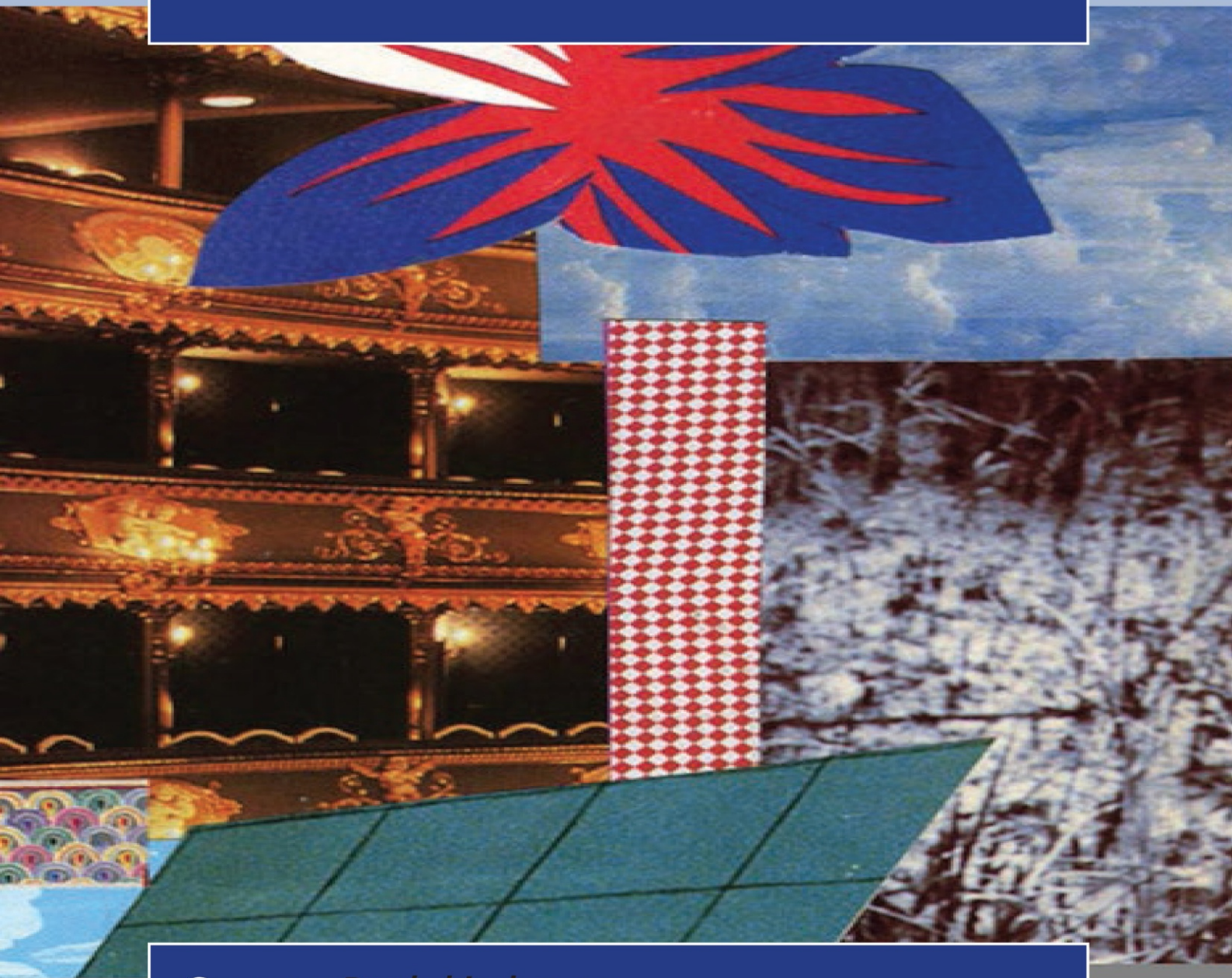


# The Teacher Monologues

Exploring the Identities and  
Experiences of Artist-Teachers

Mindy R. Carter



*SensePublishers*

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**Mindy R. Carter**  
*McGill University*  
*Montreal, Canada*



SENSE PUBLISHERS  
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The play's the thing all right, as this startlingly original work—the very cutting edge of a/r/tography— demonstrates. Welcome to a performance you won't forget.

—*William F. Pinar, Canada Research Chair in Curriculum Studies,  
University of British Columbia*

Carter's book invites readers to immerse themselves in a rich tapestry of theoretical and artistic work. Her a/r/tographical approach sheds light on the complex world of theatre artists transitioning to the teaching profession. Her writing, deeply anchored in current literature, cuts across multiple disciplines making this book relevant to any scholar interested in arts-based research.

—*Dr. George Belliveau, Professor, University of British Columbia*

Mindy Carter shares her compelling study of theatre specialists using a/r/tography as a way to examine the sometimes conflicting and sometimes complementary identities of artist and pedagogue engaged in inquiry. She does this brilliantly through theatrical monologues—bringing theory to life and life to theory. This is a must read for all theatre specialists interested in education!

—*Rita Irwin, Professor & Associate Dean of Teacher Education,  
The University of British Columbia*



## **DEDICATION**

This book is dedicated to Kevin Paul John Hayes, Benjamin Francis Carter-Hayes, Harrison Howard Carter-Hayes, Debra Ann Cunningham and Leslie Blake Carter. Thank-you all for your patience, understanding, support and love.





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To the participants in this study: a deep thank you. I recognize the contribution that you have made to this inquiry and feel privileged to have had the opportunity to explore, retell and share in your stories.



## FOREWORD

What are the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves as teachers? As teaching artists? As artists becoming teachers? These are some of the intriguing questions Mindy Carter addresses in this study that resonate with me at both personal and professional levels. I, too, have a background in theatre and a degree in acting, along with Carter and her participants. I, too, experienced the challenging shift in moving away from the theatre world and entering into the world of education. I, too, rediscovered the joy of performance in the act of teaching.

None of these tasks are simple, and I appreciate how Carter both honors the complexity of this identity change and theorizes in innovative ways around how theatre theory and praxis inform curriculum studies. At one level, when a theatre artist moves into the public education system, there is a systemic transfer that occurs. The theatre world is a small one, and most often artists will be working in organizations with anywhere from a few people to (at the most) a few dozen in total. Even if working at large theatre festivals such as Canada's Stratford or Shaw Festivals that may employ some hundreds of artists and support staff, these organizations are tiny when compared to the size and scale of the institution of public education. A single urban high school may house some thousands of people each day, an elementary school some hundreds, with well-established and maintained power-based bureaucracies in place. This systemic alteration in the working life of a theatre artist becoming a teacher takes some time to get used to, I know from my own lived experience. At another level, this new teacher must also negotiate her way into a large system with many built-in constraints, curriculum and assessment being two of the central ones. The artworld continues to struggle in a neo-liberal First World culture and society that underfunds and undervalues the arts, but at the same time artists ideally enjoy a lot of freedom in how they go about doing their work. The world of Western public education was historically constructed on a factory model during the Industrial Revolution and as such has systems of surveillance, efficiency and control built in at every level (attendance, reports, testing, supervision, accountability, etc.). Many teaching artists understandably resist these constraints, yet are made increasingly aware that these are the realities of the spaces they will occupy and live in with their students. The question then becomes how to not just survive but to thrive in a new professional life that to artists may feel oppressive?

Carter suggests that we employ a theatre-based strategy to support this process in the form of crafting teaching monologues as a component of a teacher education program. I see the monologues shared in her study sitting quite closely to soliloquies in that they feature a person talking to herself rather than to another person. In the monologues presented here, one participant faces the challenge of teaching elementary math for the first time and we witness her thinking in the moment (as does every actor) about how to make the lesson work. In a second monologue, a participant considers how her audience of bored teenagers is receiving her as she tries to ignite their passion for Shakespeare. In both of these



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pieces, I made immediate sense memory connections to the one and only time I had to teach a math lesson on my first practicum 25 years ago, and to the great risks and rewards I experienced in allowing my performer self out to play when teaching secondary English classes. As a side note, it has always puzzled me how I never felt my actor self had a role to play in my drama classes; I considered acting for or with my students to be inappropriate somehow, and that my role had to shift into a more directorial one as a teacher. Yet more constraints to encounter and improvise within!

I heartily agree with Carter's thesis that assisting theatre artists (or indeed artists in all disciplines) in the process of becoming teacher—by inviting them to explore the inner dialogue their active "I" is engaging in with their reflective "Me" as they teach—may be an effective way to support this difficult transition (Prendergast, 2003). I have invited post-degree secondary level education students, in a course on drama and cultural diversity, to look at the work of American theatre artist Anna Deavere-Smith. Deavere-Smith conducts hundreds of interviews on a chosen socio-political topic or event and then performs excerpts of selected interviews that survey the topic from every perspective, without judgment (Deavere-Smith, 2006). My students write three-voiced monologues that explore an educational diversity issue from three distinct perspectives (teacher-student-administrator; student-teacher-parent; teacher-administrator-listening wall of the office or classroom, etc.). The empathy that can be acquired, for both self and others, in the process of creating and sharing monologues/soliloquies on multiple aspects of teaching practice appears to me to be a more than worthwhile curriculum event.

Stepping comfortably and fluidly into multiple roles is a skill that theatre artists bring to the teaching profession. Teaching and learning is a performance, always, and the more that pre-service teachers can enter into this performative task with confidence and creativity the better off they and their future students will be (Prendergast, 2008). Carter's study reinforces with empirical and arts-based research my felt intuition that theatre-based approaches are needed in teacher education. The attention she pays to mindfulness and the positive long-lasting effects of intensive ensemble-based theatre training lead our thinking in the right direction.

To conclude, I wish to redirect my focus within Carter's study to her intriguing and innovative use of the theatre theories of Antonin Artaud as applied to curriculum. As Carter correctly notes, theatre has been under-studied in the field of curriculum. The theories of Bertolt Brecht and Augusto Boal seem the most common defaults in terms of acknowledging the work of artists who were interested in liberatory pedagogy through theatre. To view the scandalous, troubling yet fecund works of Artaud in this way feels radical to me, and is therefore a valuable contribution and model for those, like Carter and like me, who straddle the worlds of theatre and curriculum.

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## **NOTE**

This book required the approval of the University of British Columbia's Behavioral Research Ethics Board. Ethics was obtained for this research and renewed each year that this book and study were in progress.



## CHAPTER 1

# POSITIONINGS, PLACEMENTS AND POSTULATIONS

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

[E]ither we will be ... capable of recovering within ourselves those energies that ultimately create order and increase the value of life, or else we might as well abandon ourselves now, without protest, and recognize that we are no longer good for anything but disorder, famine, blood, war, and epidemics. (Artaud, 1938/1958, p. 80)

There is no way out of this predicament except for an individual to take things in hand personally. If values and institutions no longer provide as supportive a framework as they once did, each person must use whatever tools are available to carve out a meaningful, enjoyable life. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990/2008, p. 16)

#### *The Play within the Play*

What follows in this book can be understood through the theatrical convention of metatheatre, a play within a play, like *Pyramus and Thisbe* in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Also called stories within stories, *outer* texts often give information from the *real world* before framing an *inner* story that may be entertaining or used as an alternative way to reveal the truth of the outer story. These nested stories can utilize multiple forms of information such as theoretical ideas, artistic representations or emergent understandings to deepen, complicate and satirize unquestioned ways of knowing, living and thinking. Darrell Dobson (2005), George Belliveau (2006) and Johnny Saldanda (2003, 2005) have all used their own versions of this technique in their research as a way to articulate their qualitative projects while simultaneously questioning and exploring what it means to do arts-based research or create an aesthetic epistemology within an educational culture. This approach to arts based educational research also allows for "the meaning making that happens within the moment of action, within an artistic activity or upon reflection and sharing with others" (Belliveau, 2006, p.11) to take place.

In this book, the chapters theoretically and methodologically situate the research within the field of curriculum studies and discuss: Conservatory-style actor training programs, teacher education programs, the transition from pursuing a career in the professional theater to one as an educator and participant interviews. Between

## CHAPTER 1

these chapters are Interludes that share my a/r/tographical experiences working with the monologues written by participants and referred to as *The Teacher Monologues*. The Interludes also highlight through dialogue and theoretical exposition my search to articulate, experience and use in-between spaces, a/r/tography and ideas about the field of curriculum rhizomatically.

A/r/tography is an arts based research methodology that offers the artist/teacher/researcher a way to postulate and write about the multiple positions that they embody. By using the structure of chapters and interludes, I am attempting to weave artistic and theoretical work to simultaneously embrace and resist bifurcation by separating art from scholarship and then bringing them together as a way of making meaning and deepening understandings.

### *The Power of Identity and Subjectivities*

The multiplicity of identities that a/r/tographic approaches allow for presupposes that an individual view identity as something other than fixed. This means that we "... categorize ourselves in a range of ways and these (ways) may have conflicting and/or diverse ideologies and/or positions—for instance, a teacher might (be) a feminist, environmental activist, wife and mother and identify herself within all these groupings" (Wales, 2009, p. 263). In this way, identity can be seen as multiple; constantly shifting, realigning and reforming (Gergen & Gergen, 1997).

Since identity can be thought of as evolving, questions about how one thinks about themselves, categorizes who they are, or the way they react emotionally etc. to various experiences, links subjectivity to identity. Subjectivity means that although a group of people such as teachers may link a part of their identity to being a teacher, each individual will have a different emotional, physical etc. reaction to various life experiences. Ellis & Flaherty (1992, p. 75) suggest that subjectivities are the "human lived experience and the physical, political, and historical context of that experience". This means that "... thoughts, feelings, opinions and reactions are subjective (and) subjectivities can be regarded as the ways in which we perceive, feel and express ourselves" (Wales, 2009, p. 264).

For example, one of the participants in this study, who in part identifies, and has had others identify her as an actor, found that when she was in front of a classroom of students on practicum she felt like she should still be performing as she would perform a role. When discussing this occurrence during an interview, this individual said that she felt between the identities of actor on stage and in role and teacher struggling to teach a classroom of grade five students. Conversely, another participant with similar acting and teaching experiences found that her identity as a teacher in the school setting was informed but separate from her identity as an actor. Thus, although both individuals conceive of their identities as actor and teacher, their reactions, or subjectivities, in similar situations differ.

Numerous pedagogical studies highlight the link between how teachers see themselves and present their personalities in the classroom to the ways they have been influenced by past experiences and practices (Chapman, 2002; Davies, 1996; Klein, 1998; Pendergast & McWilliam, 1999). Results of such studies suggest that

teachers need to look at their experiences and subjectivities in order to then exercise agency in their teaching and lives. It is only once teachers develop this ability, to exercise and act upon their own thoughts in particular situations, or agency, that they can empower their students to do the same.

This sentiment, that we must care or make positive personal changes before trying to improve the lives of others, speaks to the growing research in teacher education that questions the merit of placing students in the center of all learning situations. Alternately, research suggests placing teachers at the core of teacher education studies as a way of examining their subjectivities and abilities to resist, subvert and change the very discourses that they may hold about themselves (Chapman, 2002; Davies, 1996; McWilliam, 1999; Pendergast & McWilliam, 1999; Wales, 2009). Part of the importance of examining teacher's experiences in teacher education in this way is that much of "... teachers' feelings are an important aspect of their work because much of the work of teachers is about how they express their identities and personalities in the classroom" (Wales, 2009, p. 263).

Since acting is sometimes described as an altered state of consciousness or heightened awareness (Scheiffele, 1995) and the participants in this research all studied in a Canadian Conservatory style actor training program and then worked or pursued a career as a theatre professional in Canada before transitioning to an education related field; the affects of actor training on their knowledge construction, teaching, identities and subjectivities is important to consider. Recognizing the unique impact of acting programs on learners and a description of the acting and education programs that participants attended are explained in Chapter 2. These descriptions are provided to help the reader understand the shift in identity from artist to teacher that participants experienced and why the 2004 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) report points to arts teachers possibly being at the greatest risk for leaving the teaching profession (Luekens, Lyter, Fox, & Chandler, 2004).

### *Arts Teacher Retention*

Since the 2004 NCES report was released, additional research on arts teacher retention and job satisfaction has identified that "arts teachers, perhaps more so than other subject area teachers, are especially prone to alienation and isolation due in no small part to the specialized nature of their subject area that results in fewer, if any, colleagues with matching backgrounds, experiences and interests" (Scheib, 2006, p. 6). While initially many fine arts teachers may come to teaching through their active involvement with their subject matter and an interest in creating and sharing this art with students, the support for these new artist-teachers who have in part constructed their identities during their undergraduate fine arts training as performers, find that their artist identities are not supported in the school system (Roberts, 1990). This identity conflict leads to what research has named *role stress* (Beehr, 1987; Scheib, 2003). This role stress "occurs as a result of conflicting, overwhelming, or unsatisfactory expectations identified by the person holding an



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occupational role within an organization ... occupations that hold positions between organizations or systems (are called) *boundary positions* and are even more susceptible to role stress” (Scheib, 2006, pp. 6–7). Role stress, boundary positions and identity socialization are, as one might infer, factors that lead many teachers to leave the profession within the first few years of teaching.

Because artist-teachers often have roles as artists in various organizations outside of the school setting, they can be classified as holding the boundary positions that research indicates contribute to higher than normal attrition rates for this subset of teachers. The term boundary positions that Scheib uses to describe the artist-teacher in his research, also brings to mind the multiple identities found in *a/r/tography*. Particular to *a/r/tography* is its attention and commitment to embracing the liminal spaces between identities. In *a/r/tography* this attention to the in-between allows one to consider how various identities impact the others through processes of inquiry and self-awareness. This approach is different than viewing the shift from being an artist to becoming a teacher as represented by the term boundary position because while the artist-teacher in a boundary position struggles with their new identity as *this* an artist-teacher and not *this and that* an artist and a teacher and an artist-teacher, *a/r/tography* embraces the multiplicity and complexity of an individual's experiences, subjectivities and evolving identities. Thus, finding ways to support new artist-teachers who can view their identities as multiple, in order to help them to develop agency and a sense of subjectification that allows them to exercise their agency, is at the heart of *The Teacher Monologues: Exploring the Experiences and Identities of Artist-Teachers*.

This work builds on John Scheib's (2006) findings about retention and boundary identities for music and visual arts teachers by questioning the classification of artist-teacher and extending his work to consider the experiences of individuals trained in Conservatory acting programs who pursue teaching.

Specifically, Scheib makes policy recommendations to: provide music and visual arts teachers with professional development opportunities to make art and to support these teachers with mentors as early as possible in their careers. In Scheib's research, arts teacher refers to teachers with fine arts training who then teach a fine art. These particular artist-teachers may feel isolated because they are frequently the only person teaching in their subject area and physically their classroom space is often separate from other subject-area classrooms. This is the situation because physically visual arts rooms require special ventilation, music rooms have acoustical needs and theatre spaces require larger rehearsal and workshop spaces than what can be accommodated in a traditional classroom. While such concerns are part of Scheib's research and writings on the artist-teacher, I contend that teachers who are/were artists before pursuing teaching, but who do not teach in the arts, face the same adjustment to teaching issues that new arts-teachers do simply because they have also developed their identities and subjectivities around being an artist and then becoming a teacher.

Adjustment to teaching issues may include adapting to the regular schedule that teaching requires over the irregular hours that are often equated with the artist's intensive rehearsals and evening performances, changing the way that they dress

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and groom themselves in accordance with the professional workplace environment required by many schools or possibly realigning their actions/behavior to fit in with the increasingly conservative profession of teaching. It may even be that the non-art teaching artist-teacher may find it more difficult to teach than the arts teacher because these individuals do not even have a teaching identity that links them to their art making on a daily basis. Such concerns such as the identity shift that appears to be experienced by the artist who is also becoming a teacher have led to the following research question: *What are the lived experiences of individuals with Conservatory style actor training who pursue teaching?*

In addition to this research question, I have also chosen to explore one of Scheib's policy recommendations that says that having new arts teachers make art helps them to adapt to their new role as a teacher. Because I am considering the experiences of actors who pursue teaching and monologues offer both a dramatic and reflective experience for those who write them, an additional question guiding this inquiry is: *Did writing a monologue about a problematic educational moment help participants in their pedagogical development? How?*

While these research questions guide and help to frame the research study, I am also cognizant of the emergent nature of the a/r/tographic methodology that I am choosing to use. This means that although I explore these questions in the chapters and interludes, I am also open to the possibility that the questions will evolve as the study unfolds.

### 1.2 THE RESEARCH STUDY

This being said, I began by trying to answer these research questions by learning about and using autobiographical, arts-based and a/r/tographic methods during my doctoral course-work within the field of curriculum studies, in order to examine some of my own experiences as a new teacher who once trained and worked full time as an actor. These opportunities allowed for self-reflection framed by the previously mentioned research methods and led me to write about some moments during my first three years of teaching that surprised me. Issues such as counseling students who cut themselves, spoke about suicide, brought knives to school or came to class high on marijuana were written using free associative scripted dialogue from my personal and practical experiences. Writing about these issues through scripted dialogue became a way for me to reflect and reframe the experiences. Associated with the concept of personal, practical knowledge is narrative inquiry, developed and pioneered by Connelly and Clandinin (Clandinin, 1985, 1989; Connelly & Clandinin, 2000). In this arts-informed form of qualitative research, narratives are studied as a means of conveying findings. This research project uses the monologue as a storied, narrative form. Narrative monologue writing allows participants to enter into a *currere*-like process described in greater detail later in this chapter by providing them with the opportunity to revisit an educational issue that is in some way holding them back in their pedagogical development. This process offers the participants the opportunity to re-enter a moment as a character and then eventually work through the moments in role, in

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the hopes of reframing a past problematic experience. For the actor-teacher, being in role and writing as if compliments their actor training, discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

The second research question, that asks if writing a monologue helps participants come to terms with a difficult educational problem, explores the potential importance of using the monologue form rather than another free-associative form of narrative inquiry for the actor-teacher. This is done by developing the idea that by creating a character based upon one's own experiences in a monologue, the author is provided with an opportunity to partially distance him/herself from an uncomfortable issue that might more easily be articulated through another voice rather than the author's own.

Thus, in the first phase of the research project four participants wrote a monologue about their teaching experiences. These monologues can be found in the second Interlude and in Appendix one. They are entitled: *Gallop Apace, On Stage on Both, Reflections on Teaching and If We Shadows have Offended*.

Selected participant feedback<sup>1</sup> handed in with the monologues included:

- Thanks for this opportunity. Writing this monologue was a great outlet for me during my practicum! I didn't realize that I was still thinking about some of the issues that came through in my piece and that they needed to "come out".
- It has taken me a long time to think and move through feeling self-doubt when teaching but when I sat down to write my monologue it was like I was right back in that moment and it poured out of me. It felt like it only took me 5 minutes to write and I didn't make any revisions.

In addition to eliciting promising feedback from participants, such as the way that one participant was able to work through feelings of self-doubt, the first phase of the project also provided valuable information as to who would most benefit from writing a reflective monologue (i.e. new teachers with acting backgrounds who were doubting their abilities as teachers). This data made me wonder how, for example, issues of self-doubt might be related to the isolation described in the research on artist-teachers. It also led me to construct the second phase of the research project for new teachers and educators from Canada who had taken a Conservatory actor training program.

In addition to the rationale of teacher retention for this study, the first phase of the project and my own experience writing a reflective monologue about teaching, I also examined in depth the life and works of Antonin Artaud because he exemplifies a theatre artist who lived in a boundary position. Artaud was an artist who in addition to acting, directing and drawing wrote extensively about not feeling as though he or his work fit into the society within which he lived. Because Artaud chose to try and articulate these feelings of disconnect with himself, his society and others through writing and art, Artaud's life and works offer an important perspective to the participant's experiences. In addition to the perspective Artaud brings to the participant's boundary positions, the French artist is discussed in this book because of some of the theatrical concepts he developed in

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<sup>1</sup> All participants have pseudonyms.

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his lifetime. These concepts include the Body without Organs (BwO) and Theatre of Cruelty which have since his death been theorized and explored by prolific theatre director Peter Brooks and philosophers such as Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. By tracing their expansion of his work to the actor training programs that participants spent time studying in, additional support for using Artaud as the chosen figure for understanding the lived experiences of actor-teachers with Conservatory style acting programs is provided. Finally, I feel that because Artaud continually struggled to act subjectively and exert his agency, despite the mental illness and drug addictions that plagued his life and forced him into asylums, that Artaud is an exceptional example of someone who tried against all odds to live life authentically. In relation to the earlier discussion on fixed and multiple identities, allowing oneself to be this and that complicates the way that Artaud was viewed by some as insane and by others as a prophet, artist, madman, writer, actor, director. In order to deepen and then expand upon the life and works of Artaud in relation to the study and research questions, time will now be spent describing his life and works.

### 1.3 ANTONIN ARTAUD<sup>2</sup>

Antoine Marie Joseph Artaud, called Antonin (little Antoine) was born on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 1896, in Marseilles, France. Antonin was one of nine children, only three of whom survived. From an early age, ailments such as meningitis began to plague Artaud. These physical ailments were coupled with psychic troubles that appeared at the age of 19 and home-remedies concocted by his father such as attaching a machine that produced static electricity to his son's head at the age of 5. In 1914, right before graduating high school Artaud had a nervous breakdown. As a result of this he destroyed all of his poems, began praying incessantly and was determined to become a priest. His family responded to this behavior by arranging rest cures for him over the next 5 years. After he recovered from this particular episode, Artaud claimed that during his breakdown someone who wanted to keep him from fulfilling his life's destiny had attacked him. These attacks are said to have recurred numerous times throughout the rest of his life. Antonin's family spent a lot of money to move him from one clinic to another, finally ending up in a Swiss clinic near Neuchatel where he was prescribed opium and encouraged to draw and write. After a few years in this clinic Artaud was given over to the care of Dr. and Mme. Toulouse and allowed to move to Paris.

During the next 16 years (1920–1936) in Paris Artaud dedicated himself to the theatre, film and writing. Though finding some success as a film actor, Artaud was chronically broke after the death of his father in 1924. Poverty coupled with his addiction to drugs such as laudanum, opium and heroin meant he occasionally had to move in with his mother, who had moved to Paris after his father's death, and that many of his personal relationships and theatre projects were unrealized. Also

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<sup>2</sup> References for background information on Artaud are taken from Barker (2008), Bermel (1977), Costich (1978), Eshleman and Bador (1995), and Goodall (1994).

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in the mid 1920s, Artaud attempted to have some of his poetry published in *The French Review*. Although the poetic attempts that Artaud offered to Jacques Rivière were continuously turned down for publication, the letters that Rivière and Artaud began writing back and forth were eventually published. This series of letters provides an example of how conscious Artaud was of the restrictions he felt his mind was having on his ability to fully express what he wanted to do artistically, whereas previously the editor thought that it was simply a matter of Artaud's underdeveloped writing abilities that held him back.

... Thinking means something more to me than not being completely dead. It means being in touch with oneself at every moment; it means not ceasing for a single moment to feel oneself in one's inmost being, in the unformulated mass of one's life, in the substance of one's reality; it means not feeling in oneself an enormous hole, a crucial absence; it means always feeling one's thought equal to one's thought, however inadequate the form one is able to give it. (Sontag, 1976, p. 70)

This quotation exemplifies the way that Artaud feels thinking and being aware of his inner thoughts, before trying to express this interiority through writing, is part of how he believes all people should live (i.e. learning to be present or aware/conscious in the actual moments that one is living). It is this lifelong dedication to try and articulate his own inner experience and compel others to do the same through his work in the theatre that led Artaud to feel that he was continually unsuccessful. I think that Artaud's dedication to attempting to put into words what most people would say are things that transcend the boundaries of language is often disregarded as trivial in many academic circles especially when Artaud later resorted to try and awaken these dormant metaphysical parts of man through sounds and movement when he found that language was too limiting for him. As one might guess, his dedication to writing poems, essays, letters, chants and manifestos was constantly underscored by the frustration that he also records about being unable to express in these forms what he wanted to. This reality led him to feelings of inadequacy and despair. Yet despite these frustrations, he continued to act in Surrealist films and express inspiration about possibilities for a revitalized form of theatre, as influenced by the Balinese Dance Theatre's visit to Paris that focused on subtle and ritualistic gestures.

Published in 1938, *The Theatre and its Double* (1938/1958) is thought to be Antonin Artaud's most well known work. In this series of essays or manifestos, he lays out a new kind of theatre that is to help people live life in a more authentic way. Central to this argument are the ideas of the double and The Theatre of Cruelty. The double signifies life itself and the bubonic plague. The metaphor of the plague, which reduces a person's body physically to one of liquefied organs and forces a society into some sort of process of renewal, was not simply used as a theoretical idea. Rather, it was used as a way to continue a conversation about societal change. As described by Anaïs Nin (in Eshleman & Bador, 1995), when asked to speak at The Sorbonne on the topic of The Theatre and the Plague, he was said to have:

... let go of the thread we were following and began to act out dying by plague. No one quite knew when it began...His face was contorted with anguish, one could see the perspiration dampening his hair. His eyes dilated, his muscles became cramped, his fingers struggled to retain their flexibility. He made one feel the parched and burning throat, the pains, the fever, the fire in the guts. He was in agony. He was screaming. He was delirious. He was enacting his own death, his own crucifixion. At first people gasped. And then they began to laugh. Everyone was laughing! They hissed. Then one by one, they began to leave ... Artaud went on, until the last gasp. And stayed on the floor. Then when the hall had emptied of all but his small group of friends, he walked straight up to me and kissed my hand. He asked me to go to a café with him ... He spat out his anger: "They always want to hear about ... they want to hear an objective conference on 'The Theatre and the Plague', and I want to give them the experience itself, the plague itself, so they will be terrified, and awoken. I want to awaken them. They do not realize *they are dead*. (p. 48)

This particular description of the way that Artaud decided to share his work is quite unique and interesting. Fantastical in fact is the way that he is trying to move the experience of those gathered beyond the intellectual and into the corporeal. In academic environments currently, such an approach to sharing one's work is still seen as avant-garde, despite an increased acceptance of artistic and experiential alternatives. This current reality makes it even more difficult to imagine the reception of privileging experience and the body in this way almost 70 years ago. And yet, this is what Antonin was committed to doing. As he is quoted saying in the Anaïs Nin statement, Artaud wanted to awaken the dead (in a manner of speaking). In some ways eliciting laughter and the actual removal of individuals from the lecture hall shows that he did something that forced an immediate reaction from those gathered. It did not however succeed in engaging others with his ideas and what they represented, most likely because Artaud, as he himself has proclaimed, was unable to articulate what he wanted to express coherently.

It is Artaud's dedication to: trying to be constantly aware of one's inner-self; trying to express this interiority using language, emotions, imagination and embodied understanding; and using dramatic and theatrical art as a medium to help others and oneself get in touch with their own metaphysical beings that I think are delineations of Artaud's life and work that can benefit new artist-teachers experiencing boundary positions. To further explore how theoretically Artaud has influenced and informed some curriculum theories and theorists, I now explore some of his concepts in greater detail.

### *Artaudian Concepts*

In 1926 Artaud co-founded the Alfred Jarry Theatre with Roger Vitrac and Robert Avon. This theatre was founded in order to explore surrealism and symbolism theatrically but only lasted for two years. During this time Artaud produced and

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directed plays while also writing about some of the basic theatrical principles that he believed needed to be enacted in order to disrupt the trends, like department stores, that were enveloping France at the time. Artaud saw this work as a serious game which both actor and spectator had to realize in order to be reached as deeply as possible (Artaud in Sontag, 1976, p. 246). He thought that by presenting the audience with images that could speak directly to the mind and consciousness, rather than employing illusions, props or scenery to entertain, that people would understand that nothingness was something that was not to be feared.

By the late 1920s manifestos and performances with The Theatre of Cruelty were taking place to enable:

... the theatre (to) seek by every possible means to call into question not only the objective and descriptive external world but the internal world, that is, man from a metaphysical point of view. (Artaud in Sontag, 1976, p. 244)

These manifestos coupled with three features of The Theatre of Cruelty as outlined by Albert Bermel (1977) in *Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty* state the necessity for: the implacability of life; drawing upon the collective and individual dreams of all men, both dark and utopian; and a theatre that works on the senses and nerves, rather than the intellect, that can subsequently be aimed at a general public so that the transcendental experiences of life that the theatre inspires can encourage the individual to live more passionately. When using the word cruelty, Artaud means that he wants to cleanse his audience so that they are awakened when they leave the theatre. Since Artaud wrote about most of his ideas in fragments, this in conjunction with what some have called a tendency to incorrectly interpret events, such as the Balinese theatre's emphasis on gestures and movements, cautions the reader to question the way he seeks to apply his interpretations.

*The Theatre and its Double* was published in 1938 while most of the manifestos and essays in this book were written between 1931 and 1936. These writings have been extremely influential to theatre practitioners since his death. However, within arts education, the works of Artaud are rarely mentioned. Thus, as a way to expand the literature in arts education and specifically curriculum theory within arts based research, I now consider some of Artaud's key concepts in relation to selected curriculum theories in arts education. The field of curriculum theory is particularly well suited to a discussion of Artaud as well as the outlined research questions and project because of its focus' on lived experiences, autobiographical engagements and *currere*.

### 1.4 CURRICULUM THEORY

According to Artaud some of the men and women who lived in his contemporary society had to be *awakened* from their mindlessly lived lives. Artaud discusses this issue by talking about the ways that some people went to the theatre to be entertained and seen, or to department stores to buy things that were unnecessary. Such actions were compared to what Artaud saw occurring in Mexico, where all things were made for a purpose; even art was created for enacting various rituals.

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This idea of men and women existing in a dream-like state, is articulated in curriculum theory through the works of Maxine Greene who says:

To open up our experience (and, yes, our curricula) to existential possibilities of multiple kinds is to extend and deepen what each of us thinks of when he or she speaks of a community. (Greene, 1995, p. 161)

(T)he role of the imagination is not to resolve, not to point the way, not to improve. It is to awaken, to disclose the ordinarily unseen, unheard and unexpected. (Greene, 1995, p. 28)

By discussing the importance of extending, awakening and deepening our multiple experiences, that may often be hidden, Maxine Greene reflects in relation to education and curriculum Artaud's dream to awaken society. This wide-awakeness in Greene's (1977, 1991, 1995) writings highlights the importance of contextual, emergent, creative, connected and imaginative qualities within lived curriculum. Such a view of the curriculum also anticipates the inward turn described in *Toward a Poor Curriculum* (Pinar & Grumet, 1976). This inward turn asks the individual to look inside themselves (as well as outside) to begin to describe honestly and personally what their internal experience is in order to bring into being a self in relation to knowledge and to the world (Miller, 2004, p. 48). This engagement is required as a way to capture the process of autobiographical educational engagement, as situated within a personal, political, historical and social reality that William Pinar has theorized as *currere* (1974).

In general terms, *currere* has been defined in the field of curriculum studies as running an educational course or the lived experience students and teachers have when engaged in learning. Understanding *currere* in this way was first proposed by Pinar (1974) and then later discussed as a method for systematic educational self-study by Pinar and Grumet (1976). This method has four steps—regressive, progressive, analytical and synthetical.

In the regressive step one's past lived experiences are considered the "data," which (is) generated through "free association"—a psychoanalytic technique—to revisit the past and thereby re-experience and "transform" one's memory. In the progressive step one looks at what is not yet and "imagines possible futures". The analytical stage is like phenomenological bracketing; in this step one examines the past and the future and creates a subjective space of freedom in the present. The present, the past, and the future are looked at as one movement. In the fourth, the synthetical moment, one revisits the "lived present" (Here, one listens) carefully to one's own inner voice in the historical and natural world (and) one asks: 'what is the meaning of the present?' ... (the) moment of synthesis ... is one of intense interiority". (Kumar, 2011, p. 9)

Engaging in this process of *currere* is meant to help an individual address a significant and personal educational moment by dynamically and psychoanalytically looking at it in order to understand the roots of the chosen issue.



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It is thought that by following this method, one can deepen their agency “...because autobiography is concerned with reconstructing self and cultivating singularity, which is politically progressive and psychologically self-affirmative” (Pinar in Kumar, 2011, p. 10).

For the new artist-teacher who may be experiencing role stress and the potential frustrations of being in a boundary position, autobiographical engagements that use *currere* as an inquiry process and as a creative art as a means for self-reflection and deepening agency, compliment Greene’s definition of the curriculum as a “means of providing opportunities for the seizing of a range of meanings by persons open to the world” (1977, p. 284).

Imagination also plays a key role in Greene’s encouragement to becoming wide-awake by: listening in new ways, developing on-going opportunities to encounter the arts, and working with others in community, because the imagination offers an individual a way to consider what might be rather than what is. Highlighting the role of arts curriculum, Greene calls us to move into spaces where we can create visions of other ways of being and ponder what it might mean to realize them (1995, p. 112). These perspectives are in an educational context, the same outcomes for society that Artaud wished to achieve through theatre. Although I am not making a case for Artaud’s influence within the works of either Grumet or Greene specifically at this time, I have chosen to link the curriculum theorists that influence my work with the work of Artaud because my research into Artaud inextricably informs and affects my readings of these and other theorists.

Another large part of Artaud’s theatrical theorizing is focused on breaking through the barriers of language in order to touch life and create new things with the fervor of a religious awakening but without the constricting system of beliefs. Instead he focuses on movements, gestures and sound as a way to disrupt habitual patterns of thought and action as a means for coming to know. Artaud believed that all systems such as institutions are within us and permeate our being and that for this reason it is the individual’s responsibility to create change if something is wrong in society. However, as the passage below indicates, Artaud does not think that people understand this. Rather, he thinks that men and women create society and their relative institutions to solve problems and keep order instead of relying on one’s self to do this work. This results in disengagement with the world and one’s life.

If our life lack’s brimstone, a constant magic, it is because we have chosen to observe our acts and lose ourselves in considerations of their imagined form rather than being impelled by their force. And this faculty is an exclusively human one. I would even say that it is this infection of the human that contaminates ideas that should have remained divine; far from believing that man invented supernatural and the divine, I think it is man’s age-old intervention that has ultimately corrupted the divine within him. (Artaud, 1938/1958, p. 8)

In his later writings, Artaud develops the seed of the idea that he began to articulate in this passage by talking about the ways that man (he chose to use gendered

language) has made himself into a god who no longer has to engage in his world because he has been able to gentrify some of the natural parts of himself such as using the bathroom for bowel movements. Artaud uses this as an example for the way that man has distanced himself from his humanness and signifies that an individual's creative, imaginative and spiritual capabilities have also been dulled down. While Artaud's theories for "fixing" this problem include extreme suggestions such as those written about in *The Theatre and its Double* (1938/1958), other interpretations of his ideas for an educational audience have been made by theorists such as Madeleine Grumet.

Madeleine Grumet has written about the curriculum as theatre in *Curriculum as Theater: Merely Players* (1978) and in *Towards a Poor Curriculum* (1976). In these two texts, she theorizes how the ritual roots of theatre can lead to an understanding of freedom for the educator by conceiving of the curriculum as a moving, spiritual, artistic experience. In *Curriculum as Theater: Merely Players* (1978) Grumet considers the way that the Greeks used props as actual representations of spirits that affected the individual and the society within which they lived. She then turns to the work of Antonin Artaud as a modern theatre theorist who picked up on the idea that people have lost their deeply spiritual essences because they do not engage in ritual processes of destruction and rebirth. For Artaud this understanding was developed in part through his work with the Tarahumaran Indians in Mexico (1976) where all things, including art, were made for a purpose and not for mere consumption. Because Artaud's ideas were so theoretical and Jerzy Grotowski's work<sup>3</sup> attempted to put into action Artaud's concepts, Grumet turned to applying some of Grotowski's actor training concepts that seek to eradicate an individual's habitual blocks, in her work with teacher candidates. Grumet went on to show how engaging with a curriculum that has significance for the individual leads to opportunities for her students to experience freedom, rather than liberation, through shared theatrical experiences.

For Grotowski, the theatre is not an end in itself but rather a vehicle for self-study and self-exploration that leads to a possibility for salvation. Thus for Grotowski, acting is a life's work and the act of performance is an act of sacrifice similar to that of a priest and worshipper (Brook, 1968/1990). This connection between the theatre and a religious encounter can be viewed in a curricular context in *Theory as a Prayerful Act* (1995) where Macdonald tells educators that they must profess, reveal and justify, from their own viewpoints what they believe and value. This sort of living educational theory is:

... (t)he act of theorizing (as) an act of faith, a religious act ... (or an) ... expression of belief, as William James expounds in *The will to believe*. (This) belief necessitates an act of the moral will based on faith. *Curriculum*

<sup>3</sup> Jerzy Grotowski was founder and director of the Polish Laboratory Theatre, an experimental company that became an institute for research into theatre art and the actor's art. Later he disbanded the company and focused on understanding human creativity outside the theatre and leading people back to ritual elemental connections with the natural world.

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*theorizing is a prayerful act.* It is an expression of the humanistic vision of life. (Macdonald, 1995, p. 181)

In *The Empty Space*, Peter Brook (1968/1990) calls Artaud's views of the theatre holy. He then discusses how Grotowski's theatre is as close as anyone has gotten to Artaud's ideal because its purpose is holy. For Brook, Grotowski's theatre is holy because it seeks to respond to a need that churches can no longer fill by professing to an audience images, words and visions that require contemplation, attention, meditation, consideration and action.

Curricular theorizing as theatrical engagement as an act of faith can thus be understood in relation to Grotowski and Macdonald's writings about curriculum theorizing as a prayerful or religious act. Curricular engagement as religious or prayerful seeks through study, contemplation, theorizing and writing an understanding or deep engagement with a particular topic over a lifetime. This requires continual commitment and practice. It also means that at some point in time one must give over to a hope or belief that they don't completely understand in order to enter into moments with the divine. For Artaud, this kind of engagement would represent one becoming familiarized with the divine within.

In order to describe how to push the theatre and society to new understandings and limits, Artaud uses the metaphor of the plague. This metaphor works extremely well for Artaud since the plague<sup>4</sup> actually decomposes the body while an individual is still living and causes one to take all actions/gestures/sounds to a limit that was previously unfathomable. For the actor, this meant that they take on a form that negates itself to just the degree it frees itself and dissolves into universality (Artaud, 1938/1958, p. 25). In this way both the theatre and the individual have the possibility of recovering dormant conflicts/feelings/emotions within the self. Arguably, if every individual experiences such transformation, society would as a reflection adapt and change.

Alongside the writings about an ongoing deterritorialization of curricular borders that exist between the hierarchical structures in and within the very educational landscape curriculum scholars seem continually attempting to unify, Artaud's metaphor of the plague can be seen as a reason for not trying to for example, find a one-size-fits-all definition for curriculum or the period that some have named it now in. This suggestion means that like a plague taking over a body's organs in order to change a person's physical form into something new, frozen institutional structures should be continually dissolved and rebuilt instead of artificially held up or maintained beyond their actual moment of effectiveness in order to allow for the continual process or transformation of the field.

The metaphor of the plague has helped me to come to understand the curriculum field as a process of deterritorialization as theorized by Deleuze (1994). This is a process by which we leave a territory in order to make new connections, or move

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<sup>4</sup> The symptoms of the bubonic plague include painful, swollen lymph glands, vomiting and urinating blood, coughing, terrible pain (caused by the decaying of one's body while still alive), fever, chills, delirium. 2 out of 3 people who have the plague die from this contagious disease.

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away from spaces regulated by dominant systems of signification that keep us confined within old patterns. This notion is combined with Kaustuv Roy's (2003) writings about curriculum as rhizome<sup>5</sup> where the potential for a people-centered curriculum lies in the building of strong yet seemingly unconnected connections. Roy places his ideas within the reconceptualization of the curriculum movement and it may very well be that we are always in a process of reconceptualization if we agree with his idea of curriculum as rhizome.

Rhizomes are usually thought of as root systems that grow in multiple directions but that eventually interconnect and strengthen a plant. Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2007) use rhizome to theorize research that is non-hierarchical and that uses multiple entry and exit points to represent and interpret data. To me, thinking about approaching the curriculum as rhizomatic and people-centered means that multiple people, with varying perspectives, can have the opportunity to be involved with and engaged in a particular curriculum. For example, a rhizomatic people centered curriculum can allow professors, policy makers and governments to theorize and consider curricular questions as well as children, parents and communities. This means that a rhizomatic curriculum is people-centered because although there are so many different people with so many different relationships to a particular curriculum in existence; rhizomatic offshoots of curriculum allow multiple perspectives to co-exist and strengthen one another. In this respect, thinking about the curriculum field as rhizomatic recognizes that it is always shifting and moving; dependent on context; open to reinterpretation; looking to the past and to the future to inform the present; and available for multiple paths and people to engage with its conception. The curriculum is alive!

Researching the work of Artaud from the perspective of an a/t/ographer and then finding themes such as the plague, sleep-walking and having a double, in combination with the rhizomatic people-centered curriculum, have given me an understanding about working in a liminal or in-between space that I did not understand before engaging with said writings. In relation to the research project and research questions, the discussion about Artaud has helped me to see with more nuanced understandings and perspectives the importance of researching the shifts in identities and subjectivities for the artists, teachers and artist-teachers in this study.

### 1.5 OVERVIEW

This chapter begins by describing the inner and outer story framework for this book, as well as the ideas of multiple rather than fixed identities in relation to subjectivities. This discussion is then linked to the issue of retention for artist-teachers and some of the realities, such as identity formation, that lead to their

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<sup>5</sup> In *Teacher in nomadic spaces*, Roy (2003) describes curriculum as rhizomatic because learning occurs as an offshoot, irregular growth that is not the result of deliberate planting. This means all events (not just those that are measured on a territorialized and conscious level) affect learning in powerful yet sometimes irregular ways.

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higher than normal attrition rates. Boundary positions, narrative inquiry and a/r/tography are also described in order to try and understand why some artist-teachers find it difficult adjusting to the teaching profession. While most research on artist-teacher retention has been done on visual and music artist-teachers, this study focuses on the lived experiences of four Canadian Conservatory style-trained actors who have pursued teaching. As a way to explore, represent and reframe some of the tensions between acting and teaching, participants wrote monologues about a past, disruptive educational moment as a way to re-enter that moment, think about it, reframe it through a character's voice and then move forward in one's teaching. This *currere*-like approach is framed by the theories of Antonin Artaud and Maxine Greene as a means for considering more deeply the main research questions that inform this work:

What are the lived experiences of individuals with Conservatory style actor training who pursue teaching?

Did writing a monologue about a problematic educational moment help participants in their pedagogical development? How?

In order to continue to explore curriculum theories, Antonin Artaud's work and what it means to dwell in an in-between place for actors turned teachers, I now turn to the next four chapters and interludes. Chapter 2: *A/r/tography & The Research Project* describes the methodology of a/r/tography and the research project in depth so that readers will have a deeper understanding of the project and why a/r/tographic methods are used in this research. Chapter 3: *Moments Such as These* present the data from participant interviews. This data sharing is significant to the research project because it allows the reader the opportunity to read some of the participant responses to the research questions as well as my own responses to what is said, as organized by themes. Chapter 4: *Understandings* makes sense of the themes in Chapter 3 and extends the data from the interviews, monologues and reflective writing into understandings. Finally, Chapter 5: *Considering the Openings* looks at the ways that theory, practice and research are affected by this book; as well as what future inquiry might be taken as a result of this work. Also, Interludes are embedded between the chapters as a way of creatively engaging with the research material. This creative approach to research reflects the a/r/tographical methodology that frames this study and the theatrical background of the participants who trained as actors because dialogue between characters is used in some of the Interludes. The use of another font for these Interludes further emphasizes that these *stories within the larger story* are separate but significant moments in between that extend the understandings and discussions presented in the chapters. The first Interlude *Introduction* introduces the characters in the a/r/tographical dialogues in the same way that a play would begin with a list of characters. After the characters are introduced their subsequent dialogue is woven into additional Interludes as a way of commenting on and introducing information. This ongoing dialogue also highlights the complicated conversations that are pivotal to the current field of curriculum theory's representation. In the second

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Interlude *The Monologues*, a/r/tographical conversations act as bridges that connect the presentation of the monologues collected during the research project. The third Interlude, *Border Theories, Liminal Spaces & Becoming a Crossroads*, is an extensive theoretical exposition that discusses and theorizes what an in-between space and identity is and means. This third Interlude combines both academic writing and dialogue between characters as a way of contemplating what a new kind of academic and artistic work in a liminal space might look like. As an extension of the emergent understandings of an immanent curriculum that is delineated in the fourth chapter, the fourth Interlude *Learning the Language of the Heart* takes the ideas presented in the fourth chapter and doubles them through the sharing of personal experiences. These journal excerpts are used as a way to reflect and provide new meanings to what is discussed within the research project. Finally, *The Beginning from the End* is a brief comment meant to, in an Artaudian way, suggest that although new understandings have been gained through the process of writing this work, there are always new directions to be taken and explored if one is to continually grow and learn.

## INTERLUDE 1

# INTRODUCTION

## CHARACTERS

### *A/r/tographer and Stage manager:*

The individual who seeks to bridge rather than divide the work of the artist, researcher and teacher by using a/r/tography to integrate and define simultaneously the distinctions of these three identities. During interludes, the a/r/tographer has the tendency to act as a stage manager, keeping these seemingly offstage aspects of the Interludes running alongside the paper. The reason for the Interludes and articulating particular aspects of this production is that a/r/tographical work evolves by investigating what is oftentimes taken for granted.

A/r/tographers do not strictly adhere to traditional qualitative methodologies that state research questions and then seek to answer them explicitly. Rather, a/r/tographers use all aspects of qualitative and arts based research to allow them to theorize and through theorizing engage in practicing theorizing. This means that research is viewed as a continually evolving situated and active process that leads to deep learning (Irwin, 2010).

### *Dramaturg and Director:*

The role of the dramaturg is oftentimes limited to the conducting of research for a production and for the development of a play. At times, the role of the dramaturg extends to the hiring of actors and even to writing and directing. A director develops and works towards executing the overall vision of a production until performance. In this book, the director orders, oversees, melds together, edits and synthesizes.

### *Artist:*

The artist is the a/r/tographer but is represented as an individual character in this study. This choice is made in order to deepen the understanding of the data in the study and as a means of privileging particular creative and artistic conversations that arise.

### *Teacher:*

Like the artist, the teacher is also the a/r/tographer but represented separately in order to consider specifically the point of view of the educator in this work.

### *Researcher:*

The researcher represents the a/r/tographer's "research self" and is also represented by a separate character.

INTERLUDE 1

*Maisey Roberts, Ardele Thompson, Solomon Davis and Darcy White:*  
Participants in the research study.

*Jonathan Stevens:*

A composite character<sup>6</sup> developed from the feedback given by participants in the first phase of the project.

*Rhoda Cunningham:*

A composite character developed from the feedback given from teacher candidate participants who performed in *The Teacher Monologues*.

Artist: I am so excited! Now, I know we don't have that much to talk about yet (since we are just starting this journey together) but ... I just really wanted to say how much I have been looking forward to getting together with you all for this conversation.

Teacher: Well, I am glad to be a part of it too. We don't often get the opportunity to spend time acknowledging in any kind of depth the aspects of our self that are "artist", "teacher", "researcher" and "a/r/tographer" so ...

Artist: Hey! Where's researcher? (Artist looks around and then sees researcher standing alone and deep in thought. She runs over and starts to give her a hug).

Researcher: (Researcher moves away from the embrace) Hey—what's going on here? And ... whoah ... who's writing down everything I ... STOP that ... I (she considers saying something else but decides against it).

A/r/tographer: We're representing our process of understanding what it means to be engaged in an a/r/tographical complicated conversation about our research. Remember? We wanted to try something a little bit more theatrical for a part of the research project in order to think about the experiences and monologues of the artist-teachers in the study...(There is a pause as a/r/tographer waits for researcher to answer).

Researcher: (Researcher finally speaks). Sheesh! Of course I remember but, (she whispers) I didn't think it would mean ... C'mon ... erase that ... and this ... what ever happened to ethical research?

Artist: But, we all agreed on this approach ... and you gave your consent ... so, we all have to participate (she smiles sweetly at researcher).

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<sup>6</sup> The composite characters have been used in theatre education research (George Belliveau, 2006) as a means of distilling the essence of multiple student's experiences into one character (or a chorus) as a way to focus themes, make meaning and highlight learning.



## INTRODUCTION

Researcher: (She keeps her mouth closed and rolls her eyes instead).

A/r/tographer: You know she has a point about ethical research ... we always let our own participants withdraw from a project if they want ...

Teacher: And we share our transcripts with them to make sure that their voices are represented fairly too ...

A/r/tographer: I guess we should either reconsider doing these interludes altogether or let the researcher make comments “off the record”. What do you think?

Artist: I think it’s a terrible idea. We need the researcher to share all of her expertise with us. I don’t know anything about filling out ethical protocol forms or writing up a research proposal ... she does! I just thought I was going to perform the monologues ... and now ... I can’t believe this is happening! It’s terrible. It reminds me of that time in grade 2 when I had a “Get along gang” and no-one got along.

Teacher: Don’t worry. We’ll figure it all out.

A/r/tography: Absolutely, and we already have the next chapter completed so we can present that now and hopefully by the next interlude things will have ... shifted a bit for everyone. (She whispers under her breath: I hope.)

Artist: Well, alright. I guess I can use the time to rehearse.

## CHAPTER 2

### A/R/TOGRAPHY AND THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Chapter 2 will provide details about the methodology of *a/r/tography* that I use to situate the research project. After this discussion, details about the data collection phase, participants and data analysis are provided.

#### 2.1 A/R/TOGRAPHY

Arts-based research practices are a set of methodological tools that are used by qualitative researchers in all discipline areas throughout all phases of social research (i.e. data collection, analysis, interpretation and representation) (Leavy, 2009, p. 3). What makes arts-based research unique for researchers and their audiences is that researchers who employ these methods do not try and hide their relationship to the work. The specific arts-based category of *a/r/tography* uses *a/r/t* as an acronym for artist-researcher-teacher. In *a/r/tography* these three identities exist contiguously and thus the importance of in-between space(s). As an example of these multiple identities and the importance of the in-between spaces to the relationships of and between artist, teacher, researcher and *a/r/tographer*, the Interludes in this book are used to explore and exemplify what *living with* multiple, overlapping identities that work together and in tension can mean. In this way, this methodological innovation (*a/r/tography*) is not simply about adding a new method to the arts-based research arsenal "...for the sake of more but, rather (about) opening up new ways to think about knowledge building: *new ways to see*" (Leavy, 2009, p. 3).

Rita L. Irwin and Stephanie Springgay introduce *Being with A/r/tography* (Springgay, Irwin, Leggo, & Gouzouasis, 2008) by stating that the chapters within it are not meant to provide a linear or rigid structure through which one can define *a/r/tography*. Rather the chapters work in tension sometimes leading to discordance other times working complementarily. This allows *a/r/tographical* research to resist standardization and to enter into a dynamic and fluid enterprise of living inquiry that concerns itself with self-study, being in community and relational/ethical inquiry. The ambiguity related to defining *a/r/tography* is in essence what it is about for it must be embodied, lived, felt, practiced, inquired into. Engaging through/with *a/r/tography* involves dwelling and becoming within an interstitial/borderland space where meanings and understandings are vulnerable and constantly in a state of becoming. The challenge of constantly becoming, coming into some sort of new being is that one's ideas/perceptions/ways of knowing may be arrived at for moments but, in a lifetime, multiple moments exist and are continually being created.

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The doctoral dissertation of Alex de Cosson entitled *(Re)searching Sculpted A/r/tography: (Re)learning Subverted-Knowing through Aporetic Praxis* (2003) is considered the first work which speaks explicitly about the term a/r/tography; though echoes of related references can be identified in the writings of scholars such as Rita L. Irwin and Carl Leggo in the late 1990s and through presentations such as *A/R/T as performative métissage* presented at *The International Society for Education through Art Congress* by Irwin and de Cosson (2002).

In this dissertation, de Cosson relies upon personal journal excerpts to inquire and make meaning about the nature of a/r/tography and to explore his own personal understandings of this new arts based method, some of which were prompted by discussions and engagements within the A/R/T collective, a research group that consisted of six researchers. It was Irwin, a member of this collective, that is credited with coining the term “a/r/tography” and for also writing the first methodological implications of it as:

... a living practice of art, research and teaching (A/R/T): a living métissage; a life writing, life creating experience. Through attention to memory, identity, reflection, meditation, story telling, interpretation and representation, artists/researchers/teachers share their living practice practices ... are searching for new ways to understand their practices as artists, researchers and teachers. They are a/r/tographers representing their questions, practices, emergent understandings, and creative analytic texts. They are living their work, representing their understandings and performing their pedagogical positions as they integrate knowing, doing and making through aesthetic experiences that convey meaning rather than facts. Their work is both science and art but it is closer to art and as such, they seek to enhance meaning rather than certainty. (Irwin, 2003, p. xii)

The first book *A/r/tography: Rendering Self through Arts-Based Living Inquiry* (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) was written as a way to capture some of the work that individual visual artists were doing and to think about what it means to reflect through artistic inquiry, teaching and writing. This shows how connecting ones art, scholarship and teaching through writing is an essential part of the process for artist-teachers to come to know and understand who they are and what they are doing. Thus, using artistic inquiry and writing are processes that help the artist-teacher-research make sense of their identities.

While continuing to focus on autobiography and living poetically/artistically in the world, work in a/r/tography began to affect the work of other scholars and emerging scholars in a variety of ways. For example, Barbara Bickel (2004) focused on topics such as the shift she experienced from artist to a/r/tographer and how ritual inquiry and writing the body (Bickel, 2005) allowed her to deepen her understanding of living inquiry. The collaborative project *The City of Richgate* undertaken and in part culminating in the creation of *The Rhizomatic Relations of A/r/tography* (Irwin, Beer, Springgay, Grauer, Xiong, & Bickel, 2006) stresses the ways in which a/r/tographical inquiry emphasizes practice and rhizomatic relations of inquiry in order to elaborate on how this methodology provokes the creation of

situations. Situations in which we find ourselves may relate to our surroundings or other people: as artist, teacher or researcher; in a studio, classroom or investigation to which one cannot predict the outcome. Thus, because a/r/tography is understood in part through particular situations and in part through the perspectives of the individual a/r/tographer, some may surmise that a/r/tography is not stable or rigid in its definition. While I would contend that this holds true to a certain extent, I would also remind one trying to understand a/r/tography or looking to define it that a/r/tography is still embedded within the traditions of qualitative research and informed by the body of research that informs this method, such as narrative inquiry and autobiographical approaches.

Also mentioned and of significance to understanding the nature of a/r/tography are rhizomatic relations, accredited to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987/2007), who describe how metaphorically through the image of crab grass, the ways that rhizomes work by connecting any point to another point while growing in all directions. It is the interconnection and network of many entry points into a system that affects the understanding of how theory, practice/product and process are understood. Theorizing through inquiry by allowing for an evolution of questions, since theorizing and practicing are verbs that emphasize the process of producing (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) is the way in which rhizomatic relationality links itself to a/r/tographical understanding. It is by considering educational sites for learning as in process, or through an a/r/tographic lens, that we are able to disrupt binaries, such as artist and teacher, in order to continually be in a state of becoming.

Our capacity to imagine allows us to take pleasure in others' joy, to cringe at others' pain, to be present even when we are not. Our capacity to imagine gives shape and direction to how we, as a species, learn from one another and transform our experience. We are connected. (Neilsen, 2008, p. xv)

The very beginnings of this methodology, springing from an art-research collective, has and continues to inform and shape the new directions which a/r/tography rhizomatically takes. In the second book dedicated to this topic, the introduction by Lorri Neilsen (2008) speaks of how our capacity to imagine as a species can help us to learn and grow with/from one another. This premise (originating with Jean-Luc Nancy, 2000), that we are all connected one to the other and essentially that we are singular-plural beings who are by nature in community with others, ourselves only understanding our own being by being with, is truly at the heart of this book and methodology. This means that whatever one does and whoever one is can only exist because of and in relationship to others. This reading of being-singular-plural means that a/r/tographers cannot exist without their communities and individuals cannot be without being with. It could also mean that although each person is an individual, they are still comprised of multiple identities, thus singular and yet plural beings. These readings highlight how identity is contingent upon being in relation to and with, consequently reinforcing the discussion about the nature of identity and subjectivity in Chapter 1. In order to further understand the concept of being-singular-plural in relation to the

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participants in this study, further time will be spent delineating this concept in the third Interlude. To continue with the sequential evolution of a/r/tography and its related influences at this time, I now briefly introduce the six renderings.

### *Renderings*

These renderings are used to provide one with possibilities for engaging in a/r/tographical work and include: contiguity, living inquiry, metaphor/metonymy, openings, reverberations and excess. The creation of these six renderings was influenced by one of Mieke Bal's suggestions to focus on methodological concepts rather than methods when doing research. The purpose of the renderings is not to tell others how to use a/r/tography, but rather to provide a way of understanding what living and working as an a/r/tographer might mean. In this way, the renderings help to provoke personal engagements with the concepts and make space for individuals to conceptualize their own concepts for making meaning, as illustrated by my own rationale for using both chapters and interludes in this book. The beauty of approaching arts based research in this way is that by its very nature, a/r/tography requires those who engage with and in it to be creators and innovators of their own work, rather than following a pre-existing format for research.

Since I view the renderings as representing possible rather than pragmatic ways for understanding and engaging in an a/r/tographic process or project, I do not feel that every a/r/tographer or every a/r/tographic project will always have aspects of all of the renderings within it/them. For this reason, although I list all of the renderings, I have only expanded upon the ones that I feel relate to and inform this particular research project.

To begin, *contiguity* can be visualized by thinking of a paper being folded. Within each of the folds there is a relational space that links one fold to the next. In this sense, the a/r/tographic identities of the artist, teacher and researcher are contiguous because while separate, each part is only understood in relation to the whole a/r/tographic identity that finds synthesis through the in-between spaces. Contiguous relationships thus emphasize the importance of relationality in and between ones teaching, art making and research.

*Living inquiry* refers to the ongoing living practice of being an artist, researcher and educator and to the embodied encounters that change ones artistic and textual engagements and understandings while living in this way. Like the actor who begins to learn his/her craft by paying particularly close attention to his/her surroundings, self and others; the a/r/tographer who engages in living inquiry chooses to develop self-consciousness and awareness by, for example, asking provocative questions, imagining what might be, rather than what is and engaging in projects that allow for risks and creative processes that are emergent rather than pre-determined.

*Metaphor and metonymy* have been described as representing ways of understanding the world and making relationships accessible to the senses (Springgay, Irwin, Leggo, & Gouzouasis, 2008). While both words substitute one term for another, metaphor substitutes based on similarity and metonymy displaces

a subject/object's relations. When an individual is adept at using these tropes in their writing, there is a potential for evoking past embodied encounters and memories that conjure up deeper signification and meanings that resonate with the reader and open them to something "other than".

*Openings* in a/r/tographical works allow for the possibility of new conversations and relationships to emerge. In this way, openings, like the unfolding of a flower, resist predictability and acknowledge the beauty of emergent, unexpected spaces that can be explored allowing for new meanings and ways of coming to know to occur.

*Reverberations* are dynamic negotiations, sometimes tensions, between entities that provoke one to change the way they understand something. These reverberations often exist in the spaces between identities where one attempts to understand how or why something is the way it is while negotiating a situation. For example, when reading participant interview transcripts and trying to code the data for themes, there were times that I just felt as though the information was all running together. I took this as a cue to take a break from this kind of work and go for a run or sit and play the piano. What I then found when I returned to my interview data was that I then brought a different perspective to the work. For example, if I took a break and played piano, I would sometimes return to the data and find that there were certain moments that flowed through the transcripts that I didn't notice before. This shows how my artistic identity reverberated into my academic thinking by shifting my way of approaching my work.

Finally, the rendering *excess* is about those which most people ignore, throw away, avoid. Choosing to pay attention to excess materials, data, supplemental lessons may thus signify a shift in attention and perspective that leads to new understandings more complex than what was once thought possible. For Artaud, this can be described as acknowledging the "thingness" of things and allowing them to "speak" or reveal their hidden "thingness". In this sense, paying closer attention to the "thingness of things" each day might mean that there would be no excessive consumption because by the nature of things, every "thing" would have a story or purpose that could be re-vealed if the individual spent time seeing (it) in new ways.

To me, understanding the a/r/tographic renderings and a/r/tography means more than reading about the ways that other people have articulated, explored and discovered what being an a/r/tographer is or signifies. I feel that it is necessary to experience for myself what working a/r/tographically is about because although reading texts of other people's accounts informs my work, it does not give me an embodied and lived encounter with it. This personal connection is essential to me because a large part of my own way of learning is contingent upon experiencing, touching, feeling, and bringing into existence my own ways of articulating, exploring and unfolding. Without this kind of immediate and personal engagement, I can only partially know what it means to be an artist, teacher, researcher and writer. This way of working is at times deeply reflective and personal while also being necessarily available to a diverse audience of researchers, educators and artists. Thus, in order to further explore some of the ideas of a/r/tography that have

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been discussed, I will now provide a detailed description of the research that has been undertaken.

### 2.2 THE RESEARCH PROJECT

This project was designed primarily to introduce new teachers and educators to narrative reflective writing in the form of a monologue as a way to interrogate their new teaching practice, subject matter and self. Based upon the premise discussed in Chapter 1, that when the new artist-teacher begins teaching they experience a period of adjustment to their new identity and the way(s) that they thereby react in new educational situations, the purpose of introducing the monologue as a form of reflection, was developed to provide new teachers with actor training the opportunity to reframe and respond to situations and experiences that arose in their teaching (Hesford, 1999). Since this kind of narrative autobiographical writing inevitably connects the personal to the cultural, social and political and features emotion, self-consciousness and introspection (Ellis, 2004); the monologues were thought to provide a simple and yet powerful way for individuals to connect themselves with a wider social or political situation that stemmed from personal concerns.

Since research that looks at the experiences of trained musicians and visual artists who then enter teaching already exists but, trained actors who then pursued teaching are underrepresented in the research on artist-teachers; I chose participants for this study who were graduates of a Canadian conservatory style acting program who then entered teaching. A/r/tographic inquiry and data sources that include narrative monologues, performances, reflective writings, observations, thick descriptions and interviews were then used to design this research project because I wanted to use methods and approaches that would compliment the participants multiple identities and be representative of the drama and theatre field(s) being studied. I also wanted to consider if and how themes such as being wide-awake and waking the dead, that were discussed during the literature review, might relate to the experiences participants had in acting school or during their teaching experiences to see if there was any kind of relationship between the way one learns and the way they experience the world.

#### *Social Media & Network Selection*

I used social media as a tool to contact and ask all of the graduates from the 2000, 2001 and 2002 graduating classes of a Canadian university's acting program if there was anyone who had since acting school pursued teaching or a BEd. As a result of this network selection process (deMarrais, 2004, p. 60) I was able to identify a potential list of participants for this inquiry. Network selection involves the researcher asking for information from one or more key people that can refer him/her to potential research participants fitting the researcher's criteria. Out of the 42 graduates, I received responses from 15 individuals. These 15 people were able to tell me that 22 other people had taught in some capacity since graduation. (Note:

out of the original 42 graduates five individuals were unaccounted for.) Teaching for this group included: teaching ESL overseas; teaching drama and theatre camp programs in Canada and the U.S.; teaching as a part of summer theatre company programs; classroom teaching in K-12 environments; teaching music lessons and teaching at the University level. These numbers were staggering to me because I just didn't expect that so many trained actors would end up teaching. Interestingly enough, eight of the 15 individuals who provided this information were themselves educators.

With this information, I decided to create a project that invited the eight individuals who responded and who were educators to participate in a series of interviews about their journeys and experiences in acting and teaching programs, and to write a monologue about a particular issue that was of significance to them as a teacher or teacher candidate. Out of these eight individuals, I received five affirmative responses. Four of these five people eventually participated in the study. Letters outlining criteria for participation were sent out, and Maisey Roberts, Solomon Davis, Darcy White and Ardele Thompson identified themselves as interested in taking part in this research. During the actual interviews, the questions acted as a flexible guidepost because each conversation evolved in different ways based upon participant's individual stories.

#### *The Interview Guide and Participants*

Prior to the first round of interviews I sent all of the participants an interview guide and information about writing a monologue in addition to the ethical considerations of taking part in this research (see Appendices three, four and five). The interviews which were video and audio recorded took place over a four-month period because I had to travel to interview two of the participants and work around everyone's schedules. Participants were asked to participate in two or three interviews that took between one and half and three hours each. These durations were chosen because the lengths of the interviews depended on the amount of time participants had to spend speaking with me at a given time. The time between interviews offered participants time to reflect on the topic of the inquiry in relation to their own teaching and art practices and allowed me to transcribe the interviews. This was also done so that I could consider key questions to focus on for subsequent interviews. The participants, with pseudonyms, include:

- *Ardele Thompson*: Ardele holds an HBA in Theatre (acting) (2001) and a BEd (in elementary education, 2009). Both degrees are from Canadian Universities. Ardele participated in the study by writing a monologue, reflective journal entries and participating in three interview sessions. She is currently working as an educator and storyteller as a part of a research team at a Canadian University.
- *Solomon Davis*: Solomon holds an HBA in Theatre (acting) (2002) and a BEd (2009). Both of his degrees are from Canadian Universities. He participated by being interviewed and currently teaches drama and visual art at a private school outside of a large Canadian city.



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- *Maisey Roberts*: Maisey holds an HBA in Theatre (acting) (2001). She wrote a monologue and participated in two interviews. She currently works for a Canadian University as a program designer and teaches theatre to kids part time. She enrolled in an MA in Educational Studies program after participation in this study.
- *Darcy White*: Darcy holds an HBA in Theatre (acting) (2001) and a BEd (in elementary education (2009)). Both degrees are from Canadian Universities. After graduating with her BEd she took a full time position at a private school in a large Canadian city. She participated in three interviews. Darcy is currently working part time as a music teacher.

The focus of interactions was on: actor training, teacher training, teaching practice, identity formation and one's experiences of becoming a teacher. The monologues, interviews and other reflective writings resulted in discoveries about Canadian conservatory-style acting programs and teacher training. It should be noted that I have not explored the differences between acting programs outside of Canada and thus am not in this book suggesting that I can make generalizations about all Conservatory style acting programs, this is why I have stipulated that participants attended Canadian Universities. A limitation of this study is that in actuality only four individuals from one acting school participated in this research project and only two of these four participants ended up submitting monologues. However, given that this study is not empirical and instead is focused on the particular stories and experiences of four individuals, this smaller participant pool reflects the nature of this research.

As the participants in the research study all attended a Canadian University acting program before entering teaching, an understanding of this kind of program will be described. This overview will be made in order to discern if there were any unique dispositions that this experience may have developed or honed in these individuals. After the description of acting school, teacher education programs attended by the participants will be presented using descriptions made by the individual participants.

### *Conservatory Style Actor Training Programs*

A professional training program is typically focused on selecting a small number of students to participate in a conservatory-style acting program that is housed in a university, after a successful year in a university program and after a successful audition process. Generally, ongoing academic and practical evaluations are carried out in order to continually ensure that students are committed and suited to being in this program. In addition to other elective university credits required for graduation, students take acting, voice and movement classes. Curriculum and assessment is primarily experiential and hands on. Learning is most often demonstrated through performance. The classes in conservatory acting programs are usually taught by professionals in their areas of specialization, thus these individuals generally have MFA degrees. Participants in the research study

attended a performance-based program that reflects the criteria and standards described above.

One of the two-hour interviews that Darcy White participated in included the following description of her program. (Note: I have included a lengthy quotation at this time because Darcy explains in detail the program throughout all four years.)<sup>7</sup>

... well, basically, in our first year we all just took a general acting class and did some exercises and scenes. Then we had to audition for the acting program. I remember doing a Contemporary comedy, a song and a Shakespearean piece for that audition ... To answer your question about what the program was like ... it sort of evolved ... For example, that first summer we were told not to perform in anything for the next three years because it would counteract our training ... but, these comments were always just suggestions ... we really had to make up our own minds about things ... So, anyhow ... that first year I don't even remember picking up any text. It was all about working on getting rid of the habitual ways you do things in dance class and learning to deepen and access your breath in voice class. Then in acting class we did a lot of exercises that helped us to see space and work together as an ensemble ... to learn to respond to others emotionally, physically and to get out of our heads ... things like throwing a ball in a circle for 3 hours was a big one ... it seemed strange at the time but, it helped us to learn to have a simple intention that was driven by the breath. Then the next year in acting class we finally got to start with text ... that was a big thing. We had to memorize a sonnet over the summer and then work on that in class sometimes. Other times we did mask work and focused on using the breath to develop an emotional score that we could easily access for developing characters and doing scene work. Its like—at the time we didn't know how all of these skills were being added in bit by bit or where they came from...but, we were like sponges ... we just wanted to do it all really well because we were all so committed to being actors. Oh! Another big thing was making sure you were in good shape so that the physical work would be effortless. The fourth year was the performance year and that's when we started layering everything together. It was exciting how the different classes worked to build upon one another ... but, I don't really remember where the techniques or approaches came from. Our acting coach mentioned Michael Shurtleff's book *Audition* and seemed to like David Mamet but, other than that, he just kind of led us through stuff and we trusted his vision and approach ... Oh, and he was definitely influenced by Peter Brook I would say since we did his *Marat Sade* my graduating year. (White)

This lengthy passage provides a detailed description of the acting program that participants experienced and how learning in this kind of a program is quite different in comparison to another University course in which, for example,

<sup>7</sup> I have placed a pseudonym for each participant behind the quotes that were taken from my transcripts of interview data.

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students sit in on large group lectures about a topic that the professor speaks on. What immediately strikes me as setting this program apart from others is the audition process that leads to one's acceptance in this program. While other professions require and have ways of measuring special skills and aptitudes that lead to the acceptance of a student into a program, there are at the undergraduate level usually only criteria such as grades that measure into this kind of process. In the case of this acting program however, a small number of students are selected for a cohort based upon their auditions. This group is then, over the course of three years, trained to work as an ensemble in their voice, singing, acting, dance and movement classes. As described, this kind of training means learning to get out of your head and rid yourself of habitual actions by learning to get into your body, use the breathe to access emotions and find ways to develop attention and discipline that would allow one to participate in activities for hours at a time. These kinds of skills that acting school aims to develop appear to be ones that would make anyone a more grounded individual because they aim at connecting the individual to themselves and then others in order to then be self-aware and expressive. In relation to the research questions, having a lengthy description about the kinds of experiences that participants had in acting school helps to point to the hands on, emotional, interactive and creative approaches that acting students had to become accustomed to.

Additionally, three of the four participants noted that their theatre training impacted them so much because they had just graduated from high school. This period of time in one's life was described as a time when you form your identity as an adult. Both Darcy and Ardele felt that by being given the opportunity to spend time looking inward during these years, they were able to develop an openness to themselves, others and their world that they did not think they would have developed in any other situation/program. Ardele, Darcy and Maisey all spoke about how this "open" disposition helped them to get rid of a part of themselves, named the ego by Maisey, that was judgmental. This disposition then allowed them to experience being in the world without being self-critical. In particular, the activities that helped to achieve this state included movement classes where the Luigi method<sup>8</sup> was taught, and free warm up to music time before acting class.

Specifically, the Luigi method was taught as a way to help students develop awareness of and in their bodies so that they were neutral and without personal habits or ticks that would make it difficult to take on any particular character in a show (Thompson). Movement and dance class in itself was a difficult undertaking for many people who found it hard to have to show up to class in tights and be constantly scrutinized by a teacher who was hard on them (Davis & White). However, such a challenge was upon reflection seen as an opportunity to step up and commit to engaging despite the difficulty (White). Thus, the combination of wearing an all black leotard and engaging daily in the Luigi practice led students to

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<sup>8</sup> The Luigi method was a dance warm up technique created by Eugene Faccuito in the 1950s. It was created as a form of rehabilitation after Faccuito was in a near fatal car crash and wanted to continue on with his acting, dancing and singing in New York.

not only commit to a daily practice for three years, but to learn to leave life's personal frustrations or realities outside of the rehearsal space.

Movement to music was an activity that began during the second year of the acting program and took place before acting class for Darcy, Maisey, Ardele and Solomon. During this time the lights in the studio space, a large open room with mirrors against one wall, were dimmed and music was simply played in the background. Participants of the acting class could then come into class early and begin clearing their minds before warming up their bodies and voices in order to prepare for class (Thompson & White). Finding a way to relax the body, mind and voice was the key to being prepared. Techniques for doing this work were learned in voice, singing and dance classes. But, ultimately, it was up to the individual to come up with a personal warm-up that worked for them. This chance to deeply explore oneself and to step-out-of-the-self is described as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that most people never get the chance to do (White & Thompson). Because of this particular kind of engagement, Darcy White felt that "there are so many things that one can do because of that foundation of learning about yourself and how to put yourself out there—which is a challenge really when you are just getting used to being up in front of people" (White).

In this particular warm-up space, where there were no particular ways for getting ready (i.e. it was up to the individual to warm-up their body, mind and voice in whatever way(s) worked best for them) or sense of judgment (White), students had the chance to "break the boundaries of who you think you are because you are not thinking about it—there is no judgment—there is no conception that this is me and this is how I act. You are adding onto yourself and become more of yourself or a different kind of yourself by getting over yourself" (White). This description of exploring oneself explained by Darcy was also described/articulated by Solomon as an opportunity to be in the zone and by Ardele as a way of being in the moment. When asked specifically what the theoretical underpinnings that their programs were derived from; all participants agreed that Luigi was the focus for movement classes and that Patsy Rodenberg's (1992) techniques<sup>9</sup> were used in voice. However, when asked about acting class the only participant in addition to Darcy White who recalled Michael Shurtleff, David Mamet and Peter Brook ... but not in any detail was Maisey Roberts who said that:

... there was just a sense of the Stratford Theatre Style, which was about building a company and ensemble. And while there was a sense of community, there was also a lot of competition, because for me as a mid sized brunette ... well, I had at least 4 other females who fit that category. At the end of the program I feel like I was just specifically prepared to work

<sup>9</sup> Patsy Rodenburg is a voice coach and theatre director from England. She believes voice work is for all people and not just actors/performers. She began this work because she suffered from a speech impediment as a child. The focus of her work begins with the premise that our voices are locked within habits that we must learn to liberate through breath and relaxation techniques. After this initial work she moves to more complex work such as developing well-resonated and articulated sound. She is the author of numerous books including *The right to speak* (1992).

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with a company. I didn't feel prepared to create work on my own like people from the National Theatre School do or to do specific things like the clown work I was interested in. (Roberts)

Since none of the participants interviewed could specifically remember what acting theories were used to teach them to act, I felt that this was something that I could look into in order to understand more about the theoretical rationale behind what they were doing. I didn't want to assume that because participants could not recall the names of theorists of which their acting instructor based his technique on that there were no resources provided to them. For this reason I contacted the university that they attended and asked for a list of readings that were on the acting class syllabus between 1998–2003 (i.e., the first year that one of the participants began the three year program and the last year that one of the participants graduated). I was told by the head of the theatre department, who also taught these particular students voice at this time, that although the particular acting instructor that taught during these years had since passed away, he had used: *The Actor at Work* by Robert Benedetti (1970/1997) and *Audition* by Michael Shurtleff (1978) during the final year of the acting program. I was also told that this acting professor had studied at the National Theatre School and worked at the Stratford and Shaw festivals before taking a role as acting coach. Also influencing his teaching was his love and experience of/with Shakespeare. This was evident in the focus on Shakespearian text in the third year of his acting program and in the fact that he co-founded a local summer theatre company for young actors that focused on outdoor physical theatre performances of Shakespearean plays.

The Benedetti text (1970/1997) that was used includes a series of exercises that are designed by Robert Benedetti. These exercises are placed between a series of topics for the acting student and meant to help the student to patiently develop discipline and commitment to this art by conditioning the body, mind, voice, emotions and spirit. Benedetti largely relies on the work of Stanislavski<sup>10</sup> to develop and discuss how to help students become performers who can deliver a strong and professional performance every time. This systematic approach to acting includes learning to analyze beats within a scene, identify the needs, actions and objectives of a character and understand action and through-lines within a written text. While this work is done by the individual, there is a simultaneous focus on building an ensemble.

The second text, *Audition* by Michael Shurtleff (1978), focuses on what an actor needs to know about auditioning. Viewing this text as course-required reading demands that one commit to the premise that being in a University acting program is preparation for professional acting. As such, this text takes one through the steps of what it means to have a good audition and how to follow Shurtleff's twelve guideposts.

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<sup>10</sup> Constantin Stanislavski (1863–1938) was a Russian actor and theatre director who created "The system" for mastering the craft of acting while simultaneously stimulating the actor's individual creativeness and imagination. This system is presented in his trilogy of books: *An actor prepares*, *Building a character* and *Creating a role*.

Given the dedication and discipline that a conservatory-style acting program demands, these two texts reinforce the commitment to professional acting that students in this program appear to have. I will now present descriptions of the teacher education programs that participants attended.

*Teacher Education Programs/The Participants*

Descriptions of the teacher education programs attended by participants are now provided. They are made under the individual participant's name and include descriptions from the interviews.

*Ardele Thompson*

Ardele, 29 at the time of her interviews, moved to Toronto, ON after graduating from acting school and immediately pursued a career in acting. Ardele primarily focused on roles in theatre and found some success writing and performing her own work. During the seven years that she pursued acting, she also worked with various drama education programs and as a nanny. Consultations with her career coach over a period of years led her to decide to pursue teaching. Ardele then attended the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) from September 2008 to the Spring of 2009. She took the primary-junior stream, preparing her to teach grades kindergarten to grade six, because she did not have enough credits to allow her to take Secondary level certification in drama and theatre. Core courses in this stream included:

- Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Social Studies
- Science
- Health and Physical Education
- Music
- Visual Arts

Ardele did not have to take any courses in drama and theatre during this degree. In addition to her required courses, Ardele was a part of the inner city option that focused on social justice through anti-oppression activities and on the student council that planned activities for her cohort.

*Solomon Davis*

Solomon Davis, 28 at the time of his interview, also attended an Ontario teacher education program (Queen's University). However, Solomon was a part of the Artist in Community Education (ACE) program. This is a program that is meant to place emphasis on exploring the positive roles that artists and the arts play in schools and society. Admission for this program is restricted to practicing visual artists, musicians, creative writers and actors who also have a previous degree that qualifies them for admission. ACE is meant to provide a unique opportunity for artists to study arts education and learn from one another. Graduation from this program provides students with a variety of options in addition to qualifying

## CHAPTER 2

students to teach in the regular school system. Solomon describes how “all these different artists from different backgrounds were lumped into this same particular class where the main focus of conversations was around the arts in education and especially why the arts are important at a time when there are so many cutbacks and things like that” (Davis). He goes on to discuss how this program expanded his idea of creativity and how to foster it in his own students. Essentially, teaching for Solomon means providing *felt experiences* for one’s students so that learning will have more of an impact. Solomon spent a lot of time in his interview describing not only educational theorists that impacted his learning at Queen’s but artistic principles and theorists who helped him to understand and deepen his ability to help others to develop their creativity and his own pedagogical approach to teaching. When asked about the difference in his experiences between acting and education programs he said that he felt being older (28) during his education program meant that he got a lot more out of this university experience, compared to his actor training. Solomon also noted that because of the ACE stream, he felt that he could continue to explore who he was as an artist and how this impacted his teaching rather than just focusing on becoming a teacher. Immediately after graduation Solomon got a full time teaching job at a private school, teaching visual art and drama. The school that hired him was specifically interested in hiring an ACE graduate. He is the only one of the participants who is still a full-time classroom teacher.

### *Maisey Roberts*

Maisey, 28 at the time of her interviews, pursued acting upon graduation from theatre school. She also had extensive stage and television experience before attending acting school and for two summers in between acting school taught summer theatre for the San Francisco Shakespeare festival’s summer camp program.

With over twelve years of experience teaching drama and theatre programs for various groups, organizations and institutions, Maisey brings a rich understanding of this subject matter and what it is like to teach drama and theatre. Because of her passion for teaching and learning that came across in her interviews and monologue, I was very interested to find out why she had decided not to pursue a BEd degree but still chose to work at an educational institution in an administrative role.

### *Darcy White*

Darcy White, 29 at the time of her interviews, attended the University of British Columbia’s (UBC) elementary stream 12-month teacher education program (July 2008–2009). She elected to be in the technology cohort for this program because she wanted to build her skills and experiences in this area. Like Ardele, Solomon and Maisey, Darcy sought work as a professional actor after graduating from her conservatory acting program. During this time she landed television, film and stage roles while waitressing in between jobs. Then, after a few years, driven by her other love, the outdoors, Darcy decided to work with a bike touring company,

Backroads, for a season in Europe. While making this decision, Darcy felt she was giving up her dream of being an actor. However, once she started with Backroads she knew it was the right decision. Through Backroads, Darcy met a girl who got her a job as a teacher's assistant at a private school outside of Vancouver, BC. Being a second grade teaching assistant convinced Darcy that she loved to teach and she took a year of upgrading to be eligible for entrance into UBC.

When she completed her BEd she accepted a full time position at the same school she had been a teaching assistant at. However, during this first year of teaching Darcy also had a baby. This event led her to decide to stay home with her child and to only return to work on a part-time basis as a music teacher.

### *Research Sites*

The research took place in two major Canadian cities: Vancouver, British Columbia and Toronto, Ontario. All of the participants moved to one of the two large Canadian cities where they currently reside after acting school in order to pursue a career in either film and television or theatre. The participants in this study were all educators at the time of the interviews. They did not all teach in K-12 schools. Interviews took place in a variety of community spaces suggested by the participants. Participants helped to select these spaces as they were familiar and conducive to conversation.

### *Data Analysis*

In order to analyze the data generated from the monologues, the interviews and the performances, I developed an analysis framework that allowed me to uncover commonalities and patterns that existed between participant accounts as well as individual narratives. As a way to analyze and understand the data through the lens of an a/r/tographer, I reviewed the data on my own and through conversations with participants. This process led me to review the data multiple times in order to create themes, categorize information, interpret results and make meaning. During this process, I organized the data primarily around individual participants and their responses to particular questions that fit into reoccurring themes. The reason for choosing to do this was that interviews, although somewhat similar in content, did move in different directions in response to participant interest and experience. This was an easy decision to make because the structure unfolded naturally. Kramp (2004), a narrative inquiry scholar, talks about the importance of individual and contextual aspects of participant's messages. For this reason he suggests exploring individual stories before exploring findings across narratives.

Additionally, my use of dramatic dialogues placed between each chapter of this book, in the Interludes, represent my a/r/tographic process for interpreting, analyzing and understanding the data. This reflective writing is a part of my own inquiry process and served as a vehicle for me to interpret and make meaning/connections between the theory and data while examining my own preconceptions and assumptions about what an artist, teacher and researcher are.



## CHAPTER 2

Since I chose to work with participants who experienced a conservatory style acting program like the one I attended, this process also acts as a way of examining the validity and reliability of my work because I am demonstrating how I am continually trying to question what I think, how I do things and what my own hidden biases might be. Thus, because I chose to work with a topic that was close to me, I benefited from this ongoing dialogue that considered how to address and recognize researcher bias and objectivity. In order to further address my own potential biases in this study, I also asked participants to provide additional clarifications for their statements and discussed some of the tensions I experienced with colleagues, without disclosing the identities or details of this study. I also turned to Eisner's writings on structural corroboration (1998) in order to ensure that this study would have credibility. For Eisner, structural corroboration means that "... multiple sources of evidence for the recurrence of instances that support a conclusion" (p. 55) are evidenced. This is in large part the reason that I looked at common themes in the data. Additionally, I identified the following common elements between participants:

- Actors who entered teaching did so after pursuing acting into their late 20s or early 30s.
- Actor training based upon participant interviews appears to develop the individual's noetic and aesthetic senses and perceptions.
- Teacher education programs prompted a renewed engagement with art making and this positively impacted pedagogical development for most of the participants.
- Once participants decided to pursue teaching, after much thought, it was easier for them to see alternatives, other than being a K-12 teacher that their teacher educations could lead them to pursue.
- Participants thought of themselves as educators rather than teachers or artist-teachers.

As a way to structurally corroborate what was being articulated across interviews, I looked at the idea of consensus (Eisner, 1998, p. 57) to describe another strategy for ensuring an inquiry's credibility. For Eisner, consensus is a form of multiplicative corroboration and is represented by "... concurrence as a result of evidence deemed relevant to the description, interpretation, and evaluation of some state of affairs" (p. 57). This book not only represents the notion of consensus through the common elements evidenced in participant data but through the consensus that the characters in the Interludes have to come to in order to agree on how to proceed within this work. As I worked through this particular dialogical internal inquiry, through the artist, teacher and researcher, I also realized that what I saw evidenced, in artistic forms manifested and needed to be represented through research and in my own teaching. This constant process of triangulation forced/s me as an a/r/tographer to continually question what I am doing and how I am representing, evaluating and interpreting in multiple ways. In a sense, and this my opinion, working a/r/tographically where all identities are represented equally, can embody consensus in a study. For example, when I write as an artist in the Interludes, I am not thinking or reacting or able to represent data in the same way

#### A/R/TOGRAPHY AND THE RESEARCH PROJECT

that I do as researcher, teacher or a/r/tographer. As artist I actually feel like I have to read aloud parts of the data, and use the free-associative dialogical writing in the Interludes to understand and express what this research project is about. This artistic identity also led me to perform one of the monologues. In this way, I had a different understanding of the monologue that I acted out because I had to put myself in the shoes of the person who wrote it. On the other hand, when I have been on my teaching term, at the University I work at and am engaging with the data in this project, I notice that I have more of a need to try and classify, organize and smooth out any sort of tensions that emerge in my research. This teacher lens or approach is very different to that of the artist who needs to feel through things. Finally, throughout the process of interviewing, researching and writing for this project, my researcher identity seems to keep me on track within the field and academic context that I am working in. While, the artistic part of me may want to take a different approach to presenting and exploring the data, the researcher helps me to go back to journal articles etc. to find a way to frame my artistic impulses for an academic audience. Thus, when the a/r/tographer speaks in the Interludes, I feel as though there is a representation of all of the different ways of knowing and coming to know that allow me to bring different viewpoints to my work. I have called this a/r/tographic approach a form of triangulation because it is like I am seeing the same information multiple ways that reinforce what I have come to know.

Now, as a way to begin sharing the data collected throughout this research project, in order to later work with and write about it, I will now present the monologues that were written for this research project.

## INTERLUDE 2

### THE MONOLOGUES

(During the second chapter, the director sat down and spoke about the researcher's concerns about being a part of the dialogues that are included in the Interludes with the entire cast. It was agreed that researcher did not have to have her part of the conversation recorded. However, when this decision was made researcher told everyone that she had changed her mind and wanted to be a part of the recorded dialogue between chapters. Everyone agreed that this was fine.)

Artist: Finally! I have been looking forward to presenting these monologues for two whole chapters already. Is it o.k. if I just give a performance of each one now? Should I warm up a bit more first? I might be a little rusty. (She begins stretching and warming up her voice.)

Researcher: Hey-I thought you said she could do this.

Teacher: Be patient. This is all a part of being an a/r/tographer remember? We aren't just waking up every morning and going to auditions and rehearsals ... we do other things too ... like teach.

Researcher: And study.

Teacher: Exactly ... and finding a way to clear a space in our day for creativity that interrupts and disrupts the familiar.

Researcher: Well this certainly is disruptive ... you know I (researcher is interrupted mid sentence)...

Artist: O.k. I'm ready. Who's going to introduce me?

Teacher: I've already got that covered. Here we go: The following dramatic readings of *The teacher monologues* will be presented by Artist. The first piece entitled *The Math Lesson* was written by Ardele Thompson who was a participant in this research project.

Artist:

(Reads)

I am standing, in a tiny portable, in front of 30 grades 5 and 6 students. This is the first week of my second practicum. My palms are sweaty ... my mouth is dry. Why am I nervous? This is my first math lesson ... the dreaded math lesson. My greatest

INTERLUDE 2

fear in becoming a teacher is about to be realized. I've never really liked math! I'm an artistic person, a trained actor. Math stressed me out. Still stresses me out! I could never get the answer fast enough. I didn't see anything creative about math.

As an actor, I am used to standing up and talking in front of people. But this is somehow different. There is no script here. What if some whippersnapper from the back asks me a question I can't answer? That kid Michael over there, he's really bright in mathematics. I know he's going to stump me with something.

Okay get it together. You know this unit. You've reviewed it and let's face it you know what you're talking about.

So I begin ...

*"Alright class, before we get started on today's lesson, are there any questions from yesterday's homework that people would like to discuss?"*

That's good. Nice way to ease us all into this. Okay, looks like most students were having trouble with question #3. What was question #3? Oh yeah...the triangle with the algebraic equation. I can totally answer this one, no problem. Wait! I have a better idea.

*"Is there anyone who would like to show how they solved the problem? Michael, great, why don't you put your answer on the board."*

This is good. Everyone seems excited about this. Huh ... he's got the same answer, but that's not the way I would have done it....

*"Can you talk us through your strategy Michael?"*

(thoughtful pause)

*"Did anyone else do it a different way?"*

Pretty soon I've got six students showing and explaining their strategies. And look at Toby ... Toby, who rarely speaks in class, standing up there with renewed confidence, proudly showing us how he solved the problem using his own method. Sure, a lot of the strategies are very similar when you examine them and some are better than others, but next time Michael might try Toby's strategy and Toby might try Michael's. Regardless, I know that the exchange of ideas during this time has made math seem less daunting for a lot of students. Now that's what I would have liked growing up. I think I finally have seen how we can begin to find the creativity in mathematics.

THE MONOLOGUES

Teacher: Wonderful job! You really attacked that piece with the necessary gusto. I can't wait to hear the next one.

Researcher: Me neither! In fact, I think I'll present this one for everyone. I mean, what's the big deal about reading a few lines? Here ... let me give this one a go. O.K? So, this monologue is called *On stage on both* and it is written by Jonathan Stevens who participated in the first phase of the project. (Heh-hem ...)

(Reads)

On stage on both.

Constantly on.

One comes easier depending on the day, the mood, the students. Where in my head did that come from?

I cry often because it has been so long since I have been up there, rather, I'm honing these new skills (he tells himself).  
What is more natural?

But as time passes, it's easier.  
Easier to watch, to switch hats.  
Growing accustomed to this newness.  
Watching the fulcrum go one way.  
Always pulled one way, but when it comes  
To doing it  
For the students,  
I could not imagine playing a better role.

It's a funny thing to go from hours in the studio, having perfected every verb you're capable of—  
Found motivations (a clichéd gig).

After that, years ago, after that exercise,  
I altered my thought patterns some,  
In my interactions, my pursuits, my work,  
All based on a verb.  
It became second nature to find it.  
I still do.  
Identify the kiddo, name the goal, find the route.  
They go hand in hand—for me, at least.

For other actors I've known,  
I'm sure they'd cringe.  
Last resort, they'd say.  
The "those who can do, those who can't teach" approach  
—again, as clichéd as that shit is.

INTERLUDE 2

It's a nicer group—more real—I say that  
Having extracted myself from the broken hearts  
And escapees.

Teachers. They're the real ones.  
They can do anything.  
Funny to think both professions have been scoffed at from  
Time to time.

Both hard.  
What do you do?  
I'm an actor.  
Oh.  
What do you do?  
I'm a teacher.  
And?  
On stage on both.  
On scaffold, is more like it.  
If one accepts it as that.  
I've gained more respect for my teachers since becoming one since, it's tougher  
than any other profession I know.

Actors—sure, it's a tough life.  
Tough to put the pieces together, tough to nail a life down, tough to remove  
yourself from one bed and place yourself in another.  
Tough to be wrapped up in the removal of oneself from the self and look in and/or  
remove yourself for the sake of expulsion.

Teachers—do they even question their motivations behind it?  
I'm sure they do—if the job doesn't sing, or the student's don't glow—it's only  
natural.

But, really.  
Are there any out there who believe they are not being the ultimate contributor?

But the art now. Wow.  
That's where the canker gnaws.  
Art—art and education.  
The ultimate contribution.  
Become yourself, kid.  
But, how?

Here's a chord.

Become what's real, buddy?

But how?

Here's space.

Discover everything child?  
But where?

Inside.

What better a combo than that of someone who can put on the mask that draws out the demons and open opens their arms into which the exorcized run?

Harsh, yes. But how?

On stage on both.

On fire.  
A gift to be able to stop talking about the self for some time and give the light to those who deserve it.

The next ones.

The promise that all we're devoted to, all the past we've collected, all the identities we've played, the shows that have closed, the moments frozen-all of those can come with us and contribute to the next ones.

I have a place where dreams are born and time is never planned.

Oh, that's true. So constantly true.

Teacher: Good work researcher. Your recitation was clear and well-paced. How was presenting that monologue for you?

Researcher: Well, as much as I don't want to admit it ... that was kind of hard. I kind of feel a bit out of breathe and I don't know, I just had a lot of questions about the whole monologue. You know, like I wanted to figure out more about this person's experience writing it and stuff. I didn't feel in the moment ... you know ... absorbed in the character ... I guess there really is a difference between a reading and a dramatic reading or performance of a text ...

A/r/tographer: Absolutely. I think your point that it takes time to hone artistic skills that make things like performing a monologue effortless and engaging are the result of a lot of hard work. But, you know, as much as I'd like to continue this conversation, I really think we need to just include the rest of the monologues at

INTERLUDE 2

this point and wait until Chapter 3 to analyze them in detail alongside the rest of the data collected.

Artist: That sounds good to me except that I really, really wanted to present *Gallop apace* by Maisey Roberts for you all. Could I just do that one and then we can include the remaining monologues after that?

Teacher: Isn't that monologue the one you performed at the University of British Columbia's theatre in education evening?

Artist: Yeah, that's the one. I performed it there and then showed my performance of that piece to the author before we interviewed her about it.

Researcher: Alright, then let's hear it.

Teacher: I think the correct phrase is: On with the show!

(Artist Reads:)

Self-doubt is a funny thing, especially when you are staring into a crowd of pimply faces. I feel it, feel its hot fingers creeping up my neck, while I try desperately to convey the kind of orgasmic excitement that this speech should inspire.

*Just listen to this! I say, get a load of this rhythm!*

It happens every time I teach *Romeo and Juliet*. There are three, maybe four scenes that just get the better of me. They take over my body. I can feel it coming, feel this surge of energy as I get ready for the passage.

*Who can get up here and break up the syllables for me? Andrea? "Gallop Apace" what is that?*

They look at me blankly. My eyes are on fire; I gesture back to the board, and recite it again for them:

*Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds! If this were purely iambic pentameter, I ask them, what would it sounds like? Anyone?*

Again I scan the room for some glimpse of recognition. The spark I am looking for, that tells me I am reaching someone, anyone who cares as much about this poetic trick as I do. I sigh.

*Let's review.*

*What-DOES-i-AM-bic-PENT-a-MET-er-SOUND like?*



THE MONOLOGUES

Now I have lost a couple of them. They think I am an absolute nut.

*O.k...it-SOUNDS like-THIS the BEAT ing OF your HEART!*

If Juliet was using only iambs in this line, she would be saying “ga-LLOP a – PACE.” Do you think that’s how she’d say it? I ask.

*“That would sound stupid.”* says Trent.

*Yes!* I practically shout. *Yes, Trent! it would sound stupid!*

Trent is surprised. He does not normally inspire such positive outbursts from his teachers, I suspect.

*So how would you say it, if you were playing Juliet?*

The class snickers a little, at the thought of Trent in drag. I go with it.

Go on, Trent, close your eyes. You are sitting in the upper window of your home. Romeo, whom you have recently married, in secret, will be back under the cover of night. You will probably make out. Right? You are excited. But it is still daytime! You are asking, in this speech, that Apollo run his horses across the sky a little faster today, am I right? His steeds. His “fiery-footed” steeds. Who can tell me what that means? Why are their feet fiery?

Ayesha jumps in. *“they are pulling the Sun!”* she blurts out.

I can see she is proud of herself too—she hated this class last week, and now she is piecing together this puzzle with the rest of us. Well, with me and Trent at least—I don’t know about the rest of them yet.

And this is when the self-doubt rears its head a little. All of a sudden I can see myself in front of this group, as if I am staring in at the class through a window. What am I doing? Flailing around, jumping and whirling and dancing to get this language into them. I want so desperately for them to care. They will care, I tell myself. They must. How could anyone hear this language and not care?

So, back to Trent—

*How would Juliet say this?*

He responds sheepishly, as though he doesn’t have the answer.

*Gallop Apace.*

*Right Trent. Right. GALL-op a Pace.*

INTERLUDE 2

That's how we would say it and that's how Juliet would say it too. But Why? Why does Shakespeare write it this way? Juliet is breaking out of her rhythm for this one—and we know that doesn't happen by accident. What is going on here?

A couple of students shift in their seats. Many of them are thinking about break time. About their sports game this afternoon. About the headline news this morning, or the awful things their friend said to them at lunch. But a couple of them are really considering my question, I just know it.

*GALL op a PACe.*

*This is not the rhythm of a beating heart now is it?*

I am moving my body more and more now, waving my arms and flailing a little. They may or may not care about this particular lesson, but it is obvious to me, and to them, that this might be the most exciting moment in my week. In a matter of seconds, one young student will Get It. Someone will See The Magic. They will Hear what I hear. I could pee my pants from the anticipation. But that wouldn't be very appropriate for a teacher, would it? So, who will it be?

Before I know it, I am galloping around the room. I can't help myself. I know that this makes me the lamest teacher around. Not only do I embarrass them with my frank discussions of adolescent sexuality, now I am whinnying around the room like a fool. I am beet red, I am sure of it. And I bet my underarms are wet through my shirt.

This is the day though. Look forward to this lesson all term.

GALL-op a-PACE

GALL-op a-PACE

GALL-op a-PACE

I am free like the steeds. I am crossing the sky, pulling my own chariot of begrudging, stubborn, awkward teenagers behind me.

Artist: O.K so, I know we said we wouldn't read these last two monologues but, I at least want to introduce them ...

Researcher: By saying what ... now for the last two monologues?

Artist: No, of course not ... I just want to say (in an over-the-top voice) And now for the last two monologues!

THE MONOLOGUES

*If we shadows have offended*

By Jonathan Stevens (Participant in first phase of the project)

Offstage Voice: If we shadows have offended, think but this and all is mended.

Teacher: I love it, I really do! It's so rewarding! I hate it. I hate it! I want to quit! I go back and forth between loving it and hating it. Thankfully most of the time it leans towards loving it. Otherwise, I'm not sure what I'd do. Teaching is all consuming for me. It sucks me dry. I don't know how to give less of myself to make it less demanding. Their minds are so active, it's nearly impossible not to want to get right in there and show them a lesson.

Inner Voice: Can I sustain this? How do others do it?

Benjamin can you and Blake work on the herb fetching scene? ... Yes, begin with "These are the forgeries of jealousy".

Debbie and Rosie can you prompt the lovers scene between Audrey and Harrison. They're almost off book but, they'll need a few prompts.

Offstage Voice: (Announcement-buzz sound from playground opening)

Sorry for the interruption. Teachers remember that the playground's official opening is happening at 1pm today. Please ask your students to line up at 12:55. Primaries will go to the East side of the Playground. Intermediaries on the West side. A reminder that the school band is rehearsing at 12:30. Senior girls basketball at Kitchener at 3:15. Have a nice morning children and teachers.

Teacher: Mechanicals! Can I have all the mechanicals? Pheterachart, Lulu, Caroline ... Oh right, Valerie's at ESL. He should be back in 10 minutes. Can Laughlyn read Valerie's lines?

Offstage Voice: Knock on the door (and Beatrix enters).

Teacher: OK everyone Beatrix has just arrived from the University to work with us. Can you come to the carpet?

Inner Voice: Oh my God! This is chaos. We need to work on the individual scenes. But, let's work on the ensemble while Beatrix's here. Bathroom! I maybe shouldn't have had that second coffee. I need to go to the bathroom while Beatrix's here—it's my chance.

Offstage Voice: It's mine. No—It's Mine! Give it back.

INTERLUDE 2

Teacher: Blake and Benjamin please join us. Yes, I know you want to continue working on your scene. You'll have more time after recess. I love this chaos.

Offstage Voice: [Knock on door]. Can we have your attendance sheet?

Teacher: Oh Yeah! Lulu can you give the monitor the attendance sheet? Laughlyn Ho is here so don't mark him as absent, just put as late.

Offstage Voice: Hey-Laughlyn C's back from ESL.

Teacher: O.K. everyone Beatrix's going to work on the "If we shadows have offended" ensemble piece with you ... I know you weren't here yesterday Lisa but, we'll include you. The 5 fairies can you come with me? Beatrix, Gabriel is with the Math LEAP program, but he should be back soon. And, Sophia is in resource.

Offstage Voice: [Announcement—buzz sounds] Sorry for the interruption again. Teachers can we have a brief 5 minute meeting at recess about the playground opening. In the staff room at 10:30—thank you and I apologize for the interruption.

Inner Voice: Ah, this is crazy! There's too much going on! Oh my God, Daisy is reading without me asking her to. And Laughlyn ... he's memorized the entire first scene!

Offstage Voice: If we shadows have offended, think but this and all is mended—

Teacher: Are those cue cards? Oh my God! Benjamin and Blake have created cue cards on their own to remind them of their lines!

Fairies let's work on the revels dance. Let's begin from the circle formation. Sophia, you're kneeling down so the audience can see Titania in her bower.

Offstage Voice: If we shadows have offended, think but this and all is mended—

[Knock on the door] We're collecting field trip forms for the Water-Mania outing.

Offstage Voice: Mr. Hayes, can I go to the bathroom?

Teacher: Yes Debbie. Who is going with you?

Offstage Voice: Lulu can you come with me?  
Sure, we can practice our lines while we go!

[Sound of the recess bell is heard].

Teacher: I love it

## CHAPTER 3

### MOMENTS SUCH AS THESE

Each time I re-read the monologues collected during the study, I am re-minded that this research is about the voices and experiences of the men and women who gave their time, experiences and perspectives to it. Their stories, as represented in the monologues and interviews, are depictions of moments in their lives that for some reason, have lingered with them. Out of all of the thoughts in their minds, memories that dwell within their physical bodies and unspoken resonances that their creative and spiritual beings possess, they shared for a few hours their thoughts and dreams, concerns and desires. In consideration for the stories that participants shared with me, and because I feel privileged to have been able to learn from and listen to them, I have set this chapter aside to present the information collected from the participants. Sometimes lengthy transcripts from their interviews and excerpts from their reflective writing have been presented in this chapter. In order for me to present this information in a discernable and logical way, I grouped the “moments of our shared time together” in three ways: according to *themes*, *participants* and according to questions that emerged from and informed my *research questions*.

The purpose of this chapter is to share the experiences of the participants and answer the first research question that considered what the experiences of Conservatory trained actors turned teachers are like. In order to answer this central question with regard to the content being explored, additional questions arose. These included: What are the lived experiences of artist-teachers? What are some of their challenges? What are some of the skills that these individuals develop in acting programs that benefit them as educators? How does one’s actor training affect their educational pedagogy? How does preparing for a classroom differ from preparing for a role? How are they alike? By beginning with such questions, numerous tensions arise and new clarifications must be made. For example, participants were invited because they hold an acting degree and then pursued teaching. Given these parameters initial questions about their experiences acting and teaching, studying acting and studying teaching had to be broached. Once this was done and related data collected, information was grouped into the following themes:

1. After deciding to pursue teaching participants experienced a period of adjustment.
2. Felt experiences in actor training programs taught participants how to teach drama and theatre.
3. Creating art has a positive influence on one’s teaching.
4. Acting school develops an aesthetic, noetic sensibility.

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Part of the reason that these four themes emerged as most significant from the participant interviews and monologues, is that they all in some way had something to do with the intersections between art making and teaching. Since I am interested in a/r/tographical methods, or the influence that one's art making has on one's teaching and research, and vice-versa, the connections between art making, teaching and research were aspects of the data that I naturally gravitated towards. In this way, understanding why participants wanted to teach, what their educational experiences in acting and education programs were like and how their acting programs impacted them as individuals and professionals, were of interest. What I also looked for across interviews, when I was looking at possible themes, were commonalities between responses from participants. For example, since Ardele, Solomon and Darcy all spoke about the transition they experienced as they decided to pursue teaching, I chose to focus on this occurrence in the first theme.

This first theme was a significant one to consider because for the individuals in this study, their first love was acting and it wasn't until they had spent at least eight or nine years after acting school pursuing, with varying levels of success, stage, film, television, dance and radio work that they decided to consider teaching as an alternative way to share their love for the theatre. This decision was made after years of thought.

The other three themes seemed to be more organic in that they all in some way represented the way(s) that creating art in or after acting school affected the individual's way of being in the world and consequently their teaching. While at first it seemed as though it was obvious that one's creative and artistic experiences would influence and affect their educational and teaching experiences and insights; I was still surprised to hear participants describe how going through their acting program taught them to teach and how performing in a show while on practicum gave one teacher candidate more confidence in the classroom. In many ways, the last three findings exemplify a reciprocal relationship between teaching and art making that has a positive influence on these particular individuals. This can once again be classified as a/r/tographic because in order to feel successful as a teacher, participants had to create art. This supports the exploration of my second research question which sought to consider whether or not creating a monologue would benefit the new actor-teacher. However, oftentimes it wasn't until participants took part in the interviews for this project and/or wrote their monologue about an educational issue, that they became aware of the full impact that their art making had on their teaching, such as when Ardele spoke about the way that writing her monologue *The Math Lesson* helped her to overcome her childhood block about being in a math class. In my understanding of a/r/tography, this highlights the importance of the reflective "graphy" aspect of the methodology. In this research, using a monologue as a form of reflection in an a/r/tographic sense proved to be an important form of writing for Maisey and Ardele as evidenced by the way that Maisey was able to move through feelings of self doubt about her teaching and Ardele discovered her own personal block from past experiences that were holding her back in her own math teaching.

To further explore the experiences of participants through the interview data, I now turn to the four themes and relevant transcriptions from the research project.

### 3.1 THEME 1: AFTER DECIDING TO PURSUE TEACHING PARTICIPANTS EXPERIENCED A PERIOD OF ADJUSTMENT

Narrative data from across the interviews indicates that participants felt that when they decided to pursue teaching they had to adjust to giving up on their dream of becoming an actor. Coming to terms with this reality was a struggle for some of the participants. This is a significant issue to consider because it speaks to the reality that people who come to teaching from a performing arts background may be doing so to earn a living or as another way to use their talents. It also indicates that the boundary position identity described by artist-teachers may begin when one considers teaching instead of after one is a teacher as previously thought. The following narratives discuss how participants dealt with this negotiation of their identities.

Ardele: One of my biggest challenges moving from acting/theatre to education/teaching was on a personal level coming to terms with the decision not to pursue acting as a profession anymore. Among actors there is an old joke that “those who cannot—teach” and this was something that kept holding me back.

This quotation shows how Ardele was deeply affected by her decision to no longer pursue acting. Throughout her interviews this statement affects her in various ways. Ardele chooses to deal with her insecurities as a new teacher and her sadness about leaving acting by performing in a one-woman show during her practicum and organizing social activities for her teacher education cohort. Writing her monologue (*The Math Lesson*) for this research project was also a part of her adjustment to teaching math. She says:

Ardele: Writing my monologue actually helped me speak to one of my frustrating moments as a teacher candidate when I didn't have any confidence in teaching math. That writing process really helped me go back and look at my childhood where the frustrations surrounding math were formed and to then unpack where all the related self-esteem issues were hiding. I knew I also had to go through that sort of process to embrace teaching math and overcome my challenge about leaving acting behind if I wanted to become an effective teacher.

This comment shows how Ardele was able, through the writing of her monologue, to realize how her past experiences as a math student impacted her in her own math classroom. This highlights her process of recognition experienced through the writing of her monologue. As indicated, Ardele feels that this *currere* like process is a part of her journey to becoming a more effective teacher. Solomon also talks about his reasons for pursuing teaching and how his shift from actor to teacher was made easier because of the BEd program he took.

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Solomon: I think that I did my BEd because I wanted something to fall back on ... I didn't know if I would go into teaching but, I couldn't imagine having nothing else. There was also a certain amount of parental and spousal pressure. I guess because I got into the ACE (Artist in community) program I realized that maybe I could do both (acting and teaching). I definitely think my program helped me make the shift from acting to teaching a little easier because it was all about embracing the artist educator and not about leaving your art behind.

For Solomon, pursuing teaching was about expanding his opportunities for the future. This perspective along with the ACE program's focus on being an artist educator helped him to see himself in multiple ways before he entered a classroom. In choosing to emphasize the identity of the artist educator rather than teacher I feel that the ACE program helped Solomon to see the value of embracing not only his new educator identity but to continue to value the experiences and expertise that he had accrued as an actor, director, dancer and writer. This exemplifies how embracing multiple identities rather than trying to become this or that like Ardele felt she had to do might help with the period of adjustment to teaching as experienced by Ardele. Solomon's positive response to the focus on the artist educator in the ACE program also suggests that talking about the multiple perspectives that actors or artists bring to teaching during one's education degree may help the artist transitioning into teaching. Altogether different from the experiences of Solomon and Ardele, Darcy describes making the adjustment from being an actor to being a "teacher" before her BEd.

Darcy: When I stopped auditioning and decided to work for Backroads I was really conflicted because on the one hand I loved what I was doing, being out of doors, teaching people about hiking, biking and ecology or the history of an area. But, then on the other hand, I was also dealing with giving up my dream that I had invested so much time and just everything into. So there was this huge struggle there for me. But actually once I made the decision to stop trying to pursue acting I never regretted it as time went on because I was happy with my life.

Rather than adjusting to the idea of being a teacher before her BEd, Darcy's excerpt suggests that she experienced this transition of giving up on her dream before she returned to school. The last sentence in this passage suggests that it was because of other life events rather than not acting that erased her regret, despite still experiencing a struggle about making this decision. Although she did not experience the transition from being an actor to teacher or actor-teacher when Ardele or Solomon did, during their education programs, Darcy still had to work through no longer seeing herself as an actor. These three examples show that although there is no specific moment or time that one experiences or deals with the transition between being an actor and being a teacher, a process of adjustment exists for all of the participants.



In particular this process was made easier for Ardele when she acted and wrote a monologue during her BEd. Solomon's ACE program on the other hand, emphasized the dual identities of the artist and teacher in society throughout his studies, making his transition into teaching more about adding onto his prior knowledge than making him feel like he had to see himself in a completely new light. Because this transition is a complex and uniquely individual process of becoming I feel that in order to fully theorize and articulate my ideas about dwelling in an in between space(s), where identities are shifting and overlapping, that time needs to be spent theorizing this borderland space and these emergent identities. For this reason, the third Interlude will be dedicated to a conversation of this nature and will be used to help inform the first understanding in Chapter 4.

### 3.2 THEME 2: FELT EXPERIENCES IN ACTOR TRAINING PROGRAMS TAUGHT PARTICIPANTS HOW TO TEACH DRAMA AND THEATRE

When I listened to the new teachers in this study talk about their felt experiences in University acting programs and then as teachers who had to create these creative experiences for their own students, Solomon Davis' interview about developing creativity kept coming back to me. One particular passage that exemplifies this is:

Solomon: Basically, there was no real method in my teacher education that was used to help me learn to teach my own students to develop creativity. I basically had to just set up activities on my own that would allow kids to explore...so, for example (since I teach drama and visual arts to all of the kindergarten to grade eight students in my school) in drama class I play music for my students and let them come up with their own movements and I turn the music down low ... much like my acting professor had done for me ... and then the kids move around ... so, that the only judgment you have to worry about is what is going on in your own head.

Solomon goes on to talk about how creating a safe place for learning is key in the arts and how he feels that people who have experienced embodied learning find it easier to teach in the arts. He says: "I am lucky to have gone through an acting program and worked as an actor because I experienced how theatre activities and rehearsal processes etc. work. I just know how to use them, what it feels like to use those exercises ... there is just so much more understanding. So in a sense theatre school more than teacher education prepared me to teach (theatre and drama)" (2009).

This description discusses how experiencing first-hand an activity in acting school that is taught through embodied, kinesthetic, hands on methods becomes a part of ones muscle, auditory, intellectual, emotional and imaginative learning. This means that learning is not solely taught through lectures, readings or essays and instead builds success and confidence, in the case of Solomon's teaching, because it fosters embodied and metaphysical learning. Other participants also discussed the ways that their teaching was influenced by their actor training and for this reason I think it is an important theme. For example, if teacher candidates have

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conservatory style training, teacher education programs that offer drama and theatre focuses may adapt their programs to the gap in technical education that these acting students may have such as learning more about set construction or stage management. Questions that related to and informed this finding broadly include: *How does preparing for a classroom differ from preparing for a role? How are they alike? Have you ever used your actor training in your teaching? How does preparing for a classroom differ from preparing for a role? How are they alike?* I have included answers to some of these questions as related to this second theme because I think that they relate and deepen ones understanding of how experiencing art making helps one to teach art. The reason that I have included extensive excerpts from the interview data in this section is to illustrate as accurately as possible the precise experiences of the participants in relation to the second theme and answer some of the questions stated in italics. To begin, Ardele talks about the similarities and differences between preparing to act and preparing to teach.

Ardele: I find comparing preparing for teaching and preparing for a role to be a difficult question to answer. In preparing for a role you generally already have a script. You need to learn your lines and rehearse, so that your performance is as close as it can be to the original every time. In the classroom there is no script per se, but what you do in your classroom is very scripted. So this is what I found confusing for me. On one hand, I really wished someone handed me a script of day one, through to June 29. Done! Learn my part and off I go! But that did not sit well with me ... I was trying to give myself structure (a script, so to speak) while at the same time trying to have these “in the moment” learning experiences. Having these at the same time seemed impossible to me. The classroom is a lot like a stage. There is an audience, hopefully ready to listen, and you do inhabit the role of teacher when you enter the room. But I now realize the difference. The relationship between the audience (students) and teacher (actor) is one that requires participation and interaction. This is not to say that a traditional night at the theatre does not require interaction between audience and actors, it does. We measure success by their reactions, however with the classroom audience, you must assess and evaluate them individually. What you are looking for from a classroom audience is much deeper and has to be measured in a more specific way.

In this quotation Ardele describes the similarities and differences for preparing for a role and preparing to teach. What I think is unique about this particular passage is the way that Ardele seems to understand preparing for her classroom lessons through the perspective of an actor. It appears as though to understand the differences between her audiences she almost has to begin with the kinds of interactions that she is most comfortable with, the actor and audience in the theatre, to then understand the differences and similarities between her new role as a teacher and her “classroom audience”. This suggests that Ardele has developed a disposition to seeing or making sense of what she is doing through the eyes of a

performer. In this way, Ardele's actor training frames her ways of knowing or coming to understand the new educational experiences she is having. From the perspective of the artist-in-residence, Maisey also describes the connections that she has made between her art and her teaching.

Maisey: My art really impacts my teaching and my teaching conversely impacts my art ... so for example when I was working with ArtStarts in the schools, as an artist in residence, I really made sure that teachers understood what my practice was, in part because it was a niche market (because I only use recycled materials) but, also because when working with under-resourced schools my work doesn't require supplies or any material investment on the part of the school. And it also fosters an environment for a discussion about planned obsolescence and planning for things to become obsolete. My background in the past 6 years is something that I would call mostly a kind of physical practice. It is based in object animation which is puppetry using found objects and which is based in recycling and repurposing found/expired objects in our surrounding environments and endowing them with a personality and a story and a character and applying the principles of narrative onto everyday objects. In my personal practice outside of the classroom I have a completely exploratory practice and I think of it as moving visual art. It is performative, time based and has the principles of time and space. It is also making pictures with objects and then making those pictures move but, unlike in a computer program, the only way I can make those pictures move is by having other people collaborate with me. This let's me take on kind of a directorial role when I work with puppetry groups and explore how by using these kinds of objects we can create characters and stories out of them. So, then when I transfer this into a school the way I prepare for teaching is similar to how I would direct or prepare my collaborators for a show. Students all know my premise so they look for retired objects from home and we inevitably end up with way more cell phones than anything else ... and that fosters a conversation about: why do we have so many broken cell phones? This is a product that is only around 10 years old so why are they all broken? And I think it fosters some really interesting discoveries on the part of the student and then it is really interesting talking about the aesthetics of it: what kind of character is made out of a piece of wood vs. a broken cell phone or a cork? And then this brings in some really interesting material explorations. But I guess since I direct and act in my own art practice I prepare for teaching in the same way. I share what I do with students and do the same work I do currently on my own with them.

During her time in acting school Maisey reached a point where the Conservatory-creating-a-company training that she was receiving no longer complimented the physical, Comedie D'Ellarte work that she discovered herself interested in pursuing. However, because she had learnt about getting in touch with her body, breathe and trusting the creative process in theatre school, and was also invested in

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completing her Double Honors in Theatre and Philosophy, she decided to finish her dual degrees rather than pursue additional training in physical theatre. However, Maisey said she felt frustrated that her acting classes were not geared to what she was interested in. Consequently, since University, Maisey has taken the training she received and created a performative and teaching practice that really attends to her interests in improvisation, process driven, physical theatre that builds community and challenges perceptions of objects. This is a focus that she discovered was interesting and important to her during her time in theatre school. Thus, because she received what may be considered somewhat general training in acting, movement, voice, singing and dance, she had a foundation that she could build her own practice on. Since Maisey's approach to teaching and art making appear quite similar as she describes preparing for teaching as a transfer of what she does when directing collaborators for her own shows, one might venture to say that her acting/art informs her teaching to such an extent that they are almost indistinguishable.

I think that Ardele's and Maisey's reflections on how their art making and acting training affect what and how they teach are quite interesting to consider because Ardele has completed her BEd degree and Maisey's teaching is as an artist in residence. As an artist in residence Maisey has always had a classroom teacher in the room with her and has thus not had to focus on all of the aspects of what being a teacher means to Ardele. In this way it makes sense that Ardele sees preparing for a role and preparing to teach as quite different from Maisey who approaches her art and teaching in the same way. This indicates that the juxtaposition of artist/researcher/teacher is a complex one that can be viewed in multiple and even contradictory ways. Also related to this theme is Solomon's response to the following question: *Have you ever used your actor training in your teaching?*

Solomon: Having gone through an acting program myself in theatre school is what made me able to create felt experiences more readily for my students because if I hadn't gone through those experiences I wouldn't know how they worked. I could read about them in a book like anyone going through a teacher education program who didn't have acting training experiences and see how it could work but, having experienced how it could work ... it is like I know how to use it, what it feels like to use it and so, there is just so much more understanding and confidence ... so, theatre school more than education prepared me to teach.

Solomon's sentiment, that his acting training helped him to learn to teach, indicates that he may think that if someone can do something they can teach it. This comment is actually somewhat problematic because although I would agree that if you know how to play tag, you should be able to get others who have never played with you to also join in, there are still additional steps and processes involved in getting other people to know what you know than simply having done an activity yourself. So, although yes, Solomon may have more confidence and understanding and may in fact be more successful teaching in a theatre class than someone who

doesn't have this background, one's personal abilities or background as a trained actor may not always make one a successful teacher. Rather, it appears that thinking about one's actor training informs one's teaching. For instance, Darcy's background in acting helped her embrace the process of learning within her lessons.

Darcy: As a teacher I think my training helped me to develop the sense that I can go with "what will emerge" in a classroom lesson ... kind of like trusting the process in acting ... I'm also not afraid to take some risks as a new teacher and that's because of the influence I have from trusting the process of learning that I developed in theatre and drama (even though of course I know the product or learning outcomes for students are important too). As a teacher I guess I try to borrow from the artist a bit but now I am interested in honing my teaching skills. I think I have different skills to develop than a new teacher without a performance background though. So just knowing subject content, planning, keeping up with new technologies, learning new ways to assess ... those are the kinds of things I am focused on instead of things like my speaking or reflection skills. There has definitely been a shift for me.

Consistent with her decision to stop pursuing acting and become a teacher is the compartmentalization that Darcy seems to be expressing in her approach to teaching. Although she indicates that there are aspects of her actor training that inform her abilities as a teacher, Darcy does not appear to hold a performer's perspective about teaching in the same way that Ardele's articulations of teaching were colored by her actor training. This suggests that although Darcy sees her actor training as providing her with certain speaking or reflection skills she is more focused on developing the abilities that she feels she needs make her a better teacher in new terms. This helps to illustrate the extremely diverse nature of individual's ways of understanding identity shifts and using their subjectivities. When Ardele attempted to link some of the skills from her actor training to her teaching she notes:

Ardele: You know I tried to use my actor training in my teaching. I thought about the objectives that I could use when teaching lessons. In acting school, we were trained to have incredible focus on the task at hand, while still being aware of what was happening around you. This has never left me and was an important skill in the classroom. In addition, the confidence I have in speaking in front of large groups of people, from my training, put me at ease in the classroom. The training also proved useful in classroom management. I was able to understand and respond accordingly to the dynamics I was seeing in my students. I believe this to be directly linked to my acting training.

In the monologue *On Stage on Both* and in Ardele's above response, the use of objectives in acting is said to be a starting point for understanding how to teach. Acting objectives in the Benedetti text (1970/1997) are described in relation to the levels of action in a play. These objectives are perhaps better understood as motivations that an actor may decide their character has for doing something.

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There are also a hierarchy of objectives that enable one to understand the way a play works based upon the structural levels of: individual transactions, made up of beats, beats that make up a scene and then the scenes that make up the overall action. Within the action are immediate, beat, scene and super objectives. These aspects of dramatic action are divided in this way to help an actor develop a character that has overarching and immediate intentions that carry throughout the play rather than just in a particular scene. These elements of dramatic action build upon one another and also help the actor to develop a character that evolves throughout the play. By relating teaching to objectives (i.e. motivations) participants are essentially saying that they see themselves, their students and their courses in moments/situations for understanding that are individual, evolving, collective, short term, long term and overarching. This parallel transfers a complex process for understanding an acting script and experience onto a teaching framework that may have potential for transferring information across paradigms when working with teacher candidates who have acting backgrounds.

Additionally, the ability to trust the learning process and adapt to unexpected classroom occurrences as discussed by Darcy, are abilities that are of great benefit to any teacher, let alone a new one. If hiring committees are made aware of some of the specific insights, such as this one, that an actor turned teacher can bring to a learning environment they may be more likely to see the value of the transferable skills an individual with this background brings to a potential school or workplace.

### 3.3 THEME 3: CREATING ART HAS A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON ONES TEACHING

By describing how ones teaching affected their art making and their art making affected their teaching, the participants in this study were describing a reciprocal relationship between their teaching and art making. Maisey definitely found this relationship to be significant for her work as articulated below.

Maisey: My classroom work definitely informs my professional work ... mostly because my students come up with the best ideas and I steal them ... but, seriously children have these fresh ways of looking at things ... and I think I am pretty imaginative but, really when I give the kids a crazy idea they send a whole bunch more at me and its like—crazy ideas abound!

While Maisey easily navigated the educational landscape as an artist between leading students through an art creation process and continuing her own, Solomon found teaching as a full time classroom teacher meant he focused on fostering artistic development in his students more than for himself. This suggests that when an actor becomes a full time teacher they may not have the time to create their own art, at least in the beginning years.

Solomon: I don't feel like I create much art for myself anymore. But, for instance I am getting ready to put on the holiday show at my school and so I have to go home and write an original script and then direct it so, that kind of fills that need to be creative.

In Solomon's case, he does not seem to yearn to make his own art. This does not seem to bother him although he is still directing students in school shows. Ardele however, did miss acting and this led her to perform a one-woman show while on her second teaching practicum. As a teacher candidate Ardele actually talks about the need to assert her identity as an actor to her teaching colleagues and the subsequent benefit that her acting had on her teaching. This is described in the following interview excerpt between Ardele and myself:

Ardele: During my second practicum I decided I wanted to do a clip of my one woman show because I wanted my BEd friends to really know me and performing is the only way for me to show people this part of me. You just don't really get me otherwise. Anyways, they loved the show and were like: Oh yeah! That was awesome!

Mindy: How did acting during that particular time affect your teaching?

Ardele: It definitely made me feel more connected to my creativity and it made me feel better to know I had other stuff going on ... like I didn't have to pigeonhole myself. And with the kids it made me feel like I had a secret or something and it made me more relaxed with my interactions and approach to the kids.

Mindy: It almost sounds like you found a different confidence in yourself as a teacher through that experience.

Ardele: Yeah. And its interesting that a lot of it was about having the recognition I wasn't getting from those kids ...

Mindy: So your teaching affected your art in that it made you want to perform because you weren't getting what you wanted in the classroom from that "audience". Did anything else change for you?

Ardele: You know, I really took theatre into the class a lot more after that too. Like we did science set up like it was a science television show with mike's set up for them to ask questions. I never thought of that before.

It is clear from the above narratives and conversation that the result of creating art while teaching are beneficial for the actor turned teacher because doing this kind of work especially for the teacher candidate appears to be a part of the process of crossing the border of actor to teacher. It also shows how when an individual like Ardele feels confident because she is acting she is more creative and comfortable in her teaching.

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### 3.4 THEME 4: ACTING SCHOOL DEVELOPS AN AESTHETIC, NOETIC SENSIBILITY

Throughout the interviews participants referred to a place/space/time that they had difficulty fully expressing but that was a result of the work they were doing within their acting program. As I tried to understand what was seemingly difficult to articulate for participants in a common language, I began to explore what kind of learning or disposition they were developing because of their artistic engagements and acting training. This search to name what participants described led me to writings about an aesthetic, metaphysical experience that I have come to refer to as noetic.

The term nous is a key term for Aristotle and Plato and is oftentimes referred to as: the eye of the heart or soul; mind or intellect. While there are many words for the mind in Greek what makes the nous particularly significant is that it refers to the metaphysical status of things that are intelligible and beyond purely physical understanding. Theologians such as St. Thalassios suggest that when man's nous begins with simple faith, it eventually attains a theology that transcends itself leading to a vision of the invisible and a self who can see the world without interpretation, in the way for example that one might grasp a concept or definition all at once without having to understand it in steps. The spiritual or metaphysical experiences that the nous has the capacity to begin with in order to then transcend it's self allows "light to be shed" onto anything so that one can see the familiar in new ways or as it actually is without the interference of conditioning and contextualizing. Although the roots of this term is theological and oftentimes defined in relation to an omnipresent God, the intention of using this idea is not to propagate any particular religion or system of belief. Rather it is employed in order to transcend human constructions including the ways in which the imagination and cognition make links in order to form what we understand to be knowledge. Acknowledgement must also be given to the controversy surrounding the domination of ocular-centric values that pervade not only religious discourses, where the seer of a particular truth is believed to have heightened abilities of sight and discernment, but cultures that link vision and language as a means of representation and understanding (Jay, 1995).

Rather than the term nous, Solomon spoke about working in a zone in acting school. He describes this fertile space below:

Solomon: I think I call my creative work being in the zone because I minored in religious studies while I was doing my acting degree and we actually got to talk about the whole idea of the zone there. It is kind of like a worshipping or praying zone. I think it was when I took Hinduism and we talked about the different incarnations of the Gods where you basically boil it all down to one word: God (G. O. D.) that means Generator. Operator. Destroyer. Brahman is the God that creates the world (and can re-incarnate), Vishnu is the one who keeps it going (through avatars) and Shiva is the destroyer so, there is this constant process of destruction and rebuilding. So, when an artist paints a picture they are incarnating Brahman because they are re-creating creation



and that is one of the reasons that you can go into the zones and have this sort of religious experience because you go into the zone and you are so focused on this one thing you lose track of everything. Then what you're doing becomes a meditation or prayer. In terms of theatre the zone is different because when you are working on a monologue you have to have a split focus where part of you could be in the zone but another part of you has to be analyzing the things you do for what works ... you have to be present. This isn't always the case though because then there are plays that when you walk off stage you have no idea what you just did because you were so "in the zone". So for me being present or in a moment is also like being in the zone. This creative engagement can be a G.O.D. experience where you are tapping into a part of your mind that you don't use all of the time.

Ardele also seemed to be talking about a metaphysical experience in her interview that she called being in the moment or connected.

Ardele: I think of being in the moment as being connected ... to a deep part of myself I would say. It happens when your mind is totally clear and you're not thinking of anything. This is the state we always had to try and reach in acting class during warm up. Just completely relaxed. You're trying just to be open and I think when you reach that in the arts its still you but you are at the most peace or the most calm that you are going to be. External distractions just don't affect you and you go somewhere out of time but you are still in space.

During an interview that I had with Darcy, she also described being given the opportunity to imagine and explore in her acting class that resonated with Ardele's description of being in the moment and Solomon's G.O.D. experiences. This conversation was as follows:

Darcy: And I really did like that time in acting class at the beginning in the dark where we were just given the chance to just move and make noise and listen to music and let it take you wherever you wanted. Like, if we could have just written down what was in our mind during some of those times it would be incredible. It was amazing. Just amazing because I don't think that there is anything else that will allow you that time. Because even in a meditation or reflecting in a journal you don't get that permission to really step out of yourself by going inside first.

Mindy: Can you try and explain that space? You say it is different from a meditation space, but can you try and articulate it so that someone who didn't experience it would understand?

Darcy: It was igniting your imagination and letting it take you somewhere ... and having the courage to follow that and not think about what you look like or what you were doing but, literally just being connected to this part of you ... but the perfect you ... It was all organic it wasn't planned. You were

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connected to everyone in the room even when you were working alone. But, it was on a different level. I think it was tapping into your creativity and letting it take you places.

Mindy: To places or levels that you didn't think that you were necessarily going to go. O.k. Can you try and explain that place you went to inside and how you were alone but connected?

Darcy: It was emotional and it felt like you were connected to you and everything all at the same time. There were no boundaries at all anywhere ... there was no stipulation of you needing to get here or there ... there was no remote sense of judgment. It was just your time to explore. I guess I can't describe it but I can still recognize it or parts of it.

Despite Darcy, Ardele and Solomon attempting to describe the place of exploration that led them to deep creative and imaginative work in acting school, the only person able to name this place was Solomon who used terminology from his religious studies course. This suggests that working creatively in a safe non-judgmental space over a period of time helps the individual to develop self-awareness and attunement to a deeper part of themselves. It also suggests that in order for participants to be able to talk about this kind of metaphysical or noetic learning, they need to be able to name this kind of experience.

#### *Working Noetically*

i thank You God for this most amazing day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today, and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing breathing any-lifted from the no of all nothing-human merely being doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and now the eyes of my eyes are opened.)  
(Cummings, 1992, p. 101)

As already mentioned, in order to make meaning of the theme that participants called being in the zone or in the moment in the interviews, I named these experiences noetic. To further understand this theme, I turned to the e.e. cummings poem above. In this poem, e.e. cummings' last line talks about how the ears of his ears awake and the eyes of his eyes are opened. This description returns me to Maxine Greene's descriptions of being wide awake (1995) and Antonin Artaud's

search to use theatre to appeal to one's internal world that would allow him/her to live what he calls authentically. Darcy, in her interview, talks about experiencing this as being more in touch with her true self. A self that is perfect and that she can now sometimes still recognize because she was given the chance to become attuned to understanding herself in this way during acting school. In this sense, there is an awareness process about oneself developed in acting school that helps to develop self-acceptance. This is important for an actor who must continually put him/herself up for judgment and critique at auditions and during performances.

Other skills that are honed during one's actor training that can be transferred to any situation especially teaching include: being empathetic, developing creativity and imagination, being confident at public speaking, and possessing improvisational skills. While these skills may also be developed in teacher education programs, participants discussed how their acting training helped them hone these particular abilities. Thompson, Davis, White and Roberts exemplify developing empathy when they likened their acting class to a family of sorts where you felt connected to a group of people on an intimate level. Darcy calls this:

Darcy: a relationship where in a short period of time you feel like you have watched someone go through a birth, a death, a marriage ... the most intimate moments of someone's life (even though they are on stage) ... and it's like you know you have gotten support from these people and you have given it as well ...

While Ardele feels that:

Ardele: there were actually a wide variety of people in acting school ... and so, one of the things that the acting program taught me was not to judge a book by its cover ... because there really were a lot of people I wouldn't have gotten to know otherwise ... it really taught me not to make assumptions about people. But, as far as personalities and characteristics it is hard to say ... obviously the one thing everyone had in common was empathy—otherwise you just couldn't do it. So, just really strong and empathetic people who had the desire to understand life from a different perspective was what I would say was the overarching thing about people in acting school.

Learning not to make assumptions about people, seeing life from another perspective and being empathetic are extremely significant skills for an educator who works with others because in a classroom filled with students, who have a variety of social, emotional and academic needs, a teacher that can quickly identify these needs is one step closer to quickly being able to find the correct way to meet them. Being responsive to others may have been a result of spending so much time on developing an ensemble in acting classes (i.e. by playing acting games such as pass the clap and developing the ability to give feedback to others) as Darcy describes in her excerpt. In this way, the residual affect of becoming attuned to responding supportively to others in acting school, is that one may positively be able to respond to others while teaching.

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Developing one's creative and imaginative abilities was another disposition honed during acting school that can benefit a teacher. Since Solomon was a part of Queen's University's artist in community education stream, the focus of his learning was somewhat different to that of the other participants. For example, fostering creativity and the imagination by creating felt experiences was a large part of Solomon's program. When pressed to describe what he felt creativity was, he said: "... it is the ability to create something out of nothing or to create things out of experiences you have had-basically the ability to think of things out of their context and put them in a new context" (Davis). In his education program this creativity and imagination were then used to develop felt experiences for his students in order to foster their own creativity and imagination. Solomon attributes going through acting school to enabling him to create felt experiences because if he hadn't gone through them in theatre school, he wouldn't know how they worked (Davis). In this way, the emotional, intellectual and embodied knowing that Solomon experienced in acting school enables him to draw upon the techniques and activities he needs to teach drama and theatre in his own classroom.

There was a discrepancy surrounding being comfortable teaching in front of other people and improvising within the data. While Darcy and Ardele felt that acting school helped them to feel comfortable speaking in front of others, which later helped them as teacher candidate's, Maisey's monologue is all about self-doubt and feeling worried about opening up in front of her students. This suggests that while performing in front of people as an actor may make it easier for some people to transfer this skill to an educational setting it is not the case for everyone. It may also suggest that obtaining a BEd degree helps one to gain confidence as a teacher, given that Darcy and Ardele have their BEd degrees but, Maisey does not; and that acting in front of others is a different skill to that of teaching in front of others.

### 3.5 FINAL THOUGHTS

As a way to consider and share the data from the interviews, I categorized participant narratives into four themes that address my research questions. These extended conversations provided insight into challenges that face new teachers with acting backgrounds and the influence that acting programs have on ones teaching. The first theme that I discussed really emphasized the theoretical ideas of existing in a boundary position that were outlined in the first chapter in relation to issues about fine arts teacher retention and the life experiences of Antonin Artaud. Since there has also been discussion about the borderlands in *a/r/tographical* literature, I have chosen to develop my theoretical thoughts about border theories and embed them in relevant literature in the third interlude. The reason for choosing to place this discussion in an Interlude is two-fold. First, I feel that a discussion about the borderlands should take place in a liminal space, because the borderlands are an in-between space. Second, given the frame of the story within a story that I am working within, I feel that the interlude is most suited to this discussion because the interludes are intended to be spaces that provoke and

deepen the meanings presented through the research in the chapters. Also, the integration of an a/r/tographic conversation into my theoretical discussion about the borderlands is a way to use my own perspectives as an artist, teacher, researcher and a/r/tographer to inform my thinking. This is an integral part of a/r/tographic research that exemplifies my use of the renderings contiguity, inquiry and openings. In this way, the third Interlude is a rhizomatic offshoot of the original research project that explores and represents my conceptualization of a rhizomatic curriculum. This illustrates the importance of what may have in another version of this book been discarded as excess or been reduced to a purely theoretical entry, rather than a combination of a/r/tographic inquiry and theorizing.

Thus, in the third interlude, there is a hybrid a/r/tographic dialogue and inquiry into the borderlands. This combination of exposition and dialogue is complimentary to the second and third understandings presented in the fourth chapter and helped me to re-consider what Artaud and Greene mean by being-wide-awake in a research capacity.

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## **BORDER THEORIES, LIMINAL SPACES AND BECOMING A CROSSROADS**

### LIMINAL SPACES & IDENTITY

In William Pinar's foreword to the first a/r/tography book called *A/r/tography: Rendering Self through Arts-Based Living Inquiry* (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) there is a discussion about the way(s) that the artist-researcher-teacher is given the space to dwell within in-between spaces that "... are neither this nor that, but this and that" (Pinar in Irwin & de Cosson, 2004, p.9). These dwelling places are described throughout this work and subsequent readings as: traversable spaces and boundaries; moments of praxis where making and thinking merge; and as movements within margins of intelligence and theory (to name a few). These dwelling places are also connected and integrated to and with the artist-teacher-researcher identities as places that link one identity to another. This understanding seems to necessitate spending time with the nuances of the artist, teacher, researcher (and their related in-between's) in order to understand the emotional, spiritual, intellectual and physical relationships that exist within and beside such relations. Irwin explains this perspective as dialectical where "... categories of thought (are viewed) as being in equal relationship to one another, thereby allowing the inherent concepts to vibrate constantly with active energy" (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004, p. 28). When one understands the relationship of the artist-teacher-researcher and the connections between as dialectical, the sense of living multiple identities through borderland spaces that connote liberating the individual from a certain fixed "identity" that might potentially stigmatize or oppress seems attractive. It might also suggest that one has an understanding of what it means to be an a/r/tographer.

However, when one is first confronted with what it means to be an a/r/tographer or to work a/r/tographically I feel that there is a process of understanding, questioning and inquiring that takes place in order to fully comprehend and embrace this way of being. For example, a teacher candidate with a fine arts background may have experience and theoretical training in art and research but may not fully understand what it means to be a teacher. This reality oftentimes leads to teacher candidates yearning for a list or set of criteria that can be "achieved" and "checked-off" as an indicator that if certain things are learned one "becomes a teacher". Thankfully I have never seen such a list but have witnessed numerous BEd students returning from an extended practicum with an answer to their own question(s). It thus appears that in the in between moment(s) of asking what it means to "be a teacher" and returning with a sense of what a teacher does

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(after living this role) the ambiguous process of growth, change and creativity connects the identities of the artist, researcher and teacher. *However, I would suggest that this understanding of the in between and identities of the artist-teacher and researcher do not necessarily imply understanding about what it means to be an a/r/tographer or to work a/r/tographically.* It is this differentiation that has been underrepresented in my readings on a/r/tography and of a/r/tographic research (where I have most often noticed that articles focus on articulating what it means to be an artist, a teacher and a researcher dwelling in an in between space but not on the synthesis of these parts into a reconstituted whole). Thus in order to extend the theoretical underpinnings of the a/r/tographic in between and the merging of the artist-teacher-researcher into a/r/tographer I will investigate how border theorists understand identity construction in the borderlands in order to understand their articulation of being a crossroads (and the implications of this understanding on a/r/tography (and for the artist-teachers in this study)).

#### *Border epistemologies*

Artist: Hey! This makes the whole artist-teacher-researcher boundary position more clear too!

Researcher: Exactly, but now ssshhh ...

The primacy of identity, however conceived, defines the world of representation. But modern thought is born of the failure of representation, of the loss of identities, and of the discovery that ... all identities are only simulated, produced as an optical effect by the more profound game of difference and repetition. We propose to think difference in itself independently of the forms of representation which reduce it to the Same, and the relation of different to different. (Deleuze, 1994, p. xix)

(F)or scholars doing border studies from the Mexican side of the line, it is difficult to see the border as mere metaphor, as the epitomized possibility of crossings, hybrids, and the like. (Vila, 2003, pp. 312–313)

When referring to the borderlands scholarship there are several differentiations and specifications that need to be stated in order to define the exact way in which this reference is and will continue to be used. For example, since borderland studies are interdisciplinary, contemporary trends in borderlands studies and border theory have influences from areas such as geography, political science, sociology, anthropology, economics and feminism. Benefits of multiple disciplines engaging with borderland theory and scholarship include creating bridges across disciplines that allow collaborative problem-solving to occur in relation to the social and political issues that often permeate this work. However, there are also significant problems with using this theory in such diverse ways. Pablo Vila (2003) has argued that it is precisely because “border theory now takes as its object of inquiry any physical or psychic space about which it is possible to address problems of boundaries: borders among different countries, borders among ethnicities within

the United States, borders between genders, borders among disciplines, and the like” (p. 308) that this approach has become homogenizing.

For this reason, when considering what it means to work a/r/tographically, where the hyphens in a/r/tography accent the borders as well as the resonances among the three, I suggest that one needs to spend time understanding what they think of when they think of themselves as an artist, teacher, researcher and a/r/tographer. This is essentially a process of drawing separate borders around ones experiences and identities so that one can understand them more deeply in order to then learn to cross these borders and eventually dissolve them. The reason for seeking to dissolve the borders and subsequently live with borders and non-borders is that most often borders are placed on a territory or person as a restriction meant to contain them. While some people grow to accept the boundaries that they dwell within and cannot contemplate moving outside of them, I believe that it is not until one has attempted to free themselves from the physical and psychological borders, that can and do exist, that one can experience what will be later discussed as pure immanence.

This does not necessarily mean that scholars should not use border theory in border studies (or any other area), but it does require that one conscientiously and considerately do so since there are also challenges to prevailing assumptions that border studies can only occur in geographical terms (i.e. much of the research on borderland theories and studies focus on the border between Mexico and the United States). My gaze first turned to the borderlands from the perspective of critical pedagogy where, according to Alejandra Elenes (1997) (in Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003), the borderlands were a way to advance the construction of progressive educational discourses by deconstructing notions of identity, culture and difference (p. 206). In this text, the borderlands were described as “the discourse of people who live between different worlds. It speaks against dualism, oversimplification, and essentialism. It is a discourse, a language, that explains the social conditions of subjects with hybrid identities” (Elenes, 1997, p. 199). While the work of border pedagogues continue to inform my understandings of the curriculum and the boundary positions of artist-teachers, I departed from some of these theories when I began to sense that critical pedagogues seemed to be espousing that it was only by changing an external system, like a school, that institutional change could occur. This solidarity “against” the institution for radical change, seemed destined to foster a climate for future “fighting” and “upheaval” rather than a deeper and more personal kind of empowerment and agency that aims at building community and consensus through dialogue, personal interactions and contemplation.

Gloria Anzaldua’s (1987) work on the borderlands as sites that can enable those dwelling there to negotiate the contradictions found in diverse settings also had an impact on my understanding of the artist-teacher’s boundary positions and the a/r/tographic in-between. Gloria Anzaldua published *Borderlands* in 1987 in order to represent her multiple and sometimes competing identities. This work was presented by constructing meaning in a hybrid way that incorporated narrative, poetry, storytelling and theory and contributed to my own decision to use inter-



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textual dialogue because by combining these kinds of text Anzaldua was able to bring emotional and personal nuances into her work that helped me to understand the borderlands in terms other than intellectual.

Artist: Hey, Anzaldua's format sounds a lot like working a/r/tographically. How come a/r/tographers never talk about this uncanny connection?

A/r/tographer: That's what I was thinking earlier ... I don't know exactly why...maybe because it is such a new method of research. But, you're right to point out that while there are references to the borderlands in a/r/tography as a way to understand the a/r/tographic in between, there isn't much a/r/tographical literature that acknowledges and discusses how borderland theory and border pedagogy inform it theoretically.

Artist: Well I think maybe researcher was just being a bit l-a-z-...

Researcher: Hold on a minute Miss "I need to warm up to read a few words" ...

Teacher: Come on you two ... this is supposed to be fun. Now listen, since we're talking about the borderlands and a/r/tography I thought I would mention that Belidson Dias (2006) talks about Walter Mignolo's (2000) notions of border epistemology in his PhD dissertation. In this work he develops border epistemologies as an act of decolonization of knowledge as developing an "other" thinking that displaces binary notions of self in relation to queer theories and film studies. I think that this whole idea of binary categories is applicable for us and ...

Researcher: (Interrupting) O.K. ... So, obviously you are trying to say that the very notion of a border implies that people construct binary categories in which one notion of the self gets privileged over another ... we get it.

Artist: Hey—if you have a problem with me don't take it out on her.

Researcher: What are you talking about?

Artist: Well, it just seems like you like the boundary between us and when I try and co-create meaning with you you either reject what I represent or try and make me feel uncomfortable.

Researcher: I'm sorry YOU feel that way. I assure YOU that I am simply trying to reverse the colonization that has been passed onto me (She exits).

Artist: (Under her breath) By trying to reassert yourself to me as an oppressor.

Researcher: (Realizing there is no where to exit, she returns) It seems like representing this process or border thinking (conocimiento forterizo) (Mignolo &

Tlostanova, 2006) is going to be harder to implement than I, er, we thought ... or maybe it's just me having trouble with it. If everyone else agrees, maybe I am wrong. I mean, how can aspects of myself hold such prejudices and values about other parts of me? And, how can I defend an a/r/tographical positioning if I am at odds with it myself? How can I resist particular kinds of control and power and change if I am also prescribing to them at least a little? Hhhmmm...I've heard that the borderlands are also considered a state of mind that can be interrogated through language (Urch, Dorn, & Abraham 1995, pp. 76-7) ... maybe I can ...

Artist: Excuse me.

Researcher: Yes.

Artist: I've been thinking and just need to acknowledge that I am aware that in part my identity and state of mind is contingent upon you. I get the sense that perhaps the academy that you in part represent may hold more power and dominance than my positioning but I don't deserve to be belittled or taken advantage of. I am an artist and in a process of transition from artistic to artist and from artist to researcher. I am and will continually navigate this relation and I need this to be valued and acknowledged.

A/r/tographer: Did that feel good?

Artist: You know it kind of did.

A/r/tographer: You know you just went through Anzaldua's first step of *nepantla*<sup>11</sup>?

Artist: I guess I did in some small way since that process is about exposing several identities to oneself in the in-between ... but, how could I have such an experience without teacher or researcher being affected?

A/r/tographer: How do you know they weren't?

Researcher: Hey-artsy...thanks for sharing—I mean it ... that was a brave thing to do and you're not the only one struggling with these steps<sup>12</sup> that have to be

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<sup>11</sup> The *nepantla* state is described as the first step in a four-step process developed by Anzaldua to become a border crosser. This first step requires that one begins a personal journey of self-awareness in order to acknowledge various worlds, frameworks, etc.

<sup>12</sup> The additional steps of Anzaldua's process are: *coaticue* (a position of hiding in which the female Goddess is at the center of theory potentially enabling an individual to kill the colonized parts of themselves); the *coyolxauhqui* (a process of putting the pieces that were taken apart in the *nepantla* and *coaticue* states back together...i.e., reconciling with the self and having self-acceptance/appreciation in relation to social, political and economic contexts); and *la conciencia de la mestiza* (or the one who crosses borders/the borderland consciousness).

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practiced over and over again ... and well ... for me learning about the coaticue step has been important as a female researcher because I have always felt as though I am “putting on a masculine persona” in this role. This goes back to my childhood when I was a tomboy who always wore hats and played sports at recess, rather than other games with the girls. My best-friend Caitlin and I were actually the only two girls who were allowed to play hockey, football and baseball in elementary school because we were “good”. But, playing with the guys meant that to be taken seriously I felt like I had to do some things “like a guy”. I guess I still feel that to be taken seriously as a researcher, I need to embrace some kind of masculinity that is equated with acceptance and success because some part of me feels like this is a role that I play that I want to be taken seriously at.

Teacher: So it is about learning to continually place oneself in a space of marginalization and resistance where one must constantly redefine everything around them in order to experience transformation (Orozco-Mendoza, 2008, p. 54). Hhhmmm ... that process resonates with the educational and autobiographical approach of engaging with the curriculum through currere that was mentioned earlier.

Researcher: You’re right it does! I guess the overlap lies in the way that both methods encourage the individual to look to past experiences that may be holding them back before being able to reconcile the issue or problem and then move on ... that means becoming a crossroads is a curricular experience than doesn’t it? Hhhmmm ... I’ll have to think about that.

You know artsy, I can see that because as an actor you really need to try things out in order to understand them, it was important for you to sort of work through those ideas yourself just now by ....

Artist: Thanks. But ...

Researcher: No buts. Thank you for teaching me how to engage in research a little differently ... even though it is still a little “new” ... and for also suggesting that we ask our research participants to write monologues that not only require them to use criticism and reflection but also inquiry and creativity to deeply reflect on an educational issue that they are struggling with in their journey of becoming a teacher. I think that this process will help them to reframe such moments as well as to develop awareness of their artistic and pedagogical relationships to themselves, others and their environments.

A/t/ographer: Multiple paths. *This is why we need to emphasize being a crossroads rather than a border crosser.* Crossroads can connect borders that are continually changing as a way to allow for an interchange of ideas, identities, cultures. Crossroads connote multiplicity, destruction, building and rebuilding between the various roads that merge and emerge from and to them. Crossroads

also allow teachers to take breaks from being border crossers (who in Giroux's (2005) border pedagogy are situated as continually asserting political and personal investments as oftentimes something other than they are in order to create for their own students the opportunities to be border crossers). Crossroads allow for rests and a sense of authenticity after a long journey.

Teacher: I like that.

Researcher: What?

Teacher: I like being seen as an individual who is authentic and not just as someone who has to get or give something to my students. I like that being a crossroads acknowledges that there are a lot of things going on in my day that affect me as a teacher and that sometimes I need to pause.

Researcher: And that changes come from within an individual and not by changing external paradigms, institutions or rules.

A/r/tographer: Alright, so ... o.k. ... if we are saying that the a/r/tographer is a crossroads and that coming to understand what being an a/r/tographer or artist-teacher means is an unfolding process that deterritorializes while strengthening the personal connections that are at its heart, than what are the borders for? I still don't understand how a crossroads just isn't an intersection of two roads ...

Teacher: According to Gloria Anzaldua (1987), borders are created to:

(D)efine the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish *us* from *them*. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place ... It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants. (Anzaldua, 1987, p. 3)

A borderland is not an easy place to be. It connotes silence, darkness, danger and a sense of homelessness. This intimates that the border crossing from artist to teacher or teacher to researcher can be a transition fraught with uncertainty, division, transition. For Anzaldua (1987) being a border crosser means that one is living *sin fronteras*, as a crossroads.

Artist: So wait a minute than ... if Anzaldua is talking about the borders (geographical, cultural, sexual etc.) as places that we need to cross then why does it seem like an a/r/tographer is always trying to get us to dwell in this border space or liminal space instead of just crossing through it (like you would a crossroads)?

Researcher: O.K here they are—my notes on *fronteras* and crossroads. Hheh-hhem ... So, in Spanish *fronteras* means borders and the word crossroads is called an *encrucijada*. So, I think that we have conceived of the border crosser as someone who moves between the spaces in between the artist-teacher-researcher identities

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and that *dwelling* in the borderlands is a result of these crossings. Now, an encrucijada or crossroads is not the same as a border crossing although it is being intimated that continually crossing different borders (or identities in our discussion) is the same as being a crossroads. But, when most people think of a crossroads they think of two roads literally crossing as the first image indicates. In this instance there is an assumption that one is going from one direction to another and that they are probably in a car driving straight through the middle in order to get from “here to there”.



*Figure 1. A Crossroads (America Heritage Dictionary, 2000)*

Researcher continues: However, the actual definition of a crossroads is “a place (or crucial point) where two or more roads meet” (American Heritage Dictionary, 2000) which suggests that the next image is also considered to be a crossroads.



*Figure 2. Crossroads (Dragonartz, 2009)*

Researcher continues: These images show a very different but consistently plausible image of crossroads that may change ones understanding of this seemingly uncomplex word. For example, in the first image a crossroads indicates

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that a decision in direction needs to be made and still seems fairly clear as to what the options are and how the road that is chosen is going to be relatively the same as the one that was arrived on. However, in the second image there are overlapping roads that cross, intersect, merge, converge, jam etc. It is difficult to see where one road begins and another ends. It is unclear as to whether or not crossing the spaces or borders between these roads is happening above, below, beside where it becomes harder to perceive where you are and where you may need to go. This second image shows the complexity and multiplicity of what being a crossroads might mean over a lifetime of committing to becoming through and as multiple identities in multiple places in multiple ways.

#### BEING A CROSSROADS: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT

The crossroads have been conceived of as an intersection between various identities that meet in “in between” and “conventional” spaces. In order to understand how the artist-teacher-researcher are border dwellers (in the in between spaces) I turn to a third image of a crossroads that reminds me as an actor/teacher/researcher and a/r/tographer that I am continually navigating.



*Figure 3. Los Encuentros (Quetzaltenango, Guatemala)  
(Courtesy of Nell van den Bosch-Levendig, 2008)*

The crossroads that performs my own a/r/tographical inquiry is not a highway rest-stop with full amenities and snack bar. Rather, the image that is conjured up in my mind is that of Los Encuentros near Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. It is an intersection where a main road in and out of the mountainous city meets dirt roads converging from a variety of directions. It is a busy intersection where numerous Mayan languages are spoken in addition to Spanish and occasionally English. It is a place for ending or beginning journeys as well as an area to navigate through on one's way to another destination. There are no comfortable waiting places at this

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crossroads and no protection from the constant sun or downpours during the rainy season. Souped-up school buses called “chicken buses” pack in riders past capacity so that when dangling from the outside of the bus is the only “seat” left, stragglers appreciate the opportunity to stand in the back of a pick up truck for their travel. When I first arrived in Guatemala and didn’t speak a word of Spanish, this crossroads terrified me as there seemed no rhyme or reason for selecting a bus to get on as luggage was ripped from one’s hands and tossed about with speed. However, after a few months in this country, Los Encuentros became a place that represented adventure, excitement and freedom to me because I realized that each road represented the possibility of a new place and experience that I not yet had. A place I could go to perform my own un/doing as “teacher” and be/coming as “adventurer, risk taker and traveller”. In the beginning, this crossroads emphasized chaotic and disconnected schedules, poor organization and constant waiting times (due to the break down of buses or other delays) to me. But as I spent more time in this space, provocative and inventive ways to travel, think and exist emerged which required me to embrace resilience, novelty and surprise rather than conformity, rationality and standardization because I got used to being adventurous, trying new things out and looking at the world in a new way.

Artist: I remember Los Encuentros and that time of life ... I had just finished acting school and was volunteer teaching in a completely foreign country after selling everything I owned to buy a plane ticket to volunteer as a teacher for a year. You know, it reminds me of walking the El Camino de Santiago pilgrimage for my honeymoon five years after being in Guatemala in that those were both “crossroads experiences” forcing me to give up a lot in order to learn/gain something new. It seems so contradictory to Canadian culture to think that the more we give up or lose, the more we gain ... but it was definitely true for me on El Camino as I gave up time to go there, a relaxing honeymoon, a lot of the things I brought with me that I eventually didn’t want to carry on the route...and when I gave up thinking that I could finish the walk because I was in so much physical pain, my ego kind of died leading me to gain a deeper experience and understanding what it means to live as a human being who is connected and interconnected to the physical and immaterial world ...

Researcher: *So then a crossroads can represent the simultaneous convergence of multiple ideas, concepts or experiences that are on their way to passing between given points from/to a variety of directions. In this way, even opposing and contradictory ideas and experiences have the opportunity to modify and reclassify along route. To be a crossroads means to continually be/coming by: seeking to recognize and allow for the shifting of directions, taking the time for deep moments of reflection, being attentive to surroundings and being open to new considerations or versions of oneself. For the artist/teacher being a crossroads requires that traditional notions of education, art and knowledge may need to be subverted as a means of rupturing the boundaries of educational discourse and normative axiologies in deliberate and considerate ways.*

*To be a crossroads means to be a representation of various experiences, values, ideas and perceptions that exist simultaneously and in contradiction. In this sense, one's work, self and life are constantly evolving and unfolding in and through time. Being an a/r/tographer is being a crossroads when the artist, teacher and researcher come together in moments of recognition for the way that the separate identities of artist-teacher-researcher and the spaces in between them connect and allow the whole to become greater than the sum of the parts. In this sense, one can continually work a/r/tographically but is living as an a/r/tographer when this sense of completeness is consciously understood by the individual.*

Researcher continues: So, wait a minute then, I'm not an a/r/tographer right now?

A/r/tographer: No, you're a researcher right now ... but ... since I'm talking with you I guess it can be possible to be an us and an I ...

Artist: Is that also how the whole "a/r/tographer" as a crossroads notion comes into play?

A/r/tographer: Absolutely. I mean, when I think of how a/r/tography borrows from the work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987) who describe how 'rhizomes' metaphorically relate to a network of connected identities, ideas, and concepts, I think of how rhizomes are horizontal stems of plants that grow longer roots underground while sending out shoots for new plants to grow above ground. The roots grow in all directions, with one point connecting to any other point. Like a mesh of lines on a road map, there are no beginnings or middles, merely in-between connections. In this sense if one visualizes a series of strong roots connecting the artist's work to that of the writer, teacher and researcher the spaces in between these seemingly separate identities disappear. Instead each identity is strengthened by another allowing for new directions/approaches/ideas to emerge—unrealizable when one chooses to "plant" themselves in a particular epistemology/subject/way of thinking or being.

Artist: Then why are we talking about a/r/tographers being crossroads if we already have the rhizome metaphor to understand the intersecting roots that strengthen and overlap?

Researcher: I think the difference and necessity of considering the crossroads is that you can't begin to separate the roots of a rhizomatic plant if you want or need to because they are so delicate and intertwined/interdependent. I think that each "road" related to the larger crossroads represents the individual artist, teacher or researcher and the individual journeys taken on each of these roads. These journeys can be rhizomatic but do not need to be and they *exist as moments that depict the in-between*. If you want to look at one journey on one road on its own and see it for its own significance separate from the whole you can also do this to strengthen the overall "journey". Since there is also a nexus point in the overlapping crossroads



### INTERLUDE 3

(like in the second image) moments when the a/r/tographer synthesizes, reflects, releases individual notions of consciousness and connects to the wider a/r/tographic community in which ideas of being-singular-plural<sup>13</sup> gain significance can be represented and taken as resting points or moments of deep conscious reflection that acknowledge the past and prepare one for the future.

Artist: You know ... I think being-singular-plural can also mean that you can be an artist and an a/r/tographer simultaneously ...

### CONNECTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

*Being itself is given to us as meaning.* Being does not *have* meaning. Being itself, the phenomenon of Being, is meaning that is, in turn, its own circulation—and *we* are this circulation. There is no meaning if meaning is not shared, and not because there would be an ultimate or first signification that all beings have in common, but because *meaning is itself the sharing of Being.* (Nancy, 2000, p. 2)

Being-singular-plural means that ultimately we are always in relationship with because being has nothing to do with the individual, despite the representation of self through Ego or I. In this way, we are never disconnected from others even in death (which is not a representation of the Subject but only for its representation) because my death cannot be swallowed up with me when it takes place through being-with-another where meaning is made through being (p. 83). In this way birth and death are not solitudes because they are sharings of being and the reverse. Death itself is in this way a creation because of its origin outside of the self. “An origin is not an origin for itself: nor is it an origin in order to retain itself in itself (that would be the origin of nothing); nor is it an origin in order to hover over some derivative succession in which its being as origin would be lost. An origin is something other than a starting point; it is both a principle and an appearing; as such, it repeats itself each moment of what it originates. It is continual creation” (Nancy, 2000, p. 83). The nexus points of the crossroads can be considered by looking at Nancy’s origin because the nexus is also a principle and an appearing that represents continual creation. A principle is something that one chooses to follow or comes to follow as a result of something else. If one considers their a/r/tographic journey (or artist-teacher identities in boundary positions) as a process of coming to know the identities of the artist, teacher, researcher and in between (in order to be with the meaning of this identification when represented as a/r/tographer) then a/r/tographer is no longer an origin (or crossroads) that was once a starting point. Rather, as Nancy suggests, it is an appearing where

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<sup>13</sup> Jean-Luc Nancy (2000) describes *being singular plural* as “being cannot be anything but being-with-one-another, circulating in the with and as the with of this singularly plural coexistence ... (where) ... meaning is itself the sharing of being” (pp. 2–3).

something that may always have been in unconscious existence is now visible. Since we arguably do not always experience conscious awareness, the origin of being as meaning is in continual creation (when creation is conscious awareness).

Thus, when one has awareness of being singular plural where they exist as a process of continual creation “with”, simple awareness of being transcends Self (thereby negating the importance of ones boundary position as artist-teacher or the continual separation of artist-teacher-researcher rather than “a/r/tographer” because they are being with as an origin/nexus of continual creation(s) and becoming(s) in relationship with). I have not written about being singular plural as a simplistic example meant to indicate that we as individual’s in society are never alone. In fact, I feel that using this idea to comfort ones-self psychologically in times of loneliness has nothing to do with understanding ones interiority and the concept of being singular plural. Rather, such concepts are used to encourage one to experience times of deep personal reflection where one feels connected to the universe and all it’s goings on without any attachment at all. This sense of losing oneself to find oneself was described by Darcy White during her first interview session and links to my understanding of *currere* and being singular plural. It also informs my understanding of the data collected as a part of the research project and will be discussed further in the proceeding chapter.

## CHAPTER 4

### UNDERSTANDINGS

The difficulties that Artaud laments persist because he is thinking about the unthinkable—about how the body is mind and how mind is also a body ... Artaud's work denies that there is any difference between art and thought, between poetry and truth ... so he takes art making to be a trope for the functioning of all consciousness—of life itself. (Sontag, 1976/1988, p. xxv)

People achieve whatever freedom they can achieve through increasingly conscious and mindful transaction with what surrounds and impinges, not simply by breaking out of context and acting in response to impulse or desire. And it seems clear that most people find out who they are only when they have developed some sort of power to act and to choose in engagements with a determinate world ... freedom has to be gradually achieved and nurtured in situations that have been made intelligible but that have to be continually named and understood. The pedagogical implications of this view are multiple, and it is hard to conceive of a set of educational purposes that does not include a concern for human freedom and sense of agency in the face of a more and more controlled and administered world. (Greene, 1995, p. 178)

In Chapter 1 I discussed the way(s) that viewing ones identity as multiple and evolving links subjectivity to identity. This conversation was supported by the results of numerous pedagogical studies (Chapman, 2002; Davies, 1996; Klein, Pendergast, & McWilliam, 1999) that suggest that teachers need to look at the way(s) that they have been influenced by past experiences and practices in order to exercise agency in their own teaching and lives. Only once teachers develop the ability to exercise and act upon their own thoughts in educational situations can they empower their students to do the same. The importance of subjectivity and understanding ones identity as multiple and evolving led to the introduction of a/r/tography. This introduction was made because a/r/tographic methods focus on embracing the multiple identities of the artist/teacher/researcher who works and lives within liminal spaces between identities. Thus, a/r/tography provides a way for understanding my own research on actor-teachers stemming from the research outlining how arts teachers are especially prone to leaving the teaching profession because they experience what Beehr (1987) and Scheib (2003) have termed as identity conflict or boundary positions. By asking *What are the lived experiences of individuals with Conservatory style actor training who pursue teaching?* I was led to explore the experiences of artist-teachers in boundary positions through an a/r/tographic lens. As a way to further understand the artistic and pedagogic experiences of participants, I also explored the life and works of Antonin Artaud

#### CHAPTER 4

and selected curriculum theorists. As a result of engaging with the writings of Artaud, Maxine Greene, William Pinar, Madeleine Grumet and selected a/r/tographers, to name a few theorists, themes that included making art, being wide awake and turning inward emerged. These themes were subsequently discussed in relation to the participants in the research study who I thought may be experiencing living in the boundary position of artist-teacher. Interviewing participants and having them write a monologue about an educational issue that was of significance to them was part of a reframing process inspired by the method of *currere* that I felt might support new teachers and educators with conservatory acting experiences. The purpose of this writing was to help participants move past an educational moment that was holding them back from accepting their new identity as a teacher or artist-educator. This approach addressed my second research question: *Did writing a monologue about a problematic educational moment help participants in their pedagogical development? How?* Examples such as *The Math Lesson*, *On Stage on Both* and *Gallop Apace* exemplify the ways that individuals were able to explore and work through past educational problems through the monologue format.

From the interviews and monologues four themes emerged: individuals have to adjust to becoming a teacher; making art positively affects teaching; felt experiences enable participants to teach drama and theatre; and conservatory acting programs develop a noetic sensibility by igniting an individual's imagination and creativity. Perhaps the most surprising theme of these was that participants had a noetic, creative experience in acting class that they named being in the zone, being in the moment or getting in touch with a perfect me. This was so surprising because out of all of the experiences that participants had during the four years in their conservatory style theatre performance program, trying to understand the zone, being in the moment or getting in touch with a perfect me was what emerged as a large focus of discussion in most of the interviews. Since getting in touch with a perfect me was never mentioned as a part of the outcomes of the voice class curriculum, acting program or dance component of the participant's conservatory style acting program, it became important for me to try and understand a bit more about this zone or moment in order to discern the nature of these descriptions.

I began this book by looking at Antonin Artaud as a person who lived his life in between societal norms, artistic movements and his own consciousness. I did this to understand a bit more about what it might mean to work creatively and artistically in a boundary position in order to be considerate of the possible positioning of the participants in my research who were artist-teachers. Because of Artaud's negative experiences living in various configurations of the in-between, such as being sedated, institutionalized, tortured, laughed at and banished, my original thoughts about being in a boundary position were quite negative. This impression was reinforced through the research about boundary positions that discussed how artist-teachers who experienced being in a boundary position most often left teaching in the first few years. Because policy recommendations based upon the research about artist-teachers included using art-making as a way of supporting these new artist-teachers, I began this project with the intention of

having participants create a monologue as a way to bridge the experiences and dispositions of the artist and teacher so that new teachers could link their acting with their pedagogical development. The monologue was chosen specifically because this is a form of writing that specifically involves a character externalizing their inner thoughts so that the audience can witness what otherwise would be kept internal. By choosing the monologue which is embedded within a dramatic context, where a state of heightened awareness and heightened stakes exist, individuals composing monologues were forced to select a pivotal moment extremely important to them and which they may not normally speak about for their writing. Some of these monologues, such as *Gallop Apace*, exemplified a transformation or moment of illumination for the main character that recalled for me concepts such as living noetically, being wide-awake and becoming a Body without Organs. These understandings are discussed below.

#### 4.1 UNDERSTANDING 1:

THERE IS A CONNECTION BETWEEN DEVELOPING CONSCIOUSNESS,  
CREATIVITY, AND THE IMAGINATION THROUGH ACTING EXERCISES, AND  
HAVING A NOETIC EXPERIENCE FOR THE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS STUDY

##### *Developing Consciousness*

Darcy White describes her experiences working in a creative and imaginative space during acting school as getting in touch with a perfect me. This phrasing seems to deny the postmodern condition that there can be no essential self, inner unification, essences or meta-narratives. Upon first consideration it may also seem to resist the notion of embracing multiple selves as discussed earlier in this book because there is a sense from Darcy's account, that a single self exists and if there is a perfect me there is a single ideal self that one can move towards attaining. This means that for Darcy at least, she recognizes that she has had an experience that allows her to connect with a part of herself that she may not always be conscious of. Thus, if through her acting class exercises, she is able to get in touch with a perfect her then, this perfect her must always be there. And if as Solomon and Ardele discuss there is a zone or moment that these experiences occur during, then there must be a way to further understand how if one wanted to, they could spend more time in these zones, being conscious of their perfect selves. This suggests that the acting exercises that Darcy, Ardele and Solomon experienced helped them to develop a personal awareness of an ideal self when in a zone or moment.

It thus warrants a reminder that in their conservatory program, participants spent four years learning a variety of physical, vocal, mental and imaginative exercises that helped them to become aware of their habits, thoughts, feelings, emotions and other tendencies in order to learn to let them go as a way of preparing to: become other characters in plays; create dances and shows; explore space creatively and imaginatively and connect with a company of fellow actors. Such exercises and activities took place in intensive acting, voice, singing, dance and feldenkrais classes. These classes were in addition to evening rehearsals, performances and other University academic courses. All classes in the acting program required

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100% attendance, a dress code, bi-yearly evaluations that resulted in one being sent home if they were not committed to the program and an attitude that permeated: I can, I am an actor.

The reason for reiterating the intensive nature of this program is to remind the reader that the experiences that are being discussed are not a result of participants arbitrarily doing a few exercises or warm-up activities here or there. Rather, these experiences in the moment or zone are a result of years of study, practice and learning in an intensive environment that pushed the individual to do and be more than what they arguably might have been able to do or be otherwise. For Deleuze and Guattari, this kind of intense process in which one is continually trying to move towards the perfect me is understood as Becoming a body without Organs.

#### *Making Yourself a Body without Organs (BwO)*

Near the end of his life, Artaud worked on a radio drama called *To have done with the judgment of God*. This radio drama was recorded on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 1947 with Maria Casares, Roger Blin and Paule Thevenin (Sellin, 1968) for airing on February 2, 1948. Before the actual broadcast however, the drama was pulled on the grounds of it being obscene, anti-American and anti-religious. Artaud responded to this censorship by writing, in a letter, that creating this play for which he had previously been given free creative reign, was to create a work that would appeal to certain organic points of life that would encourage the audience to participate in a new and unusual Epiphany. Numerous other individuals such as Rene Guilly supported the publication and airing of this work to no avail (Eshleman & Bador, 1995). Ironically with the invention of you-tube and the internet current versions of this once banned recording are now available for the world to view and listen to at any time. Strange sounds, primal screams and made up sounds combined with text about fecal matter and the death of God are just a portion of the experience that a listener can have. At this time however, the actual radio play and its text are not the main reason for introducing this particular text. Rather, it has been included in order to point out the term Artaud uses in this play that he calls the Body without Organs (BwO). This description of a BwO is given at the very end of the play where Artaud is asked about the purpose of this piece of writing. Basically, Artaud suggests that he has created this particular radio show in order to denounce certain kinds of social filthiness such as the American people's occupation of Indian lands and the way that man has used science to replace what is actually a God, that is both destructive and rebuilding. Artaud says that for this reason, we must find new ways to get God to emerge from the puritanical consciousness that man has attached to his identity in order to believe more in the possibilities of man. For this reason, Artaud suggests man must be emasculated by physically changing his anatomy since there is nothing more useless than an organ (Artaud, 1975). It is once a man has been given a Body without Organs, that he will have been delivered from all his automatisms and restored to his true liberty. Only once this physical act is complete can a man be retaught to dance from the inside out and this inside out is his true side out.

Though vivid and perhaps extreme, this description of a BwO suggests in perhaps the most powerful way what Artaud has continually said throughout the rest of his life's writings. Articulating once more that *in order for any sort of societal change to occur, one must physically experience something that will strip him/her of their habitual ways of doing things. This physical transformation according to Artaud can then lead to internal shifts and changes that free the inner self, thus restoring ones liberty and freedom.* This focus on ridding oneself of their habitual ways of doing things was something that all of the participants mentioned in their interviews. In this sense, developing a Body without Organs can be viewed as a teaching method for actors because of the desire to eliminate the boundaries between the inner and outer self. Thus, one of Deleuze & Guattari's questions in Chapter Six of *A thousand plateaus* (1987/2007) which asks "How do you make yourself a body without organs" might find resonances within an Artaudian influenced acting program. Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2007) explore their own answer to this and related questions by discussing how dismantling the organism, to become a BwO, is about opening up the organism to levels and thresholds, passages of intensities, that help the unconscious significations that cling to the organism find release. This is discussed in relation to Artaud's radio play *To have done with the Judgment of God* in which the BwO, or the organism, undergoes judgment that uproots the organism from a place of immanence, making it into a signification or subject.

In relation to this study, I would suggest, as I will describe in greater detail in the fourth understanding, that the individuals in this study experienced immanence during their actor training programs and that this process can be likened to the process of becoming a BwO. For Deleuze & Guattari this means that the organism has an understanding of what it means to cease being an organism who experiences "The judgment of God" or signification or as Darcy describes "the perfect me". To explain how the BwO perpetually experiences swinging between the poles of pure immanence and signification, Deleuze & Guattari use the concept of a plane that the stratified BwO swings between. Since the BwO is a limit that one is forever attaining, there are always more strata that can be dismantled, explored, etc.

Within an educational context, there is a strong pull from the educational institution to create a subject who identifies as "teacher". Thus, perhaps, if this occurs, it may become more difficult to swing back to pure or absolute immanence in which immanence is substance or a life unto itself and consistent with Artaud's ideas that life and art, body and mind should not be separated dualisms. However, in light of the discussion about becoming a crossroads in the third Interlude, I would suggest that one can experience signification or "be" a teacher and pure immanence while continuing to move in the liminal spaces between the two, if the individual can conceive of being a crossroads betwixt and between the multiple levels and roads of signification and pure immanence. To be aware or conscious of choosing to move between poles continually as a crossroads suggests to me that one has found a way to exercise their personal agency. Since participants were so interested in speaking about these immanent, or as I have earlier named them,

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noetic experiences, the second understanding has been dedicated to exploring this occurrence.

### 4.2 UNDERSTANDING 2: PARTICIPANTS NEEDED TO TALK ABOUT THE NOETIC MOMENTS THEY EXPERIENCED IN ACTING SCHOOL

As I sat and listened to Dr. Susan Walsh's presentation at the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) 2011 Teaching Showcase called *Connections* where she spoke about being nervous leading her students through a drama-based phasic relaxation activity<sup>14</sup> that she called "Coming to the room" I recognized her hesitancy about talking about something that made her feel vulnerable. But more than this I felt excited and joy-filled. The data from my participants told me that there is a *thirst to talk about noetic moments* and that we need to make space for these kinds of deeper engagements that creativity and inquiry can help bring us to.

Thus, from the interviews, I learned that we need to re-learn and use this language despite our own initial feelings of being uncomfortable doing so, so that others will also be able to. But how? How do you learn the language of poetry and art? How can you try and articulate for the first time what so many before have failed to do? What does creativity mean to begin with and how can the increasingly fast paced life of North American society make space or slow down long enough to pause, reflect, think deeply and just be?

For Peter Abbs in *Against the Flow* (2003), "as soon as one raises issues relating to the spiritual, the aesthetic and the metaphysical, one is painfully aware that one is using a language that sounds almost offensive and, at the same time, addressing a context of radical depletion, that one is talking against the status quo of the national curriculum, against the drive of the consumer society and against the sensibility of postmodern intellectual fashion" (Abbs, 2003, p. 1). Despite this predicament, Abbs also feels that changes need to be made. For this reason, he proceeds to discuss the suppression of the spiritual and transcendent; the suppression of values connected to the common realm, like human solidarity; and the loss of a binding notion of aesthetic and ethical values. To counter these problems, he suggests that making art and talking about the spiritual can counteract these issues, because creating authentic art forces an individual to reconstruct meaning, and writing poetry disrupts the individual's previously formulated thoughts and ways of expression. Abbs, a British scholar and professor, then promotes making up sounds and manipulating language, in order to help bring the spiritual back into society and connect communities because disrupting our normal language patterns shift an individual's thoughts, ideas and ways of understanding.

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<sup>14</sup> Susan's "Coming to the room" begins when all of her students are in her classroom. Once they arrive she leads them through a 3-5 minute exercise that has students bring awareness to various parts of their bodies and then breathe into them in order to "relax" them or "let tensions that may be there go". This is done as a way to create an in between space between where they have come from/what they were doing and what they will be doing in her language arts methods class at Mount Saint Vincent University.



Arguably then, the result of these creative and imaginative engagements will affect an individual's attunements to their world. As a way to further understand and represent this process of attunement, I have included a poem and journal excerpt in the fourth Interlude that is my own attempt at articulating the difficult to express in words moments. Additionally, as a way to theoretically consider these the effects of this understanding, I will render residue.

Rendering is a way to engage, present, perform and take action towards creating research that breathes, listens and lives relationally to writing, art making and teaching. By engaging with situations that make one curious and then lingering in moments where multiple meanings can simultaneously reside, dynamic encounters that are soulful and on the edge of understanding, that are never quite captured, can be entangled with. *Engaging in and with a/r/tographic inquiry is not about changing the world/others. Rather it is about changing and awakening oneself in and through time relationally and situationally.* In this sense, renderings rather than methods help one to tell/describe (diegesis), represent/show (mimesis) and interpret/explain (exegesis) rather than document, capture and present what has been found. In this spirit the renderings are offered as theoretical spaces for exploration and double imagining. Given that new renderings grounded from ongoing aesthetic inquiry may emerge over time (Springgay, 2005) the idea of *residue* as a new a/r/tographical concept and rendering is central to the contribution of this particular research and will now be described.

#### 4.3 UNDERSTANDING 3:

##### RESIDUE IS AN A/R/OGRAPHIC RENDERING USED TO DESCRIBE THE WAY THAT HAVING A NOETIC EXPERIENCE IN THEATRE SCHOOL AFFECTED THE PARTICIPANTS

Residue is what lingers or is left remaining after a process like evaporation in chemistry has taken place. In chemistry for example when two materials are combined together, like baking soda and vinegar when making the traditional 'volcano' in science, and a reaction occurs (i.e. carbon dioxide gas is emitted), the original baking soda and vinegar are gone but a residue from their interaction remains (i.e. the frothy white "mess" around the volcano). This residue clings to the sides of the volcano imprinting itself as neither of the two original ingredients used in the illustration do. It is something entirely new. Oftentimes this residue is forgotten completely and left as excess and not as what remains. *This subtle but distinct difference situates residue as different from renderings of 'excess' and to some extent 'reverberation' in that it is not a doubling of something that already exists, something extra that has not been used or something that is moving and in constant change.* Residue is also not discarded to the side when one is writing or doing research as something that may be revisited later if extra time or opportunity allows for its consideration.

Rather residue is the deeper understanding that has unraveled. Residue is not a reminder of the sublime *it is an imprint of the sublime* on an individual. In relation to the data from this study, residue is used to explain the way working 'in the

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moment' or 'in the zone' affects participants after they finish working in this creative and liminal space. *In this way, residue is an imprint of the experiences that one embodies as a result of working in an interstitial space while having a noetic experience.*

Because the participants experienced being in the zone or moment multiple times, they changed ... transformed. This change is consistent with Csikszentmihalyi's (1990/2008) research that says developing self-consciousness can lead to the overriding of one's genetic instructions in order to take a new course of action. As Greene and Artaud have said in other terms, participants experienced being "awake". For me, this suggests that the men and women in this study know what it means intellectually, physically, metaphysically, emotionally, spiritually, creatively and imaginatively to be conscious and awake because they developed self-consciousness and awareness during their actor training which led to them to noetic experiences that imprinted a noetic or illuminating residue within them. This transformative process that began with the development of self-consciousness began with acting exercises such as those discussed in the Benedetti text.

As previously mentioned, one of the texts that participants used in their third and fourth year's of acting school was *The Actor at Work* (1970/1997) by Robert Benedetti. This text outlines a threefold process of personal growth and self-discovery that encourages the acting student to begin with their own body, voice, thoughts and feelings as their instrument. This instrument, the self, must be *grounded* before opening to a *path* of action that explores the needs and thoughts of a character. Once these two steps are achieved, the third *fruition* step can build upon the foundational two in order to heighten one's ability to create and interpret the purposes of the text, a show etc. To achieve this threefold process, Benedetti includes a series of exercises and readings that lead the acting student on a program of self-discovery and self-development that begins with the individual observing their own behavior and that of those around them. This occurs by asking questions such as: What changes can I notice in my behavior each day? When does my voice or manner of speaking change? How am I thinking and feeling? Such observations are to be kept in an acting journal and are to be recorded without judgment and purely as observation, as a way to help the individual clarify their everyday experiences so that they may be intensified while acting.

This process indicates that the very first step in the process of becoming an actor is to ground oneself, by exploring who you are and what you do. Learning to observe oneself without judgment, in order to eventually develop discipline is work that Benedetti believes builds self-awareness and develops an individual physically, intellectually and spiritually.

The physical skills develop your body and voice as expressive instruments. The intellectual skills enable you to analyze plays and scenes, and to recognize how the characters you perform function with their plays. The spiritual skills involve your ability to relax, to be centered, to observe and focus, to be aware on several levels at once, and—most important—to experience transformation, to "become" the character. Each of these skills requires a different learning process. Physical skills are best developed

through regular repetition over time but, intellectual skills require shorter and intensely focused periods of study. The spiritual skills are the most difficult to describe or teach; they can be developed through physical and intellectual disciplines, but they depend more on your own initiative and life experience. (Benedetti, 1970/1997, p. 3)

According to Benedetti, it is quite apparent that although it is seemingly possible to teach an individual the physical and intellectual skills that they need to learn as an actor; developing spiritually is much more elusive. However, as also iterated, physical and intellectual activities can help spiritual development. Examples of exercises that can lead to spiritual growth include: *learning to meditate*, where one comes to understand that meditation is focused on the 'vital breath' which leads to unity between the body, outside world and breath; *stretching like a cat*, where one acts like a cat as a way to systematically check the body for long-standing bundles of tension that are blocking the flow of energy within the body; *being there*, where one simply stands in front of a group of people in restful alertness in order to be and fully experience stillness and quiet attention in the presence of others; and *centering*, where one must develop or 'discover' a physical and spiritual center where their energy exists simultaneously in physical and psychological forms, so that it can be gathered and made into new forms when acting and living. While there are other exercises used in acting programs to develop ones self-awareness and spiritual abilities, I selected the four above because they are relatively easy to understand. In the Benedetti text the skills that one develops as an actor are also discussed as having a benefit for the individual person who is doing this work. Thus, for example, if one goes through the questions and exercises outlined for the purpose of becoming an actor and experiences personal transformation in their life, they are quite obviously affected as an individual and not just as an actor. In this way, there is no separation for an individual pursuing acting between their life and work. Thus, when they experience a heightened or intense encounter as an actor, they are affected by this encounter as a person.

#### 4.4 UNDERSTANDING 4:

##### THE CURRICULUM AS THEATRICAL ENGAGEMENT IS ILLUMINATING.

Since the individual who goes through an acting program is personally and not just professionally affected by their intensive training, their whole life, as a result, can potentially be a heightened experience. While I am not comfortable stating that this is always the case or that this does not change if an individual, for example, chooses not to live life in this more intense and conscious way, some people might. They might ... seek out activities that continue to help them to develop self-consciousness, the sublime, being creative ... they might seek transcendence or illumination in order to then return their personal understandings as a sharing with the world whether they pursue acting as a career or not. The implication of this might mean continually discovering and choosing to pursue what makes them personally happy instead of conforming to what others suggest are appropriate paths to pursue. By choosing to pursue illuminating or noetic experiences by

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developing consciousness, the individual is continuously encountering a deep break from their Ego or I that previously conditioned him/her to understand his/her being in a particular way because they are living in a continual state of becoming.

This step towards the metaphysical or noetic is theorized in the doctoral book of Ashwani Kumar (2011) as the fifth step of *currere* called transcendence. In this work, Kumar links transcendence to an even deeper metaphysical endeavor called meditative inquiry, where one observes without the observer and subsequently focuses on developing a theory of meditative inquiry to understand transcendence by comparing the works of Jiddu Krishnamurti and James MacDonald. I on the other hand, feel that transcendence is the wrong term to use because in a religious context transcendence means that the nature of something God-like or spiritual is removed from the physical universe. Since according to the Benedetti text, intellectual and physical work can affect the spiritual development of an individual, I prefer to view the experience of engaging in curriculum that follows a *currere*-like process as one of immanence; because immanence acknowledges that God and the spiritual are fully present in the physical world and thus accessible to the individual. This interpretation means that I view phrases like getting in touch with a perfect me to mean that when one has a noetic experience, they are, as Solomon discussed, having a “G.O.D.” experience. While Solomon noted that G.O.D. represents generator-operator-destroyer, I define God as the positive energy that exists in the universe. This means that this positive energy can exist in everything and anything at all times...even within the individual. This means that when in the moment or zone, when one understands what it means to recognize the perfect me within, I interpret this to mean that the individual experience’s immanence or God fully present in the physical world because they see the G.O.D. (creative, imaginative, emotional, innovative) in themselves. I also feel that when one is creating art and has this kind of personal immanent experience that one can choose to channel this over-flow of their experience as a gift to others. This reflects David Mamet’s feelings about acting which state: “acting, as any art, must be generous; the attention of the artist must be focused outward” (Mamet in Benedetti, 1990/1997, p. 184). In this way, sharing ones noetic or immanent experiences with others becomes a part of not “getting stuck” in the intense and deeply personal work that is the purpose of grounding explained in the Benedetti text. This may be a way to understand Artaud’s conflict with expressing his work to others, because in his work, he always seemed to be caught up in the personal. This observation is illustrated in his talk at the Sorbonne, where he reenacted dying of the plague rather than talking about this metaphor intellectually for the scholars he was presenting for, showing that he was thinking more about what he wanted to do than what his audience needed from him, to be able to engage in his ideas and work.

In *The Math Lesson* and *Gallop Apace*, I also feel that immanence is hinted at. For example, in *The Math Lesson* Ardele describes selecting an educational moment about teaching math that required her to return to her own past frustrations in math as a child. Once she revisited her own experiences she thought about the way that she was feeling apprehensive about teaching math on practicum. Writing her monologue allowed her to visualize and describe how she would teach math to

her students in the present. Then, her interview with me gave her the chance to reflect on how teaching math had changed as a result of writing a monologue about this experience while working through a *currere*-like process. What moved Ardele's experience beyond the synthetical stage was her simultaneous experience of deciding to perform in a one-woman show while she was teaching. To explain, Ardele felt the need while teaching to get in touch with herself and to have others know her as an artist as well as an educator. She didn't feel as though any of the people who met her as "just teacher" really understood who she was without seeing her perform. As a result she felt that she had to show them. Thus, Ardele rehearsed and re-mounted her one-woman show while on practicum and invited all of her teacher-friends to come and see her. By watching her performance, I would argue she was inviting them to "see" her emotional, physical, intellectual, spiritual self. She wanted to be known and this was how she shared herself. As previously mentioned, the impact that acting had on her teaching during this time was evident. While rehearsing and performing and then even after the show ended, Ardele spoke about bringing more art into her classroom and finally feeling relaxed and like herself in this environment.

For Maisey, writing her monologue *Gallop Apace* can be seen as having the step of immanence embedded within it as evidenced in the final lines: "I am free like the steeds" because this call signifies a shift in her from being consumed with self-doubt to being free and comfortable with herself when teaching students Shakespeare. Data from Maisey's interviews also articulated how writing her monologue led her through a *currere*-like process that culminated in her feeling better about her teaching. I think lines in this monologue, such as "I want them to see what I see" describe Maisey's personal experiences performing Shakespeare and her deep love for Shakespeare's language, rhythm, poetic tricks etc. Thus, when she writes this monologue, her intellectual understanding of the text, physical experiences performing the works and spiritual moments that have arisen throughout the creation process come across. Since I was lucky enough to perform this monologue and to direct someone else's performance of it, I have also witnessed how this piece of artwork has changed and influenced others who have engaged with it. Since instrumental utility is Eisner's (1998) third criteria for seeing if an inquiry is credible, where one considers whether or not the results and implications of a research project will be useful to the field that it is inquiring about, I will describe these performances in the final chapter as an example of an implication for teaching.

INTERLUDE 4

**LEARNING THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART**

**Not a rush or sudden blow powerful and violent as Leda's**

A peaceful reflective understanding

Not a specific moment that changes it all

*But a lifetime filled with certain slants of light*

the days

we

awaken

under

the

bed

beside the children

on

top

of a

mountain

or looking at a star filled sky

*those* tears

*those* simple things that

expand

the h e a r t.

*These* are my awakenings.

Teacher: It's alright. You can do this. We'll all be here with you while you read through this.

Artist: I know it's hard but, just think about the research we've just talked about.

Researcher: Right. If we don't do this who will?

#### INTERLUDE 4

A/r/tographer: O.K. o.k. Here goes:

(June 26th/2009):

*I went to a hatha yoga class this morning at my regular studio called “Sanga”. Sanga means community in Sanskrit and this small 15 mat maximum sized studio is run by a fantastic and caring 33 year old woman. Shannon’s purpose for the studio is to provide a place for people to gather together to do yoga and to also mentor new teachers so that they can become effective instructors themselves. Yoga is not a new practice or habit for me as I have been practicing off and on for over 8 years now. However when I first moved to Vancouver, BC 2 years ago and found Sanga I really felt as though this was a wonderful place to be and I started going to 2–5 classes a week. It isn’t that I have to go—its sort of like I need to—because entering into this space in which (for me) time no longer exists is sacred and centering.*

*The first thing I do when I go in is to take my shoes off. I then proceed to unfold my mat. This time of preparation signifies for me the chance to release myself from taking notice of my hair or clothes or the misgivings and insecurities that may plague the rest of my life. I just start by sitting or lying down and begin to concentrate on my breath...gradually deepening it until my thoughts, muscles, emotions and tensions fade away.*

*This day in particular, my drishti is focused on a particular refraction of light. A glow that is actually captured on some wooden steps at the front of the room where a tea-light candle is burning. Explaining this particular kind of preparation is perhaps for me the best way to begin...as I fumble in my attempts to put into words what is for me generally indescribable.*

*Naming the ‘ness*

*After we finish our “flow” (an hour and a half of yoga poses such as the sun salutation series) there is a time of final relaxation called savasana (corpse pose). The idea of this final asana (yoga pose) is to lay on your back with arms and legs outstretched and to completely relax as a way to prepare for “final relaxation” or death. Oftentimes by this point in the class I am no longer aware of the breath entering and exiting my body, the other yogis around me, the physicality of the room or the idea of myself as something which has a consciousness that “is someone” who “does” particular things. It is during this time (for lack of a better word) that I have experienced un-language-able moments.*

*Un-language-able in the sense that sometimes when I have tried to explain what I have felt or experienced I am “with no language but a cry” and my body feels numb—almost like there is no line dividing my flesh from the rest of the world/air/objects/space etc. It is like I feel as though I am not feeling but somehow vibrating ... and humming in tune with something unseen. A sensation I have also experienced after events such as giving birth and praying with my father in law as he died and I was the only one in the room with him.*

LEARNING THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

*(But, I am getting away from myself)—Before this all happens, I suppose I should write that during savasana I see a light so bright that it looks like the center of a fire—simply a white intensesness. Sometimes I think this must be like the light people say they see when they have a near death experience. For me its just peaceful—and it spreads throughout my body/mind/consciousness until it spills out because I can't contain it and I am it anyway. I am free of the materiality of my "being". Sometimes this does not even happen consciously and all I am aware of is having to leave this state for a variety of reasons.*

It feels like what I must describe as the only home I ever known—and I feel both disappointed but accepting that I have to leave it.

*Again I feel as though I can only fumble through this account and I am still feeling the residue of leaving the studio without the ability to speak-but, with somehow the strange ability to notice everything around me in a hyper-sort of a way in which the cool air outside feels cooler and the warm air inside my car feels warmer and yet it may have been because I was feeling somehow differently...and when I put down my purse and yoga mat beside me I actually feel their weight and see the space they occupy. As I drive towards home I go so slowly because the green leaves on the trees are so much greener and the refractions of light around me so much more.*

*And in these moments I feel like I just woke up and found all of my senses for the very first time. And all I can think of is how beautiful-how exquisite and breathtaking it all is-and also how absolutely incredible and perfect my own existence ... kind of like feeling like you are in love but, so much more because the feeling is in and out of you and it is extended to everyone and everything.*

*In some ways, this experience sounds even to my own ears like a drug-induced one ... one which lasted for a few hours and resulted in me taking notice of the flight of a bumble bee or dragon fly or to hear the perfection of a baby's laughter with definitive clarity.*

*Later when I arrived at school it seemed like too much and not enough. ... and the difficulty with living forever in this state is that it feels alienating by being connecting. Alienating in the sense that I can't explain through words to others exactly what I feel like and it creates (sometimes) what feels like a chasm between me and them because (in the past) they (some of my friends) have longed to get "there" (or "here" I guess for me) and I can't seem to help them do that ... alienating also since as a kid these sorts of things happened more often and I would just be "zoned out" (staring off into space while my mind went somewhere else). Yet on the flip side, connecting in the sense that when I am the light (not really a light though), I am no longer separated from any physical or metaphysical aspect of creation.*

(Artist, Researcher and Teacher smile as a/r/tographer finishes).



## CHAPTER 5

### CONSIDERING THE OPENINGS

In this chapter I will consider the impact, implications and future directions of the research in this book using personal illustrations, as well as those that relate to teacher education in general and drama/theatre education in particular. In order to methodically cover these outlined intentions I will begin by discussing the impact, implications and future directions of this research in relationship to my own a/r/tographical practices.

#### 5.1 WHAT I HAVE LEARNED AND HOW THIS IMPACTS THEORY AND PRACTICE

Through this research I have learned that the exercises that are taught in acting programs not only develop an individual's ability to act but also profoundly affect an individual's way of being in the world. Such programs aim to develop an individual physically, intellectually and spiritually in order to help the individual learn to ground themselves, be creative and then share their work with others as a gift. This requires an extreme level of discipline, commitment and perseverance that pushes one to experience and be aware of living intensely in order to bring all they are to their craft. When an individual commits to an acting program they are personally making a commitment to see things differently than they did before. They must develop the skills and abilities to continuously ask themselves deeply reflective questions that heighten their self-awareness, emotions and skills of observation. They must also learn to center their physical and metaphysical energies deeply in the body so that they can later be used in the creation of a character while working with others.

Thus, when individuals with this kind of training come to teaching they bring a unique perspective and way of being in the world that may be different to that of someone without this background. As a consequence, actor-teachers must often dwell in boundary positions. However, by engaging with border theories and theorizing the idea of the crossroads, I learned that dwelling in a boundary position can be a liberating experience.

As mentioned, this understanding led me to theorize what it means to become a crossroads. To do this, I worked within an in-between space called an Interlude. These Interludes used dialogue to highlight my meaning making process. The result of this process-based engagement was the disruption of the idea that boundary positions are negative spaces that must be avoided by artist-teachers. It also extended previous a/r/tographical discussions about boundary places by suggesting that if one can separate the artist, teacher and researcher identities and

## CHAPTER 5

deeply understand what these mean separately, one may be better able to understand what it means to be an a/r/tographer who works a/r/tographically.

Also of theoretical significance is my discussion about the life and works of Antonin Artaud. My discussion of Artaud highlights how engaging with ideas that challenge and disrupt notions of representation, boundaries and being might help one to extend and open up to new ideas about curriculum, theory and education. Practically speaking, I do not mean that because Artaud believed in shocking people into reality that classroom teachers should begin to act absurdly or violently. Rather, I interpret this to mean that there is a place for bringing techniques such as asking unusual questions or engaging student's imaginations as a way to stimulate creativity in educational endeavors.

In my own teaching and life, this research has encouraged me to live a/r/tographically by, for example, performing *Gallop Apace* at an arts education event at The University of British Columbia. For me, engaging artistically in a rehearsal process was invigorating and enlivening. Since I had missed rehearsing, performing and engaging with text, doing this was like seeing an old friend I hadn't seen in a long time. I luxuriated in the warm-up, rehearsing and performance. But, I was also a bit surprised that initially I was shy about letting go completely and giving over to the character. As a result, I began to question myself about this hesitancy and wondered if it was because I was uncomfortable acting crazy or eccentric. This was an interesting reflection given that I was going to be performing in front of other education faculty and students.

However, in the end, I laid these insecurities aside and decided to commit to the performance to the best of my abilities. After the show, I was a bit surprised that I withdrew from the public mingling session because I was too wrapped up in critiquing how I thought my own performance had gone. This made me realize that if I do continue to perform to educational audiences, I have to find a better balance between performing and discussing the work as research afterwards since both are equally important in arts based research.

A year after this performance, I spoke about the teacher monologues with teacher candidates in one of my arts methods classes. This resulted in four students during a break in the class, asking if they could read all of the monologues and possibly perform them for a local stage company's production. This came to pass and I directed the students in *On Stage on Both*, *Gallop Apace* and *If We Shadows have Offended*. These monologues were connected by the *Reflections on Teaching*, collected during the first phase of the project. Prior to this performance of the monologues, I introduced the show to the audience by getting them to draw a picture of what came to mind when they thought of their favorite teacher. This is an activity that I have used to begin some of my teacher education classes with and how I started the first day of rehearsals with the teacher candidates who performed in this show. Most often the image that is drawn depicts a young woman with light brown straight shoulder length hair who is wearing a sweater and skirt. She is usually standing in front of a chalk-board or near a student and smiling. Since this image actually depicted the young female actors in this performance and the

audience's drawings, I addressed this stereotype immediately during my introduction as a way of involving the audience in what they were about to see.

After the performances finished, I spoke to these teacher candidates about being involved in this project and how it affected their perceptions of becoming a teacher. I also asked them if they saw any similarities/differences between acting and teaching. (Note: Only two out of the four students who participated have acting degrees from conservatory style acting programs. One student holds a BFA in music and another has taught dance for 12 years. The arts methods class I taught was interdisciplinary and this is why there were a variety of backgrounds represented).

- Being involved in this production has, in a positive way, affected my perception of what it means to become a teacher. Since becoming involved in this project I get the sense that I am entering into a career where there is a real sense of community. I feel like I am a part of something special and unique.
- ... my perception of myself as a future teacher has changed (since I began working with this project) because I am seeing that I really can be acting while I teach. I think I will also always be learning while I teach and feel that because I had the opportunity to act while a teacher candidate I can build this into my life as a teacher. I feel like this will help me thrive more as a teacher because I got to see how the teachers who wrote the monologues used them as a creative and reflective outlet for themselves. I think these monologues are amazing and they show a dedication to the teaching profession.
- I think that creating art as a teacher will make me a better teacher after this experience because it represents how I will always be committed to learning and finding new ways to present concepts to my students.

These comments from the teacher candidates who participated in a production of *The Teacher Monologues* describe how creating art impacts their teaching. Thus the impact that this research had on these teacher education students is an example of how my teaching practice adapted to the interest in performing the monologues and the desire for teacher candidates to not only write their own monologues but to talk about what it means to become a teacher.

As a result of this research, the future directions that I am interested in pursuing include continuing to understand the ideas of Antonin Artaud both artistically and theoretically. In a step towards achieving this outcome I am directing one of his plays for a one-act play festival. By commissioning an original film and musical score in addition to the live performance of Artaud's *Jet of Blood* (1925), I am attempting to represent his surrealist visions literally but also with an extra visual and musical layer that will bring context to the play for the audience. The purpose of creating the film and score is to place the actual play within Artaud's mind. This directing and producing process is bringing me to a deeper understanding of Artaud's work that I have not learnt through reading, studying and theorizing. This is also allowing me to continue to explore what working a/r/tographically means as I now feel that I naturally weave my artistic "learning" into my teaching and vice-versa.

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Another future direction that this research has taken me in, in regards to my teaching, is to use theatre based exercises, such as those outlined in the Benedetti text, as ways to begin my own teacher education classes in order to make space for creativity, imagination and conversation. While previously I have used such activities to build classroom community, I never thought of using them as a way to help students transition to the learning space or for them to develop consciousness of where they were coming from, where they are at or how this impacts what they end up doing. Helping teacher candidates to become aware or conscious of the subtleties of the intentions that can be made for a learning space is thus something that I can begin to incorporate in my own classrooms.

### 5.2 IMPLICATIONS, IMPACT AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS RELATED TO DRAMA, THEATRE AND ARTS BASED EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Based upon my review of the literature, research study and recent work with teacher candidates on *The Teacher Monologues*, the impact, implications and future directions of this book research for drama, theatre and arts based education and research include: providing acting students with an opportunity to talk about their noetic development; giving teacher candidates with acting backgrounds a chance to represent themselves more creatively and artistically during their educational studies and working with teacher candidates, with fine arts backgrounds on writing and performing monologues.

It is likely quite easy to implement the first implication suggested, as in acting programs there is a large focus on reflection through journal writing, critiquing performances, personal assessment. Given this environment, simply asking students to consider how their noetic self is evolving, is a simple way of starting this kind of discussion within an existing acting program. If there is an interest from students in discussing these kinds of learning, providing the language and theory for understanding and articulating what they are experiencing can be introduced. As I have already outlined, some theorists who may be referred to could include Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brook, Antonin Artaud and Robert Benedetti.

The second implication of this work that would impact BEd students with a fine arts background is to encourage these individuals, no matter what their level of study is, to explore representing what they have learned about pedagogy artistically and creatively. I think that providing a space for teacher candidates with artistic backgrounds to express their pedagogical understandings through art or artistic means provides a bridge between their “artist” self and their “teacher” self that would make the boundary between the two easier to navigate. It may even help to give them confidence in their teaching because they can more easily make some of the connections that Ardele did between being in front of an audience and being in front of a classroom.

Thirdly, as already discussed, writing and performing *The Teacher Monologues* has had a positive influence on the BEd students I teach. Since time can be allocated for exploring pedagogical development artistically in a fine arts curriculum and pedagogy class for teacher candidates, allowing students the

opportunity to write a monologue may be an assignment that can be developed and used. This activity could be done before practicum as a way for students to reflect on a past educational issue that they need to address or after practicum as an opportunity to reflect on a difficult issue that arose. In either case, writing a monologue would allow students to create a character about a difficult issue, reframe it and then possibly have it performed as a way of creating space between the issue and themselves.

To extend my observations of the benefits that writing a monologue has for teacher candidates with a conservatory background to future directions for this work, I now turn to a recent conversation that I had with a colleague who teaches teacher candidates with conservatory actor training. This individual, a well-known high school and University drama teacher with a PhD in Language and Literacy education discussed with me the challenges he has faced in supporting several intakes of teacher candidates in a drama and theatre education methods course pre-practicum. In part, he has found this group difficult to teach because he himself has not experienced conservatory training. Thus by learning more about these kinds of programs (as described in my work) and discovering the monologue as a potential form for reframing identity, he is increasingly hopeful that by shifting his approach to teaching these students from “becoming teachers” to embracing “being an artist-teacher” (and all of ones multiple identities) that a smoother transition in the teacher education program may be actualized.

I also think that this focus on learning to embrace ones multiple identities might lead to exciting new findings that explicitly address the issue of teacher attrition included in the rationale at the start of this book. At this time, I have discovered that while still important, I have understood issues about retention differently as a result of this research and will now consider this shift.

To extrapolate, at the start of this project, I felt that it was up to me to create an arts-based strategy that I could share with new artist-teachers that would support them in their first few years of teaching as a way to potentially encourage them to stay in the profession. However, looking back on this question, I now see that because the participants in this study experienced noetic moments that developed their agency and freedom, that they were able to find positions as educators (rather than teachers in the K-12 school system) that made them feel satisfied with their chosen positions. This means that by not focusing on quantitatively investigating the number of arts teachers who left teaching in the K-12 classrooms within the first few years as my criteria for assessment, and instead focusing on the experiences of four artist-educators, I learned that the issue of retaining arts teachers has more to do with each individual’s personal life experiences. This shift has meant that I no longer see the new artist-teacher as one who “can’t hack it teaching” but as an individual who is passionate about being a creative, imaginative, artistic individual who has chosen to use his/her background and skills within a myriad of educational settings.

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### 5.3 IMPACT, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

The particular future direction that my new view of retention has for teacher education is that I am quite convinced that the Artist in Community (ACE) program that Solomon attended is a cohort that other Canadian Universities should consider creating. The reason that this program for practicing artists interested in exploring how their experiences can be translated into a variety of educative settings is so important in relation to this study, is that the ACE stream allows an individual to explore “becoming” an educator while still “being” an artist. This focus nurtures the individual dwelling in the borderlands by acknowledging and supporting their multiple identities and subsequent re-creation.

My work is also of future importance for the field of education as it provides an example of how an arts based educational researcher can weave together both research/theory and creative representation of a subject that simultaneously deepens and extends the topic in such a way that both those familiar with arts based research and those who are not, can engage critically and creatively with the work. In this way the Chapters and Interludes are an example of how the form of a/r/tographical work can also be its function. As a result of this “showing and telling” conversations about developing criteria to assess this kind of a/r/tographical work may also take place as a way of understanding this hybrid way of researching, writing and creating.

To conclude, this research has given me the opportunity to explore the stories of four unique individuals who trained as actors before pursuing teaching. Their stories and monologues have led me to understand acting programs and teacher education programs in a more complex manner. The noetic conversations have taught me that there are moments and levels of connection and illumination in the world that can be continually discovered and deepened and that there is a yearning to engage in these kinds of conversations.

INTERLUDE 5

**THE BEGINNING FROM THE END**

I say what I have seen and believe; and whoever says I have not seen what I have seen, I will now tear off his head.

For I am an unpardonable Brute, so I shall be until Time is no longer Time.

Neither Heaven or Earth, if they exist, can do anything against this brutality they have imposed upon me, perhaps I might serve them ... Who knows?

In any case, that I might be torn away from them.

I perceive, with certitude, that which is. That which is not shall be made by me, if necessary.

For a long time now I have felt the Void, but have refused to throw myself into the Void.

I have been cowardly as all that I see.

When I believed I was refusing the world, I know now I was refusing the Void. For I know that this world does not exist, and I know how and why it does not exist.

My sufferings until now consisted in refusing the Void. The Void that was already in me. I know there has been a wish to enlighten me by the Void and I have refused to let myself be enlightened.

If I was made into pyre, it was intended to cure me of being in this world.

And the world took from me all I had.

I struggled in my attempt to exist, in my attempt to consent to the forms (all the forms) with which the delirious illusion of being in the world has clothed reality.

INTERLUDE 5

I no longer wish to be a Believer in Illusions.

Dead to the world; dead to that which is everyone else the world. Fallen at last, fallen, uplifted in this void that I once refused, I have a body that submits to the world, and disgorges reality.

I've had enough of this lunar movement that makes me name what I refuse and refuse what I have named.

I must put an end to it. I must at last make a clean break with this world, which a Being in me, this Being I can no longer name because if he returns I shall fall into the Void, this Being has always refused.

It's done. I really fell into the Void after all—that makes this world—had achieved its purpose of making me despair.

For this knowledge of no longer being in this world comes only with seeing that the world has indeed left you.

Dead, the others have not been separated: they still hover around their corpses.

And I know how and why the dead have been hovering around their corpses for exactly the thirty-three Centuries that my Double has been incessantly turning.

So, no longer existing, I see that which is.

I really identified myself with this Being, this Being that has ceased to exist. And this Being revealed to me all things.

I knew it, but could not say it, and if I can start to say it now, it is because I have left reality behind.

This is a real Madman talking to you, one who never knew the happiness of being in the world until now that he has left it and become absolutely separated from it.

Dead, the others have not been separated. They still hover around their corpses.

I am not dead, but I am separated. (Artaud in Hirschman, 1956, pp. 84–86)



Artist: Why do we have to end with this excerpt from Artaud's *The New Revelations of Being*? It is so sad. Its like Artaud is dying ... he is entering into something new ... a Void that was always there but beyond the Illusions in the world.

Researcher: Well, maybe it is like a death ... a loss ... where something that once is no longer, but which allows for something new to emerge instead. You know, the whole process of destruction and rebirth that Artaud is so interested in encouraging society to embrace.

Artist: But, why end with this now? We could have discussed this quote at almost any other time throughout the book and related Artaud's ideas to educational or societal insights ... but, now we're supposed to be finished. The conclusion has been written. Why open up a new conversation about becoming dead to the world ... to the Being that one identifies with as Self?

Teacher: Because this is what our research has been pointed towards all along. You can't begin to understand what it means to be a singular plural being, or a crossroads or pure immanence if you are attached to "you". "You" have to continually be open to letting go of your "Self" in order to become something else or everything...no longer existing, in order to see that which is.

Artist: I choose reality though.

Researcher: How do you know you have a choice? I'm sure most people would like to choose freedom but, they may have no real idea of what that means.

Teacher: You know he isn't giving up ... or in. He is accepting something other than. In education or even society, I think this is hard to understand. We may like or dislike a particular educational philosophy or curriculum and depending on our feelings about it in practice, we may or may not choose to teach it or learn more about it ... but, because of society and its related institutions, we still to some extent conform or manipulate our feelings, thoughts and ideas to make it appear "as if" we do accept what we do not. Artaud is no longer living under such illusions. He is free from pretending to act "as if".

Researcher: So, freedom has nothing to do with being given it or choosing. It has to do with allowing ones Being to no longer exist as one thought it did according to societal norms.

Artist: So for a culture to grow, it needs to change. To let go and as Artaud would say allow for things to be destroyed in order for new things to be exulted.

Researcher: Right, and in order to do this one cannot lose their double.

INTERLUDE 5

Teacher: Which could be viewed a bit more liberally, as the poles of pure immanence and signification that Deleuze and Guattari suggest we can move between.

Researcher: Sure, and that idea could also allow one to understand Nancy's "being-singular-plural" (where one is connected to everything and the Self) during moments of pure immanence whilst still moving in and out of the world (or moments when the organism needs to be signified).

Artist: O.K. Then, the "death" or end really represents a potential for something else ... something that could bring hope.

Researcher: Perhaps ... but, I don't think we should even be attached to the promise of "hope".

Artist: Whoah—wait a minute—does that also mean we need to destroy this book? Artaud did say all written poetry should be read once and then gotten rid of.

Researcher: Perhaps, but you know, I think Artaud would tell us that we just can't "hover around this work". We need to accept what we have learnt from it and be separated ... move onto something else.

A/r/tographer: Right ... the beginning of searching for the next ending ...

## APPENDIX 1: THE MONOLOGUES

### THE MATH LESSON

By Ardele Thompson

I am standing, in a tiny portable, in front of 30 grades 5 and 6 students. This is the first week of my second practicum. My palms are sweaty ... my mouth is dry. Why am I nervous? This is my first math lesson ... the dreaded math lesson. My greatest fear in becoming a teacher is about to be realized. I've never really liked math! I'm an artistic person, a trained actor. Math stressed me out. Still stresses me out! I could never get the answer fast enough. I didn't see anything creative about math.

As an actor, I am used to standing up and talking in front of people. But this is somehow different. There is no script here. What if some whippersnapper from the back asks me a question I can't answer? That kid Michael over there, he's really bright in mathematics. I know he's going to stump me with something.

Okay get it together. You know this unit. You've reviewed it and let's face it you know what you're talking about.

So I begin ....

"Alright class, before we get started on today's lesson, are there any questions from yesterday's homework that people would like to discuss?"

That's good. Nice way to ease us all into this. Okay, looks like most students were having trouble with question #3. What was question #3? Oh yeah ... the triangle with the algebraic equation. I can totally answer this one, no problem. Wait! I have a better idea.

"Is there anyone who would like to show how they solved the problem? Michael, great, why don't you put your answer on the board?"

This is good. Everyone seems excited about this. Huh ... he's got the same answer, but that's not the way I would have done it ....

"Can you talk us through your strategy Michael?"

(thoughtful pause)

"Did anyone else do it a different way?"

Pretty soon I've got six students showing and explaining their strategies. And look at Toby .... Toby, who rarely speaks in class, standing up there with renewed

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confidence, proudly showing us how he solved the problem using his own method. Sure, a lot of the strategies are very similar when you examine them and some are better than others, but next time Michael might try Toby's strategy and Toby might try Michael's. Regardless, I know that the exchange of ideas during this time has made math seem less daunting for a lot of students. Now that's what I would have liked growing up. I think I finally have seen how we can begin to find the creativity in mathematics.

ON STAGE ON BOTH

By Jonathan Stevens

On stage on both.

Constantly on.

One comes easier depending on the day, the mood, the students. Where in my head did that come from?

I cry often because it has been so long since I have been up there, rather, I'm honing these new skills (he tells himself).

What is more natural?

But as time passes, it's easier.

Easier to watch, to switch hats.

Growing accustomed to this newness.

Watching the fulcrum go one way.

Always pulled one way, but when it comes

To doing it

For the students,

I could not imagine playing a better role.

It's a funny thing to go from hours in the studio, having perfected every verb you're capable of—

Found motivations (a clichéd gig).

After that, years ago, after that exercise,

I altered my thought patterns some,

In my interactions, my pursuits, my work,

All based on a verb.

It became second nature to find it.

I still do.

Identify the kiddo, name the goal, find the route.

They go hand in hand—for me, at least.

For other actors I've known,

I'm sure they'd cringe.

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Last resort, they'd say.  
The "those who can do, those who can't teach" approach  
—again, as clichéd as that shit is.

It's a nicer group—more real—I say that  
Having extracted myself from the broken hearts  
And escapees.  
Teachers. They're the real ones.  
They can do anything.  
Funny to think both professions have been scoffed at from  
Time to time.

Both hard.  
What do you do?  
I'm an actor.  
Oh.  
What do you do?  
I'm a teacher.  
And?  
On stage on both.

On scaffold, is more like it.  
If one accepts it as that.  
I've gained more respect for my teachers since becoming one since, it's tougher  
than any other profession I know.

Actors—sure, it's a tough life.  
Tough to put the pieces together, tough to nail a life down, tough to remove  
yourself from one bed and place yourself in another.  
Tough to be wrapped up in the removal of oneself from the self and look in and/or  
remove yourself for the sake of expulsion.

Teachers—do they even question their motivations behind it?  
I'm sure they do—if the job doesn't sing, or the student's don't glow—it's only  
natural.

But, really.  
Are there any out there who believe they are not being the ultimate contributor?

But the art now. Wow.  
That's where the canker gnaws.  
Art—art and education.  
The ultimate contribution.  
Become yourself, kid.  
But, how?

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Here's a chord.

Become what's real, buddy?  
But how?

Here's space.  
Discover everything child?  
But where?

Inside.

What better a combo than that of someone who can put on the mask that draws out the demons and open opens their arms into which the exorcized run?

Harsh, yes. But how?

On stage on both.

On fire.  
A gift to be able to stop talking about the self for some time and give the light to those who deserve it.

The next ones.

The promise that all we're devoted to, all the past we've collected, all the identities we've played, the shows that have closed, the moments frozen—all of those can come with us and contribute to the next ones.

I have a place where dreams are born and time is never planned.

Oh, that's true. So constantly true.

IF WE SHADOWS HAVE OFFENDED

By Jonathan Stevens

Offstage Voice: If we shadows have offended, think but this and all is mended.

Teacher: I love it, I really do! It's so rewarding! I hate it. I hate it! I want to quit! I go back and forth between loving it and hating it. Thankfully most of the time it leans towards loving it. Otherwise, I'm not sure what I'd do. Teaching is all consuming for me. It sucks me dry. I don't know how to give less of myself to make it less demanding. Their minds are so active, it's nearly impossible not to want to get right in there and show them a lesson.

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Inner Voice: Can I sustain this? How do others do it?

Benjamin can you and Blake work on the herb fetching scene? ... Yes, begin with “These are the forgeries of jealousy”.

Debbie and Rosie can you prompt the lovers scene between Audrey and Harrison. They’re almost off book but, they’ll need a few prompts.

Offstage Voice: (Announcement-buzz sound from playground opening)

Sorry for the interruption. Teachers remember that the playground’s official opening is happening at 1pm today. Please ask your students to line up at 12:55. Primaries will go to the East side of the Playground. Intermediaries on the West side. A reminder that the school band is rehearsing at 12:30. Senior girls basketball at Kitchener at 3:15. Have a nice morning children and teachers.

Teacher: Mechanicals! Can I have all the mechanicals? Pheterachart, Lulu, Caroline ... Oh right, Valerie’s at ESL. He should be back in 10 minutes. Can Laughlyn read Valerie’s lines?

Offstage Voice: Knock on the door (and Beatrix enters).

Teacher: OK everyone Beatrix has just arrived from the University to work with us. Can you come to the carpet?

Inner Voice: Oh my God! This is chaos. We need to work on the individual scenes. But, let’s work on the ensemble while Beatrix’s here. Bathroom! I maybe shouldn’t have had that second coffee. I need to go to the bathroom while Beatrix’s here—it’s my chance.

Offstage Voice: It’s mine. No—It’s Mine! Give it back.

Teacher: Blake and Benjamin please join us. Yes, I know you want to continue working on your scene. You’ll have more time after recess. I love this chaos.

Offstage Voice: [Knock on door]. Can we have your attendance sheet?

Teacher: Oh Yeah! Lulu can you give the monitor the attendance sheet? Laughlyn Ho is here so don’t mark him as absent, just put as late.

Offstage Voice: Hey—Laughlyn C’s back from ESL.

Teacher: O.K. everyone Beatrix’s going to work on the “If we shadows have offended” ensemble piece with you ... I know you weren’t here yesterday Lisa but, we’ll include you. The 5 fairies can you come with me? Beatrix, Gabriel is with the Math LEAP program, but he should be back soon. And, Sophia is in resource.

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Offstage Voice: [Announcement-buzz sounds] Sorry for the interruption again. Teachers can we have a brief 5 minute meeting at recess about the playground opening. In the staff room at 10:30—thank you and I apologize for the interruption.

Inner Voice: Ah, this is crazy! There's too much going on! Oh my God, Daisy is reading without me asking her to. And Laughlyn ... he's memorized the entire first scene!

Offstage Voice: If we shadows have offended, think but this and all is mended—

Teacher: Are those cue cards? Oh my God! Benjamin and Blake have created cue cards on their own to remind them of their lines!

Fairies let's work on the revels dance. Let's begin from the circle formation. Sophia, you're kneeling down so the audience can see Titania in her bower.

Offstage Voice: If we shadows have offended, think but this and all is mended—

[Knock on the door] We're collecting field trip forms for the Water-Mania outing.

Offstage Voice: Mr. Hayes, can I go to the bathroom?

Teacher: Yes Debbie. Who is going with you?

Offstage Voice: Lulu can you come with me?  
Sure, we can practice our lines while we go!

[Sound of the recess bell is heard].

Teacher: I love it

GALLOP APACE

By Maisey Roberts

Self-doubt is a funny thing, especially when you are staring into a crowd of pimply faces. I feel it, feel its hot fingers creeping up my neck, while I try desperately to convey the kind of orgasmic excitement that this speech should inspire.

Just listen to this! I say, get a load of this rhythm!

It happens every time I teach Romeo and Juliet. There are three, maybe four scenes that just get the better of me. They take over my body. I can feel it coming, feel this surge of energy as I get ready for the passage.



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Who can get up here and break up the syllables for me? Andrea? “Gallop Apace” what is that?

They look at my blankly. My eyes are on fire; I gesture back to the board, and recite it again for them:

Gallop apace, you fiery footed steeds! If this were purely iambic pentameter, I ask them, what would it sounds like? Anyone?

Again I scan the room for some glimpse of recognition. The spark I am looking for, that tells me I am reaching someone, anyone who cares as much about this poetic trick as I do. I sigh.

Let’s review.  
What-DOES-i-AM-bic-PENT-a-MET-er-SOUND like?

Now I have lost a couple of them. They think I am an absolute nut.

O.k. ... it-SOUNDS like—THIS the BEAT ing OF your HEART!  
If Juliet was using only iambs in this line, she would be saying “ga-LLOP a – PACE”. Do you think that’s how she’d say it? I ask.

“That would sound stupid”, says Trent.

Yes! I practically shout. Yes, Trent! it would sound stupid!

Trent is surprised. He does not normally inspire such positive outbursts from his teachers, I suspect.

So how would you say it, if you were playing Juliet?

The class snickers a little, at the thought of Trent in drag. I go with it.

Go on, Trent, close your eyes. You are sitting in the upper window of your home. Romeo, whom you have recently married, in secret, will be back under the cover of night. You will probably make out. Right? You are excited. But it is still daytime! You are asking, in this speech, that Apollo run his horses across the sky a little faster today, am I right? His steeds. His “fiery-footed” steeds. Who can tell me what that means? Why are their feet fiery?

Ayesha jumps in. “They are pulling the Sun!” she blurts out.

I can see she is proud of herself too—she hated this class last week, and now she is piecing together this puzzle with the rest of us. Well, with me and Trent at least—I don’t know about the rest of them yet.

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And this is when the self-doubt rears its head a little. All of a sudden I can see myself in front of this group, as if I am staring in at the class through a window. What am I doing? Flailing around, jumping and whirling and dancing to get this language into them. I want so desperately for them to care. They will care, I tell myself. They must. How could anyone hear this language and not care?

So, back to Trent—

How would Juliet say this?

He responds sheepishly, as though he doesn't have the answer.

Gallop Apace.

Right Trent. Right. GALL-op a Pace.

That's how we would say it and that's how Juliet would say it too. But Why? Why does Shakespeare write it this way? Juliet is breaking out of her rhythm for this one—and we know that doesn't happen by accident. What is going on here?

A couple of students shift in their seats. Many of them are thinking about break time. About their sports game this afternoon. About the headline news this morning, or the awful things their friend said to them at lunch. But a couple of them are really considering my question, I just know it.

GALL op a PACe.

This is not the rhythm of a beating heart now is it?

I am moving my body more and more now, waving my arms and flailing a little. They may or may not care about this particular lesson, but it is obvious to me, and to them, that this might be the most exciting moment in my week. In a matter of seconds, one young student will Get It. Someone will See The Magic. They will Hear what I hear. I could pee my pants from the anticipation. But that wouldn't be very appropriate for a teacher, would it? So, who will it be?

Before I know it, I am galloping around the room. I can't help myself. I know that this makes me the lamest teacher around. Not only do I embarrass them with my frank discussions of adolescent sexuality, now I am whinnying around the room like a fool. I am beet red, I am sure of it. And I bet my underarms are wet through my shirt.

This is the day though. Look forward to this lesson all term.

GALL-op a-PACE

GALL-op a-PACE

GALL-op a-PACE

I am free like the steeds. I am crossing the sky, pulling my own chariot of begrudging, stubborn, awkward teenagers behind me.

REFLECTIONS ON TEACHING

By Jonathan Stevens

*Reflection 1:*

Today was quite interesting. We had a discussion on anti-smoking advertisements as an introduction to a paper that students will have to write. One student made this comment:

“My mom said she smoked only once in college. It smelled bad and she got hungry”.

Now, I am pretty sure that it wasn't a cigarette she was smoking, but I lead that comment into a conversation about how cigarettes cause bad smells and can be expensive.

We also talked about how ads are geared toward the younger generation so that they are hooked young and continue to smoke for the rest of their lives.

The lesson I learned today was to only respond to comments that need to be responded to. I could have said so much more about this comment but, I decided that I needed to stay on task and use this comment to support what I wanted to talk about. Some things are better left unsaid.

*Reflection 2:*

Five more days left. Where has time gone?

Today I had a parent walk in during the morning announcements. She talked to the cooperating teacher and then took her child into the coat closet.

Apparently, the students had forged her mother's signature on her report card and other documents.

Form the coatroom I could hear yelling and cries. I must say teaching has its downfalls. I felt hopeless listening to the argument. I tried to get the rest of the class on task by beginning the first lesson a few minutes early.

When the argument was over and the parent left, we all kind of stopped for a second and took a deep breath, the carried on as usual. I think we all feel like a family. If something happens to one of us, we are all affected on some level.

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*Reflection 3:*

It's F-R-I-D-A-Y!

I have now reached a point where writing on the chalkboard is not as amusing as I had imagined. First, it's practically impossible to write in a straight line. Next, I had to go back to writing in print. Worst of all, I have to listen to students say:

“Why do your E's look like backwards 3's?”

Writing on the board is practically a whole new way of writing compared to writing on a piece of paper. Not only am I writing up in the air with my wrist vertical, I also have to hold the chalk at a slant. The slant position makes the chalk print wider letters so that now my crooked letters are visible to the students in the back. Lovely.

As a child, the chalkboard seemed like the coolest thing to write on and erase (this was before the Magnadoodle). Now, I see it as a challenge to overcome. My next goal is to write on the chalkboard with even strokes, straight letters, and a greater visibility to the students in the back.

TODAY'S THE DAY

By Rhoda Cunningham

I always knew this was what I wanted to do.  
I saw my parents teach and admired them growing up.  
I thought I should take some time after my undergrad to discover if I wanted to pursue another career.  
I couldn't get teaching out of my mind.

I tried to be a flight attendant and a waitress for a while.  
But once again, I found myself dreaming of becoming a teacher.

The application process began.  
I was very nervous.  
What if I didn't get into a program?  
What if I didn't have all the credits I needed?

I experienced feelings of intense anxiety before going for my interview.

The door to my future was in front of me.  
I was extremely nervous entering the small board room.  
I needed my brain to function.

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At first, I was stumbling over my words, trying to speak.  
Eventually, coherent phrases came.

My love for teaching was being expressed as I spilled out sentence after sentence about why I was born to teach.  
I love kids.  
I love being around people.  
I sincerely want to make a difference.  
I want to get kids excited about school and learning.  
I thought back to my travels in Haiti.  
I explained my belief that education is how the world's impoverished people will see the light—how everyone should have the right and opportunity to obtain an education -how lucky we are here in Canada to have public schools.  
My mind was racing...

I think it was evident that I believe in the power of education—that teaching is my passion.  
Passion. What a wonderful word—and how wonderful to know your passions in life.

I walked out of the interview room feeling relieved and proud of myself. No matter what the outcome of the interview might be, I knew I spoke from my heart.

One day, after long hours of waitressing, I got a call from my mother at work—I asked her to open the letter.

There was what seemed to be the longest minute of silence I have ever experienced in my life ...

“Congratulations ...”.

That was all I needed to hear. The tears streamed down my face.  
Happy tears.

“Miss can I have more ketchup please?”

“Yes! Of course—sorry for being disoriented—I just found out I am going to be a teacher!”

My dream. Being a teacher.

What a lovely walk home from work that night.

I knew I was embarking on a new adventure ... an adventure that would open my heart, my soul and my mind.

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Happy tears.  
My dream was about to begin

~ Being a teacher ~

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