being informed by other's works' which then alters or informs our own, and vice versa (2011). Their mimicking evidences a physical representation of the altering of gestures after being informed by 'other's works' (2011).

A moment of conflict transformation

I invited the group to pair up and try another's gesture. Using the gestures as utterance, I was curious to see if and how they would 'fuse' another's offering with their own gesture, to

perhaps together make a 'hybrid' gesture, what Bakhtin calls 'the mixing, within a single concrete utterance, of two or more different linguistic consciousnesses' (1981, p. 429). The pairs began to take on each other's 'language' however the 'dialogue' was generally a switch in gesture with a continued back and forth.

During this time, two participants chose to work together that had recently been in direct conflict. One of these participants did something that the group expressed to me as deeply offensive to the other, and to many in the group. Their conflict was one of the points of focus for our mediations, though these were unsuccessful and the two requested not to work together anymore. Notably, here they allowed themselves this, as partners were chosen. This choice may be driven by the *metta* meditation, extrapolating or even aiming the third section of visualizing someone they were in conflict with to each other.

Physically, they began relatively slowly, each making a gesture originating from a different place and unfolding differently; one started down and flowed upwards, and the other moved outward from centre. They began to hybridize their gestures into a shared gesture with held hands, bending their arms down together and slowly coming up with arms swinging out, maintaining hand connection (**Chapter Two**, **Video 4,** Hybrid gesture). Together they created a new gestural language with hints of the two different 'utterances' they started with. They also allowed this new language to grow as they continued to perform it together, an amplification that seemed to parallel their energy, as they also began to energize to a joyful tone together. They amplified this gesture with this tone, eliciting Lorde's notion of 'joy' as a 'bridge through difference', as these two were physically and tacitly connected during this time, beyond their previous differences (Lorde, 2017a, 10). It is notable that after this workshop, I received correspondence from one of these participants that they apologized, and the apology was accepted.

I then invited the pairs to switch partners, in order for them to engage with other languages. I was curious to see if they would express hybrid gestures that would evidence all three gestures embodied at this point. Rather than sticking with another partner, many congregated into groups bigger than pairs, perhaps ready to form a larger community (**Chapter Two**, **Video 5**, Group gesture conversation). They might have been interested in expanding their 'conversations', or in broadening the 'joyful connections' made to others in the group, as these seemed to be gratifying and may account for the amplification of gestures (Lorde,

2017a, p. 10). There was a lot of laughing and eye connection during this time. Some students hugged each other. I let this exploration come to a natural end after about 5 minutes. I did not want to act as an outside force to continue the exercise. This would negate the choice I aimed to reiterate in support of their continued sense of autonomy (Veltmand & Piper, 2014, p. 1).

Analysis of metta meditation/reverse Psychological Gesture

When I completed the meditation and psychological gesture on my own one month before this workshop in a solo rehearsal, the gesture that I made was a giving out with hands parallel to the floor, open palms, and arms widening slowly, with a long, heart-led pause (**Chapter Two, Video 6,** Archetypal gesture). This is notable as it matches the compassion-based gesture that Toyokura describes; a similar movement of arms opening slowly in a gesture of giving from the heart outward (1991, p. 650). Notably, I observed several students express a similar movement and widening out from the heart, with hands open, much as I had and as described in Toyokura's text (**Chapter Two**, **Video 6a,** Archetypal compassionate gesture).

While Chekhov's archetypal Psychological Gestures include 'I want' or 'I give', there does not seem to be a gesture for 'compassion', as it is defined in the active sense that George espouses (1999, p. 97, Rushe, 2015). 'I compassion' is an obviously clunky text to form this gesture, and perhaps 'I give' is a close approximation to compassion's action based on the desire to serve or benefit someone recognized as 'similar' (George, 1999, p. 97, Rushe, 2015). It is notable that in my introduction to the psychological gesture I gave the instruction to 'really see what it would be like *to give* those feelings out.' Many of the gestures indeed were 'given out', coming from the heart or the core outwards (**Chapter Two, Video 2**, Reverse Psychological Gesture, **Video 6a,** Archetypal compassionate gesture). One student made a sweeping motion with their hands from their heart out, with a circular opening of the arms, as if cycling from the heart outwards and back again. Another student moved from standing to crouching down, during which they extended their open hand out, as if giving something to a child. Another student made a sweeping motion from their heart outwards which they combined with an archetypal full bodied giving out, ending up with arms out in front of them in a lunge position. These are all varied movements that indicate a sense of 'giving out'. This may be due to my direction in this regard or may be connected to the giving out of loving kindness in the meditation. Next time I rephrased the instructions more

neutrally as ‘explore gestures that express what you are feeling’ to clarify the source of the ‘giving out’.

Compassion is a core concept in Buddhist and Hindu religions, called *karuna* in Mahayana Buddhism and *ahimsa* in Hinduism. In the Sanskrit theatres that arose from these religions there are *mudras* or hand gestures for love or desire, however there is no whole-bodied gesture for ‘compassion’ in the Natya Sastra, the ancient Sanskrit text and one of the earliest written holistic performance texts (Ghosh, 2011). In Kathakali there is a *mudra* for compassion, although, like most *mudras*, it primarily involves only the arms, fingers, and hands. There is little evidence in any performing arts styles for a full-bodied gesture of compassion.

My directions to ‘give out’ notwithstanding, when comparing my own embodiment with the students, and then juxtaposing these to Toyokura’s text, it is arguable that there may be an archetypal gesture for compassion. While this is a potentially interesting practice as research, a full exploration of this is out of the scope of this research. My intent is to practically enact Lorde and hooks’s similar theoretical aims for social transformation in actor training. While these practices are based on compassion and may contribute to this, the goals of this research are community creation for a dialogic gaze rather than archetypal gestures for compassion.

After the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture, the students reported feeling an ‘unprejudiced’ (PFBF, W1, P7) and ‘pure love’ (PFBF, W1, P3) for and from others during the gestural conversation, and the sense of a different relationship with them, as evidenced in the formerly conflicting students’ hybrid gesture and feedback of ‘looking past tensions’ (PFBF, W1, P9, **Chapter Two, Video 4**, Hybrid gesture). This may indicate this exercise as a tool for conflict transformation. Their feedback reporting an ‘unprejudiced love’ for others indicates that these students were able to translate the loving kindness generated by the meditation to those that they had previously been in conflict with. This indicates this exercise combination as way to create connections that bridge uncreative conflict among ensemble members (Lorde, 2017a, p. 10).

Eye Greeting Exercise

After this exercise I decided to compare the potential effects of the reverse Psychological Gesture on communication to the effects of the text-based Gauntlet. To prepare for the

sustained connections of the Gauntlet, I invited participants to partake in a silent exercise greeting each other with their eyes only. Eye contact has been shown to heighten awareness of self and others, which is foundational for completing the clauses and for the connections in community (Conty et al., 2016, hooks, 2003, p. xv). I suggested that the students risk maintaining an eye connection for longer than they may be used to. I then invited them to pause while maintaining eye contact, only to separate when they sensed to. I did this to facilitate connection and awareness with each other through sensing others' unspoken decisions to stay in contact or move on. This also lays a foundation for trust, from the shared risk and vulnerability of making these connections beyond a usual time frame (Conty, George, & Hietanen, 2016, hooks, 2003, p. 40). Their sense of vulnerability manifested in moments of laughter and self-consciousness. I gave general prompts to 'stay in it', which they did, quieting down and looking at each other for long periods of time.[26] We then shifted into two groups, three students to look further at the reverse Psychological Gesture and the other six to test the Gauntlet, so that I could compare potential effects.

The Gauntlet

I facilitated the original Gauntlet via the directions given in Chapter One: with first, 'What I see in you that I see in me is…', followed by 'I suggest…' and finally 'What I love about you is…' (pp. 40-44). In this workshop, I focused on the similarity clauses rather than a facilitation of difference. As noted above, my critical framework for this initial workshop was focused on studying the impact of compassion-based practices on ensemble sustainability, rather than exploring these practices towards community and dialogic gaze. Thus, my initial use of the Gauntlet was for the purpose of acknowledging similarity and creating connection towards a sustainable ensemble. Despite this previous perspective, a sense of community was present, and there were notable examples of dialogic gaze.

They were easily able to connect with each other during the exercise, some of them intensely so; before I gave the first provocation, there were tears between two students who I know remained close throughout the ensemble's conflicts. There were also some smiles between

[26] I also did this to set the tone; the next part of the workshop was a letting go of social norms of eye connection and physical and emotional intimacy. The Eye Connection exercise creates a space, much like Chekhov's golden circle exercise, that we have shifted the room to a place where we are free to connect and be truthful with each other (2002).

students during the Gauntlet's initial eye contact, which I interpreted differently according to what I knew of their relationship; one pair with a history of tense interactions seemed to be nervous, with stiff postures; another pair with a history of close friendship seemed eager to connect: smiling, laughing, and grabbing hands. The participants did not allude to any specific previous relationships in feedback; however, these behaviours can arguably be interpreted as evidence of such. Because I aim to elicit community and connection, it is interesting to note that evidence of prior relationships may quickly emerge in this exercise.

Despite some initial hesitation speaking the phrases, most were engaged from the start, leaning towards their partners, maintaining eye contact and active listening and responding: heads shaking, bodies engaged, and responding with vocal listening signifiers. There were visible emotional responses: tears, laughter, and physical connections made. This can be seen in (**Chapter Two, Video 7,** The Gauntlet), where one of the students at the fore reaches out to wipe a tear from her partners face, who leans closer in response. They remain close, holding eye connection and tearing up throughout the exercise. These responses outwardly indicate the inner effect this dialogue had on each member. Bakhtin describes the inner effect that 'comes from the moment of utterance' (1981, p. 426). These are physical indicators of their inner responses to their partner's verbal and physical utterances, and show the first evidence of transformation elicited by the acknowledgement clauses. I also noticed that responses of this kind were more pronounced when paired with an ensemble member they had a previous positive relationship with, as in (**Chapter Two, Video 7,** The Gauntlet). This may evidence previous 'transformations' from positive mutual exchange with these partners, what Bakhtin calls the 'conditioning' that comes from the 'constant interactions between meanings' (1981, p. 426). These indications of previous positive interaction combined with the overwhelming positive feedback for this exercise initiated my desire to facilitate this exercise in an ensemble with less or even no history together, leading to the new ensemble in Workshop Three, described in Chapter Four.

The participants said the exercise opened them more to the others, 'I saw a side of them I never have' (W1, P9, **Chapter Two, Video 15**, Workshop One reflection session). It allowed for 'honesty, intimacy' (PFBF, W1, P5, P7) and the ability 'to look past opinions and tension' (PFBF, W1, P9). This particular feedback impressed me in light of this group's previous and multiple conflicts and detrimental communication issues. This shows that not only were they were able to 'look past' this long-running tension, they also discovered sides of their fellow

long-term ensemble members that they had not before. However, their similar cultural backgrounds and common training may also have allowed a receptivity to exercises that are 'intimate' in this way. They may have had a readier reception for this type of exercise because of these similarities, necessitating the implementation of it in groups that have a much greater variety of training experiences, cultural backgrounds, and social identifications.

The respondents expressed that this exercise enabled them both a connection to their immediate partners and a sense of the group as whole, 'Especially when you're getting up and sitting down together- it's like, you have the one person you're speaking to but you're still a group' (W1, P2, **Chapter Two, Video 15**, Workshop One reflection session). This respondent was aware of the group, even when they were speaking to one, which indicates a sense of engagement in the community even when interacting with only one (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18). This can be likened to hooks's notion of the 'unity in the diversity', a sense of togetherness while maintaining individual identity within the group (2003, p. 109). The movement within the transitions between clauses was especially helpful for this participant, which may indicate a more kinetic learning style. This may also indicate that some movement is useful in the exercise for this purpose, although this respondent was the only one to mention it.

They also directly attributed their connections with each other to eye contact and honesty, 'the honesty just like spews; [with] that the connection really solidifies' (W1, P7, **Chapter Two, Video 15**, Workshop One reflection session). Lorde speaks of the power of 'voicing', saying that 'only our silences' can separate us (1984, p. 10). This public, verbal affirmation of their relationship magnified the connections amongst the ensemble (Lorde, 1984, p. 10). This respondent attributed the honesty to the 'eye contact for so long' (W1, P7, **Chapter Two, Video 15**, Workshop One reflection session), a sentiment that is echoed in another's feedback:

> being forced to make eye contact with somebody while you're both like, streaming, is such a weird and powerful like, melding of humanity. And like, seeing that the human condition is within all of us…We're all going through it. No one is struggling alone. (W1, P9).

This respondent also felt the connections of commonality that came from the prolonged eye contact in this exercise. Through this, they recognized the 'universality' of the 'human

condition' that both Maslow and hooks speak of: the needs and yearnings that humans share, and that Rosenberg argues cause 'struggle' when they are not met (Maslow, 1943, p. 650, hooks, 2003, p. 110, Rosenberg, 2015, p. 52).

Reverse Psychological Gesture paired with the Gauntlet

The Gauntlet is relatively static and primarily text-based; students are seated for the majority of the exercise and move briefly during the transitions. I thought it might be useful to explore a more kinetic version of the Gauntlet by pairing it with the reverse Psychological Gesture, as an exploration of a physicalised approach to creating community. I was curious if a more kinetic and full-bodied engagement generating compassion could potentially allow students to more deeply embody it, as Chekhov advocates for Psychological Gesture (2002, p. 54). I wondered if this embodied sense of compassion would then impact their sense of community. I later formulated these questions to include an analysis for the celebration of similarity and difference and enhanced awareness of others' experiences towards a dialogic gaze.

First, I invited the group to go through their gestures together after reminding them of the steps and the phrases of it: 'May you be well, may you be happy, may you be peaceful, may you be loved'.[27] They moved in a circle, making connection with each other through the gestures (**Chapter Two, Video 8,** Reverse Psychological Gesture/gauntlet preparation). They ran through the phrases, and in a sort of meditative trance began to sway. After several minutes, they started to make their compassionate gestures.

I then gave them the first clause of the Gauntlet, 'What I see in you, that I see in me is...' I observed that it was difficult for them to attend to both the gesture and their impulses[28] in completing the phrases of the Gauntlet. One respondent correlates this observation, saying, 'it

[27] The unfortunate effect of running two groups at the same time was a divided attention. I could not lead this meditation myself as my presence was needed to facilitate the Gauntlet. Having already been through the meditation I was confident they could recreate or adapt it as a group.

[28] From Konstantin Stanislavsky to Jerzy Grotowski to Lorna Marshall, the facilitation of 'impulse' is widely discussed and practiced as foundational in actor training. Grotowski calls impulse a 'basic beat' for the actor, which Marshall purposes is 'to find the exact and authentic response' to a situation in performance, contributing to truth on stage (Richards, 1995, p. 95, Marshall, 2008, p. 35). In *The Body Speaks*; *Performance and physical expression,* Marshall defines impulse as 'a desire in the body to do something concrete in response to a stimulus' (2008, p. 33). I use 'impulse' here to describe the elicitation of vocalised acknowledgements in response to connection with others in the reverse Psychological Gesture/ Gauntlet pairing.

was the duality of doing and thinking' that was the complication for her (PFBF, W1, P6). They were significantly slower in carrying out the gesture while thinking of what to say (**Chapter Two**, **Video 9**, Duality of doing and thinking). They seemed to go in and out of engagement, and seemed to struggle to complete the clauses, as can be seen in (**Chapter Two**, **Video 9,** Duality of doing and thinking) where one student voices guttural sounds in an attempt to formulate the dialogue. They sometimes repeated previous phrase completions or used generalised observations, seen here in 'What I love about you is your openness'. As I was moving between the two groups, I may have let my attention to leading them lapse, which could also account for their tentativeness.

Comparison of Exercises

In the Psychological Gesture group, there seemed to be less eye connection and what appeared to be self-consciousness and lack of focus when speaking the phrases. Most phrases were completed with more generalized observations, 'What I love about you is your openness', 'What I love about you is the way you move' (**Chapter Two**, **Video 9**, Duality of doing and thinking). This was different from the specificity of observation in the seated Gauntlet, 'What I see in you that I see in me is the need for people to like you', 'What I see in you that I see in me is courage that you try to excavate, even though it's hard' (**Chapter Two, Video 7**, The Gauntlet). It appeared that those in the Gauntlet also had a deeper emotional connection; there was prolonged eye contact, physical contact made, and tears and laughter, whereas the Psychological Gesture group exhibited none of these things. These observations elicited several questions as to why this is: did the Gauntlet group appear to be more connected because of this specificity? Or their relative stillness? Or the easier prolonged eye contact?

These three possibilities are connected to each other and together serve to explain the difference in the students' specificity in completing the clauses. When speaking the clauses to another student, the Gauntlet group participants had one material task to concentrate on: complete the clause. Due to their stillness, they had the benefit of connection coming from unbroken, direct eye contact, which Conty, George, and Hietanen discuss as 'enhancement of self-awareness, and…the activation of pro-social behaviour, and positive appraisals of others' (2016). Through the unbroken eye contact with another in the seated Gauntlet they were able to be more self-reflexive, which supports a dialogic analysis in the 'conditioning' coming from the exchange with another (Conty, George, Hietanen, 2016, Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426).

Their increased self-reflexivity allowed them to be more specific in completing the clauses. This self-reflexivity was inherent in the exercise, as they were invited to use their own experiences for this purpose.

Clause completions such as 'What I see in you that I see in me is the need for people to like you' are deeply honest and specific, and require a dual 'risk, rather than safety' in both the inherent self-admission and in expressing an incisive and potentially confronting observation to another (hooks, 2003, p. 40). The increase in 'pro-social behaviour' from direct eye contact may have been a motivating factor in taking risks to give honest feedback that serves the listener. The increased sense of connection from prolonged eye contact motivates the want to be 'pro-social' and may have also contributed to giving beneficial feedback. There is benefit in taking the risk to share a common vulnerability, which is not only connecting, but can be motivating for growth as an individual and potentially suggest growth together (Brown, 2015, hooks, 2003, p. 40).

Devising Communications

After both groups' exercises ended, I immediately invited each to create a 10-minute devised piece, to observe their communications. As noted in Chapter One, I gave them the devising stimulus of 'metamorphosis', to spur discussion of their interpretations, and negotiation, prioritization, and organization of those interpretations towards performance (p. 51-52). This is indicative of a typical ensemble process requiring complex communication in both industry and training (Bonczek & Stork, 2013, p. 11). The Arts Council or private theatre funded projects these students will expect in the industry typically have time constraints within which they can rehearse. These projects and those in theatre festivals such as Wandsworth Fringe or Edinburgh will necessarily have time limits within which the performance must abide. To recreate an industry reality of rehearsal and performance time constraints, I gave each group 45 minutes to complete the devising and rehearsal processes.

Gauntlet group

The Gauntlet group's negotiations seemed easy; they took turns speaking, looking at each other, giving space to speak and encouragement for ideas. This space-giving indicates an awareness of representation in their communications, with some members who would normally speak more stepping back and listening to those that typically spoke less. There is evidence of dialogic gaze in this action for another's benefit. Everyone in the group was able

to offer and affirm ideas throughout the decision-making process, as can be seen in (**Chapter Two, Video 10,** Recognising voices). Several participants expressed this as a positive change from their usual strategy of one (typically white male) taking the lead (PFBF, W1, P5, P6 ,P7, P8, P9). They accepted each other's ideas with active listening and encouragement, exemplifying hooks's call for 'all voices to be recognised' in community (2018, p. 40). I heard 'I like that…', and 'yeah, let's try that', some contributing to another's idea with an addition of their own: 'what if we did…' (**Chapter Two**, **Video 10,** Recognising voices).

I did observe that this conversation was occasionally gendered; the identifying men in the group initially spoke more often and typically made more decisions than the identifying women in the group. At one point one of the men needed to clarify their plan and can be heard to specifically direct his question to the other man, 'So, Jake, what were you saying? What are we doing?' Though the other man offers his idea as a suggestion, the group accepts it as the plan. He goes on to speak at length and then dominate the conversation (**Chapter Two**, **Video 11,** Gendered communications). This was an interesting aberration to a conversation that otherwise appeared to be multi-representative. The conversation is not multi-representative if women's voices are subsumed to men's, and if men are making the majority of the decisions. Later in the conversation, a woman offers an idea but questions it, 'I have a proposition. I don't know if it will go well, but…' (**Chapter Two, Video 12**, Group Communications). The above events are a representation of typical gendered communication patterns that exist in language and conversation; women assert themselves more and with more confidence in single gendered conversation (Smith-Lovin & Brody, 1983, Tannen, 1990). In mixed gendered conversation, women are more likely to be interrupted and typically have one-third the talk time as men (Fishman, 1983, Tannen, 1993, Pakzadian, 2018). This poses an interesting question regarding the breaking of habitual communication patterns and the ability for this exercise to facilitate this. I do not expect that implementing the Gauntlet once would break years of habituation to gendered communication. This is a wider socio-cultural question that cannot be answered here; however, may start to be challenged, as this habit was inconsistent in this group's communication.

I became curious about the potential for this pattern to emerge in the next two workshops. Indeed, the second workshop's group showed evidence of gendered communication patterns, which I discuss in Chapter Three as significant. It is also notable that these groups were relatively similar in age and gender identities although had overwhelmingly different, yet still

Anglospheric socio-cultural backgrounds: Workshop One being American, and Workshop Two, a wide range of British-based identities. I suspect their common, though inconsistent, patterns of gendered communication can be attributed to their relative similarity in age and in Anglospheric backgrounds that often exhibit these patterns in conversation. I will describe this in more depth in Chapter Two.

Together, the group decided to explore their individual growth during their time of study abroad in England, using instruments in the room as objects of discovery. While the identifying men dominated the conversation and decision-making and offered ideas with more confidence, all genders offered ideas here and were generally met with encouragement: head nods, affirmative responses such as 'yes' 'that would be good' (**Chapter Two, Video 12,** Group collaborations). They discovered their instruments separately, coming up with a rhythmic 'language' with which to 'speak' their instrument. While they seemed to manoeuvre through the room separately, they were grounded together by a rhythmic structure utilising everyone's language and in apparent dialogic exchange with each other, affecting each other and responding to being affected through the expression of their instruments (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). This was the most obvious ensemble element. Any physicalised or text-based group or paired work seemed incidental, random, and was brief. They moved through the room slowly and robotically, with little eye contact and seemingly in trance-like states.

Psychological Gesture Group

The reverse Psychological Gesture group engaged in democratic decision making; each member made suggestions, and ideas were met with encouragement, 'yeah I like that', and 'I like that, that's lit' (**Chapter Two**, **Video 13**, P.G. Group collaborations). 'Yeah' can often be heard as a listening signifier, an encouragement word, and in agreement. They used group decision making, with language such as 'should we…' and 'we could…'. They each seemed to take turns asking and answering questions to clarify the piece. The theme was decided together, democratically and quickly.

Their democratic decision-making and connections were most apparent in their acceptance of each other's physicalised offerings. They had several moments of symbiosis, affecting and responding to each other fluidly, as they had done in the initial paired Psychological Gesture. Here again it was a dialogic, physicalised exchange relativizing their own movements to others' offerings (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426, **Chapter Two**, **Video 14**, P. G. Group dialogic

movement). They also have several instances of coming to unspoken completions of their explorations leading to reflection, seen in a middle transition sequence and at the end of their first physical collaboration (**Chapter Two, Video 13**, P.G. Group collaboration**, Video 14**, P.G. Group dialogic movement). This indicates a sensitive awareness and connection with each other. At the end of rehearsal, one member led them in an impromptu recitation of the meditation's blessings, willingly followed by the others. This willingness to accept partners' offers without hesitation shows how connection positively affects rehearsal explorations, and leads to useful shifts in leadership. Their leadership ebbed and flowed in a way that each voice was actively recognized (hooks, 2018, p. 40).

Notably, they rehearsed in a trance-like state just as the other group did, slowly and with a relaxed gaze that may indicate a common training that suggests a 'soft focus', where the eyes relax 'to allow visual information to come to' them, as in Viewpoints (Bogart & Landau, 2005, p. 23). This may also be due to the meditation, which can sometimes elicit a trance-like state of dual awareness of self and other.[29]

In Comparison

Both groups used a similar rehearsal technique: a brief group discussion followed by physical exploration, with a subsequent reflection about the exploration. Both groups devised together in a trance-like state, or with a 'soft focus'. Whether this comes from the day's previous exercises or their shared prior training experience is unclear. This was not part of their feedback, nor did I ask in either the anonymous feedback forms or the group reflections.

The reverse Psychological Gesture group had more difficulty completing the Gauntlet's phrases and were less specific in their observations, using generalized statements such as 'What I see in you that I see in me is light. What I see in you that I see in me is compassion' (**Chapter Two, Video 9**, Duality of thinking and doing). The Gauntlet group's observations were more specific, 'What I see in you that I see in me is courage that you try to excavate, even though it's hard' (**Chapter Two, Video 7**, The Gauntlet). However, in rehearsal communications and physical collaborations, the reverse Psychological Gesture group

[29] I have experienced this after meditation, a trance-like state which seems like a buffer between myself and the rest of the world. This happens more often when I am meditating a lot (more than once a day) or my meditations go for longer periods.

appeared more connected, had a clearer narrative, and multiple moments of creating group images. Their collaborations exhibited an ensemble ethos where no one stood out as leader, and all new offerings were accepted (hooks, 2018, p. 40).

The Gauntlet group did not appear to be as symbiotic as the reverse Psychological Gesture group in either rehearsal communications or physicalisations. This is interesting, because the Gauntlet group exhibited more physical and emotional connection during the actual exercise, which seemed to only mildly translate to rehearsal and performance. The Gauntlet group was larger in size and had a wider range of prior relationships, which may explain the apparent lower level of connection. The difference in exercises may also explain this. I accounted for this in the next workshop by making more time to run the whole ensemble through both exercises, rather than splitting them into two groups of varying number and previous relationship.

Gender also played a role in the communication differences between the two groups. The relatively male dominated discussion that took place in the mixed gender Gauntlet group rehearsal was not present in the reverse Psychological Gesture group. The reverse Psychological Gesture group was smaller, and primarily female, with two identifying women and one member identifying as gender fluid. Here, the discussion was more balanced; all voices had a turn to speak, decide, clarify, and lead (**Chapter Two, Video 13**, P.G. Group collaborations). Group decision making was democratic, these were made together and with language such as 'we' and 'let's', and their rehearsal physicalisations evidenced an equity in terms of each performer's representation in the piece.

Surprising conclusions; community and conflict resolution

This workshop addressed my primary research question of how to create multi-representative practices in ensemble actor training through the exploration of the reverse Psychological Gesture conjoined with the Gauntlet's clauses, which led to democratic practice in communication and fluid, equally represented ensemble work (**Chapter Two**, **Video 8,** Reverse Psychological Gesture/ Gauntlet prep**, Video 13,** P.G. Group collaborations, **Video 14,** P.G. group dialogic movement). The un-adapted Gauntlet was shown to positively affect democratic communication, and evidence dialogic gaze (**Chapter Two**, **Video 7,** The Gauntlet**, Video 12,** Group collaboration). However, gendered communication patterns were

still present in group rehearsal negotiations, which is not indicated in multi-representative practice (**Chapter Two**, **Video 11**, Gendered communications).

The workshop addressed my secondary research question regarding how to create community in ensembles in training and revealed the emerging potential for the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination to facilitate connection in rehearsal and performance. The workshop also revealed these exercises to aid community by easing communication, evident in the reverse Psychological Gesture group's democratic practice in rehearsal and the Gauntlet group's connections with each other. Lorde argues that connection comes from 'breaking silences', which is evident here, in the voiced acknowledgement of similarity, and the risk-taking in communication (Lorde, 1984, p. 10).

The Gauntlet and *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination are indicated to potentially address my tertiary question of how to facilitate actors in an ensemble in training to develop perpetual multi-representative practices. Multi-representative practice was manifested in the students giving each other space to speak in both working groups and was attributed to the day's exercises in participant feedback (**Chapter Two, Video 10,** Recognizing voices, and **Video 13,** P.G. group collaborations). However, multi-representative practices were inconsistent given their occasionally gendered communication patterns, which are arguably difficult to shift in one workshop. It is difficult to be definitive about how perpetual any practice can be in a one-off workshop; however, given their shifts in communication and ability to work effectively together with some multi-representative practices intact, there is potential to habituate these, given time and practice.

Most notably this workshop evidenced the usefulness of the Gauntlet as a tool for conflict resolution, which contributes to both multi-representation and community. Both groups' feedbacks overwhelmingly revealed that that they have never been able to communicate this well with each other during a devising process after three years of training (PFBF, W1, P2, P3, P4, P7, P8, P9). The students' improved connections after undertaking the exercise is notable in light of their history of conflict, particularly as these conflicts were unsuccessfully addressed in previous mediations. From this comes a surprising, burgeoning notion that this exercise can be used for conflict resolution through the connections facilitated within it. The connections therein may have provided the 'bridge' across their differences that Lorde describes as part of 'sharing joy' and can help facilitate both community and multi-

representative practices (2017a, p. 10). I observed the group members actively listening to each other, offering ideas, and responding to others with encouragement and support. I saw signs of increased physical and emotional connections with each other: hand holding, hugs, and seemingly improved communication: increased active listening, offering of ideas, and encouragement of others' ideas. The students themselves universally reported an ease of making work they haven't had in three years, and that their process was 'respectful', 'honest', and even 'fun', which they noted came as a 'surprise' (PFBF, W1, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9). This shows the Gauntlet as having improved their communications and as an exercise that can facilitate conflict management towards community and effective multi-representative work.

However, I also consider that the groups' similar responses and my observations of connection and conflict resolution must also be put into context with the participants' similar cultural and training backgrounds. Their awareness of self and other, acceptance of these exercises, and relative facility in understanding them may also be attributed to common similar experiences in their previous trainings. Their openness to the exercises, relative facility in voicing, as well as their gendered communication patterns may indicate common cultural norms of the same. Their previous relationships may have also influenced their overwhelming responses regarding connection, trust, and safety. These limitations, along with their relative similarity in age, were considerations of mine in populating the next workshops with ensembles that represented a multitude of cultural backgrounds and social identities, as well as differing training experiences and relatively less history together. This consideration became of the utmost importance in Workshop Three, where my emphasis was on the celebration of difference as well as similarity, and on the facilitation of self-differentiation and dissent. This is described in depth in Chapter Four of this thesis.

Chapter Three

Workshop Two; Communication, community, and vulnerability

This workshop was completed February 11, 2019 and developed in response to my analysis of the first workshop, from which key questions emerged. Most notably were my questions regarding the efficacy of compassion-based practices within an ensemble with a multitude of experience levels and identities, as well as with less history of common training together. As in the first workshop, I also facilitated the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination, the Eye Greeting, and the Gauntlet exercises, which are analysed in the following.[30]

In this chapter, I will describe how Workshop Two addressed concerns that arose in Workshop One about ensemble cultural and training similarities, as well as my three research questions. I will detail and analyse this workshop's practical explorations of my main question, of how to create multi-representative ('inclusive') practices in ensemble actor training through the use of compassion-based practices. I facilitated the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture for this, with variable feedback regarding their efficacy in community creation.[31] I also facilitated the un-adapted Gauntlet, through which vulnerability emerged as a through-line, most notably in participant risk-taking as well as my own (**Chapter Three, Video 1,** A moment of vulnerability, **Video 2,** A moment of conflict resolution). This led to conflict transformation for two of the participants, and evidenced both gendered and multi-representative communications in rehearsals for a short, devised piece (**Chapter Three, Video 2,** A moment of conflict resolution, **Video 4,** Gendered

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[30] Despite the presence of two stationary cameras and the intermittent use of the camera on my phone, the *metta* meditation/reverse Psychological Gesture combination and reflection sessions were not recorded due to unforeseen technical issues. In my analysis of these exercises, I rely on my written reflection and the participant's feedback. While the metta meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture exercises were part of the development of this PhD, they do not comprise the main focus, and were not used again after this workshop. Crucially, the Gauntlet exercise and Workshop Two's devising and performance communications were recorded, as notated and analysed in this chapter. Due to the technical issues in this workshop, I engaged the use of four stationary cameras in Workshop Three, and kept the video camera on my phone recording as both a back-up camera and for footage that requires mobility, such as close up shots and following performers in performance.

[31] For this purpose, I also facilitated a review of Marshall Rosenberg's Non-Violent Communication, however was unsuccessful in transmitting this training effectively, and did not continue this technique in Workshop Three. As this brought little insight to my research questions, I will not be discussing this portion of the workshop.

communication). The Gauntlet exercise led to a significant moment of dialogic gaze in rehearsal communications, with one participant voicing on another's behalf, resulting in increased contributions from identifying female ensemble members (**Chapter Three**, **Video 6,** Dialogic gaze in communications). Dialogic gaze also emerged in participant feedback of increased awareness of 'not being imposing' (PFBF, W2, P8) and being 'receptive to others' opinions' (PFBF, W2, P13), evidencing multi-representativity in devising for the group piece.

I will also describe and analyse this workshop's exploration of my secondary research question of how to create and perpetuate community in ensembles in actor trainings that seek to be multi-representative. This emerged in several ways; first, by creating trust in the room through my own expressions of vulnerability, which led to like expressions of vulnerability from participants, as well as a sense of community (**Chapter Three**, **Video 1,** A moment of vulnerability). The 'similarity' of community may be seen in feedback about the 'universality' (PFBF, W2, P8) of needs this exercise reveals, and, like the first workshop, in multiple feedbacks expressing 'connection' (PFBF, W2, P2, P4, P10, P11, P13, P14). Community was also facilitated in their 'bridging differences' through conflict transformation in the Gauntlet, as mentioned above; however, at times did not appear present during rehearsal communications that were gendered/sexist (**Chapter Three**, **Video 2,** A moment of conflict resolution, **Video 4,** Gendered communications).

Finally, I will detail this workshop's addressing of my tertiary question of how to facilitate actors in an ensemble in training to develop perpetual multi-representative practices. I will analyse this through the use of the Gauntlet, which elicited the afore-mentioned example of dialogic gaze, as well as a perpetuated awareness of role taking within the group (**Chapter Three**, **Video 6,** Dialogic gaze in rehearsal communications). This awareness allowed for two participants that typically take on directorial roles to step back and purposefully 'listen and accept others opinions in light of this workshop' (PFBF, W2, P3), and to be conscious not 'to be bossy' (PFBF, W2, P8). Several respondents mentioned their increased 'listening' (PFBF, W2, P1, P4, P5, P6, P7, P13, P14), and some a sense of 'not excluding anyone' (PFBF, W2, P1), evidencing multi-representative practice. As in Workshop One, multi-representative practice was inconsistent due to gendered communication patterns. However, these are notable shifts in their communications for a one-off workshop and there is potential for habituation with further engagement with compassion-based practices.

As in Workshop One, this workshop was also completed with aims towards the facilitation of ease of communication and potential ensemble sustainability post-training, rather than towards multi-representative practice. However, ease of communication and potential ensemble sustainability are indirectly linked to multi-representative practices through the enabling of dialogue across similarity and difference, and multi-representativity as a perpetuated practice post-training. This workshop was part of the process of developing my ideas regarding dialogic gaze and the necessity of acknowledging similarity and difference towards community, as hooks and Lorde recognize it (2003, p. 197, 2017a, p. 14). Thus, the exercises were formulated towards recognitions of similarity and universality, rather than similarity and difference. Like the first workshop, this second workshop also elicited practices and perspectives of community as well as a sense thereof, ensconced in participant feedback of 'connection' (PFBF, W2, P2, P4, P10, P11, P14). This workshop also manifested examples of dialogic gaze, as I describe and analyse in the following. Like the first workshop, this workshop did not clearly evidence *perpetual* practice for community and dialogic gaze as did the third and final workshop, in which we acknowledged difference and encouraged dissent and dialogue, described and analysed in Chapter Four.

Addressing previous questions

In the previous workshop, I observed possible mitigating factors regarding the makeup of the group that may have affected their responses to the exercises undertaken, the quality of their rehearsal communications, and their connectivity in performance. First, the actors in the previous workshop had worked together for three years, came from a common country, school, and training background, and had prior, long-term relationships with each other. This may have contributed to the reported and observed intensity of their connections in the Gauntlet and reverse Psychological Gesture exercises, their common devising processes, and their similarity of responses to the reflection provocations. To address this, I decided to work with a newer ensemble of actors from more varied cultural, industry, and training backgrounds at the start of the second term of their first year of actor training at Rose Bruford College.

The group of eighteen were relatively multi-representative: of varying class backgrounds, races, abilities, and identifying binary male or female. Places of origin were American South, Southern Greece, Dubai, Southeast London, Oxford, Northern England, and the English Midlands. There were three LGBTQIA identifying students. One student identified a medical

disability, three identified dyslexic/dyspraxic, one as ADHD, and one as Autistic. They ranged in age from 18-27. They came from different schools with varying requirements of drama training: two from separate studio schools, one from a private diploma course, several with A-levels only. They had performing backgrounds from a variety of training methodologies; all as actors, though some with an emphasis on dance, some emphasizing voice. They had varied industry experience, some of them in professional theatre, and one a professional model.

Another question arose in regard to the previous workshop group's ingrained habits from a common training history. I wondered if these may have affected their physical expression of community and connection, seen in their common trance-like state in collaborations and their common physical vocabulary. To address this question, I employed a group with less time training together. I wanted them to have some education towards a relative facility with the processes of devising from a theme, something superficially addressed in their first term. However, I also wanted to waylay common ingrained habits from potentially affecting their communication and connectivity. This group had been working together for a period of four months. This is significant as a start to building patterns of common training and performance. However, they rarely trained together as a whole during those months. They were split into two groups for the first term's skills classes and had not worked together as a full group or in pairs for any length of time. Due to these circumstances, I was confident that they had not had enough time to embody common training habits as exhibited in common language, physicalities, or in connectivity to each other.

The previous workshop's actors apparent trance-like movement in rehearsal collaborations that suggested a common training in soft focus (Chapter Two) led me to also wonder if this common quality was due to the effects of prolonged engagement with the loving kindness meditation and subsequent psychological gesture. To mitigate the potential of this, I shortened the *metta* meditation from twenty-five minutes to thirteen minutes, and the length of time engaging in the reverse Psychological Gesture from ten minutes to five minutes. I was also interested to see if shortening it would alter their full-bodied response.

Loving kindness meditation/reverse Psychological Gesture

I paired the same loving kindness meditation with the reverse Psychological Gesture, as in the last workshop (**Chapter Two, Videos 1a-e,** Metta meditation**, Video 2,** Reverse

Psychological Gesture). At this point after the morning's NVC training, we were past time for lunch, and the students were showing visible signs of exhaustion. However, I decided last minute to press on with the exercise. I did not want to repeat my timing issues from the last workshop, where I had to leave out or combine tasks towards the exploration of these exercises. Unlike the first workshop's group, I had not previously taught Workshop Two's ensemble Chekhov's Psychological Gesture, nor did I explain it to them. I only modeled a generalized gesture for them: my own compassion-based reverse Psychological Gesture, seen in (**Chapter Two, Video, 6**, Archetypal gesture). I gave the instruction, 'now please take those feelings and sensations of loving kindness into a gesture if you like. A whole bodied gesture that expresses them as fully as you can.' I was careful to word this, avoiding the phrase 'give out' as in the last workshop this may have influenced the students' gestures, the majority of which were a sense of 'giving out' as described in Chapter Two (p. 73) and seen in (**Chapter Two, Video 6a**, Archetypal compassionate gesture).

Apart from a few, they made very half-hearted gestures, some just standing there. Of the whole-bodied gestures that they exhibited, most of them were again a 'giving out' with the hands in an open, supine fashion. It was interesting to note the parallels between these gestures, my own gesture, Toyokura's description, and that of the previous workshop's students (Toyokura, 1991, p. 650, **Chapter Two, Video, 6**, Archetypal gesture, **Chapter Two, Video 6a**, Archetypal compassionate gesture). However, there was little apparent psychophysical engagement here and most of the engagement that did take place was physically restrained. Perhaps this is due to the lack of training in Chekhov's Psychological Gesture, and thus a lack of understanding of the concept this exercise adapts.

Student Response

The students were divided on the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture pairing; the majority of their responses polarised on the feelings the *metta* mediation elicited. The responses can be interpreted as 'positive': they felt 'compassion', 'love, connection with self and those they envisioned' (PFBF, W2, P14), as well as 'negative': 'emotional responses I wasn't interested in exploring at the time' (PFBF, W2, P3), and 'hurt & anger' from thinking of an ex-partner (PFBF, W2, P9). Many expressed a sense of 'relaxation' (PFBF, W2, P13, P15), 'peace' (PFBF, W2, P7), and 'calm' (PFBF, W2, P2), and one stated the meditation allowed them 'a blissfully blank mind' (PFBF, W2, P4). From the feedback it sounds as if some could not connect to the meditation due to the desire to avoid the negative

feelings brought up when envisioning someone they were in conflict with. Some mentioned having 'spaced out' intentionally or having thoughts of a personal nature that were 'negative' and unconnected to the exercise arise, causing them to 'feel emotional' (PFBF, W2, P3, P9, P11). These responses indicate the benefit of this as a perpetual practice, a learning to shift to compassion towards conflict transformation.

There were also mixed reviews on the reverse Psychological Gesture, although these were more positive than I expected. The feedback varies from 'struggling' and 'not connecting to it' (PFBF, W2, P10), to seeing little value in it; 'didn't have as much significance compared to the meditation' (PFBF, W2, P9), and 'offered little insight into the previous experience' (PFBF, W2, P15), to 'felt full of joy, full of positive, contagious feeling' (PFBF, W2, P8) and 'my body had opened up, my spine straighter + in a mood of embrace' (PFBF, W2, P5). I wondered if those who didn't connect with this were the ones who were having difficulty in the *metta* mediation. However, the numbers don't necessarily correspond to this idea, and I did not follow up with this question. The responses to this exercise show potential, and may be more effective with a previous understanding of Psychological Gesture, as seen in Workshop One.

As I will discuss in Chapter Four, I did not continue to facilitate the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination in Workshop Three, due to time considerations and my aforementioned concerns about the potential necessity to teach Chekhov's Psychological Gesture before undertaking these. I had less time in Workshop Three than in the other workshops, and I chose to budget it for more in-depth work on acknowledging difference as well as similarity, rather than for facilitating training in Psychological Gesture before the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture.

The Gauntlet

We led into the Gauntlet with the Eye Greeting exercise, and the students appeared eager to stop and make intentional eye contact with the others in the group (**Chapter One, Video 6**, Eye Greeting exercise). There was smiling, high energy, and eagerness. Some were looking around for people to catch eyes with. The energy was infectious; some gave a little jump after the interaction was over. They were grounded, centered, and responsive to my provocations to breathe and relax, and look longer than they normally would. During a previous group conversation about listening, 'eye contact' was named as a part of active listening, which

they then practised in pairs. It is arguable that this was a precursor to their obviously easy engagement with this exercise.

A moment of vulnerability

The students began the Gauntlet engaged, leaning in and starting with no hesitation. They appeared relatively relaxed, gesticulating and maintaining eye contact, some smiling and all with generally open faces and physicalities. The speakers took very few pauses in completing each clause, while those listening seem receptive, exhibiting physical indicators of active listening.[32] This may be due to the 'sharing of joy' that this exercise entails (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18). The students seemed to have come alive and verbalized with more energy in this exercise than I had previously seen them do in class. A student that was typically quiet was very vocal in this exercise. This student seemed to come from the heart and connect in the Gauntlet; they made hand motions from their chest outward and spoke in earnest. Later in the Gauntlet, this same student said, 'I suggest you take better care of your health' and their partner went 'Whoaaa…!' as if pretending offence (**Chapter Three, Video One**, A moment of vulnerability). The speaking student indicated to themselves with a finger and said, 'That was for me!', as if reminding themselves of something they need to do. This practically highlights the notion that the often-vulnerable admissions of this exercise can be affirmations out loud for self, regardless of relevance for the listener. Audre Lorde writes that 'the transformation of silence into language and action is an act of self-revelation, and that always seems fraught with danger' (1984, p. 42). Here she speaks about the risk in revealing the self, exemplified in this student's admission/suggestion of taking better care of their health. The vulnerability of this admission can foster a richer sense of connection through the elicitation of empathy in the listener, at their imagined sense of the risk to share something revealing. Athanasiou and Butler would perhaps describe the listener as being 'dispossessed', which they specify as being conditioned by affect, 'one is moved to the other and by the other-

[32] This was markedly different from how they communicated with each other in class rehearsals, where they often appeared tense and physically held. The difference may be due in part to the power dynamic and shift in responsibility. Here they were all equal participants in an exercise led by myself as outside facilitator. In rehearsal, I step out so that they are responsible for producing a piece, with an internal hierarchy they must determine. I wondered if it would be useful to explore facilitation of the Gauntlet with a redefinition of its leadership, perhaps enabling one student to make a provocation for the group or having them choose their own provocations. This is a more focused exploration of this exercise that can be addressed in later research beyond this PhD.

exposed to and affected by the others vulnerability' (2013, p. 1). Indeed, the affected listener responded by moving closer to the speaker, the two sharing a laugh and easing into relaxed connection for the duration of the exercise. This is where one of the layers of empathy in this exercise lies.

Conflict resolution and vulnerability

In *Non-Violent Communication*, Marshall Rosenberg discusses the power of vulnerability to reach across the divide and elicit an empathic response (2015, pp. 40-41). Through the expressions of vulnerability, the Gauntlet seemed to elicit a new relationship between two students that were not particularly close until this point. For my purposes, I will call them Participants A and B. While I was not witness to any overt conflict over the course of our previous work together, there was an underlying tension that existed in passive disagreements in group discussions and rehearsal. During the Gauntlet, these students can be seen to grow more physically relaxed with each other during the clause 'I suggest…' (**Chapter Three**, **Video 2,** Conflict resolution). Participant B expresses a response to Participant A's completion of the acknowledgment clause, making a face and physicality that expressed shame and sadness. In a lived experience of Conty, George and Hietanen's exemplifications of eye contact as increasing connection, this response elicited a look of empathy from Participant A, leading to a physical reaching out from one to the other and eye connection for the duration of the exercise (Conty George & Hietanen, 2016, **Chapter Three**, **Video 2,** Conflict resolution). Participant A later asks 'Are you ok' and again reaches out to Participant B, who responds 'I'm alright' with a smile. Participant B remains receptive to Participant A's suggestions for the duration of their turn. During Participant B's turn, they can be heard to suggest, twice, that 'we talk more often' which activates Participant A to emphatically agree, and later reach out in empathic response (**Chapter Three, Video 2,** Conflict resolution). My observations corresponded with their feedback, in which one expressed that this exercise resulted in a conflict resolution between themselves and this other ensemble member, 'I was paired with a person who I was probably least close to for the 'I suggest'; this was daunting but a new-found reconciliation & mutual suggestion for friendship w/each other was expressed' (PFBF, W2, P3).

At the end of the exercise, the group stood up and were eager to make physical connections, hugging their partners regardless of their previous relationship. This cross-group reconnection was translated in the content of and, often, communication towards their

devised piece. Their renewed connections correspond to the experiences of the students in the first workshop, who also expressed reconnection and renewed work together (PFBF, W1, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9). These results indicate the original Gauntlet as effective in facilitating conflict transformation through dialogue, as both hooks and Rosenberg advocate (2003, p. 44, 2015, pp. 40-41).

In this workshop, my own vulnerability was useful in relaying examples to support the students' understanding of the acknowledgment clauses. I shared a very painful illustration when giving examples in the introductory directions. I was self-conscious of having shared too much; however, I also reiterated that it was my choice to share that unapologetically, as it is also their choice. This elicits questions about transparency and vulnerability in feminist pedagogy. Lorde was intent on sharing her multiply-marginalized identities at risk of exposing herself to the very oppressions that she sought to dissolve (2017a, p. v). For her there was power in self-defining and publicly voicing her identity as a subversion of a culture that made her identities difficult (Lorde, 1984, p. 10, Lorde, 2017a, p. v). This may be extrapolated to the practice of vulnerability as a part of feminist pedagogy, although I would argue that the purpose is necessarily for feminist aims of social transformation rather than personal goals of either trauma expression or an expectation of sympathy or support from students. Though the power differential of teacher and student may be as mitigated as possible in feminist pedagogy, it is still present. A facilitator's expression of trauma and/or expectation of support from students is inappropriate; it is not a student's responsibility to support a tutor, nor are they typically qualified to do so. Had I not given the caveat that I shared my experience as 'an example', and as 'a choice' towards enabling their own understandings, my sharing would have been inappropriate. At the end of the exercise, I also gave my own 'What I love about you is…' to the students to reset the hierarchical nature of my role in leading this exercise.

Student feedback and analysis

Several students refer to the 'universality' of this exercise: 'everything kind of applies to everyone' (PFBF, W2, P8). This parallels similar feedback from the first ensemble regarding the Gauntlet as showing that 'we're all going through it' (W1, P9, **Chapter Two, Video 15**, Workshop One reflection session). This exemplifies hooks's discussions of the universality of human 'yearnings' that link to Tay & Diener's development of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943, p. 370, hooks, 2003, p. 110, Tay & Diener, 2011, p. 355). This

feedback indicates the Gauntlet's elicitation of deeper understandings of common human yearnings through the recognition and expression of deeply held needs that are not often clearly spoken. In *Non-Violent Communication,* needs are at the core of human feeling, which vary as those needs are met or not, i.e., contentment when the need for sustenance is fulfilled, or anger when the need for respect is not met (Rosenberg, 2015, p. 52). The students' feedbacks regarding recognition of what 'applies to everyone' indicates the original Gauntlet's potential to enrich multiple understandings of 'needs', and elicit a compassionate response.

Many students used the word 'positive', or the phrase 'positive thoughts' in reference to the effects of the exercise (PFBF, W2, P2, P4, P6, P10). Several talked about how good it is to speak out, 'It's so nice being able to express your positive thoughts about people to their faces' (PFBF, W2, P4), that it was 'easier than I thought' to give 'compliments' or 'positive thoughts' (PFBF, W2, P11), and that it 'gave me the opportunity to say nice things that usually make me feel uncomfortable' (PFBF, W2, P10). Lorde talks about silence as a perpetuation of the 'separations that have been imposed upon us' (1984, pp. 43-44). There is a separation perpetuated via cultural norms to hide our vulnerabilities, for fear of how what we say affects others (Brown, 2015). This is evident in the idea that this exercise was an 'opportunity to say nice things' that would normally make this respondent 'uncomfortable' and that it was good to say positive things to 'people's faces', connoting the idea that these are either not said at all or are spoken indirectly. This shows the exercise to be connecting, through enabling the opportunity to voice that which is often dissuaded by societal conditioning (Brown, 2015).

The felt freedom to voice in this exercise indicates the un-adapted Gauntlet as a direct answer to my first research question, regarding using compassion-based practice to enact multi-representative practices. Voicing and hearing both 'positive' and 'negative' feedback gives opportunity for dialogic gaze, through the understandings of self and other as a foundation for practices that represent the identities and experiences of all those in the group. This also indicates the Gauntlet as an answer to my second research question regarding how to create community towards multi-representative practice via the subversion of the 'separations imposed on us' through culturally prescribed self-silencing (Lorde, 1984, pp. 43-44). The voicings and subsequent understandings towards inner transformation of what is heard allows for the recognitions of similarity hooks and Lorde call for in community, and can also

address my third question regarding how to create multi-representation as a perpetual practice. While the Gauntlet's efficacy as creative of a perpetual practice of multi-representation cannot be confirmed in a one-off workshop, daily practice of its acknowledgment clauses, such as using 'What I love about you is…' as an end of class ritual, can potentially create a habit of voicing that the students describe here as 'nice' (PFBF, W2, P4), and as an 'opportunity' (PFBF, W2, P10), indicating something valuable, and thus more likely to continually engage with.

Some students found it 'daunting' to 'find a variation of things to say' (PFBF, W2, P5) or to 'talk to the other person on the spot' (PFBF, W2, P13). Akin to Lorde's recognition of voicing as a risk of 'self-revelation', one of the challenges of this exercise is to say what comes to mind, 'on the spot'. Therein lies the risk of revelation, in not having time to self-edit (Lorde, 1984, p. 42). The immediate nature of the timing facilitates students to speak without apology, which can be challenging and vulnerable in a culture that carries a social expectation to edit ourselves. In their feedback forms, many students reported that it was also difficult to listen this feedback, whether interpreted as positive or negative. In reference to positive feedback, they said, 'good stuff makes me uncomfortable' (PFBF, W2, P6), and in reference to constructive feedback, 'Hard to listen to how I should improve but now I know how I need to grow in myself' (PFBF, W2, P9). I frame these difficulties as information for the students, so that they have a greater awareness of their relationship with feedback and how to manage their potential vulnerability in both giving and receiving it. This is particularly relevant in an industry where feedback is frequent, and can be easily interpreted as personal, i.e., during discussions of an actor's 'look' or in performance notes. This was especially relevant to this group as they were first years, and new to managing the amount, nature, and frequency of critical feedback.

While creating habits of speaking and listening to immediate, critical feedback is useful for actors in training, the Gauntlet's effect here is also useful in creating community and multi-representative practices. This addresses my primary and secondary research questions of first, how to enact multi-representative practice and second, how to create community. The exercise helps to break the habit of self-silencing and self-editing, leading to a greater ease of giving and incorporating heard feedback. This is indicated by the response, 'Hard to listen to how I should improve but now I know how I need to grow in myself' (PFBF, W2, P9). This shows that while it was hard to hear, the feedback was beneficial for this participant's

growth. Part of community creation is having conversations that are difficult, in order to work together most effectively. After delineating voicing as a risk, Lorde writes:

> In the transformation of silence into language and action, it is vitally necessary for each one of us to establish or examine her function in that transformation and to recognize her role as vital within that transformation. (Lorde, 1984, p. 43)

It may be difficult to speak and listen to what is spoken; however, these allow us to perform and 'examine' our function in the work together, benefitting overall community collaboration. The examinations and awareness of self and other allows us to know how to grow in ourselves, as the above participant indicated, benefitting community with these in-depth understandings towards multi-representation (PFBF, W2, P9). This also addresses my third research question regarding how to enact multi-representation as a perpetual practice. With daily practice of giving and receiving structured feedback in the Gauntlet, it is arguable that a facility with this can be trained as a perpetual practice, not only towards community but in industry work as well.

The overwhelming majority of the students discussed the Gauntlet's facilitation of vulnerability as a connector in general, 'I felt so connected! I shared my deepest thoughts and feelings with people… I felt like crying happy tears' (PFBF, W2, P14). They said it was 'good for bonding and actual connection' (PFBF, W2, P11), and allowed a 'budding intimacy in our ensemble' (PFBF, W2, P4), which 'helped bring us together as an ensemble' (PFBF, W2, P10). A few referred specifically to the Gauntlet as a connector to others that they may not normally interact with; 'Makes you (not maliciously) speak incredibly personally to people within the ensemble who you may not have an established relationship to before. Is incredibly productive, safe & morale boosting' (PFBF, W2, P3). The connections indicated here are an inherent part of community as conceived by Lorde and hooks. This feedback also evidences the Gauntlet as particularly connecting and community creating, seen in feedback regarding a strengthened connection even with those 'you may not have an established relationship with' which was said to be 'productive and safe' (PFBF, W2, P3).

Like the ensemble in Workshop One, this group also overwhelmingly referred to the Gauntlet as creating connection, and the sense of being 'brought together' by this exercise (PFBF, W2, P2, P4, P10, P11, P13, P14). This feedback addresses both my primary question of how to

create multi-representative practice and secondary question of how to create community; connection is an inherent part of community, which builds multi-representative practice. These cross-group references to connection via the Gauntlet are notable, as the two groups were intentionally comprised of different people, with different levels and backgrounds of training together: those in Workshop Two for four months, and those in Workshop One for three years. However, these groups are similarly in actor training courses, with a relatively similar age range of 18-27. For this reason, I was interested to implement this exercise with performers from all experience levels and backgrounds as well as a more disparate age range. To explore the Gauntlet's facility in creating connection in groups with wider variations of identity, experience, and age, I utilised an intentionally pluralistic practice in populating the next workshop, as I describe in Chapter Four.

Gendered communication and dialogic gaze in devising communications

In *Screaming Divas*: *Collaboration as Feminist Practice*, Susan Leonardi and Rebecca Pope talk about collaboration as a 'quilt', each contributing to the whole, though each piece offered is unique (Leonardi & Pope, 1994, p. 263). They are not interested in 'subordinating difference to the unity of the whole' in the work together (Leonardi & Pope, 1994, p. 263). The students evidenced an eventually similar 'quilt' collaboration in their verbal devising communications, several students making suggestions that were added to the whole to form a unique performance that was inclusive of their common experience of having auditioned for drama school[33] (**Chapter Three**, **Video 3**, Overall collaboration, **Video 7**, Eventual quilt collaboration). However, this quilt collaboration took time to manifest, only occurring after a notable moment of dialogic gaze, which enabled marginalised female ensemble members to contribute, as I will describe (**Chapter Three, Video Six**, Dialogic gaze in communications, **Video 7**, Eventual quilt collaboration).

Gendered Communications

Like the first workshop's group, their collaborations were also often gendered, with two white, male-identifying ensemble members immediately assuming leadership roles by initiating, managing, and dominating the conversation, and making initial offers and decisions in regards to the outcome of the piece. This initial conversation followed

[33] I offered 'transition' as the devising theme, as these students completed devising around the theme of metamorphosis in the morning's session. I chose 'transition' as it relates to the concept of metamorphosis and can be similarly interpreted in various ways.

patriarchal linguistic communication styles; the men seemed to operate with the notion of conversation as a power relationship rather than a collaboration, speaking directly to each other and often, over others (**Chapter Three**, **Video 4**, Gendered communications). In this video, one man assumes 'authority' of the group, initiating, managing and making decisions. He addresses his questions and communications to the other dominant, identifying man in the group. Gendered communication styles can also be seen in (**Chapter Three, Video 3,** Overall collaborations, **Video 4**, Gendered communications, and **Video 6,** Dialogic gaze in rehearsal communications), all of which show both more interruptions and more collaborative communication when identifying women offered ideas to the group. The women also seemed more aware of others' emotions when speaking, most notably in the case of Participants C and D, which I will describe (Tannen, 1995, **Chapter Three**, **Video 6,** Dialogic gaze in rehearsal communications).

Gendered communication styles notwithstanding, students who typically did not contribute ideas nor act in leadership roles during group work were far more vocal than usual, albeit later in the discussion. This was particularly true for those identifying as women, and notably, after an act of dialogic gaze that allowed another woman to contribute her idea, as I analyse below (**Chapter Three, Video 6,** Dialogic gaze in rehearsal communications). One participant that did not usually assert herself stood in the middle of the group and gave her opinion. For my purposes, I will call her Participant D. She spoke more haltingly, which is often interpreted as a lack of confidence, even when this is an incorrect assumption (Tannen, 1995, **Chapter Three, Video 5**, Suppressing effects of interruption). Despite her more assertive communication, her three initial attempts to hold the conversation were thwarted by two male collaborators who continually interrupted her and then dominated the discussion, after which she sat down and momentarily seemed to disengage by looking at the floor (Tannen, 1995, **Chapter Three, Video 5**, Suppressing effects of interruption).

I must note that similarly suppressing effects are evident throughout the conversation as other women's attempts to contribute manifest in outright dismissal or are relegated to side conversations (**Chapter Three**, **Video 4**, Overall collaborations). Notably, most of the women who voiced an opinion were interrupted and engaged in interrupting behaviours more often when another woman was speaking. This is consistent with Fishman, Tannen, and Baron & Kotthoff's findings that women work harder to maintain conversation and are more frequently interrupted in conversation by all genders than are men (1983, 1990, 2002). This

can be seen in (**Chapter Three, Video 4,** Gendered communications) where several women's initial attempts to contribute are suppressed by being spoken over. During this conversation, many of the women were semi-engaged; slouching, looking away, biting nails, and eventually making smaller side-conversations themselves**,** reiterating women's contributions as marginalised, side conversations, rather than as part of the main dialogue (**Chapter Three**, **Video 4**, Overall collaborations). I also note that the men were not interrupted as often and when speaking, the room went quiet as if honouring the 'main' conversation (**Chapter Three, Video 4**, Gendered communications).

This evidences an inherent understanding from all participants involved that white male voices are to be prioritized as the ones to listen to (Mulvey, 1975, p. 13, Tannen, 1995, hooks, 1999, p. 123). Though they have a contribution to make, the women are to do so in a sub-group, on the fringes of the 'main' male led conversation (hooks, 1999, p. 123). In the face of these cultural gender norms of male leadership and female submission, evidence of dialogic gaze is not present. In light of the gender differences in communication either not being recognized or ignored, evidence of community, in which members offerings are honored and the group embraces all voices, was not perpetually present (hooks, 2018, p. 40, Lorde, 2017a, p 14). The men's lack of recognition that their voices were suppressing others through conversation dominance perpetuated the hierarchical, patriarchal communication patterns that feminist practice seeks to re-balance (Tannen, 1995).

Dialogic gaze in communications

One student, who I will call Participant C, raised her hand to speak twice after attempting to assert her voice into the conversation several times. This happened even after having Participant D, who had also been previously ignored, attempt to speak up for her (**Chapter Three**, **Video 6,** Dialogic gaze in communications). After this, the two women continued their conversation as an aside, rather than with the group. I found Participant C's hand raising curious, as there was no set precedent for hand-raising as part of their deliberations. We raise our hands to speak when there is someone who acts as an 'authority', who then 'calls on us'. I was curious as to who Participant C thought was the authority in the group. Baron & Kotthoff's study of power and authority in conversation would name those more successful at attempts at dominance in the group, the two men, as authority (2002). This is arguable, as she was ignored until Participant D raised her voice again, louder, calling the attention of the group to their ignored ensemble member: '[Participant C] said something me…' (**Chapter**

Three, Video 6, Dialogic gaze in communications). This quieted the two men and gave space for Participant C to speak.

This act of dialogic gaze required Participant D's awareness of Participant C's unvoiced desire to speak. Lorde writes of the importance of voicing for ourselves (1984, pp. 41-44). However, in this case, someone voiced on another's behalf, out of the awareness that the other was not being heard. This is clear evidence of the processes of dialogic gaze: first the empathetic awareness that this participant wasn't being represented in the discussion, followed by the compassionate action of calling attention to help make that participant's voice heard (George, 1999, p. 91, hooks, 2018, p. 40). There is a sense of solidarity to this, which is a notable example supporting the potential of working together in community towards the dissolution of oppressive structures (hooks, 2003, p. xv). There is evidence of empathy in this solidarity, both participants having been repeatedly interrupted; Participant D in the initial conversation, which caused her to sit down and stop speaking, and Participant C here. It is arguable that the knowledge of the other's interruptions and the sense of one's own may have provided a ready empathy in this instance of dialogic gaze. These participants may also understand a common history of experiences of being ignored and interrupted by men in group communications, as Tannen posits[34] (Tannen, 1995).

During Participant C's share, women who had not yet contributed to the discussion can be heard to use words of encouragement and vocal listening signifiers 'yeah' and 'oh my god' (**Chapter Three**, **Video 6**, Dialogic gaze in Communications, **Video 7**, Eventual quilt collaboration). Notably, when there were questions to clarify elements of the performance piece, these were mostly directed at the men, particularly when another man asked the question. This suggests the existing pattern of white male authority, compounded by the fact that they were native English-speakers, a triple primacy of the white, male, English-speaking voice (Tannen, 1995, Baron & Kottholf, 2002). However, the increase in women's contributions here indicates the benefit of Participant C's representation in this male dominated discussion; when a marginalised contributor is heard, other unheard and marginalised contributors are empowered to speak (Lorde, 1984, p. 14).

[34] However, I also acknowledge that this may be interpreted differently should one of these participants have identified male or non-binary. As they do not, a full discussion of this is out of the scope of this thesis.

Participant C's contribution benefitted the group's piece by providing a conceptual framework that they then used in the finished product. Without this solidarity and dialogic gaze, Participant C's voice would not have been heard by the group as a whole and her contribution negated, causing a restriction on her ability to affect the dialogue and damaging the strength of their work together in community (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426, Lorde, 1984, p. 42, hooks, 2003, p. xv). Participant C's ability to contribute then increased contributions from other women; those who had previously stayed silent began to make suggestions that were taken up by the group, leading to their quilt collaboration and including the suggestion for the piece's inclusive narrative around their common experience in drama school (**Chapter Three, Video 7,** Eventual quilt collaboration). This shows the potential impact of dialogic gaze on representation and group communications, as well as its efficacy as a multi-representative practice.

These occasionally gendered communication patterns were also evident in Workshop One's mixed-gender Gauntlet group communication, indicating both groups' common backgrounds of patriarchal communication styles (Tannen, 1995). The students in both groups were Anglosphere based, hailing from America and the UK, albeit many with dual cultural influences, such as Asian-British and African-American. I also observed that, as in the first workshop, the second workshop's students also made some efforts to redress this, allowing space for women's contributions, leadership, and decision-making, albeit later in their rehearsal communications. This shift may be attributed to many factors; a rebalance of gender contributions, differences in the confidence to speak up first, or a want for more time to think (Tannen, 1995). According to student feedback, the workshop's aims for creating ease of communication is one of these factors, which I will describe and analyse below.

Rehearsal collaborations

The students had less than ten minutes to collaborate and produce their group devised piece. While this was necessary for practical considerations, this was also intentional. Limited time gave them a pressing circumstance that would be interesting to observe: how would they communicate under pressure? Would they resort to old habits? Their inconsistently democratic and occasionally gendered communications continued into rehearsal. A woman was first to initiate the devising around the group's idea, to which group members generally responded. I noticed that those first to heed this idea were other women, while most of the men stood at the end of the line deliberating ideas (**Chapter Three**, **Video 8**, Gendered

performance leadership). The same white man who began their devising brainstorm and acted as 'authority' assumed the leadership and decision-making roles in rehearsal. The group allowed this, and questions about the performance were only directed to him. He stepped out of the line and started to direct; ‘Step forward then step back’ (**Chapter Three**, **Video 8**, Gendered performance leadership). This man also began to give out parts to those who did not immediately claim one, and directed the group to line up. One woman loudly protested ‘NO!’ when he gave her an assignment (**Chapter Three**, **Video 9,** ‘No’). She did not follow this protest up or refuse this particular role, and he did not offer an alternative nor an acknowledgement of this ‘no’. Other members suggested alternatives, though she did not suggest one for herself. This incident calls attention to notions of autonomy and consent. While she expressed a sense of autonomy in her initial response of ‘no’, he did not acknowledge this ‘no’ and she then consented to the role anyway. This is counter to my aims for autonomy and true collaboration, in which her ‘no’ would be honoured, and another role suggested by herself for herself.

Collaboration Feedback

Despite the apparent occasionally gendered and inconsistently democratic conversation, the group overwhelmingly expressed a ‘positive’ (PFBF, W2, P2), and ‘enjoyable’ (PFBF, W2, P4, P5, P12) working environment in which they ‘communicated well with no clashing’ (PFBF, W2, P14). Notably, they were surprised at the shift in the way the group typically worked together, saying it was ‘calm and responsive-more than I thought’ (PFBF, W2, P10), and that ‘It was surprisingly easy to work together’ (PFBF, W2, P13). This was comforting for some; ‘It was great to know that everyone was willing to listen to each other and collaborate successfully throughout the rehearsal process’ (PFBF, W2, P1). Some also expressed a shift in their individual way of working; ‘Found myself taking on a directorial role (as per usual) but was aware of not being imposing & receptive of other opinions’ (PFBF, W2, P3), and that they were, ‘particularly attuned to their listening in light of the workshop’ (PFBF, W2, P4).

They spoke of their communication during devising as ‘collaborative’, with a distinct sense of awareness for how they were communicating with each other, ‘I was conscious not to be bossy’ (PFBF, W2, P8), and ‘most people recognised when they weren’t listening’ (PFBF, W2, P7). There were several mentions of the word ‘listening’: ‘We were all listening to each other very closely and not excluding anyone’ (PFBF, W2, P1), and that ‘We all listened to

each other. No one spoke over others' (PFBF, W2, P5). They also expressed the sense that they were heard when contributing ideas, 'I was quiet but my views were heard' (PFBF, W2, P10). This is also interesting, as in my observation, it appeared that not everyone was 'heard', and that there were instances of people talking over others. They may be speaking relative to their usual devising process, however, which supports the feedback that they were surprised at the ease of their communications. Their feedback evidences the Gauntlet as an exercise that enables listening and feeling listened to in communication, which is the first part of the awareness necessitated in dialogic gaze.

It is interesting to note that none of them described a gender bias in their communications in the anonymous feedback forms or the group feedback session. This may be due to a lack of awareness of this dynamic, and/or ongoing, embodied, cultural habits of communication (Tannen, 1995). This brings up questions regarding my role as observer and teacher of this group. Is it my responsibility to alert them that they are communicating with each other in this way? As a feminist practitioner on a course with a specifically critical, intersectional feminist perspective, I agree that this is my responsibility. This helps their own reflexivity and provides useful feedback regarding ways they can communicate well as an ensemble, which is part of my position to enable. However, as a researcher, I do not think that it was my responsibility to alert them to this on the day of the workshop. I was there as a facilitator of these practices, and an observer of their collective and individual responses. To intervene on the day might muddy any results.

Did the un-adapted Gauntlet impact their communication?

This question was not on the feedback form for this workshop; however, after this experience I decided to incorporate it. In this workshop, unsolicited, several students mentioned the Gauntlet as effective in their collaborations: 'All of the talks we had contributed to more effective, creative collaboration' (PFBF, W2), and 'I believe the previous exercises allowed us to approach the task calmly' (PFBF, W2, P1). They mentioned that the Gauntlet was 'good for bonding and actual connection' (PFBF, W2, P11), and was helpful for their devising work and collaboration. Along with the previous work, the Gauntlet helped their awareness in communication for the devised piece, 'everyone seemed particularly attuned to their listening in light of the workshop' (PFBF, W2, P2). Because of these responses, I asked this question directly in Workshop Three to gauge the participants' experiences with the exercise in connection with their communications. However, I adapted the Gauntlet for the

acknowledgement of similarity and difference in Workshop Three, as described below, and so note that it is this version of the Gauntlet that fuels Workshop Three's responses to this question.

Evident multi-representation, though not perpetual

In this workshop there were reports of a sense of community and connection, and some evidence of community given the relatively democratic nature of their group discussions, their group decision making, and the enactment of a piece encompassing a common experience. Practice of community was not perpetual, evident in their occasionally-gendered communication patterns (hooks, 2003, p. xv, Lorde, 2017a, p 14). There were significant moments of dialogic gaze, most notably in Participant D calling attention to Participant C's ignored contributions, which led to increased engagement from other, previously silent female ensemble members (**Chapter Three, Video 6**, Dialogic gaze in communications, **Video 7,** Eventual quilt collaboration). This is a lucid example of dialogic gaze and its impact on multi-representation. However, dialogic gaze was not evident as a perpetual practice, due to moments of gendered communication. I also recognise that it is arguably very difficult to shift culturally ingrained habits of group communication after a one-off workshop. Thus, these moments of community and dialogic gaze are still significant, and supported by group feedbacks that communications were collaborative. This is particularly striking, as the ease of their collaboration was a pronounced change from their usual way of working (PFBF, W2, P1, P2, P4, P4, P10, P13, P14). The effect of this training may not be immediately visible, but rather a notable shift that can be developed and perpetuated with continual practice.

Research questions addressed

This workshop helped to develop and focus the practical explorations of my main inquiry of how to create multi-representative ('inclusive') practices in ensemble actor training through the use of compassion-based practices. Of the compassion-based exercises I explored for this purpose, the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination and the un-adapted Gauntlet, the latter elicited more instances that indicate community and a very clear act of dialogic gaze leading to an increase in representation of women's voices in rehearsal collaborations (**Chapter Three, Video 6,** Dialogic gaze in communications, **Video 7,** Eventual quilt collaboration). This directly addresses this research question and shows the potential for dialogic gaze to impact multi-representative practice. In feedback, the Gauntlet was referred to by the overwhelming majority of the group as 'connecting' (PFBF, W2, P2,

P4, P10, P11, P13, P14), and as having enabled a ‘collaborative, effective, and well-intentioned’ group rehearsal process and new ease of communications that the majority of participants directly gave the exercise credit for (PFBF, W2, P1, P2, P9, P10, P11, P13).

This workshop also helped to develop my secondary research question of how to create and perpetuate community in ensembles in actor trainings that seek to be multi-representative. This emerged in several ways; first, through the manifestation of the important role of vulnerability as a route to community in the original Gauntlet. The vulnerability fostered by the Gauntlet also contributed to the notable moment of conflict transformation, as well as group feedback indicating a new ease of work together: ‘no tensions, no problems, nothing’ (PFBF, W2, P12). The Gauntlet evidenced conflict transformation as critical in the maintenance of community, through the new relationship formed (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18, **Chapter Three, Video 2,** A moment of conflict resolution). The ‘similarity’ of community may be seen in feedback about the Gauntlet’s ‘universality’ (PFBF, W2, P8), and in feedback expressing connections created (PFBF, W2, P2, P4, P10, P11, P13, P14). However, at times community did not appear present during rehearsal communications that were gendered or sexist (**Chapter Three, Video 4,** Gendered communications).

There were some limitations in addressing my tertiary question of how to facilitate actors in an ensemble in training to develop perpetual multi-representative practices. Like Workshop One, this workshop also evidenced habitual patterns of gendered communication that are arguably difficult to break without additional time and practice beyond a one-off workshop. However, some shifts were notable as two participants that typically take on directorial roles stepped back to ‘listen and accept other’s opinions in light of this workshop’ (PFBF, W2, P3), and to be conscious not ‘to be bossy’ (PFBF, W2, P8). Several respondents mentioned their increased ‘listening’ (PFBF, W2, P1, P4, P5, P6, P7, P13, P14) and some a sense of ‘not excluding anyone’ (PFBF, W2, P1). These evidence a good foundation of multi-representative practices that have the potential for habituation with regular practice.

‘Doing-reflecting-reading-articulating-doing’ towards the next workshop

In preparation for the next workshop and as part of the PbR process of ‘doing-reflecting-reading-articulating-doing’, I reflected on the occasional presence of culturally ingrained gendered communication pattens: the unspoken assumption of identifying white male leadership and decision-making, and the prioritization of white male voices (Nelson, 2013, p.

31). Did this need to be accounted for in the next workshop? How would that look, and is it possible to mitigate this without imposing it as an outside force, thereby negating autonomy? As these patterns exhibited in groups that knew each other for a period of time and carried relatively similar cultural backgrounds, experience levels, and age ranges, I decided to facilitate a multi-representative group of participants in terms of age, race, ability, class, experience level, gender, and sexuality in Workshop Three. This group did not manifest similarly gendered communications as did the ensembles in Workshop's One and Two, which I will describe in the following chapter.

After this workshop I adapted the Gauntlet in light of developments in my research and reflections as part of the PbR process. I wondered if the inconsistency of community and dialogic gaze via gendered communication in both Workshop One and Workshop Two may be due to the fact that we did not specifically acknowledge similarity *and* difference in the compassion-based exercises, per Lorde and hooks's theoretical constructions of community (hooks, 2003, p. 197, Lorde, 2017a, p. 14, p. 18). The question also arose of whether the communities created in these workshops were socially transformative, as hooks and Lorde's definition of this as part of community necessitates recognitions of similarity and difference. I imbricated this reflection with Bakhtin's notion of the dialogic, and constructed an argument that adding a difference acknowledgment to the dialogic exchange of the Gauntlet would change the participants 'inner affect', allowing them to incorporate another's experience that may be different to their own, rather than solely one that is similar (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 427).

My post-workshop reflections and developments in research led to the necessity to adapt the Gauntlet's clauses for acknowledgement of similarity and difference in Workshop Three, in order to draw more robust conclusions about its efficacy for community and dialogic gaze. I adapted the Gauntlet's acknowledgement clauses to replace 'I suggest' with 'What you may not see in me is…' to recognize experiences that are not common: an acknowledgment of difference. I implemented this in the third and final workshop, as I will describe and analyse in the next chapter.

Chapter Four

Workshop Three; dissent, difference, and community

This third and final practice as research workshop took place on January 18, 2020 at the New Diorama Theatre rehearsal rooms in central London, chosen for ease of access to participants. In this chapter, I will detail how this workshop developed in response to my three research questions, to the previous workshops' arising questions and limitations, and to the practice as research process of 'iterative, dialogic engagement of doing-thinking' (Nelson, 2013, p. 19). This workshop addressed my main question of how to create multi-representative practices in ensemble actor training through the use of compassion-based practices in several ways; first, through the immediate creation of the group-devised 'manifesto', or set of ensemble principles and agreements, to support the physical and emotional space (**Chapter Four**, **Video 3,** Making the manifesto). This manifesto entailed the notion of 'accepting the no', leading to self-differentiation in participation for three members in particular, which I describe and analyse below (**Chapter Four**, **Video 3a,** Making the manifesto, accepting the no). In practice of dialogic gaze, their self-differentiation in terms of the nature of their participation was accepted and consistently supported by the group.

To my surprise, multi-representation via self-differentiation was also evident in an exercise I added, simply called the 'I' exercise. Like the Gauntlet, I also took this exercise from The Living Course, however, I did not adapt it until the workshop. The 'I' exercise is comprised of a public celebration of self with others via the presentation of 'I', stepping solo and centre into the circle of ensemble members with arms open, parallel to the floor, and the utterance of 'I' (**Chapter Four, Video 4**, The 'I' exercise). The 'I' is celebrated in dialogic exchange with, or in 'relation to' others via eye contact and connection. I added this exercise as a public celebration of self with others towards affirming autonomy; however, it proved surprisingly useful as one that facilitated similarity and difference, giving a through-line of this throughout the workshop and leading to the adapted Gauntlet's similar practice. I will describe and analyse this in more detail below.

Crucially, multi-representative practices were manifested through the use of explicit acknowledgements of similarity and difference in the adapted Gauntlet. Acknowledgment and dialogic actions in support of difference as well as similarity contributed to autonomy in

role differentiation, which positively impacted group communications, devising, and performance. This was also evident in participant feedback regarding the adapted Gauntlet having created a curiosity towards and a 'want' to 'meet' other people's differences (PFBF, W3, P1).

This workshop addressed my secondary question of how to create and perpetuate community in ensembles in actor trainings that seek to be multi-representative; first, by setting up the conditions for this via the conscious casting of a multi-representative group. This was also manifest in the encouragement of accepting 'no', which began as part of the introductory, group-created manifesto and was perpetuated throughout the workshop. The acceptance of 'no' led to group-supported and perpetuated autonomy in chosen function of participation, allowing multi-representation of identities and chosen 'roles' in community. Community was created in this multi-represented group through the use of explicit acknowledgments of similarity and difference in the adapted Gauntlet, which manifested in additional self-differentiations, as well as feedback regarding a sense of 'connection' (PFBF, W3, P1, P2, P3, P6, P7, P8, P10, P12) and a curiosity about and want to 'meet' expressed similarities and differences (PFBF, W3, P1).

This workshop addressed my tertiary research question of how to facilitate actors in an ensemble in training to develop perpetual multi-representative practices by facilitating the perpetual practise of accepting no and having the right to dissent from the start. This led to the workshop-long, group supported multi-representative practices of acceptance of, encouragement for, and actions towards self-differentiation. This was evident in the manifesto, in the language of 'it's your choice' (**Chapter Four**, **Video 2,** Making the manifesto), the encouragement of conversations to meet each other's differing experiences, and the ensemble's habitual recognition of and support for self-definitions; evidencing consistent practise of dialogic gaze. The celebration of difference in the 'I' exercise and the adapted Gauntlet allowed ensemble members to support self-differentiations by adjusting themselves to other participants' chosen functions in habitual practise of multi-representation via dialogic gaze. From this they were able to enact dialogic gaze: consistently 'looking out for' others' differences by responding to their chosen functions, calling attention to others' needs, and making room for others in a way that supports equitable participation (moving chairs for those who with mobility issues, pointing out others' self-defined contributions). This 'looking out for' became the group's way of working for the duration of the workshop.

Differentiation of self also benefitted perpetual multi-represented practice by facilitating a form of applause that involves a flapping of the hands rather than clapping, making the applause more accessible for those with a sensitivity to noise, as I will describe in more depth below. Unsolicited, and in perpetual practise of dialogic gaze, the ensemble maintained this form of applause throughout the workshop.

Responding to previous workshops

This workshop developed from and was informed by the questions and limitations of the first two, most notably as these both focused on community creation and ease of communication via acknowledgments of only similarity. I found the recognition of similarity useful to build a sense of community, connection, and moments of dialogic gaze, however, evidence of the potential for social transformation via community was inconsistent due to gendered communication patterns. My research at this time evidenced Audre Lorde and bell hooks to both discuss the necessity of acknowledging and celebrating difference as a foundational part of community with aims of transformation (hooks, 2003, p. 197, Lorde, 2017a, p. 14, p. 18). In light of these results and research, I focused this third workshop on acknowledging both similarity and difference, and inviting dissent and differentiation towards community creation and dialogic gaze. I did this from casting on, making efforts to engage a multi-representative ensemble, framing workshop communications with consent/dissent at the fore, and shifting the previous workshops' formats to facilitate exercises that engage with self-differentiation and self-celebration in groups.

Most notably, I adapted the Gauntlet to acknowledge both similarity and difference, using Bakhtin's notion of the 'dialogic' as 'a constant interaction between meanings, all of which have the potential of conditioning others' (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). My interest lay in how the Gauntlet enables participants to have an increased awareness and 'conditioning' towards other people's differing experiences through the 'interactions between' participants that the exercise generates (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). For the second clause, rather than 'I suggest…', I designed and facilitated, 'What you may not see in me is…'. This clause is a recognition of difference, where the speaker may diverge in experience from the listener. The full round of this first facilitation can be seen in (**Chapter Four**, **Video 1**, What you may not see in me is). This terminology allows the speaker to reveal experiences they have that might not be common to the listener without blame or judgement. 'What you may not see in me is…' enables the listener to hear the speaker's experience with openness and curiosity. In

(**Chapter Four, Video 1**, What you may not see in me is), speakers can be heard to reveal what is not readily visible and what may be vulnerable: 'What you may not see in me is that I am transgender', 'What you may not see in me is my fear of maybe, not being good enough' , 'What you may not see in me is my anxiety', 'What you may not see in me is that I cry at adverts', 'What you may not see in me is that I worry about how un-Nigerian I am' (**Chapter Four, Video 1**, What you may not see in me is). Listeners can be seen to receive this information with open body language, heads nodding, and a sense of being openly engaged. This is supported by participant feedback of 'curiosity' about others and a 'want to meet' them (PFBF, W3, P1, P3, P4, P6). The connections emerging from the 'shared joy' of the previous clause, 'What I see in you that I see in me is…' along with their prolonged eye contact 'lessens the threat of difference', allowing for a sense of safety in speaking and openness in listening to the completions of this clause (Conty, George & Hietanen, 2016, Lorde, 2017a, p. 10).

Just prior to this workshop, I decided not to facilitate the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture pairing. I found this combination to be interesting in terms of the embodiment of a potential archetypal gesture for compassion; however, in comparing my transmission of this in Workshop One to Workshop Two, the reverse Psychological Gesture appeared more effectively and eagerly incorporated after my having already facilitated Chekhov's Psychological Gesture. This technique requires time to achieve an embodied understanding of it; and in this third workshop, it was more important to focus our limited time on the recognition of difference as well as similarity via the initial ensemble building exercises, the adapted Gauntlet, and the 'I' exercise. After the sometimes-rushed previous groups' reflection sessions I also wanted to ensure adequate time to engage in conversation and reflection.

The ensemble in Workshop Three were cast in response to the previous workshops' groups, both of whom were made up of existing student ensembles, and both of whom contained participants with some relative similarities in age, cultural background, and experience level. These groups were also undertaking common trainings, although with varying durations of time: three years in Workshop One, and four months in Workshop Two. Participants in both groups overwhelmingly found the Gauntlet to be 'connecting', to ease communication, and to facilitate conflict transformation. This led me to wonder if their commonalities, particularly their cultural backgrounds and time training together, were affecting their overall similarity in

feedback and reported experience. In Workshop Three, I aimed to explore the Gauntlet within a multi-representative group of people who were working together for the first time. I intentionally engaged participants with a range of actor training experiences and levels, and from a multitude of racial, gender, sexual, cultural, language, religious, class, and ability backgrounds. While there were some variances in the training experiences and identities of those in the previous two workshops, those participants were fixed members of ensembles that I was currently teaching (Workshop 2) or had previously taught (Workshop 1) and were not as pluralistic as Workshop Three, as I will describe.

I changed the schedule from that of the last two workshops, particularly in terms of the exercises leading up to the adapted Gauntlet and crucially, within the Gauntlet itself, as adapted for difference, described above (p. 43, pp. 111-112). I added introductory exercises that I typically do with ensembles at the beginning of all work together. The previous workshops' groups completed these exercises at the start of my teaching time with them, well before those workshops took place, so it was not necessary to repeat them. I did these in Workshop Three to stay consistent with the previous workshops' groups experiences as closely as possible, albeit in a much more compressed timeframe. I wanted to mitigate any extraneous circumstances that would impact potentially notable variations in feedback from the adapted Gauntlet or 'I' exercise.

In Workshop Two, I had difficulties with my two stationary video/audio cameras that prevented recording of the first half of the workshop, leading me to rely on my phone's camera for documentation. To mitigate this in Workshop Three, I doubled the number of stationary cameras from two to four, as well as using the camera on my phone. To help support the use of these cameras, as well as for general workshop support, I enlisted the help of a colleague, who I will refer to as 'my assistant'. They were invaluable for setting up the cameras and the space, and particularly so for their participation in the adapted Gauntlet when a participant opted out. My assistant was engaged as an ensemble member for the duration of the workshop, and I use their verbal and written feedback as part of my analysis. For anonymity's sake, I notate their feedback with the same code as I do the rest of the ensemble members, for example: (W3, P1).

Methods towards variance

To populate this workshop, I placed an advert in the Standing Conference of University Drama Departments (SCUDD) list (**Chapter Three**, **Appendix A**: SCUDD Advert). SCUDD is the 'representative body for higher education departments…teaching and/or researching in Drama, Theatre, and related studies in the United Kingdom' (Standing Conference of University Drama Departments, 2021). SCUDD aims to promote and 'defend' these areas, and liaises with UK based and international 'bodies, councils, institutions, groups, and governmental departments' (Standing Conference of University Drama Departments, 2021). The SCUDD list is intended to share information and give a forum for debate. This list reaches a host of institutions, affiliated students and staff, as well as interested freelancers, artists, performance-makers, and researchers. I recognise that utilising this list has limitations, notably that not all drama and performer training higher education institutions are represented here, and those that are pay a membership fee. This precludes a range of people in institutions that are not members of SCUDD. The list also precludes students and faculty that may be alienated from it due to its often densely written advertisements in English.

I also placed my advertisement for the workshop on two alumni Facebook pages that I belong to, one for general Royal Central School postgraduates, and one for its MA Actor Training alumni. Again, this is limited to a very specific population of people who have access to these pages, and are thus affiliated with the Royal Central School. My thinking, particularly in extending the advertisement to graduates of the MA Actor Training and Coaching course, was that those working as tutors, visiting lecturers, pedagogues, and members of staff at varying institutions would have access to a range of interested students.

Another limitation that must be addressed is the fact that the respondents were *attracted* to the concepts and practices that I describe in the workshop advertisement, and so arrived as readily receptive to this kind of work. Regardless, from this outreach I received about fifty responses from professional actors, directors, heads of programme, and staff of various actor training programmes, as well as current students and alumni of acting, applied theatre, performance practice, and musical theatre programmes at BA, MA, and PhD levels. They came from a variety of training institutions: Royal Central School, Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, Drama School London, Fourth Monkey, City Academy, Goldsmiths, and University of East London.

I invited those interested to respond to the open-ended provocation; 'Tell me about yourself', in order to ascertain their backgrounds and identities. The question was open-ended so that they could choose what information they wanted to disclose. I did this in an effort to assure that the workshop was as pluralistic and representative of the multitude of people affiliated with performance in London as possible. I received responses from students naming a variety of countries of origin,[35] the majority of whom were multi-lingual. Of those that chose to disclose more information, respondents reported varying gender identities, sexualities, races, abilities, and neuro-diversities.

It is notable that a slight majority of respondents were young, white, British women. Before this response, I briefly considered choosing participants on a first-come, first-served basis. Had I done this, our group would have been made up of primarily white British women ages 18-26. I made a concerted effort to ensure that the ensemble was as multi-represented as possible, in order to explore these practices in a group of people with a wider variety of backgrounds and identities. I reached out to industry contacts with the specific request for Black, Indigenous, Asian, Latinx, and Global Majority participants, and students with varied class, language, and ability backgrounds. I made a wait list for people who wanted to join, but whose demographics were already represented: particularly in terms of race, national origin/culture/language, and experience level. I made sure the workshop was financially accessible by offering a remittance of £40 each and a lunch encompassing the various dietary needs of the chosen participants. I was careful to word my advert in a way that made it accessible for a wide variety of people, avoiding jargon and academic terminology as much as possible. I was fearful that my being fairly transparent about wanting a multi-representative group of people would be alienating in its potential for positive discrimination, particularly as I am a white woman, a native English speaker, and privileged with a scholarship for this work. This may have been the case, although I did not receive any complaints, and the group was represented by a multitude of people with a variety of backgrounds and identities.[36]

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[35] Taiwan, Korea, China, Australia, Singapore, Nigeria, Caribbean, North America, Canada, Chile, Greece, Malta, Spain, Serbia, Poland, Austria, Germany, Scotland, and England.

[36] This calls to mind the current debate in drama training institutions that seek a population of students that are multi-ethnic, gendered, abled, from multiple class systems and more. While I was populating a one-off workshop rather than auditioning for a three-year drama training programme, the tactics I

I chose twelve respondents, listing China, Chile, Caribbean, Nigeria, Australia, England, Serbia, Malta, Spain, Singapore, and America as countries and cultures of origin. I made sure that the participants I chose were not from the same training programme, and were from a variety of institutions. This created a risk in facilitating connection and community in this disparate group, as there were no foundations for these in place already. There was one BA Musical Theatre student from Goldsmiths, an acting course student from Fourth Monkey, an acting student from University College London, an MA Performance Making student from Goldsmiths, a recent graduate from Drama Studio London, a PhD student from Royal Holloway, one applied theatre facilitator, one lecturer/researcher/vocal coach, two professional actors, one actor/improviser/director, and one solo performer. They were a wide range of ages, from 18-62. They reported a range of gender identities: women, men, and trans, and sexual identities: heterosexual, bisexual, gay, and queer. They expressed a wide range of racial identities: Black-British, Mixed-Heritage British, Asian, South Asian, Latinx, and White, and a range of abilities: one with multiple sclerosis, two with mobility limitations, and one with reliance on a cane. The group reported neuro-diversities of autism, dyslexia, and dyspraxia.

Methods of analysis for dialogic gaze and community

The measure for the activation of dialogic gaze in the workshop was multi-fold. Primarily, I was looking for verbal, physical, or tacit evidence and/or feedback of increased awareness of others, through the acknowledgment of similarity and difference throughout the day; in particularly during the adapted Gauntlet. Then, I watched for how these awarenesses enabled them to 'look out for' each other while negotiating group work on a devised piece. I was also looking for if, and how, they maintained their autonomy in a room full of other people. This

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used can be extrapolated for those purposes. Initially, institutions could make representation a core principle and perspective in marketing to and populating for both auditionees and audition panels. To ensure representation is a through-line in the education process, this perspective can extend to teaching staff and visiting lecturers as well as practitioners and playwrights studied. They can market the school using accessible language and widely representative images, and 'request' candidates from underrepresented demographics by marketing towards a variety of students. Something that did not apply to me but that would also serve this purpose is to make the application free or at a sliding scale cost, so that this first step to drama school is not exclusive to those who can afford it. There are systemic and potentially disruptive changes that would need to be enacted for this to occur, but they can, and should be done. Otherwise, we perpetuate the lack of representation in training and industry.

parallels TLC's ethos of 'self with others', as well as Lorde's purposes in identity differentiation towards the utilization of differing strengths in group work for social transformation (1984, pp. 10-11, 2017a, p. xv, p. 18). I was interested in evidence of connection with self and other, and for awarenesses of similarity and difference. Most specifically, I was looking for evidence that they remain both autonomous and connected through the recognitions of similarity and difference, as both hooks and Lorde maintain for 'true liberation' in community (2003, p. 197, 2017a, p. 18).

I interpreted a sense of community as evident in tacit and material signs that the students were connecting with each other, through physical and emotional indicators. I was listening for feedback that their experiences were loving, positive, and connecting through similarity and difference, 'we're different but we're the same', type language. I interpreted community through their empathetic responses to each other's experiences, and through multi-representativity in the group's negotiations, particularly if they were going out of their way to be inclusive through acts of dialogic gaze: making physical and emotional space for others, moving things out of each other's way, allowing space for each other's differences, or calling attention to others. I interpreted self-differentiation in the offering of statements or suggestions using 'I' for this purpose; 'I' connotes an ownership of ideas. I was looking for a sense of 'including' and 'being included' in their feedback. My questions for analysis as an observer here were: do they report feeling like part of the group? Do they think they created an ensemble together? Do they report a deeper sense of knowing the others and/or self? Do they sense a connection with the others, even when the other person has a different experience in the world than they may have?

I was also curious about the ease with which they communicated after the adapted Gauntlet, as well as both their tacit and physical positionings in group communications. Apart from the reverse Psychological Gesture group in Workshop One, the previous workshops' groups evidenced inconsistently gendered and democratic communications in rehearsal. Given the boundaries of rehearsal and the mixed group, would the third workshop group's communications evidence the same patterns? My analysis questions as an observer were: Who speaks first? Who is doing the decision-making? What are their physical positionings in the room? Whose ideas are prioritised or praised? How do they interact with others who may want to add to the communication or pitch their own ideas? I was looking for discovery of

each other’s strengths and limitations across identifications and how they used those awarenesses within their communications.

Introductions and making the manifesto, the acceptance of ‘no’

We began with introductions, and then moved into designing a group-devised manifesto of principles for the day, as I will describe. Then, we began the exercises, starting with simple warm-ups, to the ‘I’ exercise, and then the adapted Gauntlet, followed by rehearsal/performance of a group devised piece, as I will describe. I began with a game in which participants stand in a circle and introduce themselves using an adjective that describes them and a physical gesture, i.e., ‘Dana Dynamic’, with a jump (**Chapter Four, Video 2**, Introductions). The group then repeats the name and adjective and mimics the gesture as if a chorus. I do this as a practical, embodied way to learn names, as an ice breaker for the group, and most relevantly, as a physicalised way to start the emphasis on self-differentiation. We then sat in a circle where each participant reiterated their name, gave their pronouns, and talked about why they were here. After this discussion, together we made a group ‘manifesto’ or set of principles with which we wanted to shape the physical and emotional environment of the room (**Appendices B:** Manifesto, **Chapter Four**, **Video 3**, Making the manifesto). Facilitating a group manifesto is part of my practice and serves as an introduction to a collaborative, democratic process.

Notably, we discussed the notion of theatre as an ‘invitation to yes’, and to accept others’ ‘yes’ (**Chapter Four**, **Video 3a,** Making the manifesto; accepting the no). This is a common part of theatre practice, ‘yes, and’ is a foundation of improvisation and improv work, and saying ‘yes, and’ in actor training means accepting and building on offerings from others. While this is arguably a necessary part of theatre practice, in this workshop I was interested in facilitating difference and dissent as well as similarity and agreement, in keeping with my theoretical framework built from Lorde and hooks’s notions of celebrating difference and facilitating dialogue in conflict and dissent (hooks, 2003, p. xv, p. 197, Lorde, 2017a. p. 14, p. 18). While this notion was discussed as an explicit ‘yes, and’, this could be interpreted as dictatorial, and the idea was thus implicitly reflected in the manifesto through the notions of ‘giving and receiving space’ and ‘Be generous with your energy’ (**Appendices B**: Manifesto). In keeping with the dialogic nature of the workshop and its transparent, research-based structure, this group wanted a more open picture of ‘allowing’ self to say yes, rather than requiring it.

I suggested that we also allow and accept ‘no’ as much as we encourage ‘yes’ (**Chapter Four**, **Video 3a,** Making the manifesto; accepting the no). I offered this to keep the ensemble open to difference from the beginning of the workshop, and to immediately invite participants to claim their difference and dissent should they choose. I did this to open the opportunity for the group to partake in dialogue should conflict from difference occur. The group accepted my proposal and one suggested we put in not only ‘it’s ok to say no’ but also laid a framework for what comes after saying no, ensconced in the manifestos of ‘exploration of differences-> Alternative perspectives’ as well as the call to ‘Negotiate’ (**Appendices B**: Manifesto). They used concepts to refer to their autonomy of choice in engaging with the exercises by also framing the work as an ‘Invitation-> delve deeper’ and by listing the notion of ‘Curiosity-> move towards’ as a way of being in the room (**Chapter Four**, **Video 3**, Making the manifesto).

It is arguable that welcoming ‘no’ and listing participation as an ‘invitation’ is a necessary part of feminist pedagogic practice. These encourage participant autonomy by facilitating the choice to consent *and* dissent (Veltmand and Piper, 2014, p. 4). Inviting choice in this way may also help to level the hierarchy of the room. There is less room for a person in a position of power, as a teacher is, to dictate the room or take advantage of the hierarchy when students know that they have the power to dissent. This has led to some potentially contentious questions. While the allowance of ‘no’, facilitation of choice, and ‘exploration of difference’ had overall positive outcomes in this one-off workshop populated with a pluralistic group carrying varied of levels of experience and training, how would these affect the training of ensembles in conservatoire and university programmes? Would encouraging students to freely dissent disrupt the educational environment in ways that are counteractive to the purpose of training? Would facilitating students to say ‘no’ encourage them to block themselves from a training that may be difficult, but useful, or to restrict themselves to only training that they think is ‘safe’, or that does not challenge them? If so, would this then inhibit their range of expression, experience, and limit their knowledge base, doing them a disservice in preparing for an industry with multiple and varied performance demands? This is a provocative discussion, though just outside the scope of this chapter, and will be returned to in later writing. The acceptance of ‘no’ and choice to dissent became a thread throughout this workshop and led to interesting collaborations in rehearsal and performance. I argue that

it is this acceptance that helped facilitate the sense of community in this ensemble, as I describe below.

I advocate for the importance of a visible, written, collaborative 'manifesto' for a group's autonomy in laying a foundation for the designation of their experiences in and outcomes of training. It is important to lay a framework with invitations and suggestions that set a vision for their time together, and which is readily visible throughout that time. Had we not started this way, would we still have achieved consistent evidence of community and dialogic gaze? I cannot answer this question, however, there is evidence that making this manifesto helped to lay the foundation for community and dialogic gaze as a practice, and served as a visible reminder of the right to consent and dissent throughout the day. Members of the group appeared to consent and dissent at will, and several of the terms laid out in the manifesto were transmitted on the feedback forms; for example, the invitation to 'be curious', evidenced multiple references valuing the curiosity created here as instrumental (PFBF, W3, P1, P3, P4, P6). However, the most important part was the continuing practice of the framework laid out in the group manifesto, which reiterated and validated it, and created the group's holistic sense of choice, dissent, and dialogue, all of which were perpetuated by the ensemble as I will describe.

The 'I' exercise

I incorporated an exercise that is used in The Living Course to facilitate a celebration of self, and to practise taking up space. This is usually referred to as the 'I' exercise. Participants stand in a circle, and one by one, we step in, make eye contact with the others in the room, open our arms out to the side, and say 'I'. The 'I' comes when we begin to sense an awareness of self and a connection with the others. I specifically used this exercise here to affirm autonomy, help mitigate homogeneity, and to facilitate a path for the celebration of difference within the adapted Gauntlet. I used this as a way to practise celebrating ourselves and our identities in the vein of Lorde's notion that to 'define ourselves…broadens the joining' in community (1984, p. 10). 'I' is a public declamation of self, a practical way to assert subjectivity and autonomy within the unity, and the 'unity within diversity' (Mulvey, 1975, p. 10, Veltmand and Piper, 2014, p. 4, hooks, 2003, p. 109). It is a celebration of self as an individual within a group of people, which is why it is introduced as a public practice, although I have experienced it to be empowering when done privately. This exercise is also a practice in taking up space, as the person expressing the 'I' has the whole of the physical and

emotional space of the room: the attention of the ensemble is on them (**Chapter Four, Video 4**, 'I' exercise).

I opened the exercise by adapting a phrase that TLC instructor Barb Hosler often uses, 'When was the last time you knew you were magnificent?'(2019) I said, 'When was the last time you really took up space? When was the last time you celebrated yourself?' The group did not respond in overt ways to this provocation. I said 'I have some suggestions for how we can practise that'. I gave the caveat that this is going to look different on everybody, as will all of these exercises, 'Just because I am doing it one way or whoever is doing it one way doesn't mean that you have to do it that way. We all have different bodies and we will shape these differently'. I did this to reiterate and normalise difference in our expressions of 'I'.

I asked them to take up space and suggested that the middle of the circle is the place in which they can enact their own 'I' in the way that they want. I then showed 'my version', meant to re-indicate my earlier caveat that we will all transmit this differently. I walked into the circle, intentionally looked everyone in the eye, and when I felt a connection with them as well as to myself, I said 'I', with my arms out, as is typically done in TLC (**Chapter Four, Video 4**, The 'I" exercise). This was the model with which we started; though, true to the caveat, many in the class did not mimic my movement. The first student stepped in and did 'I' with the same steps as I had, but her interpretation as transmitted through her own body and eyes still appeared slightly different (**Chapter Four, Video 4**, The 'I" exercise). I clapped in celebration as is done in TLC, and the students followed suit. One by one they went, each taking up space and expressing 'I' in their own ways.

The First Dissent

One student opted not to take their turn in this exercise, a dissent I will return to later in this chapter. I initiated clapping after each turn; in TLC applause is a way to show celebration with the person who is expressing 'I'. I noticed that it was a bit low energy however, and I got the sense that I was driving the applause. Afterwards, we held an interesting discussion provoked mostly by a participant who I will call 'Participant A' for the purposes of this research. I asked the students how that went (**Chapter Four**, **Video 5,** The first dissent). Participant A said, 'I didn't need the applause' and asked what I was looking for, as I was the one who started off the applause. 'I got the impression that some people weren't looking for applause, saying "this is me", alright. So, in a sense it feels like there's some kind of uh…

goal. It felt like there was some sort of expectation. That's what it felt like, so therefore, I wasn't seeking applause' (**Chapter Four**, **Video 5**, The first dissent).

This participant is expressing what they may see as potentially problematic about mandating applause when the exercise is fundamentally geared towards a 'celebration of self'. This is problematic due to the potential for expectations of outside approval to affect the participants' expressions. This can lead to a sense of validation seeking in gauging whether they have done the exercise 'right', rather than having done it for self-celebration. 'I' is meant as a celebration of subjectivity and self, where 'right' is different for everyone, and is something they do *with*, rather than *for* others (Mulvey, 1975, p. 10). TLC emphasizes this point as well, 'I' is conceptualized as a celebration of 'authentic self'[37], and the clapping is seen as important feedback for a participants embodiment of 'I' (The Living Course, 2021, Hosler, 2019, 2020). Applause is also framed as encouragement for students and as a 'celebration with' rather than a judgement. Bakhtin might say that outside recognition is necessary for identity formation and validation as part of the dialogic construction of self (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). However, within this dialogic construction of self is the choice to assimilate the information given (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 422). Through this idea, Participant A may be interpreted as choosing not to assimilate the 'expectation' interpreted within the applause. There was a sense that the clapping was seen as a value judgement rather than the 'celebration of self with others' the exercise was set up to be.

This opened up a short but important conversation about applause as a celebration, or as a judgement. Some in the group expressed comfort with the clapping. For the majority, it sounded as if the connection with others was prioritised above this element. This connection provided 'a calm, supportive energy', and that 'taking that moment to just connect with everyone calmed my fears' (**Chapter Four**, **Video 6**, Discussing the 'I' exercise). These are

[37] When asked how the facilitator can tell when a student is being their 'authentic self' in this exercise, Barb Hosler said, 'It's a difficult thing to define. It's not about checking boxes…although I do look at things like: if they have no energy, their voice is flat, shoulders are slumped, don't make eye contact, and arms are not up. There are two components that I use to determine if I think someone has reached 100% of their authentic self: first, the reaction of the others in the room. When someone hits it, the room erupts, they go crazy. They can just feel it. I can just feel when there's that shift inside. And, as I tell the students; when you are at 'I' at your 100%, you won't want to stop doing it!' (Hosler, 2020).

variations of the idea that connection with others, even while expressing in front of them, is calming.

A participant I call Participant C[38], whose self-differentiation I later analyse, offered a particular form of applause she called 'flap-plause' which is a silent applause, hands held up and flapped, rather than clapped (**Chapter Four**, **Video 7**, Accessible applause). She found this technique effective in her experiences of presenting at conferences, 'I found it much more informative about the response of the audience…if someone agrees with a point you're making, they'll go like this…and you get that feedback' (**Chapter Four**, **Video 7**, Accessible applause). Notably, the group took on this suggestion without being directly asked, and did so for the duration of the workshop, as can be seen in (**Chapter Four, Video 16,** Workshop Three in performance), where they use flap-plause after their performance. This is one example of the way in which the group worked around each other's needs without having been asked to do so. They began to operate in ways that were more amenable to Participant C's stated needs, even when those needs were different from their own. This is notable evidence of the dialogic gaze: an assimilation of another's experience and operation around their needs in practise (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 424).

Participant A questioned the purpose for saying 'I' and expressing this with arms held out, '…having people come into the space and say 'I - I just wonder what the aim is' (**Chapter Four, Video 8**, Question and suggestion). Participant A mentioned an experience with a similar exercise, where a person enters the room, stands in front of the ensemble, makes eye contact with them, and then exits the room when they feel necessary. Participant A found this effective, 'it's so simple, and so basic, and we have absolutely no comment on your body' (**Chapter Four, Video 8,** Question and suggestion). Participant A relayed that there was no applause, so as not to make a comment on a person's body. I asked the group if we should try it without the applause and suggested that we do the exercise again without the necessity to verbalize 'I', and with a self-chosen physicalization of this self-celebration (**Chapter Four,**

[38] While I have kept participants as anonymous as possible, it is important to note that this participant is Dr. Ysabel Clare, a well-known academic whose research has resulted in 'the development of two new cognitive models framing human experience and the work of the actor' (Ysabel Clare, 2021). Clare specializes in acting, voice, presentation, and communication skills and has a host of academic qualifications and trainings as well as respected careers in performance making, teaching, coaching, mentoring, and research.

Video 8, Question and suggestion). I did this to encourage the diverse bodies in the group to feel comfortable expressing the notion of 'celebration of self', and to facilitate autonomy in enacting this notion. I asked, rather than suggested this, to create a space for negotiation and dissent (hooks, 2003, p. xv). There were a few expressions of 'I didn't mind the applause' but overall, the murmurs were 'yes, let's try it' (**Chapter Four, Video 8,** Question and suggestion). While this autonomy and negotiation is consistent with feminist practice, I also wondered if the participants would hide behind a 'performance' of 'I', something TLC would generally caution against, as their emphasis is on authenticity. Or would the participants' expressions be heightened, and their self-celebration more easily accessed and transmitted given this autonomy?

This productive conversation led to a greater variety of embodiments of 'I' (**Chapter Four**, **Videos 9a, 9b**, The developing 'I'). Participants were more still when taking up space, and clear and connected in their movements, eye contact with others, and their voicing of 'I'. Some engaged in longer and seemingly more intentional eye contact with those in the circle. Their 'I's were noticeably more grounded than before; their voices were lower, and they had a tacit sense of presence. Some 'I's became more creatively expressed, some even performative; one participant wove through the circle of people with a fluid, dance-like physicality. I do not know if this was inauthentic, and their later feedback indicated that they felt 'freer' to create from impulse (W3, P5, **Chapter Four, Video 9c,** The developing 'I' reflection session). Although there was no direct mention of authenticity, this feedback indicates that their increased expression of impulse could arguably be linked to this. Some participants enacted this in a frank way; simply standing in the open, making an eye connection, saying 'I', and walking out (**Chapter Four**, **Videos 9a, 9b**, The developing 'I').

The respondents overwhelmingly reported feeling more 'present' (W3, P10), 'less rushed' (W3, P5), and that this exercise created 'the space for agency' (W3, P1) that affected later work (**Chapter Four, Video 9c,** The developing 'I' reflection session). There seemed to be an increased self-awareness when the claps were removed. Notably, many of them mentioned that taking the applause away either made them more aware of their 'subconscious' want for validation (W3, P2), or that in taking away applause '…it's not validation from all around you, it's validation from yourself' (W3, P1, **Chapter Four, Video 9c,** The developing 'I' reflection session). Some even said they 'got even more validation…I felt a bigger

outpouring of love and acceptance within the space without the claps' (W3, P2, **Chapter Four, Video 9c,** The developing 'I' reflection session).

The group also mentioned an increased sense of connection with others, 'it's not 'I' taking up the space, but it's them', with your eyes upon one person, 'it's that moment of connection' (W3, P1, **Chapter Four, Video 9c,** The developing 'I' reflection session). This participant is talking about a dialogic connection, that although they are the one in the middle, the others take up the space as they affect and are affected by each other (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 424). By this logic, the person in the circle would have a reciprocal experience with others; they are 'taking up each other's space' in the connection with each other, akin to Bakhtin's notion of 'being' as a 'co-being' simultaneously with others. This is an experience that was shared, 'I think "I" in relation to others when standing in the middle making eye contact' (W3, P1, **Chapter Four, Video 9c,** The developing 'I' reflection session). For these respondents, the experience of connection is a dialogic one, the 'I' is not alone and stands with the others 'as part of a greater whole' and in a 'constant interaction' with others, which conditions all (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). They reported that the connection was a 'sharing of self', 'it just felt I connected with you…the connection is probably I put myself in there, and I shared that with you' (W3, P1, **Chapter Four, Video 9c,** The developing 'I' reflection session). Perhaps this comment reveals in practice hooks's 'shared world', the acknowledgement of the self as revealed to others elicits a reciprocal sharing, creating a dialogic space (hooks, 2003, p. 197, Bakhtin, 1981, p. 424). The group went on to talk about the nature of 'being seen' as a 'taking up space'. One participant recognised their differences in this way,

> We're all coming from very different experiences of being seen in our daily life. And how we're seen. And on what terms we're seen. So then to come in and say 'I' would be the integration of all of that. We're all coming in with 'I', and 'I' is not, you know, objective, and 'I' is not universal. (W3, P8).

This participant acknowledges that each ensemble member's 'I' is fundamentally different because their lived experiences are different, and it is their lived experience that informs the expression of 'I'. Understood this way, sharing the 'I', the 'celebration of self', in itself is a practical enactment of both hooks and Lorde's notions of celebrating difference (hooks, 2003, p. 197, Lorde, 1984, p. 45). To simply stand with others, informed by our lived experiences, can be a celebration of difference. I was happily surprised to find this, as I meant

for the ‘I’ exercise to facilitate a sense of ‘autonomy in unity’ or ‘co-being’ which would build towards an ease of acknowledging similarity and difference in the adapted Gauntlet (hooks, 2003, p. 109, Robinson, 2011). However, this feedback indicates that recognitions of similarity and difference are inherent in the ‘I’ exercise as well. The ‘I’ exercise then becomes useful towards providing a robust through-line of exercises that acknowledge similarity and difference as a potential framework when paired with the adapted Gauntlet.

The Second Dissent

During the ‘I’ exercise, one student, who I will call Participant B, opted not to enact ‘I’, though they stayed engaged and, in the circle, connecting with and celebrating the other participants. During the above conversation about applause, Participant B explained their reasons for opting out, ‘…I have a tendency to support more than take space, which is just something, I really…try to…struggle with it, like taking space, I like holding rather than taking’ (**Chapter Four, Video 10**, The second dissent). Participant B expressed a vulnerability in discussing their struggle to take up space, which can be interpreted as a contribution to the shared world equitable to the other students’ offers, though this was a verbal, rather than an embodied offer (hooks, 2003, p. 197).

Incorporating Bakhtin’s idea of the dialogic and actions for dialogic gaze, the group accommodated Participant B’s ‘difference’ by remembering this preference and recognising Participant B’s subjectivity in self-identifying as a ‘support’ rather than a participant (Peeren, 2008, p. 14, p. 17). This was evident during the next round of the ‘I’ exercise; when Participant B and myself were left to go, the group looked only at me in the expectation that I would complete the exercise (**Chapter Four**, **Video 9b**, The developing ‘I’). In what I thought was politeness, I gave Participant B space to go, which they declined. Their difference and dissent were unquestioningly accepted by the group, even when I re-offered Participant B space to consent. In evidence of a ‘dialogic gaze’, the group looked out for and accommodated Participant B’s identification as ‘support’ (Peeren, 2008, p. 14, Lorde, 2017a, p. 14). Participant B differentiated themselves as ‘support’ through choosing not to do this practice, an example of the varying forms that ‘co-being’ will take when the acceptance of difference is part of the shared world (hooks, 2003, p. 197, Robinson, 2011).

Participant B emphasized that they ‘don’t want to make anyone feel that I am not being part of’ the exercise, because they are more comfortable in a role of support (**Chapter Four,**

Video 10, The second dissent). This participant's awareness and 'establishment of their function' is evidence of self-definition, the place where they 'are and are not like you' (Lorde, 1984, p. 10). They were able to self-boundary their position in the room and claim what they did and did not want, 'But I don't want to feel that I have to do anything' (**Chapter Four, Video Ten,** The second dissent). They not only did not want to do the exercise; they did not want to feel obligated to do it. One student responded with the suggestion that the group release the circle and spread throughout the room, 'would you feel better if we were like, all in different spaces?' (**Chapter Four, Video 10,** The second dissent). Participant B declined, to which I reiterated that it is 'all their choice'. I did this against my usual inclination, which would be to respond in the way the other participant did and suggest an alternative for Participant B. I have understood inclusive practice to mean that 'all are at the table', and perhaps have conceptualised participation to mean that we are all at the table, and doing the same thing in the same way.[39] However, there is room for an equitable understanding of active participation that looks different on different people, an 'acceptance of alterity' (Peeren, 2008, p. 14). This demands a perspective of equity rather than equality; the ways in which students engage may be different given their needs, though all are thusly engaged.

The group's assimilation of Participant B's difference laid the groundwork for the creativity Lorde refers to when discussing 'difference as a creative function' (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18). During later rehearsals for a group devised piece, this participant stood to one side rather than engaging with the group. In an act of dialogic gaze, one of the participants remembered and invited them in as an outside support; after which Participant B served as such, teaching the group an exercise that formed the foundation of their devising piece. I will describe and analyse further in this chapter. Participant B's dissent to participation in the 'I' exercise, and their verbal and physical positioning as 'support' led them to serve in a function that was useful for themselves, the group, the creative process, and the outcome of the devised piece.

The Third Dissent: a symphony in three movements

As in workshops One and Two, I preceded the Gauntlet with 5 minutes of the silent Eye Greeting exercise. I then invited the participants to line up near the chairs. Participant C,

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[39] This idiom can be further problematised with the question of who is the one inviting to the table, hence my wording indicating that all are *already* there. This research seeks a pluralistic response to this question through normalising multi-representative practice.

noted above, stayed near the corner in the back while the others lined up (**Chapter Four, Video 11,** The third dissent). Participant C has autism and was concerned, 'is this an exercise with eye contact?'(W3, Participant C). I told this participant exactly what to expect from this exercise, including the acknowledgment clauses. Participant C said they will stay engaged but will sit and 'listen' to the exercise from where they were currently seated, about ten feet away from the set-up of chairs.

This is another example of the engagement of difference and multi-representation in this workshop, a participation that looked different depending on the needs and skills of the participant. I was worried about Participant C sitting out at first, and the potential for isolation in having placed themselves in a corner. However, not only had they recused themselves from something they were aware would be difficult, they were able to engage a strength of theirs by listening to the 'rhythm' of the exercise. An actor trainer and former dancer themself, Participant C continually referred to the 'music' of the exercise, listening to the rhythm and flow of words, sounds, and breath coming from those engaged in the adapted Gauntlet. During my facilitation of the exercise, I moved over to Participant C several times, to physically acknowledge their inclusion. Each time they would feedback 'the rhythm' of the three clauses, eventually referring to the Gauntlet as a 'symphony in three movements' (PFBF, W3, Participant C, W3, Participant C).

This is the first time I had an engaged listener in this way during my delivery of the Gauntlet and the adapted version thereof. This enhanced my own understanding of the exercise and provided another perspective, particularly as Participant C alerted me to the notion of the exercise as an 'aural journey' (W3, Participant C). This is notable as this aural journey parallels the energy each clause generates, as an energetic symphony in three movements. This is also notable as another tool for analysis. 'What I see in you that I see in me is…' was the opening movement, and *allegro* or 'moderately fast' (PFBF, W3, Participant C). Participant C picked out words that would 'pop out' from the responses to this clause, such as 'confidence' and 'energy' (PFBF, W3, Participant C, W3, Participant C). This is interesting as this first clause is a connection through similarity and often an energetic start to the Gauntlet exercise. The upbeat *allegro* rhythm supports this energetic beginning. The second clause was, 'What you may not see in me is…'. Participant C relayed that the responses to this clause were 'slow and *largo*, where voices were lowered in expressing the acknowledgments, and the rhythm of words flowed into each other and 'did not pop out'

(PFBF, W3, Participant C). However, for Participant C, 'What you may not see in me is…' as a phrase in itself stuck out. This is interesting, as this clause is one of difference and was initially difficult for participants. When I introduced this phrase to the group, one participant questioned, 'Oh, it's like a revelation?' (W3, P3), indicating this phrase as something secret, the revealing of a vulnerability. This interpretation of this clause supports Participant C's observation that the responses here 'were low and mashed together', so that an outside ear could only clearly differentiate the clause itself rather than the secret 'revelations'. For Participant C, the third and final acknowledgment clause, 'What I love about you is…' was high energy, an '*allegretto*, like a Mozart Opera' (PFBF, W3, Participant C). Participant C was able to differentiate words again, 'What I love' being the ones most emphasized (W3, Participant C, **Chapter Four, Video 12,** Verbal devising negotiations). I model this phrase with high energy and a particular rhythm of speech that highlights the word 'love', coinciding with Participant C's observations (**Chapter One**, **Video 5**, What I love about you is).

Participant C's active listening and expertise in rhythm and observation as an actor trainer proved to be beneficial to the group. Their observation of the Gauntlet as a 'symphony in three movements' provided a framework for the group's devised piece, which I describe in depth below and can be seen in (**Chapter Four, Video 12**, Verbal devising negotiations/ symphony structure). Participant C's differentiation and identification of self as 'outside ear' is an example of using difference as a creative force (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18). They were able to use their difference in ability and skill to perceive the exercise in a way that was beneficial to the whole group's work together, despite the fact that Participant C was physically positioned 'outside' of the exercise.

Gauntlet Feedback and analysis

Participants overwhelmingly found the adapted Gauntlet to be community creating and connecting, and were surprised that it facilitated the 'depth of connection' with (PFBF, W3, P10), and 'authentic appreciation' (PFBF, W3, P3) for people they had just met. As in Workshops One and Two, the word 'connect' or 'connection' was used by most participants to describe the exercise in written and verbal feedback (PFBF, W3, P1, P2, P3, P6, P7, P8, P10, P12). This was sometimes expressed as a sense of 'solidarity' or 'unity' (PFBF, W3, P2, P3, P7). Several participants referred to the 'power of creating connection' (PFBF, W3, P6). One wrote, 'Powerful. Created a connection (deep one) with someone I barely new [knew]' (PFBF, W3, P10). Notably, two people echoed the same statement: 'I am not alone' (PFBF,

W3, P7, P11). One participant wrote this in capital letters, ‘All I could think of was I AM NOT ALONE’ (PFBF, W3, P7). As these are anonymous and confidential, I was not able to follow up with this person to garner the reason for their emphasis. However, their highlighting this indicates it as an important thought. This shows the ‘power’ of connection, and ‘unity and solidarity’ with those who are different to themselves, resonating with Lorde’s notion of ‘the sharing of joy’ as a ‘bridge…that lessens the threat of their difference’ (Lorde, 2017a, p.10). This becomes more lucid in the context of the group’s overwhelming feedback during the acknowledgment of difference, when they said that they felt a ‘strong desire to accept and “meet” difference, even if it wasn’t an immediate understanding’ (PFBF, W3, P1). They felt that theirs and others’ ‘different experiences were acknowledged & accepted’ (PFBF, W3, P7), and they felt ‘equal’ in this (PFBF, W3, P10). Sandwiching the acknowledgment of difference between two acknowledgment clauses for similarity may have enacted the similarity clauses as a bridge for their acceptance and ‘feeling accepted by’ during the difference clause (Lorde, 2017a, p. 10, PFBF, W3, P7).

In the undertaking of the difference clauses, the participants expressed ‘curiosity’ about others’ differences and placed an emphasis on learning and wanting to learn about other people’s experiences in the world (PFBF, W3, P1, P8, P9, P12). In discussing what ‘creates the conditions for community’ in ensemble, Michael Boyd lists ‘curiosity’ as a core ‘principle’ (Radosavljevic, 2013, p. 149). hooks describes a ‘radical openness…to explore different perspectives’ as a positive outcome of pluralistic practice (2003, p. 48). The participants’ curiosity was expressed as an ‘openness’ rather than a judgement and grew out of the want to ‘explore different perspectives’ fostered within this exercise through the intentional dialogue and connection making (PFBF, W3, P9, hooks, 2003, p. 48). Their feedback satisfies both Boyd’s and hooks’s advocacies for community and pluralistic practice in ensemble, which are aims of this research. As noted, several participants went further than curiosity, expressing ‘a want’ or ‘desire’ to learn and to ‘meet’ the differences expressed (PFBF, W3, P1, P8). These participants are calling attention to my point of acknowledging difference and evidencing dialogic gaze: the *activation* of ensemble members on behalf of those with experiences that are different to their own.

One participant relayed that they dissolved ‘prejudgements’ through the voicing of the acknowledgements within this exercise, ‘I found myself subconsciously prejudging because of difference. However, through acknowledging I felt like I was more accepting’ (PFBF, W3,

P3). This is evidence of a transformation in ‘inner discourse’ and the effects of assimilation of others’ experiences (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 424-425, Robinson, 2011). The transformation lies in this respondent’s ‘accepting through acknowledging’ (PFBF, W3, P3). This can also be likened to Lorde’s notion of ‘voicing’ as a political act, ‘for it is not difference which immobilizes us, but silence’ (Lorde, 1984, p. 44). This person’s verbal acknowledgment of others’ differences in the adapted Gauntlet allowed an internal transformation towards acceptance of difference, which for Lorde, is necessary for the transformation of oppression (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18). In this case, this compassion-based practice shows itself to be transformative as well as multi-representative, through the voiced acknowledgment of difference.

This is especially impactful as those in the room expressed often vulnerable revelations to others that they had known for less than two hours before this exercise began. They ‘were surprised’ to create a connection with people they just met (PFBF, W3, P9, P10). Some were relieved at this connection with ‘strangers’, ‘So rarely do you get to speak out loud what you hoped somebody knew about yourself with[out] being judged. It opened up the layers of yourself and the people in front of you’ (PFBF, W3, P3). They were able to access knowledge about self and other through these revelations, which were accepted by their ensemble. This participant, like Lorde, relays the power of voicing ‘as an act of self-revelation’ that is necessary for ‘establishing her role as vital’ in community work towards transformation (Lorde, 1984, p. 43). This self-revelation is important in actor training as it benefits group work together through the establishment of their own roles in the work. This also helps to create ensemble connection through the expression and reception of vulnerability. This feedback evidences the adapted Gauntlet as community creating in new ensembles, addressing my second research question regarding the same. The communal benefits of self-differentiation and connection created through these self-revelations can be seen in their rehearsal and performance practice, as I describe below.

Lorde speaks of voicing self-revelation as ‘fraught with danger’ though empowering and ‘necessary’ (Lorde, 1984, p. 42-43). This dual perception of speaking out can be seen in participant feedback describing their experience in the Gauntlet as ‘uplifting’ (PFBF, W3, P12), ‘empowering’ (PFBF, W3, P2), and ‘calming’ (PFBF, W3, P6); yet also feeling ’vulnerable’ (PFBF, W3, P2, P9), and ‘naked’ (PFBF, W3, P12) at the same time. They felt vulnerable speaking, but empowered in the act of speaking. I argue that this empowerment is

facilitated by the reciprocal voicing established in the Gauntlet, and the desire to validate another's vulnerability with their own revelation: responding to self-revelations that resonated in similarity and made them curious in difference.

Given the plurality of people in the room, one participant's feedback is especially interesting:

> we're used to presenting ourselves in a way, or telling our story in this- in a certain fashion, and you gave us words that like- it was like 'Oh how am I going to fit 'What I love about you…' how am I going- you know it was kind of like fitting into your language. (W3, P8, **Chapter Four, Video 19,** Workshop three reflection).

This person is saying that despite the different ways that the participants 'present themselves' to and 'are seen' in the world, the clauses gave them a common language (W3, P8). Bakhtin wrote, 'A word, discourse, language, or culture undergoes "dialogization" when it becomes relativized' (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). Through this lens, the adapted Gauntlet can be understood as a 'relativizing' practice, as the clauses were phrased to be understood across different speakers. This relativity also reiterates the understanding of this practice as a dialogic one (Bakhtin, 1981, P. 426). Further to this, the adapted Gauntlet facilitates an embrace of cultural and language differences, as the clauses are framed to make responses accessible to a wide variety of speakers. This evidences it as a cross-cultural, relativizing practice.

Rehearsal and Performance; the dissents come to fruition

In the previous chapters, I did not analyse the group's devised performances, as these did not contribute to the exploration of my research questions. However, here I will detail Workshop Three in performance as this was inseparable from rehearsals and supports my analysis of Participants A, B, and C's self-differentiations, as well as the group's perpetual practices of dialogic gaze. After the adapted Gauntlet, I gave the ensemble thirty minutes to devise a ten-minute performance piece, again around the theme of 'metamorphosis'. In this group, each dissenting person became integral within the devising process. Participant A as a performer, Participant B acted as an outside eye, leading the group in an exercise of generating 'shapes' towards enacting their shared interpretations of metamorphosis. Participant C provided the framework for the piece based on their assessment of the Gauntlet as a 'symphony in three movements', as well as introducing a 'textual musicality' based on their observations of the

rhythm of words within the Gauntlet (**Chapter Four**, **Video 12**, Devising negotiations/ symphony structure). The dissenters were able to participate in the way they chose to, which ultimately benefited the group and their work together.

I gave the ensemble their devising stimulus and time restrictions, and then stepped back to observe. Through small talk and lunch, they stood in a circle and gradually began to discuss the piece, one person offering ideas at a time, building on the previous offers. There was a short, primarily verbal discussion (**Chapter Four, Video 12**, Verbal devising negotiations/symphony structure) which changed to incorporate physical provocations, from a suggestion of continuous tableau-making (P1, W3). This then shifted into a physicalised, responsive 'flow' elicited from provocations provided by Participants B and C (**Chapter Four, Video 13,** Physicalisations/ dialogic gaze in rehearsal). Unlike Workshops One and Two, there was little evidence of gendered communication at any part in their devising discussion. I did notice that initially the same four people were doing the majority of the talking, while most others were enacting these suggestions physically (**Chapter Four, Video 12**, Verbal devising negotiations/symphony structure). Through the conversation and physical provocations, they began to find what several of them referred to as a 'flow' on their feedback forms: negotiating and physicalising offers, 'organically' responding and provoking impulse (PFBF, W3, P3, P4). The verbal negotiation was less than five minutes long, though their physicalisations lasted 20 minutes.

One participant offered an exercise of creating a group tableau, each actor entering the circle to add to the narrative according to impulse. Enacting dialogic gaze, one participant called attention to Participant B, 'maybe [Participant B] has a good sense of it…'. Participant B accepted this, asking 'Can I propose something?' When he went unheard, another participant called attention to him, '[Participant B] has something' **(Chapter Four, Video 13,** Physicalisations/ dialogic gaze in rehearsal). This is evidence of perpetual accommodation of Participant B's previous self-identification as an outside support (Peeren, 2008, p. 17). Their self- identification was chosen by themselves as a subject, and their 'alterity preserved' by their fellow participants in this accommodation (Mulvey, 1975, p. 11, Peeren, 2008, p. 14).

Participant B then made a suggestion that they refine their tableau creation and re-formation. They suggested, 'just try to find a position, maybe an action…but, don't create a, a story' (**Chapter Four**, **Video 14**, A proposition). Those in the circle agreed and made the

adjustments accordingly and immediately,[40] leading the group to accelerate the physical discoveries they were making as a community, and building to their eventual, group described 'flow' (PFBF, W3, P3, P4, P8, P10). Participant B emerged as a beneficial contributor to group devising, both through their own dissent and self-positioning as 'support', and the accommodation of this by the group, despite the potential for a power differential in positioning him as outside eye. There is evidence of a reciprocal 'trust' here: from the group, in allowing potential for this power dynamic, and in Participant B's admission that the support role is more comfortable (Govier, 1992, p. 17). This may evidence trust as a hidden element in Bakhtin's assimilation of difference, as well as in both hooks's and Lorde's ideas about celebrating difference in community creation: we trust each other to engage in the process (Peeren, 2008, p. 17, hooks, 2003, p. 112, Lorde, 2017a, p. 18). This evidencing of trust is consistent with feminist pedagogic practice as part of facilitating autonomy, which leads me back to the question of trust and autonomy in actor training; do we trust our students to choose to consent, or not, to the training practices we present? While provocative, this question is out of the scope of this current chapter and will receive greater consideration in Chapter Five.

In action

With Participant B's outside provocation and Participant C's offer to lend 'musicality' by reading the definition of and synonyms for metamorphosis, the group slid into devising 'organically', easily and without apparent obstruction, as several of the participants stated (PFBF, W3, P3, P4, P8, P10, **Chapter Four**, **Video 15**, Dialogic provocations/ flow into performance). Their use of the term 'organically' seems best clarified by feedback that the devising 'seemed to unfold by itself' (PFBF, W3, P4). The text opened up another layer of 'musicality' as Participant C suggested. The ensemble continued to develop the shapes they built around each other, while Participant B occasionally gave direction and provocations, some of which were akin to Bakhtin's notion that, 'we are always in dialogue with other beings' (Robinson, 2011). Their provocations were phrased as if adapted from Bakhtin's own

[40] I wondered if this was because the group wanted a leader. Do groups need a person to be on the outside as a director figure? It is arguably useful to have an outside perspective to view performance as an initial and critical audience member; however, there is a risk of perpetuating power structures in the enactment of this position. How does the need for a leader impact feminist aims to mitigate hierarchy? This is a provocative question; however, it is outside of the scope of this thesis. One of the purposes for the Gauntlet in TLC is to facilitate a leader to emerge from the group, who will often be first in the main exercises of the course (Hosler, 2019). I have not utilised this exercise for that purpose as it is out of the scope of my aims in creating community.

writing, 'How do you rearrange yourself with other people? How are we changing constantly with the impulses from others?' (**Chapter Four, Video 15,** Dialogic provocations/ flow into performance). This makes Bakhtin's dialogic a relevant support to notions of impulse and response in devising, and an interesting theoretical provocation for this work.

There is evidence here that the connection they described in the adapted Gauntlet reverberated into their devising. Incorporating their differences in embodiment and assimilating others' self-differentiations in role-taking towards devising, the participants seemed to flow together, which they corroborated in their feedback (PFBF, W3, P3, P4, P8, P10, Bakhtin, 1981, p. 424). The flow seemed to emerge according to Participant C's three-part symphony framework, *allegro* at first, into *largo*, and then *allegretto,* to a swift but punctuated ending. The flow was aided by Participant B's physical provocations and Participant C's offering of text. The group listened and responded to these textual provocations, repeating words they 'latched' on to, echoing sounds or full words, while continuing their physical provocation and response, heard in (**Chapter Four, Video 15,** Dialogic provocations/ flow into performance). It is also notable that the focus of their spoken words changed. First the group verbalised synonyms for metamorphosis in repetition to Participant C's textual provocations. Later, the group began to improvise text, with a focus on the concepts of 'I', 'Us', and 'Together' as elicited by Participant A in the 'I' exercise, as well as here (**Chapter Four, Video 9a,** The developing 'I', **Video 16**, Workshop Three in performance). This shift may have also developed from the workshop's emphasis on concepts of 'I' and 'Us' throughout, transmitted through to performance. This shows the impact that the intention of 'celebrating self with others' has on group dynamics in performance as well as communication.

Participants B and C relaxed into the flow themselves, adding to the group's 'textual rhythm' of repeating the words associated with metamorphosis (**Chapter Four, Video 16,** Workshop Three in performance). The group moved in rhythms, playing with and around each other and the room. The room looked and sounded like an ever-flowing stream of shifting bodies and expressions. A very interesting thing happens in (**Chapter Four, Video 17,** A symbiotic moment) when two participants pass through the middle of the group together, making symbiotic movements with their backs to each other, and then turn to face each other as they pass. After careful attention to each other, this is repeated later, almost as a game. It is seamless in execution and looks as if they rehearsed this movement, but they did not. I

interpret their listening, responding, and awareness of each other and for the overall piece to the 'connections' they speak of, created by the adapted Gauntlet and the scaffolded exercises affirming self with others leading to it (PFBF, W3, P1, P2, P3, P6, P7, P8, P10, P12).

Creating community in ensemble work through difference

Unlike the first two workshops, here Workshop Three participants used their differences to create, speaking the text in their native languages (Lorde, 2017a, p. 14). I heard *yo* and *tu* (Spanish for the English concepts of 'I' and 'you'), *nosotros* (a Spanish word for the English concept of 'we'), *todo* (a Spanish word for the English concept of 'all'), and *kāi* (a Chinese word for the English concept 'to open') (**Chapter Four, Video 18,** Using difference to create). Their language differences added vocal texture by reflecting the cultures represented in the room, subverting the dominance of English as the 'primary' language. This seems a practical enactment of Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia, their varying 'utterances' having and giving meaning according to this particular time and place, and that no one utterance is hierarchical (1981, p. 263). In the context of this piece, the words were imbued with the meaning of 'together', and the varying languages used to express this notion were symbolic of difference as part of togetherness: hooks's notion of the 'unity within diversity, diversity in unity' performed (2003, pp. 109-110).

Each ensemble member performed a different function to contribute to the piece as well. Participant B was the outside eye and exercise leader, Participant C provided the textual 'music' and the three part 'symphonic' framework for devising, and Participant A was the catalyst in shifting the text utilised towards concepts of 'I' and 'We' (**Chapter Four, Video 16,** Workshop Three in performance, **Chapter Four, Video 18**, Using difference to create). In a continual act of dialogic gaze, another participant placed themselves in a supportive role for Participant A, who earlier expressed the need for an available chair due to mobility determinations. This participant incorporated this need into their dual, self-determined role of set-designer and provocateur; moving and provoking the shifts of the symphonic movements with the chairs in the room. One participant acted to continually clarify the work with questions and provocations (W3, P9). Yet another regularly called attention to those who were not being heard (W3, P4). One acted as initiator and producer, paying attention to the timing of the piece (W3, P2, **Chapter Four, Video 16,** Workshop Three in performance).

Through the acceptance of 'no' and the recognition of similarity and difference, ensemble members each used their own strengths; whether through dissent, 'I do not want to do this', 'I

can only do this', 'I position myself this way', or through consent; accepting impulses offered by the group towards an organic formulation of the piece, and saying 'yes, and'. Their recognition of similarity allowed for the joy of connection that Lorde calls a 'bridge' between difference (2018, p. 10). The acceptance of their differences allowed them to place themselves in the roles they saw fit to, and to accept and support others in doing the same (Peeren, 2008, p. 14). Their difference and dissent gave them a boundary for being in the room that was not only respected, but celebrated and assimilated by others who accepted and looked out for their self-identifications, in perpetual practise of the dialogic gaze (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 424, hooks, 2003, p. 197, Lorde, 2017a, p. 14).

Devising Feedback

The students corresponded with this, overwhelmingly expressing a sense of the whole group being embraced in the process of communication towards devising, almost all calling it 'open' (PFBF, W3, P1, P4, P6, P7, P9, P10, P11, P12), and that it was 'very open and easy to communicate' (PFBF, W3, P12). This communication was 'generous' (PFBF, W3, P2, P10), and inclusive, 'people took the suggestions of others seriously and creatively' (PFBF, W3, P1). There was 'a high level of listening and accepting other people's proposals' (PFBF, W3, P11), and 'it felt like there was a desire for inclusivity and a generosity towards each other's offers' (PFBF, W3, P4). There was no evidence or feedback regarding gendered communications, and they overwhelmingly communicated that they felt heard, wanted to hear others' ideas, and that there was a sense of 'understanding and cooperation' (PFBF, W3, P1). Again, many of the responses refer to the word 'connection', and notably the *want* to connect, and the *want* to be seen and known, 'I wanted to engage with people' (PFBF, W3, P7).

Almost every participant expressed a sense of a natural, seamless flow in the devising itself. They referred to this as an 'organic process' (PFBF, W3, P3, P4), and several used the term 'flow' (PFBF, W3, P3, P8, P10). This is also expressed in the feedback that 'there was a sense of real communication through movement and touch' (PFBF, W3, P2). This feedback shows their connections in performance and awareness of each other, indicating the adapted Gauntlet towards effective devising. This feedback is also interesting in light of the fact that the connections facilitated through the Gauntlet are overwhelmingly text-based, although the transitions and connections made can be quite physical and engage a whole group awareness

in shifting around a tight space while avoiding moving the chairs. These are physical aspects that may help explain the 'real communication' described here.

Notably, their feedback of 'curiosity' and 'interest' regarding difference while partaking in the Gauntlet may be expressed in several participants' feedbacks that engaging in this devising process was a further 'breaking up barriers of strangeness' (PFBF, W3, P1, P3, P4, P6). This person refers to the notion that they were no longer strange to each other, a 'crossing boundaries' in pluralistic practice that hooks advocates (hooks, 2003, p. 47). While hooks discusses pedagogic practice and the interest that educators take in 'crossing boundaries', this can be extrapolated to this multi-cultural group in their desire for and active learning about each other (hooks, 2003, p. 47). The link is in the primary 'interest' as a starting point for this practice. I argue that the interest in learning about difference generated by the adapted Gauntlet enabled participants to 'break the barriers' of difference and work together in this 'organic' way (PFBF, W3, P3, P4, hooks, 2003, p. 47).

It is also notable that some participants referred to the process as 'a bit awkward at the start' due not only to 'different levels of confidence/openness' but in getting the group to transition to rehearsal (PFBF, W3, P9). This may be attributed to what one participant named 'falling into habits of practice' in terms of those leading the process (PFBF, W3, P10). However, they also expressed that it was easy for them to fall into the 'flow' and that they found 'a safe middle ground to work in after the group 'allowed play' and took on each other's offerings' (PFBF, W3, P7). This flow was evident and the shift to flow was notable, supported by feedback from those working within the group, as well as my own observations (**Chapter Four**, **Video 15**, Flow into performance, **Video 16**, Workshop Three in performance). One participant writes, 'very quickly the differences were nothing (except for the physical stuff in the devising/improv)' (PFBF, W3, P5). This person is specifically referring to those participants with limited mobility, Participants A and C, a vital observation as this was a highly physical devising process. Yet, Participant C was able to 'make a contribution that was taken up' and mitigate their limited mobility by reading text provocations for the group to 'play' with (Participant C, PFBF, W3, PC). Participant A made vital contributions to the room and used their cane as an extension of their reach where necessary. Neither of these participants mentioned any issue in terms of lack of consideration for their limited mobility, and both expressed an ability to make fully recognised contributions as members in this ensemble process. Several participants talked about the process being 'playful' (PFBF, W3,

P4, P11), ‘joyous’ (PFBF, W3, P4), ‘relaxed’ (PFBF, W3, P9), and stated, ‘I felt close to them-playfulness brings people together!’ (PFBF, W3, P11). They spoke of this joyful connection as easy, truthful, and ‘unforced’ calling it, ‘honest’ (PFBF, W3, P4, P11), ‘authentic’ (PFBF, W3, P2, P4), and that ‘nothing positive was forced’ (PFBF, W3, P1). This shows a practical enactment of Lorde’s idea that joy brings people together, a bridge over their differences (Lorde, 2017a, p. 10).

The adapted Gauntlet facilitated ease in devising communications and connection

They overwhelmingly and rather enthusiastically said the adapted Gauntlet helped in their communication and in devising, a question directly asked on their feedback forms. All thirteen participants (including my assistant) clearly responded with a positive affirmation of ‘Yes!’, ‘Definitely’, and ‘Absolutely’ to this question (PFBF, W3, P1-12). The connection many spoke of in the adapted Gauntlet exercise itself carried into their comments on devising, where ‘connection’ and ‘a want’ or a ‘desire’ to connect was evident in their devising as well (PFBF, W3, P1, P6). Several attributed this directly to the Gauntlet, ‘You wouldn’t think it did but going into devising knowing what we know about the other person opened up the space for authentic connection’ (PFBF, W3, P2). ‘Absolutely, it [the Gauntlet] established genuine levels of intimacy and trust’ that carried into their work in performance (PFBF, W3, P8). This is notable as the ensembles in Workshops One and Two responded similarly, both of these having had a relative history of work together. However, Workshop Three’s group had come together for the first time only a few hours before the adapted Gauntlet, and their feedback regarding connection is equally as, if not more, frequent and lucid as the previous workshops’ groups.

They specified several effects of the Gauntlet that carried over into their devising as well, ‘It felt very open, playful, honest and ensemble. It [the Gauntlet] helped to empathise with people and go beyond initial impressions’ (PFBF, W3, P4). This participant directly mentions ‘empathy’ as a part of the effect of the Gauntlet. Empathy has been a focal point of recent research in various disciplines and seems commonly conceptualised as ‘understanding and sharing feelings with another’. *Empathy as Dialogue in Theatre and Performance* author Lindsay Cummings describes dialogic empathy as coming ‘in many forms’ and exemplifies its effectiveness in theatre when it is perceived as a dialogue. Cummings calls it a ‘process entailing deliberate, repeatable acts of engagement’ which she lists as ‘listening, thinking, and imagination’ (2016, p. 124). Imagination here is conceptualised as the way we imagine

ourselves in someone else's situation, characteristic of the understanding described in common definitions of empathy. As the empathy described was primed in the 'listening, thinking and imagination' practised in the Gauntlet and transferred to their work and communications, this participant may inadvertently be describing 'compassion', which I have conceptualised as a process of 'active empathy based on the recognition or understanding of commonness, which elicits a drive for action on behalf of the other' (George, 1999, p. 97, Cummings, 2016, p. 124). In this process, compassion is the action taken arising from empathy (George, 1999, p. 97). This is where compassion and the dialogic intersect: acting for the benefit of others whose experiences may not be familiar to our own.

Recognising similarity and difference as necessary for multi-representative practice

In the explorations of my primary research question of how to facilitate multi-representative practices in ensemble, Workshop Three evidenced the adapted Gauntlet as an exercise that can elicit the practice of the dialogic gaze, through voiced acknowledgements of similarity and difference (hooks, 2003, p. 197, Bakhtin, 1981, p. 424, Lorde, 1984, p. 47, Lorde, 2017a, p. 18). In comparison to the un-adapted Gauntlet in Workshops One and Two, Workshop Three's adapted Gauntlet manifested more consistent and perpetuated examples of dialogic gaze, via the facilitation and acceptance of self-differentiation and the assimilation of such by the ensemble. It is particularly notable that I did not observe gendered communication in this workshop, nor were there feedbacks from the participants suggesting this. This differs from the first and second workshops, in which difference was not yet part of the framework of the Gauntlet, nor recognised in any other compassion-based exercises facilitated therein. In these workshops, occasionally gendered communications caused blocks to truly multi-representative practice. While evident in these workshops, community and dialogic gaze were inconsistent.

My primary research question was also addressed through the creation of the group-devised 'manifesto', which crucially entailed the notion of 'accepting the no', providing a foundation for the practices of self-differentiation in participation for all ensemble members, most notably for Participants A, B, and C (**Chapter Four, Video 3a,** Making the manifesto, accepting the no). Their self-differentiations in terms of the nature of their participation was accepted and, in practice of dialogic gaze, consistently supported by the group. Multi-representative practices via self-differentiation were also evident in the 'I' exercise, in their individualized, accepted enactments and suggestions for this exercises development.

This workshop addressed my secondary question of how to create and perpetuate community in ensembles in actor trainings that seek to be multi-representative; first, by setting up the conditions for this via the conscious casting of a multi-representative group. Community was created in the making and practice of the group manifesto, which invited consent and dissent (**Appendix B:** Manifesto, **Chapter Four**, **Video 3,** Making the manifesto). Community was created in this multi-represented group through the use of explicit acknowledgments of similarity and difference in the adapted Gauntlet, manifesting in participants identifying and acting in self-determined functions within the ensemble, utilizing their differentiated strengths towards group work (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18).

Workshop Three responds to my tertiary research question of how to facilitate actors in an ensemble in training to develop perpetual multi-representative practices by facilitating a consistent practice of accepting no from the start and of having the right to dissent. This is visible in the ensemble's perpetual recognition of and support for self-definitions, evidencing consistent practice of dialogic gaze (**Chapter Four**, **Video 3a,** Making the manifesto, the acceptance of no, **Video 5,** The first dissent, **Video 10,** The second dissent, **Video 11**, The third dissent). The celebration of difference in the 'I' exercise and the adapted Gauntlet allowed ensemble members to self-differentiate and to support self-differentiation by adjusting themselves to the other participants' chosen functions as habits of multi-representation via dialogic gaze, which become the group's way of working for the duration of the workshop.

From the results of this workshop, I conclude that the adapted Gauntlet and the 'I' exercise are effective practices for community creation per Lorde's and hooks's similar notions of it as a socially transformative entity built on recognitions of similarity and difference (Lorde, 2017a, p. 18, hooks, 2003, p. 197). In comparing the gendered group communications and fewer moments of dialogic gaze in Workshops One and Two to Workshop Three's equitable communications and perpetuated practice of multi-representation via dialogic gaze, it would appear that Lorde and hooks's similar theoretical notions of community as a socially transformative entity does in fact require the recognition and celebration of similarity and difference in practice. Further to this, Workshop Three shows that compassion-based practices the adapted Gauntlet and the 'I' exercise are two ways that we can enact community and dialogic gaze in actor training and beyond, as I will describe in the following chapter.

Additionally, Workshop Three has also shown that dialogic gaze contributes to the flow of rehearsal and performance in a group devising practice. The connections created in the adapted Gauntlet and exercises leading to it enabled their devising by allowing for similarity to act as a resonating force and joyful ‘bridge’ towards a fluidity of work together (Lorde, 2017a, p. 10). The ‘I’ exercise and the adapted Gauntlet’s celebration of difference acted as routes to self-identification in chosen roles in the group’s communication process. Unlike the first and second workshops, their communicated differences benefitted their rehearsal communications, and the physical and textual expression and structure of their performance piece, enacting autonomy in the unity, and the unity in diversity (Lorde, 1984, p. 10, hooks, 2003, p. 109).

Chapter Five

Compassion-based practices as transformative in actor training and beyond

In this inquiry, I used a practice-based research process to explore responses to my research question of how we can create multi-representative ('inclusive') practices in ensemble actor training through the use of compassion-based exercises. I found that multi-representative practices of community and dialogic gaze can be created from dialogic recognitions and celebrations of similarity and difference found in the adaptations of The Living Course's compassion-based exercises the 'Gauntlet' and the 'I' exercise, facilitated and adapted in Workshop Three (The Living Course, 2021). I found that dialogic recognitions of similarity alone in the Gauntlet in Workshops One and Two can also help facilitate connection and conflict resolution, and crucially, multi-representative practices of community and dialogic gaze. Community and dialogic gaze were less evident and consistent in Workshops One and Two than in Workshop Three, because of their ensembles' occasionally gendered communication patterns. However, these culturally ingrained patterns are arguably difficult to ameliorate in a one-off workshop, and their communications were observed by myself and reported by them as easier and more enjoyable, indicating a change as a result of these practices.

This research has addressed my second research question regarding how we can create and perpetuate community in ensembles in actor trainings that seek to be multi-representative through dialogic celebrations of similarity and difference, embodied in the intersubjective 'I' exercise and in voiced acknowledgements of the same in the adapted Gauntlet exercise, facilitated in Workshop Three. These exercises perpetuated community, evident in ongoing multi-representative practices of dialogic gaze, workshop-long equitable communications, and a reported, ongoing sense of connection. Recognitions of similarity alone in Workshops One and Two facilitated a sense of community via connection, however these workshops evidenced inconsistent community and fewer apparent instances of dialogic gaze, showing ingrained patterns of gendered communication that were not present in Workshop Three.

My third research question of how we can facilitate actors in an ensemble in training to develop perpetual multi-representative practices was most effectively explored through the

creation of frameworks that invited both consent and dissent, and through the celebrations of similarity and difference in the adapted Gauntlet and 'I' exercise in Workshop Three. In this, multi-representative practices were perpetuated by the ensemble throughout the workshop, via the encouragement and use of dissent and self-differentiation and the ensemble's ongoing practices of dialogic gaze in support of these self-differentiations and differences in skill, ability, identity, and preference. Community was also perpetuated via workshop-long practices of dialogic gaze, and in their on-going equitable communications and group reported sense of connection. I did not find evidence of perpetual multi-representative practices in Workshops One and Two via recognitions of similarity alone, as their communications were occasionally gendered, and manifestations of dialogic gaze were notable, yet not habitual as they were in the third workshop's group. As noted, it is difficult to measure 'perpetual', and the data is conceived as perpetual throughout the duration of the workshop. There is potential for longer term habituation of dialogic gaze and community with ongoing practice of compassion-based exercises as I describe below.

From the data generated in exploring these questions, I draw the conclusion that multi-representative practices of community and dialogic gaze do indeed necessitate the recognition and celebration of difference as well as similarity in practice, as hooks and Lorde theorized (2003, p. 197, 2017a, p. 14). I also argue that these recognitions can create dialogic gaze when they are facilitated and incorporated in a dialogic process, whether that be voiced reciprocal exchanges, as in the adapted Gauntlet, or physicalised, embodied ones, as in the 'I' exercise. As these practices are compassion-based, this research shows that compassion-based exercises create multi-representative practices, and will do so perpetually when both similarity and difference are acknowledged and celebrated. These conclusions can be further explored through continued development of these compassion-based practices, as I will explain below. First, I will review and reflect on my analysis through the practice-based research process itself and review my findings from the three workshops. Then, I will review the common concepts that have arisen in both student feedback and my own observations over the course of this research: community, dialogic gaze, dissent/difference, connection, communication/ gendered communication, conflict transformation, vulnerability, and universal human needs.

Practice-based processes

The necessity to imbricate theory into the process of practice-based research enabled me to incorporate Audre Lorde and bell hooks's similar notions of community and social transformation, shifting the aim of my initial research questions from ensemble ease of communication and potential post-training sustainability to that of multi-representative practices (Lorde, 1984, 2017a, 2017b, hooks, 2000, 2003, 2018). The imbrication of hooks's 'oppositional gaze' allowed me to specify multi-representative practice as a critical perspective, and Bakhtin's 'dialogic' allowed me to both define the processes of taking on this critical perspective as 'dialogic gaze', and to adapt the Gauntlet as a dialogic exercise addressing the necessity of recognising similarity and difference in community (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426, hooks, 1999, p. 126). In contemporizing the concepts of multi-representation, affect/emotion, and vulnerability I am supported by Pedwell's work on affect (2012, 2014) and Ahmed's notions of emotion (2014) as well as her thought and writings on diversity and inclusion (2012).

Subsequently, this process also allowed me to focus on the Gauntlet as the 'key element' out of the varying compassion-based practices utilised; including the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination, and basic elements of Marshall Rosenberg's *Non-Violent Communication* framework (Nelson, 2013, Rosenberg, 2015). In the immediate process of practice in the third workshop, I also discovered the efficacy of the 'I' exercise as similarly community creating in its embodied celebration of similarity and difference and facilitation of self-differentiation and dialogic gaze.

Compassion-based practices as community and connection creating

This research has revealed the original Gauntlet's effectiveness at facilitating a sense of community and connection in Workshops One and Two, and the adapted Gauntlet as consistently community creating in Workshop Three. In Workshops One and Two, the exercise facilitated a sense of connection, which is part of Lorde and hooks's notions of community, however does not wholly make community in and of itself (hooks, 2003, p. xv, Lorde, 2017a, p. 14, p. 18). Community comes from work together towards liberation of all based on the acknowledgement of similarity and difference (hooks, 2003, p. 197, Lorde, 2017a, p. 14, p. 18). There was some evidence of this in these two workshops: in Workshop One through both the Gauntlet and the reverse Psychological Gesture group's allowances for

different interpretations of 'metamorphosis', democratic dialogue, collective decision making, and renewed practice of making physical and emotional space for each other, albeit more consistently in the reverse Psychological Gesture group (hooks, 2003, p. 40, **Chapter Two**, **Video 10**, Group collaboration, **Video 11,** Gendered communications, **Video 13,** P.G. group collaborations). In Workshop Two, communications were also eventually, though unevenly, democratic; with some collective decision-making, and later quilt collaboration. Most notable was the example of dialogic gaze and its impact on representation: Participant D's recognition of and calling attention to Participant C's previously ignored contribution, enabling Participant C to develop the framework of their groups devised piece, and resulting in increased representation of women's voices in the general conversation (**Chapter Three**, **Video 3,** Overall communications, **Video 6,** Dialogic gaze in rehearsal communications). The students' overwhelming feedbacks regarding connection and ease of communication in the un-adapted Gauntlet in Workshops One and Two exemplify it as a way to create a sense of community and connection with each other through voiced acknowledgements of similarity, even in fractured groups (Lorde, 1984, p. 44, hooks, 2003, p. xv, Lorde, 2017a, p. 6, **Chapter Two**, **Video 4,** Hybrid gesture, **Chapter Three**, **Video 2**, A moment of conflict resolution).

Audre Lorde and bell hooks's notions of community were evident in practice in Workshops One and Two, however not perpetually, as some of their communications were hierarchical and gendered. This is inconsistent with feminist practice as conceived in this framework, and does not indicate the perpetuated equity in the work together towards social transformation that the recognition of similarity and difference is aimed towards (hooks, 2003, p. 109, p. 197, Lorde, 2017a, pp. 14-18). I also recognise that these patterns of communication are culturally prescribed and arguably retained as ingrained habits (Tannen, 1995). It would be difficult to release these habits of communication without ongoing time, training, and practice of new equitable and multi-representative communication forms.

Workshop Three differed from the first two in multiple ways. Most relevantly, both community and dialogic gaze were evident as perpetual practices throughout the workshop, via the acceptance and celebration of ensemble members' dissent and self-differentiation. The acceptance of difference was designed by the group from the beginning and continuously validated, starting with the ready acceptance of Participant A's dissent in the 'I' exercise, Participant B's decision to take the role of 'outside eye', and Participant C's recusal from the

Gauntlet (**Chapter Four**, **Video 5**, The first dissent, **Video 10,** The second dissent, **Video 11,** The third dissent).

Crucially, their dissents and the acceptance of such added to the group's work together. Participant A's dissent in the 'I' exercise was useful for the group in facilitating an experimental framework for the exercise and a new form of accessible applause (**Chapter Four, Video 9 and b**, The developing 'I', **Video 7**, Accessible applause). Participant B's self-differentiation in the 'I' exercise facilitated their crucial role as the outside eye in the group devised piece (**Chapter Four**, **Video 14**, A proposition), and Participant C's observation of, rather than participation in the adapted Gauntlet allowed them to use their strengths of listening and observation to offer the framework for the devising of 'a symphony in three parts' (PFBF, W3, Participant C, **Chapter Four**, **Video 12,** Verbal devising negotiations/symphony structure). The acceptance of their similarities and differences allowed them to place themselves in the roles they saw fit to, and to accept others doing the same (Pereen, 2008, p. 14). This resulted in actual community and an effective devising process which was 'inclusive', in which all 'felt heard', and together created a process that 'broke up the barriers of strangeness' to make a joyful and transformative performance piece (PFBF, W3, P1, P4, P8, P10). I attribute this to the workshop's framework welcoming dissent and the adapted Gauntlet and 'I' exercise's celebration of difference, which acted as a route to self-identification in their chosen roles in the group's communication process, and facilitated autonomy in the unity, and the unity in diversity (Lorde, 1984, p. 10, hooks, 2003, p. 109).

Compassion-based practices and the creation of dialogic gaze

As Pedwell necessitates for 'material change', it is clear that the Gauntlet can begin an 'actionable process' for dialogic gaze in groups that use the exercise to recognise similarity (Pedwell, 2017, p. 152). It is also clear that this exercise can more consistently activate a dialogic gaze when the Gauntlet is adapted to recognise both similarity and difference, as hooks and Lorde both advocate and as enacted in Workshop Three (hooks, 2003, p. 197, Lorde, 2017a, p. 14, p. 18, **Video 13,** Physicalisations/dialogic gaze in rehearsal, **Video 16**, Workshop Three in performance). While there were moments that evidence a dialogic gaze in every workshop, it was more consistent, more obvious, and patently beneficial in Workshop Three.

In Workshop One, ensemble members enacted dialogic gaze by making physical and emotional space to contribute for those that were typically quiet in group discussions. They did this by making room in the circle, and through the self- silencing of those that typically dominated conversations (**Chapter Two**, **Video 10,** Recognising voices, **Video 13,** P.G. group collaborations). Workshop Two manifested a notable moment of dialogic gaze, in Participant D's activation on behalf of Participant C, resulting in Participant C's ability to contribute, as well as increasing the contributions from other identifying women in the group (**Chapter Three**, **Video 6,** Dialogic gaze in communications). This increased women's representation and developed into their eventual quilt collaboration, where all voices were given the opportunity to contribute to the making of their piece (Leonardi & Pope, 1994, p. 263, **Chapter Three, Video 7**, Eventual quilt collaboration).

The celebration of difference in the adapted Gauntlet and 'I' exercise in Workshop Three fostered not only a sense of curiosity and openness about each other, but a 'desire to meet' and assimilate those differences: a verbal acknowledgment of dialogic gaze (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 424, hooks, 2003, p. 109, Lorde, 2017a, p. 14, PFBF, W3, P1). As in Workshops One and Two, they also made room for democratic communication and received each other's interpretations and ideas of performing 'metamorphosis' readily and with equitable incorporation of group members' offerings (**Chapter Four**, **Video 12**, Verbal devising negotiations, **Video 13**, Physicalisations/dialogic gaze in rehearsal, **Video 14**, A proposition). They went beyond the previous workshops' groups by allowing the 'desire to meet' each other and 'cross boundaries' to manifest in continual actions of dialogic gaze on behalf of each other, based on their incorporated understandings of ensemble members' differences (hooks, 2003, p. 47, PFBF, W3, P1, P11). This was evident in the ready acceptance of self-differentiations and dissents, and in their perpetual actions on behalf of these differences, most lucidly shown in the ensemble's continuing support of Participant A, B, and C's self-differentiations.

Do these behaviours simply indicate maturity rather than activation on behalf of another? Can these actions simply be described as polite, or socially aware? Social awareness is part of the dialogic gaze in the actions taken on behalf of others, and is facilitated by compassion-based exercises. Dialogic gaze differs from maturity, politeness, and social awareness in that it names a perspective that is critical of works made and experienced on behalf of others, and necessitates actions in support of each other's identities and experiences. This positions

dialogic gaze as both a compassion-based practice and a political act in the subversion of each other's oppressions. This research has evidenced dialogic gaze as a trainable practice towards activating actors for the purpose of multi-representation, differentiating it from similar concepts in its specific aim for social transformation. Pedwell writes, 'Any effective approach to individual or social change, then, needs to account for those material processes that underlie everyday actions or tendencies' (Pedwell, 2017, p. 154). This is the job of dialogic gaze in this research: to shift the everyday tendency of seeing the world from only our own perspective, experience, and identity representation to that of a broader, critical view on behalf of our incorporated understandings of others' experiences.

The usefulness of difference and dissent for multi-representative practice

The adaptation of the workshop's framework and the Gauntlet itself in Workshop Three towards enabling celebration of difference and dissent proved to be effective in manifesting perpetual practices of community and dialogic gaze. This is particularly notable as the only workshop group with no common history to inform either their reported connections or their lack of conflict despite the focus on difference. With the emphasis on difference and dissent as well as similarity and consent; community, ease of communication, and dialogic gaze were more consistently evident in Workshop Three than in Workshops One and Two, and were wholly present in the way that hooks and Lorde advocate for socially transformative practice (1984, p. 10, 2017a, p. 18, hooks, 2003, p. 197). This research, then, implicates recognitions and celebrations of similarity and difference as necessary for socially transformative practices, as hooks and Lorde theorised. This research further implicates dialogic, compassion-based practices for this purpose. There is potential for the further development of these compassion-based practices in actor and applied theatre trainings, as well as in training other facilitators, in industry practices that focus on rehearsal and performance processes, and in societal and community groups seeking community and connection. I will discuss these potentials below. First, I will review key concepts and practices that have emerged from this research for a more robust contextualisation of these further developments.

Review of Key Concepts

Connection

The overwhelming majority of respondents in all three workshops referred to connection, or the sense of being 'brought together' through the compassion-based exercises: the *metta* meditation/reverse Psychological Gesture combination, the 'I' exercise, and most notably and

most often, the adapted and un-adapted Gauntlet. My observations of each group's engagement with the Gauntlet concur with this feedback. The Gauntlet in both adapted and original form elicited a consensus within and across all three groups regarding its effectiveness in creating connection. The respondents in Workshop One expressed that the un-adapted Gauntlet enabled them both a connection to their immediate partners and to the group as a whole (PFBF, W1, P4, P5, P9). This is a sense of self and partner in the context of the ensemble which can be likened to hooks's notion of the 'unity in the diversity', (2003, p. xv). In Workshop Two, the participants expressed that the Gauntlet exercise specifically helped them to connect with others in the group that they may not normally interact with, and to positive effect, as well as aiding in 'bringing them together as an ensemble' (PFBF, W2, P2, P4, P10, P11, P13, P14). In Workshop Three, the word 'connect' or 'connection' was used by most participants to describe the adapted Gauntlet in written and verbal feedback (PFBF, W3, P1, P2, P3, P6, P7, P8, P10, P12). This was also expressed as a sense of 'solidarity' or 'unity' (PFBF, W3, P2, P3, P7). Several participants referred to the 'power' of the exercise in creating 'connection (deep one) with someone I barely new [knew]' (PFBF, W3, P10).

All three workshops attributed their connections to the Gauntlet exercise, which positively impacted their groups' devising. 'Connection' and 'a want' or a 'desire' to connect was evident and referred to in feedback: unsolicited in Workshop Two (PFBF, W2, P4, P9, P10, P11, P13), and explicitly in Workshop Three, where it was listed as a direct question (PFBF, W3, P1, P2, P8, P9, P10). Several attributed their connection in devising directly to the Gauntlet, 'You wouldn't think it did but going into devising knowing what we know about the other person opened up the space for authentic connection' (PFBF, W3, P2). 'Absolutely, it established genuine levels of intimacy and trust' that carried into their work in performance (PFBF, W3, P1, P9, P10). This verbal feedback was most visible in practice in Workshop Three, where their reports of 'fluidity' were apparent and owed to the connections created in the adapted Gauntlet.

The cross-group common feedback of connection is particularly notable as the groups were comprised of multiple different people, with varying lengths of training together: the first group for three years, the second for four months, and the third for just two hours. Workshop Three's group is the most significant in this regard because of their short history together and comparatively wider range of ages, experience levels in performance, and greater variety of

cultures, races, ethnicities, gender identities, abilities, and backgrounds. Regardless, their feedback concurs with the connections reported and observed by me, albeit less consistently, in the ensembles in Workshops One and Two. This is overwhelming evidence that the Gauntlet creates a sense of connection across varying ensembles that is readily apparent to an outside observer and positively impacts group work. From this I conclude that this exercise creates connection and can be used in multiple ensembles, the potential of which I will describe in 'Further developments' below.

Recognising commonality

As a specific recognition of connection, participants in all three workshops also overwhelmingly referred to a practical realization of the 'universality' of common human needs in their feedback (Maslow, 1943, p. 370, Tay & Diener, 2011, hooks, 2003, p. 110). They refer to this as being facilitated by the Gauntlet in particular. In the first workshop they recognised that 'the human condition is within all of us….We are all going through it.' (W1, P9, **Chapter Two, Video 15,** Workshop One reflection session). In the second workshop they expressed a recognition of needs and wants that are 'universal' (PFBF, W2, P4) in that they 'applies to everyone' (PFBF, W2, P8). In the third workshop they expressed the similar idea that what was said by self, 'kind of applies to everyone' (PFBF, W3, P9), and echoing the Workshop One feedback above: 'we are all going through it' (W3, P8, **Chapter Four, Video 19,** Workshop Three reflection session). This calls to mind hooks's and Maslow's discussions on common human needs and yearnings that are within all of us, and can indeed be 'applied to everyone' (2003, p. 110, 1943, p. 370). This feedback also reflects the dialogic nature of the Gauntlet. The listeners were affected by hearing the speakers share what is true for themselves, causing them to expand and re-interpret their own experiences with the common need/want that was expressed (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). This is evident in student feedback that listening to the others' experiences gave them a concrete inner understanding that 'I AM NOT ALONE' (PFBF, W3, P7).

This feedback helps to give an understanding of the potential depth of recognition that the Gauntlet elicits. It is useful for the facilitator to understand this in order to be ready for the exercise's potential for deep affectation through dialogic recognitions of each other (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). While this exercise is intended to create community and enable a dialogic gaze, it is not intended as a tool for therapy. There is potential for that purpose with the correct framing, informed consent of participants, and in the right environment, such as a

drama therapy space. This is a necessary awareness for facilitators in actor training, towards ethical and appropriate facilitation.

Ease of communication

The compassion-based practices utilised in this research positively impacted each workshop ensemble's ease of communication. Every group mentioned variations on the idea that communication was 'collaborative' (PFBF, W1, P1, PFBF, W2, P2, P3, P14, PFBF, W3, P1, P10), 'honest', and 'respectful, kind and even fun' (PFBF, W1, P7). In light of the recent conflicts in both Workshops One and Two, ease of communication was often written as 'renewed': 'it was kind and collaborative, which has not been my experience in the past' (PFBF, W1, P1), and 'felt as though we were more of a coherent unit than usual' (PFBF, W2, P10). They directly attributed their renewed communication to the day's exercises, particularly to the sense of connection created by the Gauntlet (PFBF, W1, P1, P3, P4, P7, PFBF, W2, P2, P3, P10, P11, P13). There were risks in communication in all three groups that the Gauntlet and associated exercises were able to meet; the debilitatingly fractured nature of ensemble communications in Workshop One were relieved by this exercise, leading to conflict resolution. Similarly, the formerly conflicting participants in Workshop Two extended invites for friendship after this exercise (**Chapter Three**, **Video 2,** A moment of conflict resolution). In Workshop Three, the risk taken was in voicing often vulnerable communications with an ensemble of relative strangers. Through this exercise, each ensemble member in every group was able to manoeuvre through these risks to voice deeply with each other again or for the first time, creating connections and transforming conflict. This cross-ensemble common effect shows the Gauntlet to allow for ease of communication in a variety of groups with varying histories of communication and conflict.

It is notable that all three workshops' groups were able to engage in rehearsal and performance communications democratically, albeit inconsistently so in Workshops One and Two. Workshop Three's communications appeared as a true quilt collaboration, where each person contributed in the manner of their choosing while working as a group towards a common creative goal (Leonardi & Pope, 1994, p. 263). Overwhelmingly the students' feedbacks correspond to this, Workshop One saying that communication with each other was 'open', 'productive and respectful', and 'kind and collaborative' (PFBF, W1, P2, P6, P9). The participants in Workshop Two called it 'collaborative' (PFBF, W2, P2, P3, P14) and a 'teamwork ethos' (PFBF, W2, P5). The Third Workshop's group overwhelmingly expressed

a sense of being embraced in a democratic process of communication towards devising, 'no ideas were rejected' (PFBF, W3, P7), and 'people took the suggestions of others seriously and creatively' (PFBF, W3, P6). There was 'A high level of listening and accepting other people's proposals' (PFBF, W3, P9), and 'it felt like there was a desire for inclusivity and a generosity towards each other's offers' (PFBF, W3, P3). It is also notable that much of this group's communication in rehearsal and performance was done through physical provocations and responses during the devising process. This is expressed in the feedback that 'there was a sense of real communication through movement and touch' (PFBF, W3, P6). This group held multiple members that were considerably more experienced in devising and physical theatres than those in the first or second workshop groups, which may have given them a particular facility in this way.

It is also notable that the group in Workshop Three differed from the others in the lack of any apparent gendered communication. The members of the first two workshops' groups were primarily Anglospheric, still in training, and generally closer age and at a younger average age than the members of Workshop Three, all of which may have played a role in this communication style. However, this is arguably due to Workshop Three's emphasis on self-differentiation, dissent, and dialogue, which were laid out in their group manifesto and emerged as habits of pluralistic practice in ways that were not evident in the first two workshops. This interrogation points to further explorations of compassion-based practices and gendered communication that, while out of its scope, this PhD lays a foundation for.

Conflict transformation

Conflict transformation was an unexpected result of the implementation of these compassion-based exercises, and shows the further applicability of the *metta* meditation/reverse Psychological Gesture combination and most notably, the Gauntlet, for this purpose. This was readily apparent in Workshops One and Two as both ensembles had histories of destructive conflict. It was not until the workshop that these groups seemed able to relax and work successfully together again. The students in Workshop One said the Gauntlet allowed them the ability 'to look past opinions and tension' leading to apologies exchanged after the workshop and heeding hooks's notion that 'we are more than our differences' (PFBF, W1, P9, hooks, 2003, p. 109). The Gauntlet allowed for two students in Workshop Two to reconcile a friendship, and overwhelmingly the students felt a 'coming back together' after

their previous fracture (**Chapter Three**, **Video 2**, A moment of conflict resolution, PFBF, W2, P4, P10).

There was no history of conflict in Workshop Three as this was their first time working together. It is arguable that there was potential for uncreative conflict in this group, particularly given the encouragement of difference and invitation to dissent to any part of the workshop. However, dialogue was also given space from the beginning, during the initial group created manifesto (**Chapter Four, Video 4a,** Making the manifesto- accepting the no). This was honoured when dissent first occurred and was then discussed, and when self-differentiation was supported by the ensemble. The honouring of dissent, accepting of differences, and dialogue around the incidences of 'saying no' allowed an expectation of respect for self and others' autonomies, which enabled participants a tacit permission to self-identify (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426). This resulted in group work together that enabled ensemble members to contribute according to their strengths and chosen roles during this workshop. It should also be noted that the students were paid to do this workshop, which may have contributed to their engagement and contributions.

Vulnerability

Vulnerability was evident as a tacit sense in all three workshops, and appeared in feedbacks regarding both the adapted and original Gauntlet. Multiple participants across the three workshops implicitly or explicitly referred to the effects of expressing vulnerability in completing the acknowledgment clauses. This was mentioned in the first workshop's reflection session in a discussion about the connecting effects of 'streaming' [crying] in front of another ensemble member, and how the honesty elicited in this exercise allowed them to solidify their connections (W1, P9, **Chapter Two, Video 15,** Workshop One reflection session). In *Non-Violent Communication*, Dr. Marshall Rosenberg discusses the power of vulnerability to reach across the divide and elicit an empathic response (2015, pp. 40-41). This was evident during the Gauntlet in Workshop Two, when Participant B's vulnerability during 'I suggest…' allowed for conflict transformation and reconciliation (**Chapter Three**, **Video 2**, A moment of conflict resolution). The third workshop's group noted a 'confessional' quality to the exercise, an engagement with vulnerability in sharing information that may have been potentially shameful or risky to share (W3, P3). It is notable that the third workshop's group explicitly expressed 'vulnerability in sharing' along with a sense of 'empowerment' in the act of speaking (PFBF, W3, P2, P9, P12). These seemingly

opposing feedbacks directly align with Butler and Athanasiou's notions that vulnerability has the potential for both affectation and harm (2013, p. 158). Here the exercise is seen to elicit a vulnerability that risks both harm and empowerment in the sharing. This also alludes to the Gauntlet as a practical process of Lorde's recognition that voicing is a courageous act of self-empowerment that can lead to social transformation, indicating this exercise as a transformative one (1984, p. 10).

My own vulnerability was useful in relaying examples to support each ensemble's understanding of the acknowledgment clauses. This was particularly evident in the second workshop where I shared a very painful example when explaining one of the clauses, after which I reiterated to the class that it was my choice to share unapologetically, as it is always their choice. This focused the group on their own choice to share in this exercise, which they were able to do with a deeper understanding. This leads me to conclude that it is useful for the facilitator of this exercise to share their own vulnerabilities for the purpose of modelling it. However, this sharing is not useful if it violates the nature of the relationship between student and facilitator in attempts for a therapeutic release.

Further developments

The compassion-based practices explored in this research and emerging concepts contextualised above provide multiple routes for further development. There is the potential to utilise compassion-based practices as useful tools for rehearsal and performance making. Self-differentiation and dissent benefitted performance in Workshop Three and proved to be consistent with intersectional feminist practices towards the facilitation of autonomy (Govier, 1992, p. 16). The interest in learning about others' differences generated from the 'I' exercise and adapted Gauntlet enabled participants to 'break the barriers' of difference and devise together in a reportedly 'organic' way (PFBF, W3, P3, P4, P8, P10, hooks, 2003, p. 47). The framework of inviting consent and dissent enabled participants the autonomy of self-differentiations, which were upheld by the group in perpetual acts of dialogic gaze. These upheld self-differentiations benefitted group communications and gave form and content to their group devised piece: Participant A as a focal performer in the process, Participant B as an outside eye/director/exercise leader, and Participant C as provider of the performance piece's framework and textual musicality. Notably, when directly asked, the participants overwhelmingly and rather enthusiastically said the difference adapted Gauntlet helped in their communication and in devising. The 'I' exercise and adapted Gauntlet, and framework

of inviting dissent and consent can be extrapolated for use in professional ensembles with aims for actor's autonomy and ease of communication. These exercises and framework are particularly relevant for those with feminist aims for social transformation via multi-representation.

There is evidence that the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination and the un-adapted Gauntlet are also effective as rehearsal and performance tools when only utilizing recognitions of similarity. Regarding collaboration after the *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination and the Gauntlet, participants in Workshop Two expressed variations on the idea that this sequence of exercises was helpful in rehearsal and performance; collaborations were 'positive-everyone seemed particularly attuned to their listening in light of the workshop' (PFBF, W2, P4), and 'the previous exercises allowed us to approach the task [of devising] calmly' (PFBF, W2, P1). In performance, they were 'more of a coherent unit than usual' (PFBF, W2, P10). Participants of Workshop One mentioned that the *metta* meditation/reverse Psychological Gesture pairing and the Gauntlet exercises were 'good for bonding and actual connection' in rehearsal and performance (PFBF, W1, P9), and that the Gauntlet contributed to their devising work and collaborations (PFBF, W1, P1, P3, P4, P5). They reported that they would use the reverse Psychological Gesture in future work, 'Definitely want to use psychological gesture for devised pieces' (PFBF, W1, P6). In performance, 'everyone I worked with was acceptionally [sic] open, which allowed…comfort as well as creative freedom and collaboration' (PFBF, W1, P3). Communication during performance was 'more open' (PFBF, W1, P9), and 'honest, in the moment and trust-bound' (PFBF, W1, P6). These feedbacks show that the original Gauntlet and *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination can be used for creating connection in ensembles in rehearsal and performance. The *metta* meditation and reverse Psychological Gesture combination is implicated here as particularly useful for embodiment in devising.

Applications in research of professional ensemble practice

There is also potential to explore these compassion-based exercises within research regarding professional ensemble practices. Rather than training, the 'I' exercise and adapted Gauntlet, as well as the framework of dissent/consent could be applied to rehearsal communication practices, which Gay McAuley, Paul Allain, and Jen Harvie all discuss as uncommon in performing arts research (McAuley, 2012, Harvie, 2012, Allain, 2016). The frameworks interrogated in this research could address this gap by offering a specific route to interrogate

rehearsal practices through a close study of professional ensemble communications and potential compassion-based interventions. I would be curious to apply the framework based on celebrations of similarity and difference within an existing professional ensemble, to gauge the effects on their rehearsal communications and/or potential conflict resolution, as applicable.

Applications in actor training

Workshop Three shows a unique potential for an emerging, consent/dissent based pedagogic practice inviting dissent and difference from the start, enabling self-differentiation that allowed for not only community and dialogic gaze but also a fluidity and ease in their rehearsal communications and group-devised performance. The emergence of trust and autonomy from the workshop's framework of encouraging dissent and consent begs the question of the same in wider actor trainings: do we foster trust by enabling student autonomy to dissent and consent to the training practices we present? We train for the acceptance of offers from others, ensconced in the common facilitation of 'yes, and'. Additionally, there is often an assumption that the lessons facilitated by us as pedagogues will be unquestioningly consumed by students and are for the benefit of their work as performers in the industry. But are these assumptions ethical, beneficial, and correct? Through its intersectional feminist pedagogic framework with aims for liberation through community and dialogic gaze, Workshop Three shows the answer to these questions as no; it was more ethical for the students to maintain their autonomy and self-differentiation, which ultimately benefitted their group rehearsal and performance.

The question then becomes, how do we teach content while training actors in a practice that enables dissent to what is taught? I think there are a multitude of ways to do this: in language used,[41] i.e., 'inviting' students to engage with the material, rather than assuming their engagement; in fostering autonomy, i.e., enabling students to teach the room through their own research of actor training and performance making theory and techniques; and by building dissent into frameworks of practice, i.e., facilitating the incorporation of the phrase 'no, although' as well as 'yes, and'. 'No, although', is the recusal from one thing in lieu of a

[41] Ahmed interrogates the importance of language, calling words 'tools for doing things' (2012, p. 5). Conscious use of language supports feminist aims for social transformation as a practice, and, as Ahmed states, can be practical tools for this purpose. We can enact a practice of dissent in the classroom through the use of language that evokes dissent/consent (2012, p. 5).

self-made suggestion. 'No, although' allows both dissent and choice in offering an alternative solution, thus maintaining both participation and autonomy. It allows for the students to teach themselves, through researching alternative ways to participate. A fuller interrogation of enabling dissent in actor training points to research beyond this PhD, which exhibits the potential for dialogic exchanges of similarity and difference to be developed as practices towards a fuller framework of multi-representation and liberation in intersectional feminist actor trainings. As these exercises and dialogic, compassion-based recognitions act as a framework, there is potential to apply these in other social groups with aims for multi-representative practices. I am interested to explore whether the benefits of the framework of differentiation and dissent seen in Workshop Three will manifest in other ensembles in training and wider social groups, potentially increasing the validity of these conclusions and opening new pathways to equitable group communications and multi-representative practices.

Pedwell writes, 'It is thus through the creation of habits, rather than their cessation, that more progressive and enduring forms of social transformation might be activated' (2017, p. 154). As a further development, I have adapted the Gauntlet's acknowledgment clauses for daily use to activate habituation of community and dialogic gaze towards the 'enduring forms of social transformation' that Pedwell calls for. I use 'I suggest' as a tool for delivering constructive feedback, and 'What I love about you is…' as an end of class ritual for recognising each other's work (Chapter One). I have also adapted the Gauntlet's structure in the creation of new clauses, exhibited by 'What you may not see in me is…'. These phrases are flexible and can be framed towards generating a specific quality in the ensemble, such as 'What I appreciate about you is…', to express gratitude.[42] This adaptation acts as a daily practice towards affirming and perpetuating community. As this research consisted of three one-off workshops, there is potential to develop this research further by interrogating and analysing any continuing effects of this daily practice. I would be interested to gauge the

[42] It is interesting to note that The Living Course facilitator Barb Hosler has said that 'people generally aren't huge fans of the Gauntlet. Typically, it's the exercise done after, which is called the "Chair Lift", in which a person sits on a chair, and four others posted at this person's knees and underarms have to lift this person up with only their fingers' (The Living Course, 2021). Hosler says this is the exercise that 'really gets people together and going happily' after the Gauntlet (2019). This is interesting to note as I have experienced the Gauntlet to be the exercise where people come together and really begin to connect with each other. I wonder if my adaptation of saving 'What I love about you is…' to the end of the exercise has made it a lively and connecting one, from which to transition to rehearsal and devising.

ensemble's ongoing communications, and any conflict transformation, and/or activation on each other's behalf.

Due to the crossover of aims for community and social transformation in this research and in applied theatres, there is also potential for compassion-based practices to also be effective in these trainings. Compassion-based practice's potential for perpetuated multi-representative practices directly address applied theatre's commitment to using theatre to 'benefit individuals and society' through the facilitation of pluralistic and egalitarian practices from the training level on (Nicholson, 2014, p. 3). Compassion-based practices can be taught as a framework for ensembles in applied theatre trainings for the purpose of multi-representative practices of community and dialogic gaze, and to enable a consent/dissent framework within the group. Applied theatre students who are interested in teaching ensembles or who are working within varying community groups can then utilise these exercises for the same purpose, as they are a transferrable framework.

Compassion-based exercises can also be taught as a framework in actor training programmes as well. I have begun to do this through my teaching on the Royal Central School's MA Actor Training and Coaching course, where I offer the framework from Workshop Three as a course in 'Compassion-based ensemble training' (Blackstone, 2020, 2021). I utilise the group manifesto, the 'I' exercise, and the adapted Gauntlet. I pair these with basic warm up games and exercises for the purpose of offering frameworks for initial ensemble creation, as well as for maintenance through daily practice. I suggest that they can adapt the Gauntlet in the various ways that I have mentioned above, as well as in whatever way they see fit for their purposes as pedagogues. I have received feedbacks from former students of this programme regarding their successful use of the adapted Gauntlet in connecting ensemble members (Morimotu, 2021), and regarding the 'I' exercise as having 'brought new groups together' even over the online platform 'Zoom'[43] (Skelton, 2020).

Finally, there is room for further developments in imbricating the exercises and ethos of celebrating self with others that The Living Course offers within an interdisciplinary actor training, particularly one with aims for social transformation. The Gauntlet and the 'I' exercise are two of several exercises in TLC that carry compassion-based, dialogic

[43] Zoom is a 'video platform' that enables video and audio 'calls, meetings, webinars, and online events' (Zoom, 2021). Due to the 2020-2021 Covid-19 pandemic, taught lessons were moved to this platform to enable continuity of learning.

recognitions of self and others, along with additional exercises that acknowledge feelings: 'Sad, Angry, Afraid', celebrate play with others: 'Have fun with others', and facilitate public celebration of dreams and goals: 'I dream, and make things happen' (The Living Course, 2021). The development of these practices is particularly relevant in actor trainings for accessing emotion, for maintaining mental health, for building 'joyful bridges' with ensemble members, and for envisioning hopeful futures (The Living Course, 2021, Lorde, 2017a, p. 10). Given the transferrable framework, these trainings can be extrapolated to wider societal groups for similar purposes of connection and mental health maintenance, especially as we are shifting our collective and localised worlds into a socially distant format due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Multi-representation, community, ease of communication, connection, and the recognition, celebration, and looking out on behalf of self and others are all more important than ever before.

Further research in communications

This research also lays a foundation for the further investigation of gendered communications and compassion-based interventions for such. Questions for development include; were Workshop One and Two's groups inconsistently gendered due to their ages or relatively homogenous cultural backgrounds? What interventions can facilitators use to diminish the oppressive effects of this communication habit? This research shows the potential for celebrations of difference and similarity to frame equitable and democratic communications in rehearsal and performance, as seen in Workshop Three. It would be interesting to revisit the framework inviting dissent and consent in a new ensemble in training, for exploration of any similar effects and potential corroboration to this study. As the invitation to dissent and consent are a framework, it, along with the compassion-based exercises connected to it, can be extrapolated to any group with aims for multi-representative communication practices. I would be curious to approach community groups or businesses outside of actor training for further development in this area.

Online adaptations of compassion-based practices

In March 2020, I had the opportunity to adapt both the 'I' exercise and the Gauntlet for facilitation with MA Actor Training and Coaching students on Zoom. In my adjustment to an online format, I attempted to mimic the quality and structure of these exercises as they are done in person. I first engaged the 'I' exercise: in their own living spaces, each person took a turn to step forward and engage the body in the original, TLC version of this exercise, to the

muted clapping of others. The students reported a sense of connection with each other during this exercise; the open arms of the ‘I’ exercise gave the appearance that they were touching each other in a circle on screen.

I implemented the adapted Gauntlet as closely to the in-person structure as possible. I gave directions and facilitated the acknowledgement clauses while sharing a common ‘meeting room’. To complete the acknowledgment clauses, I split the students into pairs in ‘break-out rooms’, mimicking the face-to-face paired work. Zoom allows for breakout rooms to be timed, and I was able to give them 3 minutes each to complete this task, considerably longer than we would have in the classroom. This time was needed for the transition in and out of the breakout room, and was arrived at through a process of exploring one and two minutes per group, neither of which accommodated clause completion and timely transitions back to the whole group meeting room. As I could not be present in each breakout room or make overall announcements, the students timed themselves to ensure parity of clause completion. Though this was an online platform, the students overwhelmingly spoke of the connections this exercise created. They said the adapted Gauntlet allowed them to feel as if they were in the same room with each other, despite the fact that we were each in our respective living spaces and separated by physical distance.

This experience showed that the connecting effects of the ‘I’ exercise and adapted Gauntlet are consistent, even over a potentially alienating online platform, which widens the possibilities for global use. This is immediately relevant; at the time of this writing, the UK is still engaged in rolling lockdown measures, and socially distanced actor trainings via online platforms are being developed and implemented to varying degrees of success. A significant portion of this MA involves placements as observers and co-teachers in varying actor training institutions. At the time, these were immanent and the students expressed great concern due to the necessity for social distancing. There was a collective sense of relief to experience the adapted Gauntlet and ‘I’ exercise as connecting; they felt confident using this on teaching placements to ‘still create ensemble’ even though they could not physically connect with students.

New knowledges

Based on the outcomes of this research, I offer new knowledges that dialogic, compassion-based practices can facilitate multi-representative practices of community and dialogic gaze in ensembles in actor training. These practices necessitate acknowledgment and celebration of similarity *and* difference to be perpetual and consistent, as hooks and Lorde theorized, and as was activated in this research (2003, p. 197, 2017a, p. 14). I also offer the adapted, compassion-based trainings the Gauntlet and the 'I' exercise as effective for these purposes and which may be conceived and additionally adapted as part of a larger framework for multi-representative actor trainings, seen in Workshop Three's focus on dissent and differentiation. As part of a framework, these exercises can potentially be extrapolated to groups within and beyond actor training that are carrying aims for social transformation via multi-representative practice. As part of this, I would utilise the same methods as done in Workshop Three: with the invitation to dissent as well as consent, a group created manifesto, the 'I' exercise as part of the introduction, and the Eye Greeting exercise followed by the adapted Gauntlet. This could then lead into group specific exercises or act as a team-building workshop.

I also offer new knowledge in the concept of 'dialogic gaze', a trainable critical perspective and practice that critiques works made and experienced and ultimately, our performing arts industries and society beyond for multi-representation. This practice can be ensconced in looking out for and acting on the behalf of others, particularly when their experiences are different to our own. While this can be likened to altruism or kindness, this concept is specific in the notion that acting on behalf of others is a compassionate response based on understandings of similarity and difference that are inwardly 'fused' from dialogic exchange (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426, George, 1999, p. 97). The inner transformation arising from the understanding of self and others' similarities and differences allows us to take the 'perspective of the most marginalised', perpetuating this critical perspective towards multi-representative practices and community creation (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 426, Crenshaw, 1989, p. 166, hooks, 1999, p. 125, hooks, 2003, p. 197, Lorde, 2017a, p. 14).

Necessity for education in communication and living multi-representativity

This research also gives strong implications for the necessity of education in communications that can be applied in and beyond actor training. Communication training is not mandatory in

any level of education in England, and after this research it is my opinion that this training is essential. In this, I consider the often-gendered communications within the ensembles in Workshops One and Two, and the suppressive effects this had on identifying women ensemble members, decreasing their representation in the discussion (**Chapter Two**, **Video 11**, Gendered communications, **Chapter Three**, **Video 5**, Suppressing effects of communications). I also consider the workshops' participants often tentative relationship with giving and receiving feedback. All three workshops' ensembles mentioned a lack of training in this, as well as in asking for what they want or need. I observed and received feedback regarding a general lack of practice in self-voicing and self-advocating (Lorde, 1984, p. 10). I received responses such as, 'I found it a lot easier to say the things, hearing good stuff makes me feel uncomfortable' (PFBF, W2, P2). This corresponds with several other reports of the same, and one piece of feedback in which the participant stated, 'I didn't know that I had likeable qualities' (PFBF, W3, P12). I find this unacceptable and frankly, heart-breaking, as it stands to reason that everyone has likable qualities. In these three years of research and five years of teaching, I have discovered the difference in engagement, motivation, trust in the ensemble, and desire to be in the room when students' 'likable qualities' are regularly affirmed, which I have adapted the Gauntlet for in the daily use of 'What I love about you is…' as a ritual end to class. Crucially, I have also found that those who are regularly affirmed in this way recognise their own likeable qualities more readily, and in this are more confident, happy, and prepared for an industry in which resilience is necessary. I extrapolate this beyond actor training and the performing arts industries, as communication practices and the positive effects of clear, compassionate communication are vital for ease in manoeuvring through any industry or societal group, and the affirmation of self is positioned by Maslow as a universal human need that seems to go far too often unfulfilled. Were this kind of communication normalised, it stands to reason that far more humans will show up confident, happy, communicating with ease, and through this: represented.

If there is a service for the world that this PhD can do, perhaps it is to impress upon those in roles that may be influential to others: parents, teachers, managers, supervisors, and others in the general public the importance of communication and living multi-representation: by readily acknowledging similarity with others, by celebrating rather than running from how we are different, and by showing and telling ourselves and other people that we are valuable, worthy of representation, and yes; 'likeable'.

While visible multi-representation is a necessity for normalising our global community's representation in a world still dominated by white supremacist, able-ist, cis-gender, heteronormative patriarchy, I expect that the radical release of oppressions would potentially be unnecessary if both oppressor and oppressed know that they are worthy in and of themselves, and have the potential to make valuable contributions to any ensemble, be it in actor training, our community beyond, or the world at large.

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Appendix

I. Appendix Chapter One

Appendices A: Feedback Forms, see attached folder: 'Appendix', subfolder 'Appendix, Chapter One'

Appendices B: Manifesto, see attached folder: 'Appendix' subfolder 'Appendix, Chapter One'

Appendices C: Informed Consent, see attached folder: 'Appendix' subfolder 'Appendix, Chapter One'

Appendices D: Field Notes, see attached folder: 'Appendix' subfolder 'Appendix, Chapter One'

II. Appendix Chapter Two

Appendices A: Workshop Itinerary:

Warm-up- 30 min
Loving-kindness meditation- 25 min

Psychological Gesture- 10 min

Brief informal interview/reflection- 15 min

(Break)2- 20 min

Short warm-up-5min

Eye greeting exercise- 5min

Split into Gauntlet Group/ Psych gesture group-45 min

Devising-25 min

Performance- 15 min

Informal Interview/reflection-30 min

Lunch

IV. Appendices Chapter Four

Appendix A: SCUDD Notice, see attached folder: 'Appendix', in subfolder 'Appendix, Chapter Three'