

Audience in Performance:  
A Poetics and Pedagogy of Spectatorship

by

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### **Abstract**

This study is designed as a curriculum-based response to an urgent educational responsibility: How do we understand and respond to our ever-greater roles as audience members in a technologically, politically, culturally and economically performative society? The lived-through experience of the live performing arts offers a powerful medium for young people within which to find relevance and genuine connection with artists and artistic practice that is not generally available through mediatized forms of performance. This curriculum theory study, in implementation, has the potential to greatly improve the cultural literacy of future audiences for the performing arts.

The paradigm shift in our culture from predominantly textual to predominantly visual creates a pressing need for aesthetic and critical understandings of the many ways we experience everyday life as audiences in performance. Live performance forms – theatre, dance, performance art, opera, music – offer a crucial counterbalance to the prevailing forces of film, television and other mass media forms of performance. These performing arts audiences are generally more challenged - aesthetically, affectively and cognitively - in their reception and interpretation of live performance. Also, due to the inherent nature of shared presence in live performance, the potential exists for authentic, meaningful interactions between performers and spectators in a way that is not possible in most media-based performance forms.

A curriculum theory for *audience-in-performance* (AIP) involves an increased awareness of the presence, attention and witnessing activities of live audience, as revealed in aesthetic philosophy. Performance theory sees the alienation, commodification and dispersment of contemporary AIP, but also recognizes the potential for resistance, collaboration, participation and shared memory and meaning-making with performance. AIP curriculum theory consists of three parts: pre-performance (preparatory/ predictive); performance (attentive/interpretive); and post-performance (reflective/evaluative). The role and function of AIP is akin to that of choruses in Ancient Greek theatre, occupying the liminal space between audience and performance. AIP students prepare for performance as artists do, through the art form itself, and whenever possible in concert with performers. AIP curriculum theory, also called pedagogy of the spectator, has six key characteristics: aesthetic, improvisatory, performative, critical, political and social.

Successful implementation of AIP curriculum in the worlds of education and performance requires a greater understanding of performance by educators and of education by performers. It requires the placing performance studies into educational practice to enhance and improve student/teacher spectatorship of both culture and curriculum.

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## Epigraph – Two Found Poems

### poetics

the sphere  
of infinite vibrations  
of meaning

(Roland Barthes, *The Plates of the Encyclopedia*, 2000, p. 398)

### pedagogy

it is better  
to fail  
in teaching  
what should not  
be taught  
than  
to succeed  
in teaching  
what is not  
true

(Paul de Man, *The Resistance to Theory*, 2000, p. 43)

**PROLOGUE**

**Haiku on Audience and Performance  
in Education**

## Haiku on Audience and Performance in Education

seeing performance  
an audience brings itself  
into new being

audience presence  
opens up the performer  
to the telling tale

audience - aware -  
knows their actions make the play -  
applaud themselves too

performance - the space  
the audience occupies  
to create meaning

this conversation  
between audience/actor:  
all stories live here

i perform for you -  
you attend my performance  
(no i - no you...we)

you perform for me -  
i attend your performance  
(no you - no i...we)

what in performance  
draws the audience to see  
better who they are?

when the actor speaks  
to the audience - what new  
dialogues may emerge?

the audience breathes  
conspiracies of meaning  
- creates performance

sharing space and time -  
performer and audience -  
we are complicit

when i act - you see  
who is the me/not-me you  
gather in your eyes?

the theatre is a  
sacred space - the container  
of hopes, fears, lies, dreams

who are we when the  
lights go down? our eyes focus  
together as one

what is theatre? well -  
i have a story to tell -  
attend - that is all

to turn the mind to -  
apply oneself - be present -  
wait upon - escort  
(Concise Oxford Dictionary)

i want to turn your  
mind to performance - to be  
present - to attend

who goes to the play?  
"not i" say the young people  
"what's on tv?"

how do i transmit  
my love of performance to  
those who may not care?

within performance  
lies awareness and presence -  
conditions of form

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Freeing the Captive Audience: Performance, Education and Everyday Life in a Dramatized World**

### A Conspectus

Performance matters. Therefore, audience matters. Performance and audience matter in culture, in socio-politics, in economics, in technology. Therefore, performance and audience should matter to young people in schools. This curriculum theory study examines the potential of heightening young peoples' ability to perceive and interpret their own participation as members of an *audience in performance* (AIP). In an increasingly dramatized and performative contemporary world, this AIP curriculum offers illuminating educational experiences in and through the performing arts. My intention is to argue for the importance of regular, habitual attendance of young people at live performances as essential for their social, cultural, political and emotional development. Gathering the voices of those who agree with me, who join with me in chorus to argue for the relevance, even the dominance (for better or worse) of performance and spectatorship in contemporary society, is the first task of this study. Against a backdrop painted in this introductory chapter of a world immersed in spectacular but mostly mindless drama and driven to perform (or else), I go on to create a *counter-performance in curriculum* (see Blackadder, 2003, and below, pp. 27-28). This counter-performance is rooted in aesthetic philosophy and performance theory, each field of which brings deeper understandings of the nature and significance of spectatorship in the initial preparatory, rehearsal stage of this inquiry.

To begin, I offer a chapter by chapter conspectus of this study in a way similar to that of a play synopsis offered in a theatre program; to assist a theatregoer through the transition from actual to possible worlds.

AIP curriculum theory is rooted in the theories of contemporary aesthetic philosophers such as Hans-Georg Gadamer (1989), Paul Ricoeur (1989), Paul Thom (1993) and James Young (2001). These philosophers delineate the qualities of spectatorship in live performance; presence, witness, play, sharing, self-forgetfulness and continuity of self, playing attention, interpretation and criticism, and opening to the world. Audience in the performing arts is distinct from general discussions of audience in aesthetics and thus requires a particular understanding of how this type of audience functions as spectators in the process of experiencing performance. Traditional aesthetic philosophy tends to focus on the primary work of art – the dramatic text, the musical score – and positions the performance of the work as secondary to the text, an interpretation only, not a work of art in itself. The performing arts remain an under-examined area of aesthetics and so it becomes necessary to adapt more general aesthetic theories to fit the emerging curriculum model of audience education and aesthetics in performance. As suggested in Chapter Two, performance challenges audiences in ways that expand horizons of expectations, develop perceptual abilities and, potentially, creates change in both cognitive and affective ways.

Performance theory draws on these generalized qualities of spectatorship, some of which are true for other kinds of aesthetic experiences, and particularizes them. Surveying what performance theorists and theatre artists have to say about audience reveals the complex interplaying processes involved in spectatorship. In Chapter Three, Herbert Blau (1990) points out the current state of alienation between performers and their audiences, while others pinpoint areas of potential struggle and resistance to the status quo. A spectator offered the opportunity to connect with performance as a co-

constructor rather than a consumer can engage in processes of resistance, self-expression, collaboration, memory and meaning-making. Avant-garde performance movements, political, popular and applied theatre are all forms of performance that open up engagement and participation with the audience in various ways, and therefore are valuable models to position in relation to both mainstream performance and AIP curriculum (see Chapters Three to Five, Seven).

Chapter Five suggests that this AIP curriculum in action can be understood more fully through the metaphor of dramatic chorus. The roles and functions of the Ancient Greek chorus in relation to a drama can be effectively applied to students in relation to curriculum and spectators in relation to performance. Chorus members, students and spectators all have the potential to “conspire” with the dramas, curricula and performances they encounter. These conspiracies, or breathings-together, create spaces for dialogue with powerful forces. For Greek choruses, this is the opportunity to remind gods and royals that their actions will affect the whole society. For students, this is the chance to respond in critical and creative ways to the curriculum that shapes their learning. For spectators, this is the possibility of engaging at a deeper and more mindful level with culture and with each other, beyond mindless consumerism and isolating individualism.

The AIP curriculum theory that begins to emerge in Chapter Six considers the *audience as co-performers*, fully capable of moving from passivity into creative interaction with performance. These interactions are most often effective within the form of the performance itself (dramatizing for drama, dancing for dances, “musicking” [Small, 1998] for music, etc.) and happen in a three-part structure; *pre-performance*,

*performance, and post-performance.* The pre-performance phase is preparatory and predictive in nature, exploring themes, issues and ideas that will be seen onstage through group improvisation and sharing, preferably including *performers as audience or co-participants* to some or all of this activity. The performance phase challenges students to perceive and interpret in creative and imaginative ways that highlight the importance of their presence and participation. The post-performance phase involves processes of interrogation and response, again, preferably including performers.

Finally, in Chapter Seven, AIP curriculum can be seen as consisting of six key qualities or characteristics. It is aesthetic, improvisatory, performative, political, social and critical in nature. Placed within education and society as a whole, this curriculum offers the possibility for young people to become more efficacious and proficient as both performers and spectators. It also offers potential teachers of this AIP curriculum new and unique ways to interact with students, curriculum and culture beyond the four walls of a school, or the fourth wall of performance.

Circling back to where this study begins, the haiku presented in the Prologue reveal my stance and bias in relation to my topic. I have what might be called a *pro-theatrical prejudice* (see Barish, 1981, on the anti-theatrical prejudice) as my background and experience in theatre lead me to contend that both theatre-making and theatre-going are inherently educational, complex, interartistic and always some kind of reflection – whether accurate or distorted, reactionary or revolutionary – of ourselves and the world we live in. While I have spent much of the past twenty years as a drama educator in both theatres and schools, I am also a practicing actor and director, and these aspects of my own experience greatly inform this study. In addition to this, I am a lifetime theatregoer

and my love of theatre and the practice of regularly attending theatre has enriched my life and this inquiry in immeasurable ways. Certainly, this study is deeply connected to a personal and long-term commitment I have had to the theatre in all its many guises; adult, children's, youth, local, global, professional, popular, educational, classic, contemporary, mainstream and fringe. This study is therefore a transparent expression of my firm faith (if often shaken) in the transformative, healing, educational, communal, socio-political and ritualistic power of live performance. This is the autobiographical soil that contains the seeds of my inquiry, expressed most directly in the poetry to be found throughout these pages. In regard to the use of poetry in inquiry, Chapter One constructs a metaphorical scaffolding that leads from topic to method and finds useful methodological terms to apply to studies, like this one, interested in artful approaches to arts-based topics.

### **Freeing The Captive Audience – Seeing Ourselves Seeing**

Following this brief overview, I now examine the backdrop to this study, the frame that holds it in place, the theme that supports its variations. This is the white noise constantly hissing behind our contemporary First World culture; the *dramatized world* (Williams, 1974) and the *performative society* (Kershaw, 1994). In demonstrating the necessity for education to pay curricular attention to performance and the skills involved in active spectatorship, it is first necessary to show that the world we live in and the world we create for young people to occupy in schools are very different and, in my view, increasingly out of joint. Therefore, I begin with the works of performance and cultural theorists Raymond Williams (1975), Baz Kershaw (1994, 1999, 2001, 2003) and Jon McKenzie (2001) as they describe a world that is immersed in drama and engineered by

performance. Next, I examine how audience has been theorized in two other related fields, audience studies and theatre history. Then, circling back towards audience in aesthetic education in my conclusion, I trace what some key philosophers of arts in education have to say (or not say) about the importance of live performance.

Each of these fields of audience studies, audience history, performance studies and art education, in varying ways, takes the view that in our contemporary “global village” all the world really is a stage and that we citizens are becoming, more and more so, merely players. Or, worse than this, we are merely passive watchers of players. Rooted in the ideal of what philosopher Cornel West calls an “active critical citizenry” (2000, p. 183), I posit a counter-performing AIP curriculum theory of active, participatory spectatorship in both education and society.

To begin, I offer three found poems created from the works of cultural theorist Raymond Williams (1975) and performance theorist Baz Kershaw (2003) that serve to express some of the deep questions and concerns we face in our present-day culture and society. They are the underpinnings to what follows.

### *Raymond Williams – Two Found Poems*

#### **defining the problem**

- i. we have never  
as a society  
acted so much  
or  
watched so many  
  
watching  
(of course)  
carries its own problems  
  
watching

itself  
is problematic

- ii. drama is built  
into the rhythms  
of everyday life  
  
(drama as habitual experience)

more in a week  
than most previous  
lifetimes

at once  
a dramatic  
and a social  
fact

(Williams, *Drama in a dramatised society*, 1975, pp. 4-5, 19)

### **shadows of shadows**

fiction;  
acting;  
idle dreaming  
and  
vicarious spectacle;

the simultaneous satisfaction  
of  
sloth and appetite;

distraction  
from  
distraction  
by  
distraction

a heavy (even gross) catalogue  
of our errors

till the eyes tire  
millions of us  
watch  
shadows of shadows

(and find them substance);

scenes

situations

actions

exchanges

crises

slice of life drama

now

a voluntary

habitual

internal rhythm;

flow of action

and acting

of representation

and performance

raised to a new convention...

a basic need.

(1975, p. 7)

***Baz Kershaw – A Found Poem***

**spectacles of deconstruction in the performative society**

mediatization

disperses performance

through culture: the eye of the camera

the ear of the microphone

the body of the keyboard

the extra finger of the mouse

everything as performance

(for someone else and

crucially

for ourselves)

mediatization coupled to liberal democracy

to late-capitalism

the market at the heart of the social

ubiquitous and spectacular:

politicians perform  
    shares perform  
    life-styles perform

(the ghost in the global machine is a performer and we are that ghost)

every vision of disaster  
 every fantasy of civilization  
 the spectacle of knowledge itself  
 contained in the magic of the micro-chip

shrinking the human to nothing  
 dispersing the human everywhere  
    destabilizing the human

(where are we in this?)

a culture founded on narcissism:  
 we are always looking for ourselves  
 through spectacles of deconstruction  
 (in which we always see ourselves looking)

mighty cultural processes  
    the ways power circulates  
 create performative societies

(with  
 spectatorial  
 participation  
 and agency  
 as key  
 to activism)

(Kershaw, 2003, pp. 605-606)

### **The Performative Society – How To Do Things With People**

British performance theorist Baz Kershaw first coined the term “performative society” in 1994 and it has become a touchstone concept in his various writings (see Kershaw, 1994, 1999, 2001, 2003). The word *performative* has had an interesting history in its theorization over the past four decades, since the landmark Harvard lectures of

philosopher and linguist J.L. Austin, *How to do things with words* (1962). Austin distinguishes performative language as that which *does* something, rather than simply describes or represents. For example, saying “I do” at a wedding is both word and action combined into a *performative utterance*. Austin’s germinal work was to have a deep resonance with emerging performance studies scholars and has been theorized in multiple ways (see Schechner, 2002, pp. 110-142). Essentially, *performative* is an adjective that describes someone or something as having the qualities of performance; that is, active, presentational, embodied and often fictive in nature. These qualities may be either viewed as positive or negative, depending on context. Kershaw’s position is that society itself has become performative, a world where we are all pushed into constant states of performance and spectatorship that are alienating, exhausting and numbing, leading to a culture with a hugely rich and diversely interconnected surface but little substance or authenticity. His conclusion that “spectatorial participation and agency are key to activism” (p. 606) conforms to my own, explored throughout these pages.

While Chapters Three and Four focus on how performance theories like Kershaw’s clarify our understanding of audience, I need here to examine an important text by American performance theorist Jon McKenzie (2001). He paints a broad landscape of a performative society that forms a large part of the topical backdrop I am creating in this introductory chapter.

*Perform or Else: From Discipline to Performance* (McKenzie, 2001) is an audacious attempt “to rehearse a general theory of performance” (p. 4). To contextualize the impact his work has had on those studying performance, I begin my discussion of this text with reviews from three theatre and performance journals:

McKenzie begins his book by identifying three kinds of performance at work in contemporary culture: organizational, technological, and cultural. A failure to perform results, respectively, in being fired, becoming obsolete, or being socially normalized....Each of these brands of performances faces a different 'challenge', a challenge of efficiency, effectiveness, or efficacy. The central argument of the book is that performance has replaced discipline (à la Foucault) as the paradigmatic formation of power and knowledge in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. (Sayre, 2003, p.200)

A second reviewer echoes Sayre:

McKenzie argues that performance, a concept that always implies theory, is deeply woven into the discourses and practices of business, industry, management, engineering, and technology. However, regardless of the historical context or field there is no agreement on a fixed definition of performance. More crucially, wherever it appears, "*performance challenges*, it provokes contests, stakes a claim" (32)...Performance, McKenzie asserts, is ultimately a transformative force that causes institutional, social, and intellectual shifts. (Sabatini, 2002, p. 505)

Obviously, McKenzie cannot be accused of lacking ambition, and although reviews of this work are somewhat split (Sayre ultimately weighing against, Sabatini for), the voice of leading performance studies scholar Richard Schechner (2000a) adds serious weight to the perceived value of McKenzie's paradigmatic study:

If alternatives to what we have had and what we are at present being offered [in terms of socio-political/cultural global imbalances of power] are to be developed, it seems to me that the boldest kinds of experimenting in the arts are called for. Experiments that challenge all kinds of separations. This is what is implied in Jon McKenzie's important new book, *Perform Or Else*. McKenzie asserts that "*Performance will be to the 20th and 21st centuries what discipline was to the 18th and 19th, namely, a formation of power and knowledge*" .... This knowledge and power come from the integration of three different kinds of performance: the economic, the cybernetic, and the aesthetic. McKenzie considers this one bundle of relations. If McKenzie is right, and I think he is, then this is what all the fuss is about. Arguing about performance, about who takes what from whom under what circumstance, and so on, is really about "power and knowledge," about how the world is going to be run. (p. 7, parenthetical comment added for clarity)

McKenzie traces the use of the word *performance* in three distinct fields of contemporary society: culture, economics and technology. In culture, he tracks the

development of performance studies – an interdisciplinary offshoot of theatre/drama studies, oral/speech communications, anthropology, sociology and linguistics – over the past fifty years. He suggests that cultural performance is centrally concerned with issues of *social efficacy*, or social justice; that is to say, how performance positively assists us in understanding ourselves, seeing ourselves, re-forming ourselves in relation to the culture that surrounds us, and/or transforming the culture itself through performative actions (pp. 29-54). Next, McKenzie sees the term “performance management” (p. 55) used in relation to questions and standards of *efficiency* as they apply to economics. Organizational theory looks at the efficiency of individuals and organizations within a capitalist society that is concerned with “the bottom line: maximizing outputs and minimizing inputs” (p. 81). This economic model of performance and efficiency has recently come to carry more and more influence in the field of education. Students sit standardized tests that measure their academic performance. Teachers and schools, in their turn, are judged and rated according to the relative success or failure of these performances. Young people are taught that they are preparing themselves to enter an adult world where, as McKenzie’s title dictates, they must “perform – or else”. As such, and as mentioned earlier, my study forms what might be called a *counter-performance in curriculum* (see Blackadder, 2003 and below) in which students prepare themselves for the future through their interactive encounters with artists and culture, and through which they may develop a critical aesthetic philosophy that is more concerned with changing the world than becoming more efficient within the status quo.

The third field McKenzie surveys is that of technology, where he sees the primary challenge of performance being that of *effectiveness*. After listing over seventy products

and companies that include the word performance in their title (pp. 104-106), McKenzie states that “[t]his use of ‘performance’ to market everything from carpets and computers to mops and manifolds indicates one thing: for specialists and nonspecialists alike, *technologies perform*” (p. 106). “Technological performance, as engineered and evaluated by Techno-Performance researchers, refers to the behaviors and properties that technologies exhibit while executing specific tasks in specific contexts” (p. 130). Computers, missiles and cars are all subjected to trials that measure their respective performances. Billions of dollars, for example, have been invested since the early nineties in the development of “high performance technologies” and networks; super-fast and super-smart ways to successfully compete in a global market (p. 98ff).

In his next theoretical move, McKenzie draws comparisons from each of these three fields, noting how the metaphor of theatre can be found in each one, although used in different ways (as scripted narrative, as theatricality, as self-reflection, as social criticism and/or action). More importantly, he sees the notion of *challenge* to be at the core of performance, however and wherever it may be used and found. The challenges of social efficacy, organizational efficiency and technological effectiveness are global, transnational challenges that must be faced and met with success or failure on all of our parts. The threads he pulls between and among these disparate fields of performance lead him to “a speculative analogy” (p. 176):

**Performance will be to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries**

**What discipline was to the eighteenth and nineteenth:**

**An onto-historical formation of power and knowledge.**

(p. 176, formatted as in original)

My interest in McKenzie’s general theory of performance, which he names *perfumance* (pp. 203ff), lies in its relevance to curriculum and pedagogy within this study. If

McKenzie is right, and I think he is (echoing Schechner's response), his voice is a strong cry for a seismic-level shift in education. If young people can learn to perceive and interpret the world and themselves in it as an interconnected series of performers, spectators and performances at multiple levels of society, is there then a possibility for them to gain more agency to resist the powerful forces that push them to perform for military-industrial, consumerist and technocratic ends? While the curriculum conceived in this present study is focussed quite intentionally on cultural forms of performance, it is greatly inspired by the creative and provocative theorizing found in McKenzie's text.

### **Audience Studies and the Absent Theatregoer**

The field of audience studies also helps me to paint the backdrop of the chapters to follow. Audience studies is an offshoot of cultural studies and/or communication studies, which in themselves have historic roots in anthropology, sociology and other related disciplines (psychology and linguistics, for example). Even a cursory survey of what is being published and discussed in contemporary audience studies quickly reveals that the focus of inquiry is almost entirely on "mediatized performance" (Auslander, 1999, p.5); that is, audiences are studied predominantly in relation to television, film, the internet, or other forms of mass media. Very rarely does one find any study of live audiences, although some work has been done on rock concert and sports spectatorship (Auslander, 1999; Kennedy, 2001). A recent article in a new online audience studies journal, *Particip@tions*, notes that, "there is little qualitative research asking whether there is indeed a distinct nature to the experience of live performance" (Reason, 2004, unpaginated) and that, "the experiential impact of liveness on actual audiences, by its

nature something elusive and difficult to access, remains an under-researched area”  
(unpaginated).

In a key anthology published in 2003 by Routledge, *The Audience Studies Reader* (Brooker & Jermyn, 2003), not one of over thirty entries directly takes up live audiences in the performing arts. However, French cultural theorist Michel de Certeau’s important text *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) is excerpted. His work assists in the articulation of a shift in audience studies from an *effects-based* theory (what a performance *does* to its audience) to a more interactive theory of audience in terms of its own *uses and gratifications* of spectatorship. De Certeau argues that we have the potential to resist the dominance of popular culture and capitalist power structures through everyday acts of “reading, talking, dwelling, cooking etc.” (p. xx). He places proposed acts of resistance up against a media-driven world:

The media transform the great silence of things into its opposite. Formerly constituting a secret, the real now talks constantly. News reports, information, statistics, and surveys are everywhere. No story has ever been spoken so much or shown so much....Narrations about what’s-going-on constitute our orthodoxy.  
(p. 185)

### *De Certeau – A Found Poem*

#### **forest of narrativities**

an anonymous code  
information innervates  
and saturates            the body politic

from morning to night  
narrations  
constantly haunt  
streets and buildings

(articulate our existences  
by

teaching us  
 what they  
     must be...

make our legends)

captured  
 as soon as  
 he awakens

the listener walks  
 all day long  
 through the forest  
 of narrativities

(journalism, advertising, television)

that still find time  
     as he is getting ready for bed  
         to slip a few final messages

under the portal of sleep

(p. 186)

De Certeau describes a world where we are constantly bombarded with information, images, stories, most of which serve to dominate our thinking and actions. At their best, as posited in this study, theatre and other performing arts forms can serve as acts of resistance to mediatized forms of performance, and offer audiences a space and place where more authentic, truthful and meaningful human encounters potentially can occur.

Audience studies scholar Virginia Nightingale (1996), places television audiences into the context of the everyday in her book *Studying Audiences: The Shock of the Real*. She draws on the work of sociologist Goffman (1959) and cultural theorists de Certeau (1984), Lefebvre (1971) and others to create a model of “the conceptualisation of *audience as a relation*” (p. 149, emphasis added). In her definition of the types of

relations audiences engage in, Nightingale points out that understanding audiences is always both text and context-driven and, importantly, that

Audience relations always involve the exercise of power – someone always has the power to offer ‘audience’ and someone else must respond by accepting or rejecting that offer. There is no requirement that audience relations be democratic – frequently, especially in broadcasting, they are not. The power structure of the relation always affects the nature and quality of its performance. (pp. 149-150)

This key point about the essential power relations involved in performance is one that will be taken up in later chapters, where I criticize the lack of meaningful contact between performers and audience in most contemporary theatre practice along these lines. The curriculum theory I propose is intended to offer higher levels of participation (and therefore, power) to members of an AIP. As Nightingale says, “audience is a relation of complicity in which people actively live and make the cultural imaginary, the web of intrigue which the complex contemporary Text [sic] has become” (p. 144). To heighten a spectator’s awareness of his or her role in these complicit relations, these cultural imaginings, these webs of intrigue are important educational undertakings that can be made transparent in the live and living forms of performance.

A third audience studies text that speaks to the topic is Bird’s (2003) *The Audience in Everyday life: Living in a Media World*. Bird, an American anthropologist and ethnographer, has carried out a number of studies on audience in popular media; tabloids, newspapers and news reports, and television series. She articulates her thoughts about our immersion in a mediatized world:

I believe we do need to more fully interrogate the reality of living in the mediated culture that some celebrate, some fear and some...feel nervously ambivalent about...I believe we cultural studies scholars have also felt profoundly uneasy about whether media are “good for us” in a more general sense....The “active audience” movement arose in large part to counteract the

“cultural dope” view of media consumption, and it has been very successful in reconceptualizing the audience (us) as participants in media culture, rather than its victims. (p. 166)

I am also “nervously ambivalent” about the effects of media on young people, which is why I see interactions with live performance as a form of counterbalance to these prevailing forms of performance. Yet, reading some audience studies texts, together with the work of Philip Auslander on “liveness” (taken up in Chapter Three), has tempered my knee-jerk negativity towards popular media and their victimizing effects on audiences. Bird’s research, and others (see Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998; Ang, 1996; Lewis, 1992) reminds me that many people have found creative and effective ways to both control and interact with the media that surrounds them. As a researcher interested in ‘freeing the captive audience’ I must acknowledge that not all mediatized audiences are captured or imprisoned, at least not all the time.

It is in the area of *fandom* that audience studies most clearly describes what may be called resistant and empowering audience relations with mediatized performance. Studies on fan behaviour and activity illustrate how effectively fans can take ownership of the dramatized world presented to them through the media and use these narratives as inspirations for their own creativity and performance (Brooker & Jermyn, 2003, pp. 167-212; Bird, 2003, pp. 51-85). The *Star Trek* phenomenon is one of the clearest examples of this, where fans have extended and, in many cases, reconstructed the original shows and movies into their own versions, many of which are shared either online or at organized conventions. Music, book and film fans operate in this way, also, often joining either real-time or online communities of like-minded fans. Fantasy and role-play games offer additional ways of seeing audiences become organized, independent and powerful

in relation to a mass media narrative (although we recognize that occasionally excessive behaviour can lead to unhealthy obsessions). These positive, creative, even potentially resistant activities of spectatorship have proved very useful to me in the formulation of the curriculum theory I present, and they are taken up more fully in later chapters.

### **Audience in History – Silencing the Spectator**

Taking an historical perspective on today's AIP is an instructive exercise that helps fertilize the soil in which this inquiry is embedded. The rise of reception studies in literature, along with the work of reader-response theorists such as Stanley Fish (1980), has led current theatre historians to view audience history as an interesting and valuable pursuit to understand better the effects of drama on individuals and communities. Here I discuss a small number of key audience history studies useful to this present work (see also Davis & Emeljanow, 2001; Postlewait & McConachie, 1989).

In Butsch's (2000) recent study of American audiences, *The Making of American Audiences: From Stage to Television, 1750-1990*, the theatregoer is present for about the first third, dealing with a time period from 1750 to around 1920. Then this spectator disappears into the fog of radio, film and television spectatorship, seemingly never to return. The fact that on any given night, tens or even hundreds of thousands of North Americans are attending live performances seems to fade into irrelevance for Butsch in the light of the many millions (even, globally, *billions*) of people watching television, film or surfing the internet. What also becomes clear in Butsch's study is how previously active and participatory theatre audiences, albeit somewhat disruptive and unruly, became pacified and silenced in the twentieth century. This pacification was accomplished by the

complete fourth wall separation of actors and audiences engendered through new drama forms, electric stage lighting and the cinematic model of placing the audience (literally and figuratively) into the dark. Other historical audience studies of interest that posit the same phenomenon – the pacification and alienation of contemporary mainstream theatre audiences in comparison to those of the past – are Blackadder’s (2003) book *Performing Opposition: Modern Theater and the Scandalized Audience* and Fisher’s (2003) essay “Audience Participation in the Eighteenth Century London Theatre.”

Blackadder creates a compelling study of the negative reception of a number of significant modern dramas by their audiences. He is fascinated by plays that so provoked their audiences that they responded in ways that had been largely left behind in the historical past. Blackadder calls the negative response of audiences to such plays as *Ubu Roi* by Alfred Jarry, J.M. Synge’s *Playboy of the Western World* and a number of plays by Brecht, “counter-performances” (2003, p. xi) where the audience, or part of it, performs its opposition to the play as it is performed. The timeframe of his study is from the 1880s to the 1930s, “a key transitional phase in the evolution of normative audience response in the theater [sic]” (p. xiii). He goes on:

During the nineteenth century, the behavior of audiences in the western non-musical theater grew increasingly subdued, and for the better part of the twentieth century, spectators sat quietly in the dark, not applauding, let alone speaking or shouting, until the end of the performance. (p. xiii)

As Butsch (2000) also says, this change was facilitated by the rise of naturalism in playwriting and acting styles, electric stage lighting and, later, the cinema. It is the exceptions to this new code of passive audience behavior that interest Blackadder, in the wake of the “fundamental transformation of the norms of audience behavior in the

western theater [that] took place between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries” (2003, p. xv). As he comments:

Such multifaceted and colorful intersections of conflicting positions seem unlikely to occur in the present-day theater, most of which is either a form of high culture struggling with the obligation to compromise with market forces, or a fringe activity attracting mostly like-minded spectators. (p. xix)

While I do not advocate for audience protests on the level that Blackadder describes, I am interested in countering the passivity of current audience practice through a more engaged and interactive model of spectatorship that is offered in later chapters.

Moving backwards in time, Fisher’s (2003) essay on Restoration audience behaviour in eighteenth century London highlights what has been both lost and gained in the modern pacification of AIP. Her study is very thorough, drawing on newspaper reports, journals and diaries of actors, producers and spectators to produce a portrait of theatregoing at that time. Clearly, audiences then held much more power to shape and control performances according to their will. Actors and producers often had to interrupt performances to appeal to patrons, arguments erupted both in the house and between performers and spectators, apologies or remonstrations were offered and were either accepted or denied, actors were loudly lauded or condemned. It was not uncommon for an actor to be called upon to repeat a favorite speech or scene for the audience (an historical precursor to instant replay!) Up until the turn of the nineteenth century, it was still common practice to allow audience members to sit on stage, thus allowing for even more disruption/participation, depending upon your point of view. Such audience behaviour is very similar to that which had occurred in Elizabethan theatre and can be traced back to the roots of European theatre practice in Ancient Rome and Greece. Fisher

sees the historic relation between actor and audience as one of servant to master, where the onus was on the performer to please the audience or risk censure. She suggests that what happened in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was a reversal of this power relation, such that actors became the masters and audiences took on the more servile roles.

Fisher concludes:

The darkened auditorium has completely separated the players from their patrons and overt public displays of emotion in the theatre [by the audience] are no longer commonplace. Human emotions have not changed, but theatrical tradition regarding audience behavior and dramatic presentation has. Although most practitioners are undoubtedly pleased that today's audiences are usually quiet and polite, the theatre is in danger of becoming culturally exclusive.... I am certainly not advocating a return to the earlier master/servant relationship between patron and player, to pelting or rioting, but I do, nevertheless, regret the loss of proactive and uninvited audience participation. (p. 66, parenthetical comment added)

I agree with Fisher, the loss of a proactive audience/performer relationship is a regrettable one. This inquiry attempts to re-position performing artists' relationships with their audiences, through the medium of education. While we cannot return to the past, we may hope for a more responsive and dialogical encounter in the theatre, as was seen in the eighteenth century and prior. In Chapter Five, I draw on earlier history to consider the function of audience in the light of the choruses in Ancient Greek theatre, a time when theatre practice was an extension and expression of community life. In this way, the stories of theatre history help to inform this inquiry into contemporary AIP.

### **Aesthetic Education and Live Performance – Percipience and Imagination**

*Cornel West – A Found Poem*

**the ravages of the culture of consumption**

cultural decay  
social breakdown

undeniable  
unprecedented

inability to transmit    meaning  
                                  value  
                                  purpose  
                                  dignity  
                                  decency to children

(i am talking  
                                  the state of their souls)

deracinated  
                                  rootless  
  denuded

culturally naked

missing what's needed  
to navigate                terrors  
                                  traumas  
                                  death  
                                  disease  
                                  despair  
                                  dread  
                                  disappointment

falling prey to  
                                  culture of consumption  
                                  stimulation addiction  
                                  spectator passivity  
                                  hedonistic self-indulgence

observing  
the collapse  
of empire

(i want it...  
                                  i want it now)

distraction  
over



Best (2000), Maxine Greene (1995, 2000) and John Dewey (1934) to begin to shape a space in arts education for a curriculum theory of AIP.

Ralph Smith (1998) has developed a “percipience curriculum”(p. 6) for aesthetic education, with the general goal of “cultivating percipience in matter of art by teaching the concepts and skills of art conceived as a humanity”(p. 6). His proposed curriculum consists of arts of creation (art objects), communication (language), continuity (history) and criticism (aesthetics). All of these skills and activities focus on the development of a broadly-contextualized aesthetic education imparting the ability to see and hear (perceive) art well. He concludes:

Teaching and learning proceed along a continuum from familiarization, perceptual training, and making to historical awareness, exemplar appreciation, and critical analysis, stressing discovery and reception learning, didactic coaching, and dialogic teaching methods. (pp. 6-7)

Smith defines the arts of criticism as one of the four central concerns of aesthetic education. The ability to conceptualize, critically analyze, interpret and judge artworks is considered by Smith to be a key element of his curriculum. In my view, these abilities should not be limited to visual art in books or slide shows, or in (mediatized) recordings of performances of music, dance, opera and theatre. All art experiences in education are improved the more direct and real they can be; the texture of a painting becomes tangible in the gallery, as does the sweat on a conductor’s brow, or the breath of a dancer in flight. His understanding of art as a humanity also gives shape and substance to his curriculum in the cross-disciplinary conversations it makes possible: history speaking to philosophy; sociology talking with anthropology; fine arts in concert with literature. Live performance experiences, I believe, must be a necessary part of this percipient curriculum process.

Elliot Eisner (1998) also offers a curriculum for aesthetic education, and identifies four areas of desired outcomes. Similarly to Smith, these outcomes involve the creation of art or “art-like creations” (p. 36), the development of aesthetic awareness, and the understanding of socio-political and historical contexts within which art is created and perceived. Finally, says Eisner:

I wish to identify a particularly important set of outcomes for arts education. This one pertains to dispositions that are difficult to assess, let alone measure, but they are dispositions that appear to be cultivated through programs that engage students in the process of artistic creation. I speak of dispositional outcomes such as the following:

- A willingness to imagine possibilities that are not now, but which might become.
- A desire to explore ambiguity, to be willing to forestall premature closure in pursuing resolutions.
- The ability to recognize and accept the multiple perspectives and resolutions that work in the arts celebrate. (p. 37)

Eisner is speaking specifically about visual art education here, but his call for an experiential, appreciative, contextualized and developmental art curriculum has much to offer the proposed curriculum for audience in the performing arts. His notion of dispositional outcomes is also a useful one when identifying desired qualities formed through AIP curriculum; the three outcomes Eisner offers, above, seem eminently worthy of development in the curriculum conceived herein (see also Fiske, n.d., for more on dispositional outcomes in relation to arts in education).

Harold Best (2000) writes about the development and use of intellect in aesthetic education from his perspective as a music educator. He begins with lower-order arts activities “based purely on philosophical knowledge” that involve, “thinking about without thinking in” (p. 8). The next level involves “words and thoughts about the arts based on modified experiences with the arts (reading, listening, using memorized taste)

that have yet to include regular experiences in” (p. 8). Best sees some benefits to this ‘middle ground’ in that students are beginning to make connections between theory, history and practice in the arts. However, for Best the highest-order value of aesthetic education involves:

...a synthesis of thinking about and experiences in (through both performing and creating) that results in thoughts about issuing from experiences in. This is the goal toward which all arts education should strive. The amateur and the professional are similarly at work but to different degrees. It is possible only through the superintending that mindedness can bring to the full curriculum. (p. 8)

Best calls for attending performances within an arts discipline, but highlights that simply attending is not enough: arts education must be centred around “thoughts about issuing from experiences in” (p. 8). His point that both amateur (student) and professional artists “are similarly at work but to different degrees” (p. 8) is also an important one in the context of this study. AIP curriculum proposes that students prepare for performance experiences much as performers do, through the particular performing art form they are to see and/or hear. Thus, an AIP curriculum that supports deepening students’ thinking and experiencing of performance would fit well within Best’s *mindedness curriculum*.

Although all three writers discussed above offer useful thoughts, not one of them focuses explicitly in on the development of the imagination as a desired end result of aesthetic education. For that focus, I turn to educational philosopher Maxine Greene, who writes about the power and importance of the human imagination, especially in regard to education:

***Maxine Greene – A Found Poem***

**what makes it possible?**

what makes it possible  
to notice the flower

the moonlight  
the songs of birds?

exposure to works of art  
the capacity to engage

responsiveness to colour  
to texture  
to design

a release of imagination  
moving beyond  
space and community

(energized by shared art experiences  
touched in desire and thought)

to explore such moments  
to expand the spaces  
conversations  
meanings

can only be  
to ponder  
the future  
of school

(2000, p. 278)

Experiencing and processing performance is one way that educators can build students' abilities to notice, respond, release their imaginations, express diverse views and hopes and share through art. As Greene writes (1995), "the arts offer opportunities for perspective, for perceiving alternative ways of transcending and of being in the world, for refusing the automatism that overwhelms choice" (p. 142).

How are these theoretical models of aesthetic education implemented in performing arts education practice in our schools? Not very well, according to Lin Wright (2000): "The problem is that drama/theatre instruction has generally not been a part of arts education in our schools. In fact, by many administrators, teachers, and parents, arts education is viewed as music and visual arts" (p. 11). Music, while

invaluable and irreplaceable, is only one of the three performing arts (along with drama and dance). Wright along with Garcia (1992) also posits that:

[T]he general student in the United States essentially has no theatre education. The perceptions of the public, school teachers, and principals still relegate theatre to the elective or after-school program – if it is in the school at all. It may be time to find a more contemporary view of our society to help the public realize the importance of drama/theatre (1992, p. 26).

It is this “more contemporary view of our society” that Wright and Garcia call for that I have been sketching out in this introductory chapter – a view of a drama-saturated and performance-driven world – that seems to be crying out for some kind of an educational response.

John Dewey in his seminal book *Art as Experience* (1934) provides an historical concluding framework for this brief overview of contemporary thinking in North American arts education, as he says that:

...there is work to be done on the part of the percipient as there is on the part of the artist. The one who is too lazy, idle, or indurated in convention to perform this work will not see or hear. His ‘appreciation’ will be a mixture of scraps of learning with conformity to norms of conventional admiration and with a confused, even if genuine, emotional excitation. (p. 54)

Seventy years later, what would Dewey think of a world where it is common for a young child to watch television for three or more hours per day? What would he have to say about the sacrifice of a total of hours equal to nearly one day in every seven to “lazy, idle” spectatorship that offers little or nothing in return (Statistics Canada, 2003)? Young people living in today’s dramatized, performative world still require careful nurturing through an accessible curriculum of aesthetic education that develops their abilities to interpret, evaluate, appreciate and criticize performance, wherever it may be found.

### **Spiraling Inward – Toward the Thesis**

A compilation of research articles, gathered together with an introduction and conclusion, is a commonly-used dissertation format in the sciences that has been gaining currency in recent years in education (see Boote & Beile, 2005, p. 10; Duke & Beck, 1999, pp. 33-35; Krathwohl, 1994, p. 31). The two main advantages of this design are: 1) The writing activity involved is much more akin to the kind of writing required in academic scholarship (that is, essays and chapters as opposed to a traditional dissertation format); 2) There is a far greater opportunity for a compilation study to achieve publication in its original form and therefore reach a wider audience than is usually the case (Duke & Beck, 1999, pp. 33-35).

This dissertation is a collection of research essays and poems that explore my topic of inquiry in a metaphorical framework and from a number of different critical perspectives. The arrangement of chapters reflects the topic of inquiry; a poetics and pedagogy of spectatorship. The pre-performance chapters (Chapters 2 – 4) are the exploratory rehearsal stage of the curriculum theory that is performed later on (Chapters 5 – 7) and critically interpreted in a post-performance conclusion (Chapter 8). Thus, it is my intention that readers carry with them through these pages a sense of self-spectatorship; that they are able to watch themselves watching both the process and performance of this inquiry. The production is a variety show, featuring as it does a blend of prose and poetry, of theorists and practitioners, and of my own voice, sometimes quite measured, occasionally barely in control of the passion I feel towards my topic. The methodological thinking that supports this admittedly non-traditional approach is laid out in Chapter One, where I suggest that if a researcher releases his or her imagination

and begins to think metaphorically about inquiry, much of great interest and value may follow.

The scope of the study – although interested in all of the performing arts as possible sites for the implementation of AIP curriculum – is limited to my own field of specialization; that is, theatre. I am a sessional instructor in theatre and drama education, a former secondary dramatic arts teacher, and a practicing audience educator and theatre artist. Thus, I am grounded in theatre and drama education as my core fields of expertise. My Master's research project was on audience education in professional theatre (see Prendergast, 2001, 2002). This background and specialization means that the lenses with which I see the world are performative and theatrical in nature. Theatre has been called the most interdisciplinary of the performing arts, often incorporating dance and music into its performance practices (See Carlson, 2001b; Pavis, 2001; Shevtsova, 2001). As Thomas Gressler (1999) writes, “I would like to suggest that theatre is the essential liberal art” (p. 52):

Theatre is the only liberal arts discipline that touches on nearly every other liberal arts discipline (including psychology, literature, sociology, philosophy, history, aesthetics, computer science, visual art, communication arts, music, movement and dance) (p. 52)

I am therefore making a broad assumption that theatre contains within it elements of all the performing arts and is therefore a suitable focal point for this dissertation study.

If I were an actor on stage facing you at this moment, the house lights would be up and I would be standing, ready to begin but out of role and neutral, welcoming you with a smile, one by one by one by one. As the lights slowly begin to fade, signaling the

magical and ephemeral transfer from real to imagined worlds, it is important that you know: Your presence is greatly valued here.

## **Methodology**

### **CHAPTER ONE**

#### **Falling into Poetry:**

#### **From Topic to Method in**

#### **Five 'Seeing-as' Moves**

## Foreword

### A Found Poem

Outside, the day glides by like ticker tape,  
the sky blue as a new translation of Loginus  
on the sublime. The bay shines  
like the skin of a bluefish. Inside,  
memory gnaws him like a fat dog.  
He has outdone himself, and now  
he wants to enter sleep as a farmer,  
familiar, confident, enters his field.  
He wants to put his hands in death  
as into the carcass of a stripped turkey.  
Those lives he moved among before,  
the town, have closed the way the sea closes  
if ships go down. Not even beauty can stop him—  
the shouts of boaters, the blades of the oars  
moving together like the feet of water spiders  
as if there were no such thing as death.  
Like stacks of folding chairs, everything is ready.

—(Found in works by Sylvia Plath, Charles Wright, Alison Hawthorne Deming,  
Erin Belieu, Jane Hirshfield, Maxine Kumin, Miller Williams, and Marianne  
Moore)

by Beth Ann Fennelly (2003) in “Various parts of the elephant: on metaphor”

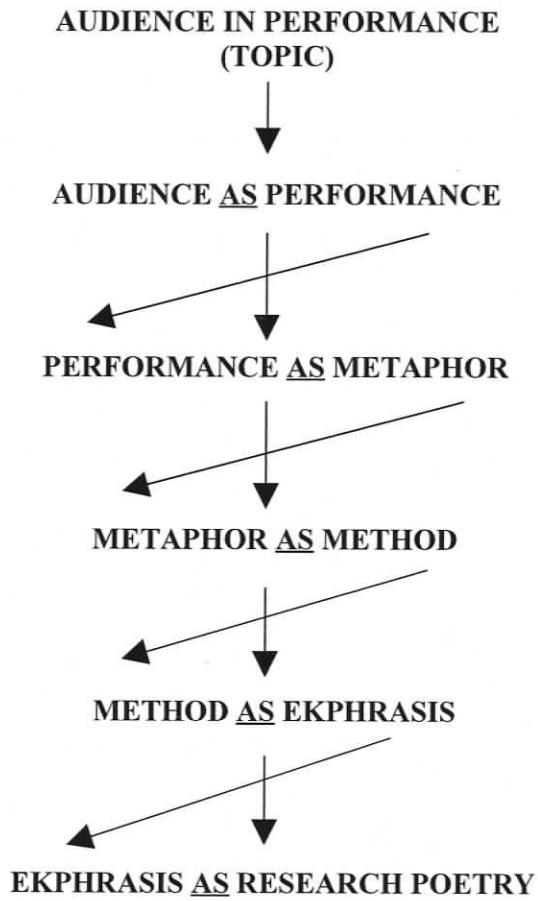


Figure 1: From Topic to Method in Five 'Seeing-as' Moves

### **Falling Into Poetry: From Topic to Method in Five ‘Seeing-as’ Moves**

All methodology involves metaphor, the ‘seeing-as’ lens (or lenses) that researchers place over their topics of inquiry in order to acquire new insight, knowledge and understanding. This methods chapter aims to explore this assertion in a series of sequential ‘moves’ from topic to method, all of which are metaphorical in nature. As such, this chapter is divided into five sections, four short (First to Fourth Move) and one long (Fifth Move), each of which is linked to the one previous through a metaphorical connection that joins them together into a cohesive chain (see Figure 1).

The primary move here is to shift one two-letter word that bridges the two halves of my topic so that *audience in performance* becomes *audience as performance*. This first move arises from the realization that a study rooted in performance theory requires that a performative methodological lens be placed over its topic. In this case, if I am interested in understanding spectatorship in performance, then I must begin to understand *spectatorship itself as a form of performance*. Of course this is a metaphorical understanding, but it has proved to be a very powerful one. It has allowed me to see audience as active rather than passive, collaborative/co-creative as opposed to consumerist/commodified, and as a verb rather than a noun.

Out of this first metaphorical move comes the necessary reflection on performance itself as a metaphor. In this move I draw largely on performance theorist and phenomenologist Bert O. States’ (1996) “Performance as metaphor” where he offers a number of distinct theoretical metaphors for performance that have been employed in the establishment of the field of performance studies over the past thirty years or so. These metaphors are seeing performance *as*; social behavior, social conflict, appearance/

disappearance, presence, restored or twice-behaved behavior, transformation, and pleasure/desire. Each of these metaphors is examined and criticized by States. He concludes with his own metaphor of *performance as a way of seeing*; the connection that allows me to make my next move.

From these understandings of performance as metaphor, as a multiplicity of ways of seeing, comes the next move; that is, seeing *metaphor as methodology*. I begin by looking at some qualitative research that has drawn methodologically on metaphor (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000; de Certeau, 1984; Fuchs, 1996; McKenzie, 2001; Randall, 1995; Sawyer, 2004; van Manen, 1997). This move leads me to the literature on metaphor and the work of Ted Cohen (2001), Jan Zwicky (2003), Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and others in the fields of literary theory, linguistics and aesthetic philosophy. Coming to a recognition of the deep-rootedness of metaphor in our language and culture, as embedded in our very consciousness, allows me to make my next move.

In studying the fairly recent phenomenon of poetry used in research contexts, I happened upon the word *ekphrasis*. Ekphrasis, from the Greek meaning *to draw out* or *to make clear*, is the practice of creating art in response to art (<http://www.answers.com/ekphrasis>). Historically, ekphrasis has been primarily seen in poetic responses to visual art as seen in Homer, Shakespeare, Keats, Wordsworth, Auden, Williams, Ashbery and others (although a recent study has been done on what is called “musical ekphrasis”; composers creating music in response to other art forms [see Bruhn, 2000]). This little-known practice in literature gives me a name for what I have been and am doing; responding to the art form of performance – that includes spectatorship as an

artistic practice – through poetry. I call this research poetry writing practice *ekphrastic inquiry*.

Thus my final move here is from ekphrasis to research poetry. Here I examine the contemporary uses of poetry in qualitative research practice and, more specifically, in arts-based educational research (ABER) in order to place my work in this context with a fuller understanding of the range of possibilities in this ekphrastic inquiry practice. My conclusion here is to suggest that research poetry is best employed in studies related to affective and/or aesthetic experience, especially in the arts, as this allows for the desired consonance in research of method and topic.

#### **First move: Audience *as* performance**

My reading of aesthetic philosophy and performance theory on spectatorship has significantly shifted my understanding of the roles and processes of audience in performance (AIP). This change in understanding has come about through the recognition of the essential presence of audience in a performance context. As playwright Charles Tidler points out,

...the audience is a necessary element of live theatre. It's like the tree falling in the forest: if you stage a play and there's no audience, did you have a play? There's a give and take between the stage and the audience. It's a kind of potlatch: it's a series of givings-away. I give it to the actors, the actors give it to the audience, and the audience gives it back to us. (Threlfall, 2004, p. 16)

This interactivity of performance and audience calls for activity on the part of the audience, but what kind of activity? Is the activity of audience simply seeing and listening? Simply watching and hearing? Simply consuming a commodity? Subsequent chapters in this study will reveal the rich complexities at play in an AIP that is given

opportunities to interact with performance in authentic and artistic ways. These findings are revealed in the metaphorical hinges that unite audience and performance.

Performance studies scholar Richard Schechner describes the field that he helped to found as a *method rather than a discipline* (Schechner, 2003). It is this insight, delivered to me *as a performance* (that is, as an audience member in the presence of Schechner at the 2003 Association for Theatre in Higher Education [ATHE] pre-conference on performance studies) that allows me to unite audience and performance through metaphor. If Schechner's (and other performance theorists') work has been about seeing many aspects of culture and daily life *as a performance*, then it seemed right that I make use of this metaphorical lens myself. Thus, I simply replaced the two letter word 'in' that lies between audience and performance in my topic with the word 'as'. And that, as Robert Frost says, has made all the difference.

What has been opened up in this metaphorical shift? Immediately, audience becomes activated, in motion. The purpose of AIP becomes *to give as well as receive, to tell as well as be told*. In seeing spectatorship as a performance I can apply the definitions and theories of performance to the audience. While not every metaphor may 'fit' exactly, it has become very clear that most do fit, and fit well, in a way that brings something new into being; a new way of seeing the audience. Many of these curricular and pedagogical insights will be revealed in later chapters of this dissertation, but one key illustration can serve here to show the metaphor of audience *as* performance in action.

Audience participation in performance has become increasingly marginalized over the past hundred years or so in the Western world. Participatory activity of AIP can now be found only in borderline spaces and places such as applied theatre, popular

theatre and in certain avant-garde theatre and performance art practices. History tells us things used to be otherwise, that audiences used to be far more involved and interactive in performance processes (see Butsch, 2000; Kershaw, 2001). Thus, my metaphorical first move here is to see the *audience as a verb* rather than a noun and to examine the actions of AIP as verbs, as things that are performed. This is the fundamental basis of a curriculum theory for AIP, as curriculum is also concerned with audience and performance, with actions and activities, with verbs rather than nouns. A list of verbs describing the actions of AIP therefore begins to look like this (with room for expansion):

## **Audience as Verb**

to see

to hear

to attend

to spectate

to witness

to be present

to perceive

to share

to interpret

to encounter

to experience

to reflect

to predict

to judge

to evaluate

to criticize

to change

to be moved

to feel

to understand

to connect

to construct

to disconnect

to deconstruct

to renew

to converse

to conspire

to be complicit

to commune

to wonder

to react

to be surprised

to gaze

to be inspired

to theorize

to contextualize

to decontextualize

to conceive

to participate

to respond

to journey

to make meaning

to contemplate

to watch

to soliloquize

to choralize

to transform

to be curious

to be interested

to co-exist

to co-create

to open

to recognize

to interact

to focus

to risk

to forget

to remember

to be entertained

to be instructed

to play

to ponder

to assist

to dream

to desire

to please

to enjoy

to think

to question

to resist

to mind

to idealize

to realize

This seems a much richer range of activity than ‘to buy a ticket’ and ‘to be entertained’, both of which are the primary actions and activities of audience as practiced in our culture today (see Fuchs, 1996, for her chapter “Theater [sic] as Shopping”). More in-depth readings of aesthetic philosophy and performance theory will yield many more verbs for AIP, seen in later chapters. For now, the point to be made is the significance of the metaphorical shift toward understanding spectatorship as a creative activity, *as* performance.

### **Second Move: Performance *as* Metaphor**

If audience can be understood as a metaphor for performance, then performance can be understood as a metaphor for...*what*? Sociologist Erving Goffman (1959) argues that we perform our everyday lives, and his work has had great effect on the development of performance theory. So, the broadest metaphor we can apply to performance is *as life*. This, of course, is mimesis. But this is also a very broad metaphor indeed, and one that needs some fine-tuning, some focussing, in order to become clearly useful in the context of this study. Fortunately, performance theorist Bert O. States (1996) has written on performance as metaphor in a way that helps achieve this tighter focus.

States’ “Performance as Metaphor” (1996) is essential reading in performance theory, as it troubles many of the assumptions, clothed in metaphor, that have guided the development of the field. I offer a diagrammatic summary of this work, below, because to cover this lengthy material more comprehensively would be to carry my reader away from my central mission; that is, to make methodological/metaphorical moves that link topic with method within this study. This chart shows how States lays out and questions the roots and values of a number of metaphors for performance found in theory.

THEORIST	INSIDE/OUTSIDE	METAPHOR	QUESTIONS/PROBLEMS
Raymond Williams	Outside/Cultural Studies	Performance <i>as</i> Keyword	How can we be clear about defining keywords when they are “inextricably bound up with the problems [they are] being used to discuss”, both ideologically and methodologically (Williams in States, p. 2)?
Eving Goffman	Outside/Sociology	Performance <i>as</i> Social Behavior/Everyday Life	What are the ways in which we repeat ourselves (p. 5)? What <i>isn't</i> performance in this definition, and therefore somewhat meaningless (p. 5)?
Victor Turner	Outside/Anthropology	Performance <i>as</i> Social Conflicts/Dramas	How do we resolve the “metaphorically vacant” tautology of performance as social conflict as drama as performance (p. 5)?
Peggy Phelan	Inside/Performance Art & Performance Studies	Performance <i>as</i> Appearance/Disappearance/Presence/Performativity	Where does Phelan’s metaphor move us beyond “evoking a principle that has a long history in aesthetics and does not define performance or performance art any more than it defines any other kind of art” (p. 13)?
Richard Schechner	Inside/Theatre & Performance Studies	Performance <i>as</i> Restored & Twice-behaved behavior	When do qualities such as “immediacy, ephemerality, peculiarity, and ever-changingness” apply to more than performance, as in almost <i>any</i> process or action (quote from Schechner in States, p. 13)? When any behavior is <i>learned</i> is it then not also possibly <i>restored or twice-behaved</i> as well?
Robert P. Crease	Outside/Philosophy	Performance <i>as</i> Science (Presentation/Representation/Recognition)	How do the science and performance of <i>transformation</i> provide “the fundamental pleasure at the very core of mind and memory” (p. 21)? How do Crease’s four categories of performance – “failed, mechanical repetition, standardized, and artistic” (p. 22) – become usefully applied to the task of defining the field of performance?
Bert O. States	Inside/Theatre & Performance Studies	Performance <i>as</i> Way of Seeing/Transformation/Pleasure and Desire/Simultaneity	Where is performance located if defined as “seeing that involves certain collaborative and contextual functions (between work and spectator) which are highly elastic” (p. 12)? How does defining performance as “the simultaneity of producing something and responding to it in the same behavioral act” work as a phenomenological understanding (p. 25)?

Table 1: Summary chart of Bert O. States’ “Performance as Metaphor” (1996)

Note. The INSIDE/OUTSIDE heading refers to States’ delineation of whether or not a theorist is an ‘insider’ or ‘outsider’ of performance theory.

What becomes clearer for me, from this text and the summary chart, is the danger that performance can easily slip into becoming an over-generalized term, like 'culture', that tries to be all things to all people at all times and thereby tends to lose its force and become diffuse. The enthusiasm on the part of these writers to embrace performance as a metaphor for such broad-ranging comparatives as listed above gives me a welcome sense of caution as I proceed. However, these metaphors can also be critically examined for their utility within this present curriculum theory project, in that they offer multi-faceted views of performance that *include spectatorship within the definitions*, as part of the whole that is performance. In other words, these metaphors are not interested in the separation of actor and audience; rather, they all see performance as essentially uniting the seer and the seen in simultaneous activities of social behavior/crisis, presence, performativity, presentation, representation and recognition. A metaphorical vision of performance in these terms is very useful to AIP curriculum theory, in that these theoretical positions support the reunification of artist and audience that is theorized in this study.

What I also see here is a metaphorical pattern in all of these performance theories where performance is compared to something larger than itself. I suggest that this may be symptomatic of a somewhat defensive posture, often taken by a marginal field attempting to establish itself within academia. This is similar to what happened in British drama education twenty years ago, when drama was analogically-placed in relation to the whole curriculum. The fallout of this advocacy campaign 'Drama is Curriculum', in Thatcher's England, was the subsequent removal of drama as a core subject as the government argued drama would be covered in other subject areas such as literature,

social studies and history. Not the intended outcome for drama education advocates, by a long shot! Therefore, I begin to see that these larger-than-life metaphors for performance offered up by both inside and outside theorists need to be approached with caution. My interest in and study of performance is framed quite distinctly as aesthetic cultural performance (theatre, dance, opera, music), that includes mainstream performance and alternative performance practices (applied theatre forms, multidisciplinary forms, performance art). I am not looking at performance or spectatorship as an anthropologist, psychologist or sociologist, but rather as a theatre/drama educator and curriculum theorist. These interdisciplinary boundaries must be held with some care, as it becomes quite easy (as seen in States' critique) to fly off the surface of the planet when enticed into embracing all-encompassing metaphors.

This being said, I do see much value in laying out these metaphors for examination and reflection in an AIP curriculum context. Certainly, they serve my purpose in arguing for the importance of spectatorship and performance studies in education. To raise the status of performance, through metaphor, to the level of being enacted in everyday life, social conflict or even *science* itself, creates a much-needed space for performance in curriculum. That particular argument is made in the introduction to this text as the rationale and significance of this curriculum theory, a space made in education for *performative spectatorship in the performing arts*.

Two other metaphorically driven studies related to performance as metaphor also warrant mention here. The first is Jon McKenzie's *Perform or else: From Discipline to Performance* (2001), where he looks at how performance is understood in culture, technology and economics as a "grand theory" of performance. His study plays an

important role as a rationale for the educational significance of this doctoral project, and therefore is prominently placed in the Introduction (pp. 17-20). The second metaphorical study is found in educational research, where the metaphor of *teaching as performance* has been taken up over the past quarter century or so, mostly in the past decade (see Pineau, 1994 and 2005; Sawyer, 2004, pp. 19-20 for relevant references). Most recently, R. Keith Sawyer (2004) has contributed to this debate in *Educational Researcher*:

Teaching has often been thought of as a creative performance. Although comparisons with performance were originally intended to emphasize teacher creativity, they have become associated instead with contemporary reform efforts toward scripted instruction that deny the creativity of teachers. Scripted instruction is opposed to constructivist, inquiry-based, and dialogic teaching methods that emphasize classroom collaboration. To provide insight into these methods, the “teaching as performance” metaphor must be modified: Teaching is improvisational performance. Conceiving of teaching as improvisation highlights the collaborative and emergent nature of effective classroom practice, helps us to understand how curriculum materials relate to classroom practice, and shows why teaching is a creative art. (p. 12)

Sawyer’s metaphorical analysis of teaching resonates very well with the teaching of spectatorship. One of the challenges and delights of audience education is that every performance is an entirely different experience. This requires a high level of improvisational teaching ability, involved in the performative processes of collaboration and creativity, that is an important pedagogical aspect of AIP curriculum to be examined in subsequent chapters (see Chapters 5 – 7 and Conclusion).

My next move from here, in this particular chapter, becomes an attempt to raise the status of metaphor itself to the level of research method.

### Third Move: Metaphor *as* Method

Method is fundamentally *a way of seeing* and thus can be understood and taken up as being *metaphorical in nature*. In this study, I am interested in exploring the metaphors of *audience as performance*, taken up above, and *performance (including audience) as poetry*, taken up here and below. The first metaphor is my topic, the second an important aspect of my method.

Clearly, my study falls within the interpretive paradigmatic realm of qualitative research, in that I am not interested in supposing or assuming that I have relative objectivity in relation to my research. In fact, I am more interested in exploring through poetry the very deeply and personally-held attitudes I have in relation to the discoveries made throughout this project. The curriculum theory I am formulating is in direct response to my own lifetime's worth of passionate spectating, teaching and acting in the performing arts, primarily in theatre. Thus, many of my findings are presented in the metaphorical language of poetry, arguably the most intimate, connected and subjective of writing forms. As University of Chicago philosopher Ted Cohen says, "One motive to metaphor is the desire to communicate how one feels and why one feels that way"

(Cohen , 1997, p. 239):

A principal ambition in the use of metaphor...is to induce others to feel as we do, and to do this by describing the objects of our feelings in a way which requires a special effort at comprehension on the part of others. When I offer you a metaphor I invite your attempt to join a community with me, an intimate community whose bond is our common feeling about something. (p. 233)

Within the vast field of qualitative research, the sub-fields of interpretive and narrative inquiry and arts-based/arts-informed research both see research practice having this quality of "intimate community" between researcher/participants/readers whose

bond lies in their potential to “common feeling about something” (p. 233). Researchers who use narrative and other art forms to interpret and represent their research are generally concerned with the affective domains of experience where the “tools” of performance – story, poem, visual art, music and/or dance – can be brought into studies that are interested with understanding human emotional experience. For example, narrative researcher William Lowell Randall (1995), in his book *The Stories We Are: An Essay on Self-Creation* states in his prologue that his book “is about the merits of the metaphor of life-as-story – about where it comes from and where it leads us, where it holds up and where it breaks down” (Randall, p. 3). He proceeds to take up this metaphor in a 400 page-long study, without losing (figurative) steam along the way! Other theorists, in scholarly discourse of all kinds, also make methodological uses of metaphor.

In another illustration of the use of metaphor in research, qualitative research theorists Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) incorporate the notions of “poetic hermeneutics” and “root metaphors” into their complex theory of reflexive methodology (pp. 89-94). They describe root metaphors as “metaphors that underlie whole discourses” and “a natural field for interpretive studies” (p. 90). As examples, they cite sociologist R.H. Brown’s (1976; 1977) work on root metaphors in sociology (“organism, mechanism, language, drama and game” [Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 91]) and organizational theorist G. Morgan’s (1980; 1986) root metaphors in that field (“machine, organism, population ecology, cybernetic system, loosely coupled system, political system, theatre, culture, text, language game, enacted sense-making, accomplishment, psychic prison, instruments of domination, schism and catastrophe” [Alvesson &

Skoldberg, 2000, p. 91]). (Of course, I find it interesting that drama and theatre are mentioned as root metaphors in each of these fields. See also Fuchs, 1996, and below.) Morgan himself argues that “schools of thought in social science, those communities of theorists subscribing to relatively coherent perspectives, are based upon the acceptance and use of different kinds of *metaphor as a foundation for inquiry*” (Morgan, 1980, p. 607, as cited in Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 91, emphasis added). I am arguing something far less comprehensive than this; simply that metaphor is the methodological foundation for this particular inquiry.

In yet another example of research *and/as* metaphor, educational researcher Max van Manen’s (1997) hermeneutic/ phenomenological understandings of both researcher and researched are rooted in metaphor, including that of *Writing as Method* (p. 124ff).

He says:

By way of metaphor, language can take us beyond the content of the metaphor toward the original region where language speaks through silence. This path of the metaphor is the speaking of thinking, of poetizing. (p. 49)

Here, van Manen predicts my own move for me, shifting easily from metaphor to poetry, as I will be doing myself later in this writing. Any serious theatregoer would likely agree with me that silence is one of the most powerful, primal and memorable elements of dramatic experience. The connection between silence and poetry is a metaphorical leap that van Manen makes by implicitly linking the *speaking of thinking as poetry*. Certainly, it has been my experience in this study that expressing my thinking as research poetry has allowed me to ‘speak my thinking’ in a useful and meaningful way. It is my hope and intention that the research poetry in this dissertation will create openings, pleatings,

ruptures, resonances and synergies that are reflective spaces (and silences) for my reader within the text. This is how I wish for my poetry *to perform* in this context.

So it can be seen that metaphor has played an important role in certain kinds of qualitative research practice as a methodological approach. Other scholars broaden their view of metaphor, beyond the context of inquiry, by seeing it as a significant aspect of our language, culture and everyday lives. Performance theorist Elinor Fuchs writes a chapter titled “Theater as Shopping” (1996) in her influential *The Death of Character: Perspectives on Theater After Modernism*. She also writes a chapter in the same text about the theatrical metaphors used by critical theorists such as Debord, Deleuze, Derrida and Foucault. These metaphors include society *as* spectacle, writing *as* performance, and philosophy *as* theatre (pp. 144-157). Cultural theorist and philosopher Michel de Certeau has a chapter titled “Reading as Poaching” in his key text on resistance in late capitalism, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984, see also Introduction). Metaphorical methods such as these are easily found when one begins to look. Below, in a highly-selective manner (due to the need for brevity here), I will take up the work of Beardsley (1967), Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Jan Zwicky (2003) on their surveys, studies and meditations on metaphor in aesthetics, literary theory, linguistics and philosophy. These texts are chosen for their perspectives on metaphor that effectively resonate with my own, and that lead quite naturally into the language of poetry.

Philosopher Monroe Beardsley (1967), who has written much on metaphor, claims that metaphor, “raises puzzling questions about the nature and limits of language and knowledge” (p. 284). He goes on to describe how metaphor has been taken up by many branches of philosophy: rhetoric and poetics (that is, language and literature);

philosophy of mind; philosophy of science; philosophy of religion; and ontology (pp. 287-288). Some metaphors he offers as examples include: “Time is a child at play” (in rhetoric); “Nature abhors a vacuum” (in science); “The Lord is my shepherd”/ “God the Father” (in religion); and, “The world is Will” (in ontology) (pp. 284-288). While a thorough survey of metaphor in philosophy alone would make a book-length study, the clear importance ascribed to this subject has led to its seeping into many other fields as well. Another field that has taken a strong interest in metaphor is linguistics.

In a key text for both philosophers and linguists, *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), philosopher Mark Johnson and linguist George Lakoff present an interdisciplinary study of how “metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action” (p. 3). Their joint study goes on to examine how metaphor and metaphoric understanding are found in many aspects of our lives. They examine many “structural metaphors” (p. 61) that infiltrate our language and thought, such as: Argument is War; Life/Love is a Journey; Knowledge is a Container; Mind is a Machine; and, Time is Money/a Moving Object. Their careful logical analysis of how metaphor works on our capacities to both think and feel leads Lakoff and Johnson to determine that, “metaphor is a matter of *imaginative rationality*” (p. 235), and that:

[Metaphor] permits an understanding of one kind of experience in terms of another, creating coherences by virtue of imposing gestalts that are structured by natural dimensions of experience. New metaphors are capable of creating new understandings and, therefore, new realities. This should be obvious in the case of poetic metaphor, where language is the medium through which new conceptual metaphors are created. (p. 235)

Here, Lakoff and Johnson speak directly to my own interest in placing metaphor at the centre of my study of spectatorship and curriculum. It is my intention that this study be equally concerned with imagination and rationality. And this quality of

*imaginative rationality* is a key quality I am interested in this curriculum theory developing in young people as they encounter performance. It is also a key quality of my research design; thus, the research poems incorporated into this text attempt to engage the reader's imagination while the prose engages his or her rationality. Performances, of course, are always metaphors (see States, 1996, and above). Lakoff and Johnson conclude their study with an Afterword that speaks to this connection between metaphor and performance:

It is as though the ability to comprehend experience through metaphor were a sense, like seeing or touching or hearing, with metaphors providing the only ways to perceive and experience much of the world. Metaphor is as much a part of our functioning as our sense of touch, and as precious.  
(p. 239)

My research stance and bias in this study, as revealed most fully in my research poetry, is that live performance is a way for young people "to perceive and experience much of the world" and that these metaphorical performative encounters can enrich their educational (rational) and emotional (imaginative) lives. These encounters have the potential to offer AIP students "new understandings" and "new realities" (p. 235).

I conclude this metaphorical move, *metaphor as method*, with a look at the recent work of Canadian poet/philosopher Jan Zwicky, *Wisdom & metaphor* (2003). Zwicky is a Wittgenstein scholar best-known for her *Lyric philosophy* (1992) and her use of poetry and aphorism (the latter seen in Wittgenstein's writing, too) as her way of knowing and presenting/performing her research. In re-reading Zwicky's text, I find myself driven into the process of creating found poetry due to the poetic quality of her writing. This experience of *falling into poetry* has been central to this study, and yet is difficult to describe methodologically in a rational way. Choosing to represent my understanding of

certain texts through found poetry is a highly intuitive process based on my aesthetic and emotional as well as my intellectual responses. As such, I have made the effort to thoroughly review poetic practice in qualitative research (in my Fifth Move, below) in order to validate what it is I am doing. In the case of Zwicky's text, I have created a found poem in four parts that captures, for me, her essential linking of metaphor and wisdom.

*Jan Zwicky – A Found Poem*

**on metaphor and wisdom**

- i.     the shape  
       of metaphorical thought  
          is  
       the shape of wisdom  
  
       the way  
       two things gesture  
          is  
       the shape of the world  
  
       to think truly  
       (to get at  
                          the shape of what-is)
- ii.    metaphor:  
       meta-images  
       multiply  
  
       pattern  
          intersect  
                  reflect meaning  
  
          one context  
       (conceptual constellation)  
          laid over another  
          (just so)  
  
       aspects  
          outlines  
                  common patterns

- spring into focus  
(make a difference)
- iii. metaphor:  
traces a gesture  
of address
- enacts ontological  
attention
- pulls a stitch  
through the rift  
between us  
and the world
- derives extreme tension  
between being and time
- opens to embrace  
all that is  
held in balance
- (inflected by being  
inflected by time)
- iv. metaphor:  
flashing  
back and forth  
over the hinge  
of what is common
- “While changing it rests” (Herakleitos, p. 67R)
- a linguistic short-circuit  
(meaning arcs  
across the gap)
- things are  
and are not  
as they seem
- to ‘get it’  
(to understand)  
is  
to experience meaning

(to be able  
to go on)

is what-is  
is wisdom

(Zwicky, 2003, pp. Unpaginated [Foreword], 4L, 6L, 24L, 58L,  
59L, 67L, 68L, 82L, 86L)

“Metaphor”, concludes Zwicky, “is a way of understanding the world” (p. 115L) and it is the way I am choosing to try to understand more deeply the phenomena of audience in performance and the pedagogy of spectatorship. I am also methodologically delighted by Zwicky’s use of left and right-hand pages in her text. Her own writing takes up the left-hand position, while the right-hand pages contain entries from philosophers and poets that are “attempts to illustrate, extend, or comment on the left’s claims and arguments” (unpaginated [Foreword]). In the presentation of my study, research poems are inserted into the text as an attempt to “illustrate, extend or comment on” the curriculum theory that is being explicated, chapter by chapter. However, Zwicky chooses to write aphorisms rather than poems in this particular text (she is a Governor General Award-winning poet), and thus cannot help me name what it is I am doing when I write poems in response to audience and performance – for that I need to make my next move.

#### **Fourth Move: Method *as* Ekphrasis**

It is a potent human attribute, the ability to name. I think of Helen Keller, portrayed in *The Miracle Worker* (Gibson, 1962), as she connects the sensation of water on her hand with the pattern of language drummed onto her palm by her teacher Annie

Sullivan. With this metaphorical insight, this moment of naming – *water as word* – the whole world opens up to this sight-sound-speechless child. While nowhere near as shattering an experience, I was struck with the power of naming when I first came across the word *ekphrasis*. I have been writing research poetry over the past five years, both original and found, all of which responds to my interdisciplinary topics of audience, performance and education. Other than naming this work *data poetry*, then subsequently re-naming it *research poetry*, I have had no other word to help me define more specifically what it is I have been doing. Until now.

Ekphrasis is the practice of writing descriptively, most often poetically, about works of art. The original definitions of the word from the Greek are “speaking out” or “telling in full” (Heffernan, 1993, p. 6), and “to show very clearly, to make completely clear” as “a descriptive text which places the matter communicated clearly and distinctly before our eyes” (Bruhn, 2000, p. xviii). The practice of writing ekphrases began in the rhetorical schools of Ancient Greece, with the paradigmatic exemplar being the extensive description of Achilles’ shield in Homer’s *Iliad*. Ekphrastic writing has continued over time with examples found in the work of poets such as Ovid, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Keats, Yeats, Shelley, Byron, Browning, Auden, Larkin, Williams and Ashbery. All of these poets have written in response to either real (*actual ekphrasis*) or fictional (*notional ekphrasis*) visual works of art (Heffernan, 1993, pp. 7, 146). Some examples of ekphrases that may be familiar to the general reader are: “The Rape of Lucrece” (Shakespeare); “Peele Castle” and “Westminster Bridge” (Wordsworth); “Ode to a Grecian Urn” (Keats); “Leda and the Swan” (Yeats); “Ozymandias” (Shelley); “My Last Duchess” (Browning); “Musée de Beaux Arts” (Auden); “An Arundel Tomb”

(Larkin); “Landscape with the Fall of Icarus” (Williams); and, “Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror” (Ashbery) (see Aisenberg, 1995; Heffernan, 1993). Other poets who have written ekphrases include e.e. cummings, May Sarton, Richard Wilbur, Emily Dickinson, Adrienne Rich; Gabriela Mistral, Gillian Clarke and John Robert Colombo (see Aisenberg, p. 194; Benton, 1997, p. 372; Bruhn, 2000, pp. 3, 24-25, 58-80). While there are some examples of ekphrasis in prose fiction writing, that is, descriptions of artworks found in novels or short stories, I will limit my discussion here to poetic forms of ekphrasis.

I am naming my practice of writing poetry in response to audience and performance a methodological form called *ekphrastic inquiry*. While I realize I am placing myself in some very illustrious company, my aims are far more modest than to achieve the immortality of the poets above. My goal is simply to offer a potentially useful term and practice for qualitative researchers in the arts or art education, who are also interested in *arts-based educational research* [ABER], to add to the growing field of arts-based research [ABR] or arts-informed inquiry (see Irwin & deCosson, 2004; McNiff, 1998; Neilsen, Cole & Knowles, 2001). This is the term that may work effectively for any researcher, such as myself, who is interested in *writing poetically about art*. Ekphrastic inquiry is a method rather than a technique because it is a very specific way of both interpreting and representing a topic of inquiry. To approach a topic with a poetic sensibility is to view what is seen as essentially metaphorical, imagistic and aesthetically experiential in nature. To be interested in exploring the poetics of a topic is to be interested in uncovering multiple layers of meaning, filtered through the researcher’s own constantly-shifting experiences. It is to see the world through the eyes

of a poet. While this method may be more generally called *poetic inquiry* (Butler-Kisber & Sullivan, 2004), this present paper is focussed on an aspect of poetic inquiry that involves the study of artistic topics and phenomena.

From here I wish to take up some of the most recent scholarly work done on ekphrasis, primarily in literature studies, with one text in musicology. Four key texts on ekphrasis will be addressed: Katy Aisenberg's *Ravishing Images: Ekphrasis in the Poetry and Prose of William Wordsworth, W.H. Auden, and Philip Larkin* (1995); Michael Benton's "Anyone for Ekphrasis?" (1997); Siglind Bruhn's *Musical Ekphrasis: Composers Responding to Poetry and Painting* (2000); and James Heffernan's *Museum of Words: The Poetics of Ekphrasis from Homer to Ashbery* (1993).

James Heffernan (1993), who has written what is clearly the seminal text on this subject, defines ekphrasis as "the verbal representation of visual representation" (p. 3) that "uses one medium of representation to represent another" (p. 4). While this definition seems to limit ekphrastic writing to responding only to works of visual art, which would therefore exclude my use of the term in writing poetically about performance, fortunately the term has some elasticity. Siglind Bruhn's (2000) interartistic study in musicology broadens the definition of ekphrasis and its practice to include musical composers, "inspired by a poem or painting, a drama or sculpture, to such a degree that they set out to transform the essence of this art work's features and message, including their personal reaction to it, into their own medium: the musical language" (p. xix). Aisenberg's (1995) definition of ekphrasis as a "literary description of a work of art or material object" (p. 1) can also be broadly interpreted as including my responses to performance. Benton's (1997) writing is focussed on how spectators/readers

make sense of ekphrases “in a more complex and varied activity than the viewer of a picture or the reader of an ‘unattached’ poem” (p. 398). His thoughts on “[t]he ekphrastic spectator” (p. 398) are in remarkably close alignment with my own on AIP, to which I will later return.

Beginning with Heffernan (1993), I also begin to trace the thread of my own need/desire to employ poetry within a curriculum theory inquiry into audience and performance. He states:

Because it verbally represents visual art, ekphrasis stages a contest between rival modes of representation: between the driving force of the narrating word and the stubborn resistance of the fixed image. (p. 6)

In a way, my ekphrastic inquiry practice has been the inversion of what Heffernan posits here. The driving force I am responding to is that of performance and the fixed image is the poem I write that attempts to secure, to freeze-frame, to capture something that is always present then absent, appearing and disappearing, transitory and ephemeral in nature. Heffernan also says that “ekphrasis entails *prosopopeia*, or the rhetorical technique of envoicing a silent object” (p. 6). Performance is far from being a silent object (although it is a very slippery one), but envoicing performance and spectatorship in the context of a research study has led me to discover that poetry is the most authentic way I have been able to find through which to represent many of my understandings and discoveries. I agree with Heffernan’s assertion that “[t]o represent a painting or sculpted figure in words is to evoke its power – the power to fix, excite, amaze, entrance, disturb, or intimidate the viewer....” (p. 7). My research poetry is an attempt to evoke the power of performance and spectatorship in my reader, and to reflect on that power myself.

Moving on now to Bruhn's (2000) study of musical ekphrasis, wherein she lays out "a three-tiered structure of reality and its artistic transformation" that is "present in every case of traditional ekphrasis" (p. 8):

- (1) a scene or story – fictitious or real,
- (2) a representation of that scene or story in visual form – a painting or drawing, photograph, carving, or sculpture (or, for that matter, in film or dance: in any mode that reaches us primarily through our visual perception), and
- (3) a rendering of that representation in poetic language. The poetic rendering can and should do more than merely describe the visual image. Characteristically, it evokes interpretations or additional layers of meaning, changes the beholders' focus, or guides their eyes towards details and contexts they might otherwise overlook. (p. 8)

My intention in writing poetry on my topic is, as Bruhn says, to evoke interpretation and additional layers of meaning, to change the beholders' focus and to guide their eyes toward details and contexts they might overlook. Later in her text, Bruhn goes into more detail about this ekphrastic process, outlining "five important categories: transposition, supplementation, association, interpretation, and playfulness" (p. 575). A summary of these concepts will also serve to explicate and validate my own practice of ekphrasis. First, transposition "aims at recreating through other means what is expressed in the primary art work" (p. 58). This is how Roland Barthes defines ekphrasis; as an anthological fragment that is transferable from one discourse to another (translated from the French, cited in Heffernan, 1993, p.193). Second, supplementation is defined by Bruhn (2000):

When a poet supplements a work of visual art, he or she adds some of the innumerable non-spatial dimensions that cannot so easily be expressed visually. Supplementations range from sensory experiences (with descriptions of sound, smell, taste, and touch that the image may suggest but not make explicit) all the way to the poet's reading complete

gestures into arrested postures, a possible “before” and “after” into the captured moment, feelings and thoughts into depicted characters, etc.  
(p. 64)

Third, association, involves “(a) sensory or mental input – an image, a phrase, a thought – triggers memories or mental links that...may lead to intriguing domains that may often be rather remote from the stimulus” but “that allows an informed audience to recreate the path of association and delight in the recognition” (p. 67). Fourth, interpretation, happens in ekphrasis when “the poet approaches the painting with a critical eye, commenting on the choices he/she believes the artist to have made, and exploring possible reasons that may have prompted such choices” (pp. 75-76). Fifth, playfulness, is a stance found in ekphrasis when the poem “is dependent on the expressive intention the visual art work itself communicates” (p. 77). This quality of playfulness is greatly valued by a number of postmodern theorists, most notably Patti Lather (see Lather, 1991). Bruhn calls all of these categories of ekphrastic practices “transmedializations” (p. 51ff).

As I summarize Bruhn’s thinking about ekphrasis, my own thinking is clarified. Clearly, in writing research poems about performance and audience, I am engaging in Bruhn’s ekphrastic processes of:

- *transposition* – from one art form to another, in this case, from performance to poetry;
- *supplementation* – augmenting prose writing with poetic writing within my study;
- *association* – drawing on aesthetic philosophy and literary theory as well as performance theory as sources for poetry writing (see Chapter Four);
- *interpretation* – as a way of knowing and coming to a greater understanding of performance through the creative, intuitive poetry-writing process;
- *playfulness* – selecting and re-arranging words and phrases in creating found poems;

- *transmedialization* – exploring the creative relationship between performance and poetry.

Bruhn offers a methodological vocabulary that can be usefully applied to my own research poetry-writing practice. More importantly, these are all qualitative terms that may prove useful for arts-based researchers when describing the processes of ekphrastic inquiry.

Next, Aisenberg's text *Ravishing Images* (1995) provides a feminist critique of ekphrasis. She highlights the importance of *transparency*, "a term which dictates how and when to speak in a poem, and whose voice will be therefore heard and whose face visualized" (p. 193) as "a necessary moral act, a poetic act, and one which tries to open the epiphanic instant and make it last" (p. 195). The quality of transparency, akin to ethical research practice, is one I would wish for my ekphrastic poetry, and will therefore add to Bruhn's list of ekphrastic processes, above. Aisenberg notes that, "the exchange between the arts will always be one of infinite fertility and mutual inspiration" (p. 197); I have certainly found the ongoing dialogues I have been conducting between poetry and performance to be rich and rewarding, both as research and as creative acts.

This look at *ekphrastic inquiry* will conclude with Michael Benton's "Anyone for ekphrasis?" (1997), that looks explicitly at what may be named as *ekphrastic spectatorship*. Fascinatingly, Benton's descriptions and understandings of reading ekphrastic poems resonate deeply with my readings of spectatorship in aesthetic philosophy and performance theory: "[Ekphrasis] is a rhetorical game played by poets and a spectator sport for the reader who is invited to 'attend twice at once'" (p. 367). He goes on:

Being a spectator [of ekphrasis] involves reading the relationship between two arts, the visual and the verbal, from an unusual and unstable stance. For this sort of spectating means reading poems which, in turn, are reading paintings or sculptures; and, maybe, doing so from a position of knowing the visual work *before* the poem; or, maybe, of coming to it *as a result* of the poem; or, maybe, of 'reading' the visual work through, or alongside, or against the poem's 'reading' of it. This sort of spectator is cast in a different role from that of the ordinary viewer or reader. (p. 367, parenthetical comment added)

He vividly describes the challenges of reading/spectating ekphrases in a way that I have transcribed as a found poem, in yet another example of this theory in practice, created solely from his text (pp. 368-370, with occasional verb tense changes):

### how to read an ekphrasis?

the poem  
is always dependent  
    disconcerting symmetry  
                                    in the sight lines

interference  
or  
enhancement?

deflection  
or  
deepening?

    ambiguous  
    simultaneous roles  
    visual and verbal

fall into story-making  
                                    the poet's interpretation  
(a greater risk  
    of rejection)

the ekphrastic spectator  
                                    contemplates  
                                    this unstable position

through the eyes of a poet

(pp. 368-370)

This description of ekphrastic reading resonates with the multiple levels of reception and response at play in spectatorship of performance. In a play, for example, we are always witnessing the actor and the character *contemporaneously*, that is, in the same place at the same time (see Gadamer, 1986; States, 1985; Chapter Two). This double challenge is one that lies at the heart of theatrical spectatorship. Ekphrasis asks for this phenomenological double-mindedness of the spectator as well. We are attending to the catalyst for the poem as well as to the poem itself. A double challenge, yet doubly rewarding in engaging multiple intelligences – cognitive, imaginative/creative and affective – including both visual and verbal.

To conclude, ekphrasis is an efficacious term and practice from literature that can be successfully applied to a specific form of arts-based research practice – that of research poetry – into the arts-based topics of spectatorship and performance in education. For scholars interested in “artful inquiry” (Barry, 1996; Neilsen, Cole & Knowles, 2001) and poetic approaches to qualitative research (see Butler-Kisber, 2002; Cahnmann, 2003; Cannon Poindexter, 2002; Glesne, 1997; Sullivan, 2000; Richardson, 1994) the practice of ekphrasis may also prove useful. To write ekphrases in response to artistic inquiries is to find a potentially harmonious consonance between method and topic that can be named *ekphrastic inquiry*.

The fifth and final move of this chapter lies ahead. This move takes us from ekphrasis to research poetry, overlaying the two as we look at the recent emergence of poetry writing in qualitative research practice. An annotated bibliography/anthology of research poetry is examined as the basis for surveying the methods and practices of research poets in diverse fields of inquiry. Critical criteria for validation and acceptance

of arts-based forms of qualitative research are also considered and reviewed. Ekphrastic inquiry is thus placed into the larger context of poetic and other arts-based interpretations and representations in current research practice.

### **Fifth Move: Ekphrasis as Research Poetry**

#### ***Introduction: The Phenomena of Poetry in Research***

An annotated bibliography/anthology of poetry in qualitative research that I have been gathering since early 2003 now has over one hundred citations and a number of sources yet to be added (as of late 2005). Although the term *research poetry* or *research poems* is not widely used (Cannon Poindexter, 2002; Daft, 1983; O'Connor, 2001), I am employing this term as an umbrella to cover the multiple terminologies I have been finding: data poetry or data poems (AERA, 1999; Commeyras, 2001; Ely, Vinz, Downing & Anzul, 1997); poetic representation (Richardson, L., 1994, 1997); poetic transcription and poetic narrative (Glesne, 1997); found poetry (Butler-Kisber, 2002; Sullivan, 2000); anthropological poetry (Brady, 2000); narrative poetry (Finley, 2000; Norum, 2000; Tedlock, 1983); aesthetic social science (Richardson, M., 1998); poetic, fictional narrative (Smith, P., 1999); ethno-poem (Smith, W., 2002); transcript poems (Santoro & Kamler, 2001); map-poems (Hurren, 1998); "poetic condensation of oral narratives" (Öhlen, 2003, p. 557); fieldnote poems, (Cahnmann, 2003).

Research poetry is an area of growing interest to arts-based qualitative researchers and there are examples of research poetry to be found in many areas of the social sciences and humanities. The potential power of research poetry is to do as poetry does, that is to synthesize experience in a direct and affective way. Although a certain amount of

contextualizing may be necessary for the fullest appreciation of poetry in a research setting, it is my contention that the best examples of research poems are good poems in and of themselves.

Research poetry tends to belong to one of the four following categories:

1. *Researcher-voiced* poems written from field notes, journal entries, or reflective/ creative/autobiographical writing as the data source. This category is problematic in that it could conceivably encompass all poetry, if positioned as an essentially autobiographical art form, taking its data from the poet's (researcher's) life experience. Of course, all poetry could also be argued to be a form of research, but poems must be framed in a research context in order to qualify here; a re-searching of experience and sorting into expression and communication through language.
2. *Participant-voiced* poems written from interview transcripts or solicited directly from participants, sometimes in an action research model where the poems are co-created with the researcher. The voices in the poems may be singular or multiple.
3. Research poems that *blend* both the researcher's and the participants' voices.
4. *Literature-voiced poems* written from works of literature/theory in one or more disciplines or fields.

Method must lend itself to topic, as in any research design. What kind of topics are most suited to poetic forms of inquiry? The research poetry bibliography I have been assimilating covers a wide range of disciplines in the social sciences and humanities, including anthropology, education, English, health sciences (medicine, nursing and social work), women's studies, philosophy, psychology, sociology, counselling and urban

planning. Therefore, research poetry – just as poetry itself – can function well within a broad range of topics. However, my sense is that the best research poetry – again, as seen in poetry – will carry within it the power to move its audience affectively as well as cognitively and will deal with the kinds of topics that lead into the affective experiential domain. For example, some of the key questions answered in studies using poetry are:

- 1) How do managers feel about losing their jobs (Brearley, 2000)?
- 2) How do young Batswanians [sic] feel about their gender roles (Commeyras & Montsi, 2000)?
- 3) How do primary elementary students feel about their relationship with their teacher (Butler-Kisber, 2002)?
- 4) How do parents of autistic children feel about their interaction with the health and education systems (Beatson & Prelock, 2002)?
- 5) How does a young homeless person feel about her life (Finley, 2000)?
- 6) How does it feel to be a mother (Barg, 2001), an art teacher (Buttignol et al., 2001), a parent with school-aged children (Freeman, 2001), a girl (Gannon, 2001), a gay teacher (Grace, 2001), a teacher of colour (Santoro & Kamler, 2001), a refugee (Hones, 1998), a terminal cancer patient (Öhlen, 2003), or a couple living with HIV (Cannon Poindexter, 2002)?

***Research Poets: Scholartists in Artful Inquiry***

“Scholartists” are researcher/artists who bring their artistic sensibilities and experiences into the research process (Nielsen, 2001). “Artful inquiry” is described by David Barry (1996) as a form of symbolic constructivism, “a qualitative research approach that uses... nonroutine artlike portrayal to elicit, challenge, and shift existing sense-making

frameworks” (p. 411). Finley (2003) reviews art-based studies published by *Qualitative Inquiry* over seven years (1996-2003) and deals with significant questions in ABER that apply to research poetry. She concludes that arts-based inquiry is rooted “within a newly formed tradition of participatory, critical action research based on an ethics of human relationships” (p. 281). Eisner (1997) reminds arts-based researchers that “Expertise does matter” (cited in Finley, 2003, p. 286), opening up issues around evaluation of, qualifications within (of both researchers and audiences), and risks of charges of elitism against, the arts-based research community. Singer Gabella (1998) writes another reminder, that “the arts may help us to see research as the articulation of two human spaces: the world as interpreted...and the world as it might be” (p. 50).

Successful artful inquiries have the potential to reach a much wider audience than do more traditional research studies. For example, an art teacher engaged in full-time teaching may never find the time or space to read John Dewey’s important philosophical text, *Art as experience* (1934). However, reading three short found poems created from this text is a reasonable possibility for this teacher, and will successfully expose her to ideas the scholar-artist who wrote these found poems found significant in Dewey (see Sullivan, 2000).

### ***Writing Research Poetry: A Guide***

The how-to of writing research poetry is almost absent in the literature, although anthropologists’ Tedlock’s (1983) transcription of participant data into “narrative poetry” and Gee’s (1985) method of poetic transcription – dividing interview data into quatrain stanzas – offer useful early models that pre-date the recent development of ABER. Glesne (1997) and Butler-Kisber (2002) both offer some research poetry-writing

techniques, taken up below. Piirto (2002) addresses the important issue of qualifications in arts-based research and also discusses her own poetry-writing process. As for my own emerging sensibilities regarding how research poetry is created, the terms offered here are the beginnings of articulation.

Sifting through data, whether researcher data from field texts of various kinds (see below) or participant data, is the process of intuitively sorting out words, phrases, sentences, passages that synthesize meaning from the prose (see Glesne, 1997, pp. 205-207). These siftings will be generally metaphorical, narrative and affective in nature. The process is reflexive in that the researcher is interconnected with the researched, that the researcher's own affective response to the process informs it. As Ely, Vinz, Downing & Anzul, (1997) state, "creating poems . . . has been an extremely successful activity for many qualitative researchers" (p. 136). They also note, "one joyful thing about writing poetry is that, given the same data, different people create differing versions" (p. 136). It is performative in nature in that poetry is originally an oral art form that is deeply rooted in the sense of voice. Creating research poetry is a performative act, revealing researcher/ participants as both masked and unmasked, costumed and bared, liars and truth-tellers, actors and audience, offstage and onstage in the creation of research.

Forging strong links to poetic practice in literature is one way to validate research poetry in research that is under-examined. Found poetry has an established history and practice in literature, including works by prominent poets such as Maya Angelou (1991), Annie Dillard (1995), Rick Moody (2001) and John Robert Colombo (1966) (see also Rubinstein, 1999). Ezra Pound included elements of found poetry in his famous work *Cantos* (1948). Contemporary poets such as Christian Bök and Daniel Nussbaum set

themselves extremely difficult tasks to create what I call *constrained poetry*. Bök's *Eunoia* (2001) is limited to words containing only a single vowel used once or more per word. Nussbaum (1994) writes found poems using only text from actual vanity license plates. The constraints of these poets' work can be paralleled to the constraints of working with data to create found poems in a research context. Also, the constraints facing the ekphrastic poet – creating in response to another's creation – can be comparatively used.

A comparative study between found/constrained poetry and research poetry, the focus of which would be to measure whether or not research poetry succeeds *as poetry*, is another important contribution yet to be made to this debate. In a most positive development along these lines, Melisa Cahnmann's (2003) article in *Educational Researcher* considers the use of poetry in educational research practice and shares her own ethnographic research poems, one of which has been published in both research and literary journals, and also in a large daily newspaper. She writes:

Developing a poetic voice prepares scholars to discover and communicate findings in multidimensional, penetrating, and more accessible ways. The author explores the craft, practice, and possibility for a poetic approach to inquiry among teaching and learning communities and encourages all researchers, especially those using qualitative methodologies, to consider what poets do and learn how to incorporate rhythm, form, metaphor, and other poetic techniques to enhance their work...[T]he use of poetry [is] a means for educational scholarship to impact the arts, influence wider audiences, and improve teacher and graduate student education. (p. 29)

Moving as Cahnmann does, from poetry in literature to poetry in research, leads us to the work of Laurel Richardson (1994, 1997) and Corinne Glesne (1997). These two writers are most commonly cited in studies employing poetry. While sociologist Richardson does not focus on the how-to aspects of her lyrical ethnographic research

poems (preferring to tell how her work has been received, a research poetry reception study!), Glesne (1997) does break down for the reader how she goes through a sifting process (p. 206) to create two versions of poetic narratives from participant interview transcripts. The first version is “chronologically and linguistically faithful to the transcript” (p. 207), the second “draws from other sections of the interviews, takes more license with words” (p. 207). She describes how she works from a more typical qualitative data analysis involving coding and sorting data by themes and then moves into the poetic transcription process. She says:

...I found myself, through poetic transcription, searching for the essence conveyed, the hues, the textures, and then drawing from all portions of the interviews to juxtapose details into a somewhat abstract representation. Somewhat like a photographer, who lets us know a person in a different way, I wanted the reader to come to know Dona Juana [the participant] through very few words. (p. 206)

Glesne later attempts a definition of poetic transcription that “moves in the direction of poetry but is not necessarily poetry” (p. 213). She goes on:

Poetic transcription approximates poetry through the concentrated language of interviewee, shaped by researcher to give pleasure and truth. But the truth may be a ‘small t’ truth of description, re-presenting a perspective or experience of the interviewee, filtered through the researcher. It may not reach the large “T” truth of seeing “with the eyes of the spirit” for which poetry strives. (p. 213)

This stance raises a key philosophical issue in arts-based research, that is: Is research of this kind *art* or merely “art-like”? Barone (2001) addresses this in *Educational Researcher*, and, as with Glesne here, seems to fall on the safer side of the fence, positing arts-based research as not-quite-art: “...the research may be characterized as *arts-based* rather than as full-fledged art” (p. 25). My intention to articulate a methodology for research poetry is to position it as an artistic practice carried out within a research

framework that cannot and must not diminish the critical/aesthetic qualities of these kinds of poems *as* poetry. Here, I am grateful for Piirto's (2002) recent writing that criticizes arts-based research being carried out by unqualified or under-qualified researchers, or, I might add, by those who are insufficiently contextualizing their work within aesthetics and fine arts/humanities as well as social science.

Speaking autobiographically, I can locate my interest in research poetry coming out of my drama/theatre background as well as my formerly more private practice of poetry-writing. I experience the voices I read in research poems as heard, as spoken, as expressed, as soliloquies/monologues/dialogues, as character-driven. I am always interested in the clearest possible voice being heard, whether it is the voice of the researcher, the participant(s) or the literature, when I read or create research poems. This connection between research poetry and drama seems important in articulating this method, recognizing that poetry and drama come from the same roots in Western history, from ancient songs and rituals, and also seeing the inherently oral nature of poetry and drama. I have written elsewhere about soliloquy and chorus as poetic/dramatic voice forms applied to research (Prendergast, 2004b, 2003a, 2001), and can see in the bibliography/anthology of research poetry I have been gathering that many entries could be classified as monologues or soliloquies and are, in fact, more prosaic than poetic, and as such may need to be re-named for accuracy's sake.

### ***Research Aesthetics: Developing Standards in ABER***

As introduced above, my stance is that I can see little or no point in attempting to validate arts-based methods in research without the application of appropriate aesthetic critical criteria to the task. Validating arts-based research with science-based criteria is a

mismatch that can only lead to confusion at best, failure at worst. Research poetry is one of an array of arts-based qualitative research method with developing standards.

Therefore, in order to move towards the validation of research poetry, a researcher should be familiar with the emerging standards in the field of ABER.

Here follows brief summaries of the conditions and criteria for arts-based studies in general and research poetry in particular as described by the foremost writers and practitioners of ABER:

A. Barone and Eisner's (1997) list of "Seven features of arts-based educational inquiry" offers a design methodology that accommodates a qualitative and creative research writing style:

1. The creation of a virtual reality
2. The presence of ambiguity
3. The use of expressive language
4. The use of contextualized and vernacular language
5. The promotion of empathy
6. Personal signature of the researcher/writer
7. The presence of aesthetic form (pp. 73-78)

B. Bochner (2000) outlines his criteria for judging art-based research narratives reluctantly, having first questioned the validity of evaluative criteria in arts-based studies. However, his six criteria are as follows:

- 1) I look for abundant, concrete detail...not only facts but also feelings.
- 2) I am attracted to structurally complex narratives, stories told in a temporal framework that rotates between past and present reflecting the nonlinear process of memory work – the curve of time.
- 3) I almost always make a judgment about the author's emotional credibility, vulnerability, and honesty.
- 4) I prefer narratives that express a tale of two selves; a believable journey from who I was to who I am, a life course reimagined or transformed by crisis.
- 5) I hold the author to a demanding standard of ethical self-consciousness.
- 6) I want a story that moves me, my heart and belly as well as my head....  
(selected from pp. 270-271)

C. Butler-Kisber (2002) outlines six “ideas” around her uses of found poetry in qualitative research:

1. Interview material is the easiest to work with because it most closely resembles natural, everyday talk that in turn can be portrayed in ways that evoke the reader.
2. Audiotaped material to a certain extent, and definitely videotaped field texts, make the task that much easier. Audiotapes retain dimensions of the interactions that help to get at the sensory elements not apparent in prose. Videotapes preserve both the auditory and the visual, making revisiting the material even more authentic.
3. Because poetry has a performance/auditory dimension, in the process of creating found poetry it is useful to read it aloud repeatedly in order to fine-tune the work. As in all qualitative work, getting a response from the participant(s) helps deal with ethical issues, but also contributes to crafting the product.
4. A working collaboration between the interviewer and interviewee that is built on trust and reciprocity over time is most conducive for producing a context in which interesting and important stories will emerge. The trust and reciprocity tend to produce symmetry in the relationship between the participant and researcher. This helps balance the power differential inherent in such work and encourages researcher reflexivity.
5. Whether found poetry is used as a public form of representation or as an analytic tool within the inquiry process, it will bring the researcher closer to the data in different and sometimes unusual ways that can yield new and important insights.
6. Reading poetry, and reading about poetry, and attending workshops or courses all help to develop and hone artistic skills. (p. 235)

D. Cole and Knowles (2001), in “Qualities of Inquiry: Process, Form, and

‘Goodness’”, define “Elements of Arts-informed (Life History) Research” as:

1. Intentionality
2. Researcher presence
3. Methodological commitment
4. Holistic quality
5. Communicability
6. Aesthetic form
7. Knowledge claims
8. Contributions

They also offer a number of questions “the answers to which are integral to the development of sound, defensible scholarship grounded in a consistent and coherent arts-informed perspective” (p. 217). These questions centre around issues of purpose, perspectives, appropriate methods, articulated principles, presence (of both researcher and participants), representation, authenticity, substance, audiences, coherence, consistency, and interpretability.

E. Finley (2003) offers her “attempt at a postfoundational ‘rubric’” (p. 294) for assessing arts-based qualitative inquiry:

- Are the researchers performing a useful, local, community service by conducting the research? Could the research be harmful in any way to the community of participants?
- Whose voices do I hear most clearly, those of the researchers or those of the participants?
- Is there evidence of an ethics of care among the participants and the researchers?
- Is there evidence of a blurring of roles, of researcher being researched and of participants as researchers?
- Have researchers been willing to experiment with form, both in their practice of research and in their representations? Are they limited by the hegemony of research discourse?
- How does the form of representation (regardless of whether it is, for instance, painting, dance, or narrative) create an open space for dialogue between readers/perceivers and research participants, as well as opening dialogue with researchers and artists? Are research documents writerly, or painterly?
- Does the research (practice and representation) allow a heuristic, “open” text, in which there are spaces for multiple meanings to be constructed? Does the research provoke questions, rather than draw conclusions?
- Is the practice and the representation of research passionate and visceral? Does it involve activity that created opportunities for communion among participants, researchers, and the various discourse communities who might be the audiences of (and participants with) the research text?
- Does the representation, both through its form and its content, have the capacity to connect its local, community service purpose with purposes of its audiences? Is the reader/ viewer, or participant, likely to be moved to some kind of action? (p. 294)

Finley concludes that “craftsmanship, artistry, and expertism are not among the qualities I seek in arts-based research. I am far more impressed with, and find great artistry in, experiences of passion, communion, and social responsibility” (p. 294). Finley contradicts herself here, and endangers her pro-arts-based stance in the doing. Artistry, craft, and expertise *are one* with passion, communion and social responsibility and should not be separated when it comes to evaluating arts-based research. Finley states that she is not looking for artistry as a criteria for judgement in one sentence, then tells us where and how she finds “great artistry” in the very next line. For me, a critical stance in evaluating ABER practices requires an *aesthetic* position as a researcher/reviewer, along with positions concerned with social justice and collaboration with participants. As I say elsewhere in this writing, aesthetic criteria are essential to the understanding, appreciation and value of art-based research. These criteria should not be replaced with validating art-like amateurism in arts-based studies because of admirable intentions in the “passion”-filled researcher.

F. Piirto’s (2002) work has been introduced above. She asks questions as her criteria for conducting arts-based/arts-informed research:

1. How can the artistic way of knowing be honored in education, a field of the social studies?
2. How much should a person have studied or practiced an art before utilizing it in educational discourse, especially high- stakes discourse such as dissertations, products in peer-reviewed scholarly venues, or theses?
3. What is the difference between accomplished art and art used for social purposes and personal expression in the field of social studies?
4. In an era that cries out for interdisciplinarity, is it necessary to have studied or performed the art in order to attempt to do it, display or perform it, use it? (p. 432)

She also makes a strong call for aesthetic qualifications for arts-based researchers:

A field is transformed through individual creators pushing the boundaries of their domains. People working within the domain decide that change is called for. This is what the arts-based researchers are doing currently, in the domain of educational research. They are saying that in certain ways the social studies way of knowing is inadequate, wanting. In order to transform a field, the researcher, the creator, must have mastery of the theory, the rules, the ways of knowing of that field, and also of the domain that is being used to transform it. (p. 433)

Piirto strongly suggests here that researchers undertaking arts-based projects have a solid educational and/or practical backgrounds in the arts in order to qualify themselves for this method of inquiry.

G. Laurel Richardson, heralded as one of the first to use research poetry, offers her criteria for “alternative ethnographies” (2001, p. 250):

1. *Substantive Contribution.* Does this piece contribute to our understanding of social-life? Does the writer demonstrate a deeply grounded (if embedded) human-world understanding and perspective? How has this perspective informed the construction of the text?
2. *Aesthetic Merit.* Does this piece succeed aesthetically? Does the use of creative analytical practices open up the text, invite interpretive responses? Is the text artistically shaped, satisfying, complex, and not boring?
3. *Reflexivity.* How did the author come to write this text? How was the information gathered? What are the ethical issues? How has the author’s subjectivity been both a producer and a product of this text? Is there adequate self-awareness and self-exposure for the reader to makes judgements about the point of view? Do authors hold themselves accountable to the standards of knowing and telling of the people they have studied?
4. *Impact.* Does this affect me emotionally? Intellectually? Does it generate new questions? Move me to write? Move me to try out new research practices? Move me to action?
5. *Expression of a Reality.* Does this text embody a fleshed out, embodied sense of lived experience? Does it seem “true” – a credible account of a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of the “real”? Scientific enterprises offer one lens, creative enterprises, another. We see better with two lenses. We see best with both lenses focused and magnified. (p. 251)

The summaries offered above of establishing standards in ABER are both helpful and confusing, indicative of the emergent state of this methodological field. It is certainly helpful for a researcher interested in ABER to be able to carefully consider and evaluate the guidelines offered herein. The confusion lies, however, in the hard fact that most of these social science-based writer/researchers are establishing criteria *for their own work* as well as the work of others. This role confusion and conflict of interest allows me to see why so many of the criteria described seem to correspond more closely for me to a philosophy of research as a form of progressive social/political/pedagogical action than as a more aesthetic approach to understanding a very broad possible range of lived experiences. These writers, on the whole, are social scientists first, arts-based researchers second. This central criticism is illustrated most clearly in my concerns with Finley's position on ABER, as taken up above. What I strongly believe is called for at this point in the development of ABER is a thoughtful and useful range of responses to these methods from the perspective of the humanities, particularly the fine arts. Initiating dialogues with practicing artists – poets, playwrights, visual artists, creative writers – and aesthetic philosophers/critics about the form and nature of art *as* research is an essential effort still to be undertaken. To avoid these admittedly challenging encounters is to open ourselves up to the charge of dabbling, and to facilitate a climate in which ABER can become dismissed as amateur at best, self-indulgent at worst.

### ***Tying a Knot: Definitions and Conclusions***

How are both poetry and research poetry attentive, assistive, condensed, synthesized forms? Attentive research involves developing a heightened awareness, through

processes of reflexivity and creativity, to all aspects of the inquiry. Research poetry reflects this kind of recursive and poetical approach. Next, I find the need to invent the word , *assistive*, coming out of the French word for audience, *assistance*, with its understanding that audiences do not just attend a performance (or read a text), they also assist in the co-creation of that performance/text. Assistive research is concerned with co-construction, co-operation, supportive and connective sensibilities in the researcher/researched relationship (see also Finley, 2003). In other words, as in poetry, the relationship between poet and poem is the same kind of relationship we are intending to foster between researcher and research. Research poetry requires an artist/researcher to enter into the researcher/participant relationship and the researcher/data relationship in a very open, intuitive, responsive manner. Research poetry is data analysis and representation from these stances and offers a condensed and synthesized form of field texts as aesthetic discourse in research.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) lay out a wide range of possibilities for field texts in their book *Narrative Inquiry* including: teacher stories; autobiographical writing; journal writing; field notes; letters; conversation; research interview; family stories and stories of families; documents; photographs, memory boxes, and other personal-family-social artifacts (p. xi). This list offers a research poet a rich array of data sources to consider, and more possibilities may yet be added. I think there is much to be found in the understanding of research poetry as *autopoietic* (self-creative/generative) in that this stance acknowledges that a research poet is self-creating her own understandings of data through the act of making poetry. Research poetry works with what is *there* (the data)

and then, through the researcher – autopoietically, ekphrastically – is transmuted into something that was *not there*, a synthesized understanding of the data in poetic form. Of course, the quality of the research poem is deeply connected with the quality of the data it is drawn from. Data that is rich in metaphor, narrative and affect will yield potentially richer research poems as a result.

Oberg (2003) breaks down arts-based educational research (ABER) into three main areas: ABER as a way of communicating; ABER as chosen for ethical considerations (as in the fictionalization of at-risk participants); and ABER as *a way of knowing*. While my first attempts at research poetry in ABER (Prendergast, 2001) were definitely undertaken as an effective/affective way to present data, I feel that I am now moving into a deeper understanding of research poetry as a way of knowing (see Prendergast, in press, 2004c, 2004e). I am as hopeful as educational researcher/research poet Melisa Cahnmann (2003) when she says that, “We must assume an audience for our work, an audience that longs for fresh language to describe the indescribable emotional and intellectual experiences in and beyond classrooms” (p. 35).

Therefore, it seems that the most appropriate way to conclude this writing is to enact a research poem, to practice the preaching. Thus, I present a found poem created solely from this section, the Fifth Move of this text, that attempts to synthesize the methodological points raised and discussed. Although it may lack the more direct, affective quality of the best research poems, as an example – in this case – it may serve its persuasive (and playful) purpose.

**Research poetry is...**

a way of speaking/representing/analyzing  
in qualitative research

a mode of artful inquiry  
undertaken by scholars/artists

a sifting  
    metaphorical  
        reflexive  
            performative  
                evocative  
                    creative process

a poetic form  
found (in) poetry

a dramatized  
sense of voice  
(spoken & heard  
soliloquy & chorus)

a field text:  
    autobiographical  
        autoethnographical  
            autopoietical  
                reflective  
                    contemplative  
                        narrative in nature

an aesthetic  
    (affective, illustrative)  
        object

an arts-based process  
of re-researching:  
    attentive  
    assistive  
    condensed  
    synthesized

a potent experience  
    (insights, transformations, changes)  
to unite  
    feeling and form  
        through language

**Section One: Pre-performance**

**Chapters Two – Four**

### Section One: Pre-performance

*Section One: Pre-performance* comprises the literature review component of the study. In Chapters Two through Four, readers will find reviews of contemporary aesthetic philosophy and performance theory that forms the theoretical roots of the curriculum for audience in performance that emerges in Chapters Five through Seven.

Chapter Two was written following a course in aesthetic philosophy taken with Dr. James Young at the University of Victoria in 2002. Dr. Young's book *Art and Knowledge* (2001) provided a framework for discussion between the two of us around how theories of audience in aesthetic philosophy might be adapted for curriculum development. In my independent reading I found most traditional aesthetic philosophy had little or nothing to say about audiences in performance, a finding that was upheld by Paul Thom's (1993) book *For an audience: A philosophy of the performing arts*. However, I discovered a number of Continental aesthetic philosophers who have attended to the differences between spectators of literature or visual art and those of live performances. It was in the writings of Gadamer and Ricoeur that I found ideas that meshed effectively with my own experiences and prior practitioner-based research into audience education.

Chapter Three began as a study of a single text, Herbert Blau's *The Audience* (1990), that I had overlooked in my Master's thesis on audience education in professional theatre (Prendergast, 2001). The book took me many months to slowly make my way through, as it is extremely dense and challenging in its high postmodernist and deconstructionist writing style. I was daunted by the task of having to make sense of Blau's theories for a curriculum-based study. Unsure how to proceed, I began to 'play'

with the text by pulling out passages I had marked throughout my reading and crafting them into found poems. This strategy was one I had used to positive effect with participant data in my Master's thesis, but had not thought of using with a theoretical text as a data source. I discovered the strategy to be most helpful in allowing me to synthesize my understanding of Blau into a format that could then be drawn into a curricular framework.

Following this work on Blau, I extended my reading more fully into the field of performance theory and wrote both in essay and found poetry forms about what was most usefully applied to an emerging AIP curriculum theory.

The found poems in Chapter Four are an example of how an arts-based approach to inquiry can offer results that satisfy more than one purpose. In this case, the poems fulfill my research intention to present and creatively represent part of my literature review. However, they also may prove useful as heuristic tools for students within the AIP curriculum I am formulating. While I would not expect secondary or undergraduate post-secondary students to read the literature I am drawing on, to ask them to read the poems created out of this literature is a possibility – perhaps even a pleasure – for students who are studying and learning spectatorship.

**Pre-performance I**

**CHAPTER TWO**

**“Playing Attention”:**

**Contemporary Aesthetics and  
Performing Arts Audience Education**

**“Playing Attention”: Contemporary Aesthetics and  
Performing Arts Audience Education**

*The spectator is an essential element of the kind of play we call aesthetic.*  
(Gadamer, 1989, p.333)

We all watch television. We all go to the movies. Some of us also attend live performances such as plays, concerts, operas, dance recitals, poetry or prose readings and so on. What are the differences to be found between these two experiences? The audience experience of television or film is a shared one, although a more fragmented sharing in the case of television, as it is with live arts events. We are aware that we are not alone in viewing a show, that it is a collective event. But we also realize that our presence does not really matter (aside from boosting ratings or adding to box office profits), that the performance will continue with or without us. We may exit or enter the room or auditorium at will and never offend the actors, because their presence is “mediatized” (Auslander, 2001) and we are not sharing the same time or space with them. Attending a live performance is otherwise; our presence is a key element of the event and definitely can and does make a significant difference both for the performers and for ourselves. Although the size and qualities of the event and audience may alter this assertion – a huge stadium rock concert is arguably a more mediatized live performance than a small folk club date – it still holds true that *presence* is one of the most important qualities of audience in live performance.

If we can accept that audience presence is central to performance then it follows that aesthetic education in the performing arts needs to pay some attention to this phenomenon. In a First World culture that is currently over-saturated with mediatized performance, the future health and vitality of live performance is endangered if educators

neglect to address the challenges and processes involved in being an audience for the performing arts in arts education curricula. This chapter provides the beginnings of an exploration of how aesthetic/arts education may assist young people to grow in awareness and understanding of the essential role played by audience in performance. In examining the work of four contemporary aesthetic philosophers – Hans-Georg Gadamer (1986, 1989), Paul Ricoeur (1989), Paul Thom (1993) and James O. Young (2001) – I focus on the areas of spectatorship, attention, interpretation, and evaluation/criticism as important qualities of AIP. I then offer a possible curriculum framework for audience education in the performing arts that is – in form and nature – creative, experiential, emergent and open question-driven.

Both classical and contemporary aesthetic philosophy tend to ignore the performing arts in general and audiences in performance in particular (Hamilton, 2001; Thom, 1993; Saltz, 1998). Plato (in Dickie, Sclafani & Roblin, 1977/1989, pp. 20-31) derides performance as anti-reason and Aristotle (in Dukore, 1974, pp. 31-56) salvages it by focussing on the audience's experience of *catharsis* in tragedy, but this fascinating debate gets lost over time as philosophers get caught up in questions around the definition and nature of art. Examinations of audience in aesthetics tend to assume an audience engaged in the more reflective, contemplative and individual activity of viewing a work of visual art, reading a poem or appreciating beauty in general. Philosophical discussions of the performing arts tend to deal with the text of a play or the score of a musical piece as the *primary* aesthetic object. Performances of these texts or scores are considered somehow *secondary*, less-definable due to their transitory and ephemeral nature, therefore less worthy of serious aesthetic consideration (Thom, 1993). Although a

number of aesthetic philosophers have taken up performance and audience issues in more recent years, especially regarding issues around ‘authentic’ performance of music on original instruments (Davies, 1987; Young, 1988), the experience of AIP remains understudied. Others, such as Nick Zangwill (1999), try to negate the audience altogether as being a relatively insignificant part of an aesthetic event and argue that the central focus of aesthetics should be on the artist and the creation of artworks.

Fortunately, there have been a few voices in the field that do attend more closely to performing arts in general and audience in particular, or whose work can be effectively applied to this distinct type of aesthetic event. In the next section of this chapter I will describe: how Gadamer values the spectator in *Truth and Method* (1986, 1989); how Thom raises the profile of performing arts audiences in philosophy with *For an Audience* (1993); what Ricoeur (1989, in *Metaphor and the Problem of Hermeneutics*) and others have to say regarding aesthetic interpretation applied to performance; and, what Young (2001) suggests as key elements of effective art evaluation and criticism in his recent book *Art and Knowledge*. The work of these philosophers adds greatly to an overall understanding of AIP and offers useful models for curriculum development in this field.

### **Part One – Spectatorship as Consummate Beholding**

#### ***A. Gadamer On Spectatorship***

Gadamer’s (1989) discussion of spectatorship comes out of his understanding of art as self-representation through play activity and his position that the spectator “gives himself [sic] entirely to the play of art” (p.332). In order to clarify and thus render Gadamer’s thoughts useful to this present discussion, I will break them down into the following categories that serve to define his views on spectatorship:

1. Presence
2. Sharing (*theoria*)
3. Self-forgetfulness
4. Contemporaneity
5. Continuity of self/ Absolute presence (*parousia*)

### 1. *Presence*

...the being of the spectator is determined by his being there present. To be present does not simply mean to be in the presence of something else that is there at the same time. To be present means to share. If someone was present at something, he knows all about how it really was. (p.331)

Gadamer values the spectators as co-creating the aesthetic object and event through their presence together with the artists and artworks, their sharing and self-forgetfulness, *theoria* and *parousia*. His ideas here come out of a definition of art as representation of play:

If art is not the variety of changing experiences whose object is each time filled subjectively with meaning like an empty mould, representation must be recognized as the mode of being of the work of art. This was prepared for by the idea of representation being derived from the idea of play, in that self-representation is the true nature of play – and hence of the work of art also. The playing of the play is what speaks to the spectator, through its representation, and this in such a way that the spectator, despite the distance between it and himself, still belongs to it. (p.328)

Here we see how Gadamer values the spectator as integral to performance within which the presence of the spectator co-constructs the aesthetic event such that “in the performance, and only in it...do we encounter the work itself” (p.328). From this view, a spectator’s awareness of his or her presence in time and space with the performers and performance is a distinct quality of the performing arts that has implications for AIP curriculum. How do we build a sense of *belonging to performance* within audience? We note that “drama exists really only when it is played, and certainly music must resound”

and that “[t]he performance of a play, likewise, cannot be simply detached from the play itself, as if it were something that is not part of its essential being, but is as subjective and fluid as the aesthetic experiences in which it is experienced” (both, p.328). This contextualizes the spectators as being part of something that is brought into existence in key part by and through their presence.

## 2. *Sharing (theoria)*

Thus to watch something is a genuine mode of sharing....Theoros means someone who takes part in a mission to a festival. Such a person has no other qualification and function than to be there. Thus the theoros is a spectator in the literal sense of the word, who shares in the solemn act through his presence at it and in this way acquires his sacred quality.... (p.331)

This understanding that Gadamer brings to *theoros* is that of “a true sharing...namely being totally involved in and carried away by what one sees” (p.332). Certainly, the level of true involvement by a spectator in a performance is a useful indicator for perceived aesthetic value that can be applied to AIP curriculum.

What is also of use is Gadamer’s dialectical view of spectatorship, through presence and sharing, as being both and the same “outside oneself” and “wholly with something else” (both, p.332). It is this kind of doubled sense of being that is possible in performance: performers and audience feeling united with and separate from the performance at one and the same time. For actors this is clearly demonstrated through the doubling functions of taking on roles (Actor as Character and vice versa) and for audience through the ebb and flow of suspension of disbelief or levels of engagement and involvement.

Gadamer goes on to illustrate how tragedy can offer an excellent example of a “basic aesthetic phenomenon” (p.333) whereby, in creating a sense of “tragic

affirmation” in spectators, it can allow the spectator to “see that ‘this is how it is’ is a kind of self-knowledge...who emerges with new insight from the illusions in which he lives”(p.334). The ideal shared encounter with art is also a shared encounter with true self.

### 3. *Self-forgetfulness*

Employing the metaphor of religious ecstasy and spiritual communion, Gadamer claims another quality of spectatorship lies “in the nature of the spectator to give himself in self-forgetfulness to what he is watching”(p.332). How is the spectator to accomplish this state of self-forgetfulness? What horizons of expectations, preparations and/or experiences may enhance the possibility of self-forgetfulness in performance? Clearly an understanding of the spectator’s situatedness in the context of a performance comes into view: What needs to be clarified enough such that one is able to forget oneself in the act of spectating? What must be shed or let go? Gadamer offers valuable guidance here:

Self-forgetfulness here is anything but a primitive condition, for it arises from the attention to the object, which is the positive act of the spectator. Obviously there is an important difference between a spectator who gives himself entirely to the play of art, and someone who merely gapes at something out of curiosity (p.332).

This seems to be a call for audience education to highlight the positivity of attention on the part of the spectator, as well as to develop the growing ability of the spectator to give him or herself, through a process of self-forgetfulness, to the “play of art” (p. 332). This resonates well with Ted Cohen’s (1999) thinking around high and low audiences in art, in that a low audience (mostly for popular art forms such as found on television) “merely gapes out of curiosity”, whereas a high audience can “give (itself) entirely” (Gadamer, 1989, p. 332).

#### 4. *Contemporaneity*

Gadamer develops Kierkegaard's theological ideas around contemporaneity by applying them to spectatorship. He states:

... 'contemporaneity' forms part of the being of a work of art. It constitutes the nature of 'being present'.... Contemporaneity... here means that a single thing that presents itself to us achieves in its presentation full presentness, however remote its origin may be. (p.332)

Here Gadamer is focussing on the presence of the performance which he understands as distinct from *simultaneity* that "refers to the coexistence and the equal validity of different aesthetic objects of experience in the one consciousness" (p.332). Simultaneity in a theatre experience refers to the *simultaneous yet separate* presence of the performance and the audience. The theatrical metaphor of the fourth wall that separates actors and spectators is the manifestation of this sense of separation in a simultaneous experience.

In contrast, contemporaneity (drawing on Kierkegaard) "does not mean existing at the same time, but is a formulation of the believer's task of so totally combining one's own presence and the redeeming act of Christ, that the latter is experienced as something present (not as something in the past) and is taken seriously as such" (pp. 332-3). In other words, Gadamer challenges the spectator to the difficult task of dissolving all mediating influences within an aesthetic encounter, to give him or herself wholly to this potentially ecstatic encounter. Interestingly, Gadamer describes this process as "a task for consciousness and an achievement required of it [that] consists in holding on to the object in such a way that it becomes contemporaneous, but this means that all mediation is dissolved in total presentness" (p.332). To be contemporaneous with a performance

means to feel a dissolution of all mediating influences and to have a strong sense of merging with a performance experience. Experienced spectators know that this is a rare yet most precious event that may happen only a handful of times in a lifetime. This seems to be yet another suggested objective for audience education: to prepare students for the required state of consciousness that may allow for “total presentness” in performance.

##### 5. *Continuity of self/ Absolute presence (parousia)*

In another dialectical move, Gadamer unites within the spectator the self-forgetful contemporaneity of art with a corresponding sense of continuity of self. He comments:

Precisely that in which he loses himself as a spectator requires his own continuity. It is the truth of his own world, the religious and moral world in which he lives, which presents itself to him and in which he recognizes himself (p.333).

Thus the spectator is given, through aesthetic distance from the performance, room to both give and take from the experience. Gadamer insists that this distance, indeed, makes it possible for us to see and “makes possible the proper and comprehensive sharing in what is represented before one” (p.333).

To clarify his position, Gadamer employs the comparative term *parousia*, or ‘absolute presence’ that:

...describes the ontological mode of aesthetic being...so the absolute moment in which a spectator stands is at once self-forgetfulness and reconciliation with self. That which detaches him from everything also gives him back the whole of his being (p.333).

Gadamer’s philosophizing here resonates with Coleridge’s (1817) core notion of the reader/spectator’s *willing suspension of disbelief* and of other writers’ work on *aesthetic distance* (Ben Chaim, 1984; Hanfling, 2003; Kitamura, 1992). Once more this suggests

an important, if idealized, condition for audience education: how can we develop this contradictory sense of self-forgetfulness and continuity of self in audience's encounters with performance?

Clearly, Gadamer has much of value to offer audience education in reflecting on the roles of spectatorship in aesthetic encounters. We now turn to the work of Paul Thom, who, like Gadamer, begins with the notion of playfulness as central to spectatorship in performance.

### ***B. Thom and Playful Attention***

Thom (1993) tells us in his introduction that “[a] history of philosophizing about the performing arts, when written, would consist mainly of blank pages” (p.6). His work is an attempt to redress this perceived error within aesthetics to consider that “the performing arts are not art, are not good art, or are, when considered in relation to the creative arts, merely ancillary” (p. 8). While there is much of value in this work, of most value to this present paper is Thom's discussion of audience in the performing arts, particularly in his delineation of six types of what he calls “playful attention” (9p. 205) within an AIP:

1. Because performing is a process, an audience's attention can play between the performer's present actions and recollected past actions or anticipated future ones.
2. Because performances normally involve several performers, an audience's attention can play between one performer and another.
3. Insofar as various contents are represented by various vehicles in an artistic performance, an audience's attention can play between content and vehicle.
4. Because a work can receive several performances, an audience's attention may play between a particular performance as a whole and another performance of the same work.

5. Because performance is for an audience, the audience's attention can play between aspects of the performance and aspects of their own lives.
6. Because performances are given in performance spaces and such a space has an outside, audience attention can play between what occurs inside the performance space and what has occurred or may occur outside it (p.205).

Thom says that:

To take up such an invitation to playful attention would be to place oneself in a position where substantive interpretation was called for, as a means of integrating the disparate data provided by one's playing attention.... I suggest that a good audience has a developed capacity for taking up opportunities like these (pp.205-6).

These six modes of playful attention therefore offer practical guidelines for audience education and warrant closer examination here for that purpose. As a sidebar, how much more open and positive is Thom's term 'playing attention' than the traditional pedagogical dictum of 'paying attention'? What spectator would not rather *play* than *pay*?

The first type of playful attention addressed by Thom focuses on the fact of performance as a process, an event that takes place over time. An audience is constantly involved with the past, present and future of a performance. Just as in life, we spectators are challenged to integrate our past experiences with present ones, and to operate predictively to anticipate possible future events. Gadamer reminds us of the centrality of presence in performance, but Thom highlights that our presence in time has a past and a future as well and that this sense of past and future affect how we experience a performance.

Second, Thom takes up the notion of selection within attention. This involves the awareness of *gaze* as key to audience function within performance. Much has been written about the power of the gaze, especially in feminist contexts, but I particularly like

what Theatre of the Oppressed theorist Augusto Boal (1995) has to say about it in connection to the creation of aesthetic space “created subjectively by the gaze of the spectators...inside a space which already existed physically, in three dimensions (p.18-19). He goes on:

The aesthetic space thus comes into being because the combined attention of a whole audience converges upon it; it attracts, centripetally, like a black hole. This force of attraction is aided by the very structure of theatres and the positioning of stages, which oblige the spectators all to look in the same direction; and it is abetted by the simple presence of actors and spectators who connive in their acceptance of the theatrical codes and their participation in the celebration of the show. The ‘theatre-space’ is a ‘time-space’; it exists as such and will retain its particular properties as long as spectators are present or implied. (p. 19)

Both Thom and Boal remind us of the power of the audience’s attention through its conniving creation of and playfulness within the aesthetic space of performance.

Third, Thom highlights the distinction between form and content in performance. This points to the need for an educated audience to be able to distinguish (and play) between *what* a performance is doing and *how* it is doing it. An ability to understand the artistic processes of interpretation involved in performing some kind of text (script, score etc.) allows an audience to better play their attention between the content and vehicle of a performance. Audience preparation is suggested as important here.

Fourth, Thom sees that a more experienced audience will have the skill to play its attention between one textual interpretation and another. For example, the works of Shakespeare have received multiple and ongoing theatrical and film interpretations; a knowledgeable spectator can appreciate the strengths and weaknesses between a particular Shakespeare production and others he or she has seen. Another possibility for audience appreciation lies in the viewing of the same performance on two or more

occasions, allowing for attention to play on the similarities and differences of the experience. Assessing the subtle shifts and changes in a repeat performance offers another level of challenge to the spectator.

Fifth, Thom sees the opportunity for audience to play between the performance and their own lives. This raises the issue of *relevance* within performance and audience education. While it may be possible for a spectator to enjoy and value a performance that has no connection to his or her own life, surely a performance that provides a source of relevant connection has a greater potential to achieve Gadamer's ideals of spectatorship. For young audiences the relevance of performance to their own experience is not just ideal, but essential. Whereas attempts to create this sense of relevance through education can often be superficial and therefore relatively ineffective, an audience that is able to achieve Gadamer's goals of presence, sharing, contemporaneity and so on is going to be more easily able to find relevance in even the most distant and challenging performances. What I am suggesting here is that audience education too often makes the error of lowering the performance to the audience ("See, Hamlet can't commit to his girlfriend, either!") rather than challenging the audience to seek and find the universals of human experience within the particulars of performance ("How do we experience and express, like Hamlet, our sense of grief, betrayal, revenge or despair?").

Finally, Thom reminds us that performances happen in spaces and places and that the context surrounding the performance gives audience another medium for playful attention. Awareness of the building, location, lobby, auditorium and fellow spectators enveloping the performance is part of the spectator experience and this awareness can be heightened, once more, through careful aesthetic education.

As we move forward into the work of Paul Ricoeur, we take with us the benefits of Gadamer and Thom's thoughts on spectatorship and playful attention that provide the specific contexts for aesthetic interpretation applied to performance.

### *C. Multiple Perspectives on Interpretation*

The subject of interpretation in aesthetics has a long and complicated history far beyond the scope of this chapter. Contemporary aesthetics' "theory of interpretation has changed so rapidly that one could not have anticipated the radical themes favored in the 1990s from their rather well-entrenched sources in the 1950s" (Margolis, 1992, p.232).

Margolis goes on:

The point is that it is impossible, now, to assess the viability and validity of theories of interpretation against a conceptual backdrop that is more or less canonically constant. There are no such canons.... Recent theories of interpretation are conceptually inseparable from equally radical larger reconstructions of the very nature of science, philosophy, intellectual inquiry in general. (p.235)

Given the complexities of this area and the limitations of space, readers interested in interpretation can examine the works of theorists such as Barthes (1970), Beardsley (1970), Danto (1981), Foucault (1973), Hirsch (1967), Iser (1978) and Margolis (1989). Speaking in the most general terms, theories of interpretation have moved from a more Romantic sensibility of interpretation as an objective activity that may be judged as right or wrong/true or false to a post-modern, post-structuralist understanding of interpretation as subjective and situated in history and culture such that, according to Margolis, "[w]hatever is interpretable is, in principle, open to infinitely many interpretations, both synchronically and diachronically" (p.237).

The danger of the contemporary views on interpretation applied to AIP curriculum lie in the collapse into relativism, wherein aesthetic educators are left with little more to offer students than saying, “A performance means whatever you think or feel it means.” However, retreating to more classical and dogmatic positions on interpretation contain dangers as well. Telling students, “This is what this performance means” is akin to giving someone food as opposed to teaching them how to farm – it is no way to develop spectators who can independently interpret performances over a lifetime.

It is in struggling with these contradictory paradigms that one finds the work of Paul Ricoeur (1989) useful and applicable to the specific challenges of interpretation in performance. Ricoeur posits “a theory of interpretation which places the emphasis on ‘opening up the world’” (p.358). Although he is not dealing explicitly with performance, but rather with reading texts, Ricoeur’s theories resonate well with those we have examined above. He states:

I understand this: that the interpretation of a text culminates in the self-interpretation of a subject who thenceforth understands himself better, understands himself differently, or simply begins to understand himself. This culmination of the understanding of a text in self-understanding is characteristic of the kind of reflective philosophy which...I have called ‘concrete reflection’....In short, in hermeneutical reflection...the constitution of the *self* is contemporaneous with the constitution of *meaning*. (p.346)

This understanding is immediately useful to aesthetic educators in focussing on the activity of hermeneutical reflection in spectatorship. In other words, an audience education curriculum guides students to generate a new and different understandings of themselves through their presence and sharing in a performance.

Further useful to audience-in-performance is Ricoeur’s conviction that:

To understand is to follow the dynamic of the work, its movement from what it says to that about which it speaks. Beyond my situation as reader, beyond the situation of the author, I offer myself to the possible mode of being-in-the-world which the text opens up and discloses to me. (p.356)

He goes on to explain:

I should prefer to say that the reader understands himself in front of the text, in front of the world of the work. To understand oneself in front of a text is quite the contrary of projecting oneself and one's own beliefs and prejudices; it is to let the work and its world enlarge the horizon of the understanding which I have of myself. (p.356)

This suggests a higher-order question for audience educators to ask as an alternative to, "How is this performance relevant to you and your experience?" by asking, rather, "How has this performance changed you and your sense of yourself?" This stance places a greater responsibility on spectators; they are challenged to open up to the possibility of being changed by a performance, as opposed to simply observing how a performance connects to them as fixed and unchangeable entities.

Finally, Ricoeur gives us a couple of salient thoughts on interpretation:

...to interpret is to follow the path of thought opened up by the text, to place oneself *en route* towards the *orient* of the text. We are invited by this remark to correct our initial concept of interpretation and to search – beyond a subjective process of interpretation as an act *on* the text – for an objective process of interpretation which would be the act *of* the text. (p.348)

This speaks to interpretation in performance as an active 'here and now' process involving the shared presence of the spectator in interpreting meaning as the act of the performance. The task of audience education in this regard is to assist students in placing themselves '*en route* towards the *orient* of the text' by engaging in predictive, reflective and evaluative activities in relation to an experience of performance. Discussion of these

potential curriculum activities follows as we move forward to consider issues of aesthetic evaluation and criticism of performance.

#### ***D. Young and Evaluation/ Criticism***

Aesthetic evaluation and criticism is yet another area where much ink has been spilled over time. Aesthetic education has also attended to these issues, for example in the work of Elliot Eisner (1979) on developing student “connoisseurship” and in that of Ralph Smith (1998) in calling for a “percipience curriculum” within arts education. However, it is in the work of the contemporary aesthetic philosopher James O. Young (2001) that we find a valuable gathering of criteria for evaluation of artworks that may be successfully applied to spectatorship of performance.

Young’s argument that art is a source of knowledge in his recent book *Art and Knowledge* is a welcome one for arts educators. He sets out to prove that art is constructed of what he calls affective “illustrative representations” (p.26) that offer knowledge to audiences through a variety of strategies that may give “right perspectives” (p.67) to a “suitably qualified audience”(p. 67). The pleasure that we glean from art is the pleasure of gaining knowledge by interpreting the affects upon us of the illustrative representations within an artwork.

In his chapter on the evaluation of art, Young lays out his principles and criteria for an artworld audience:

1. Cognitive value principle
2. Interpretability principle
3. Suitability/ Subject Matter principle
4. Originality principle (pp. 126-133)

Here follows a summary of each of Young’s principles placed in the contexts of

performance and audience education.

### *1. Cognitive value principle*

Young believes that “[t]he cognitive value of an artwork will be proportional to the value of the knowledge it makes available”(p.126):

This principle states that works of art with a high degree of aesthetic value can contribute importantly to the knowledge of an audience. (Notice that the principle states what a highly valuable artwork can do, not what it does. Whether a highly valuable artwork actually contributes to knowledge depends, in part, on its audience.) A defence of the cognitive value principle has two parts. The first part of the defence is an argument for the claim that part of the aesthetic value of an artwork is its cognitive value. The second part of the defence argues that only works with a high degree of cognitive value have a high degree of total aesthetic value (p.126).

In order to accept Young’s principle here, we must also pay attention to his parenthetical comment about audience. It seems clear that the cognitive – and therefore aesthetic – value of an artwork requires an audience capable of mining that knowledge. Increasing the potential for students to recognize the cognitive value of a performance must be a central tenet of audience education curriculum.

### *2. Interpretability principle*

Young reminds us with this principle that:

Artworks have cognitive (and aesthetic) value qua representations but can only have this value if audiences can interpret them. Consequently, the interpretability principle follows from the fact that artworks have value qua representations (p.128).

The ability of students to interpret performance is clearly a skill to be developed in audience education and Young assumes “that careful attention to an artwork by an informed audience will be rewarded with comprehension” (p.129). He also notes that

this principle “requires that audiences be able to acquire the knowledge and abilities necessary for the interpretation of a work” (p.128).

Within a performing arts education framework, this speaks to the need for a curriculum that is extensive in its breadth of exposure to many different types and styles of performance across cultures and time, as well as one that offers intensive experiential opportunities for students themselves to create and perform. In my own audience education research and practice in professional theatre I have seen how students gain interpretive skills in performance through taking on some of the challenges faced by the performers in their rehearsal process. They do so by directly experiencing – through improvised and process-driven dramatic activity – what is going on in the play/performance. My position here, following Young, is that an informed audience, possessing the knowledge and abilities to interpret performance, can be developed most effectively through the activity of the artform itself, and even more so with the addition of the cooperative involvement of professional artists in this process (see Prendergast, 2001).

### *3. Suitability/ Subject Matter principle*

This principle focuses on the importance of subject matter in assessing aesthetic value. Young has no time for subjects in art that he deems better served through semantic representation – that is primarily scientific or purely philosophical investigations – and therefore no time for much of modern art that steep itself in abstractions and textual discourse. The art he holds most valuable illustrates knowledge through its representations of right perspectives, that he qualifies as not necessarily morally ‘right’ but that provide us with insights into important subjects (pp. 130-1).

The greatest of artworks are about important subject matters; we include Shakespeare in our arts and English curricula because of our general cultural agreement about his lasting significance. The stories he tells, characters he creates and the language he employs reveal multiple truths about the nature of being human. The ability to assess the suitability and significance of the subject matter would strongly indicate the need for some philosophical elements within audience education. When students can encounter some of the most profound questions of existence that are taken up in philosophy, they are also being given valuable tools for aesthetic experience. Conversely, artworks that take up these profound questions – What is love? What is fate? Who are we? – offer audiences philosophical tools for further investigations of human nature.

#### *4. Originality principle*

Young states that “the most valuable art helps us understand subjects which puzzle us, which we overlook, or which we avoid” (p.132). He qualifies this by holding that originality is a necessary but not sufficient condition for aesthetic value. Originality of perspective that “is not simply technical originality” is deemed necessary for high aesthetic value by Young (p.132). He says:

A perspective has not been thought...until it has been well expressed.  
When artists develop new modes of expression they make possible the  
thinking of new thoughts (p.133).

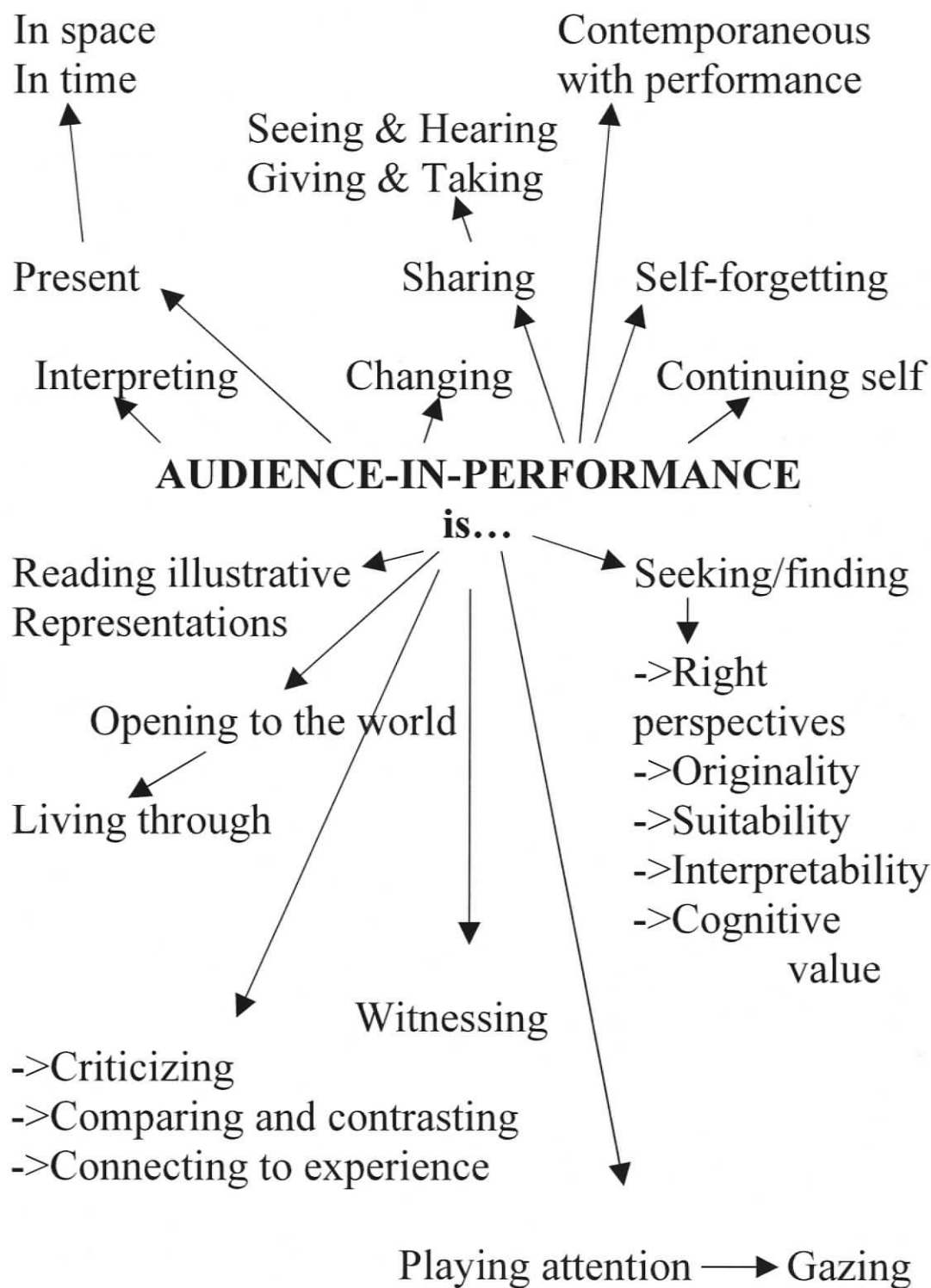
There are interesting applications to curriculum to be found here. Trying to identify what in an artwork puzzles us, or we overlook or avoid, is a strong way in to the process of evaluation and criticism. Audience group discussions following a performance, preferably with the involvement of the performers, may be enhanced by

attention to these areas- What puzzled me? What did I miss? What was difficult, or did I avoid?

### *Conclusion*

The works we have examined above on spectatorship, attention, interpretation and evaluation/criticism have effectively laid the groundwork for the development of an AIP curriculum. What seems of most importance in these philosophers' thinking that may be carried forward? Summarily, and displayed visually, I suggest the following web diagram of the multiple activities related to audience-in-performance:

Figure 2: Web of activities involved in audience-in-performance



***Part Two: From Theory to Practice-  
A Curriculum for Performing Arts Audience Education***

A performance is a transitory and ephemeral event. This nature of performance makes creating a curriculum for the purposes of enhancing AIP experiences a real challenge. However, the study of the philosophers' works above has given us some valuable assistance in beginning to develop a curriculum of this kind. The curriculum framework outlined below is preliminary in form, intended as the starting point for ongoing dialogue amongst interested arts educators and aesthetic philosophers.

Mirroring the nature of performance, an audience education curriculum is emergent, processual, experiential, active, creative, intuitive, and driven by open-questions. This curricular stance allows students to see performances, and their spectatorship of performances, as shared experiences shaped by their presence and efforts to open themselves up to be changed by these events. A performance event is usually bracketed off from daily life and can be divided into three parts: *pre-performance*, *performance* and *post-performance*. These three sections lead to a curriculum structure that is also divided into three parts: *predictive* (pre-performance), *attentive/interpretive* (performance) and *reflective/evaluative* (post-performance). Below are suggested open-ended questions that correspond to each of these three parts involved in the process of AIP.

While this question series creates a possible form for this curriculum, I would strongly suggest that the content of audience education curriculum be guided by and through the content of the performance itself. In other words, there should be a clear correspondence between the form of the performance and the form of pre- and post-performance activities. Simply put, studying performance requires experiencing

performance. Educators delivering this curriculum are therefore challenged to construct specific and unique activities best-suited to a particular performance. This asks AIP teachers to attend a performance before their students – or read the play, at the very least – in order to better prepare them for the experience through mimetic and creative strategies. Improvising, acting, dancing, singing, music-making are all appropriate tasks to prepare and/or follow-up a theatre, dance, opera, or musical performance (as will be more fully explored in subsequent chapters).

#### ***A. Predictive (Pre-Performance) Curriculum***

Questions for group discussion, activity and preparation and individual writing:

- Who am I as a spectator?
- What are my roles and functions within the performance?
- What are my expectations for the performance?
- What are my preparations (for example: reading texts, listening to recordings, looking at reviews, interviewing artists, writing/performing around the themes/styles/genres of the performance)?
- What are my predictions for the performance, based on prior experiences, knowledge of the company, space, artists, materials involved?
- How may I best prepare myself for the perceived challenges of this performance?

#### ***B. Attentive/Interpretive (Performance) Curriculum***

- How do I best attend to the performance?
- What elements draw my attention/gaze?
- How playful am I in relation to the performance?

- What makes my presence matter? Increases or decreases my sense of presence?
- Where was I able to forget myself within the performance?
- How did I connect with the performance? Find myself within it?
- How do I experience time and space/place throughout the performance?
- How do I experience the audience?
- What do I bring to the performance?
- What do I take away?
- What do I leave behind?
- How am I changed?

***C. Reflective/Evaluative (Post-Performance) Curriculum***

- What puzzled me or confused me?
- What did I ignore or avoid?
- What was illustrated/represented by the performance?
- What perspectives were given by the performance?
- How valuable were they?
- What in the performance generated new thoughts?
- How suitable/significant was the form/content of the performance?
- How true and/or beautiful was the performance?
- What can I compare and/or contrast with the performance?
- What have I learned?

### *Conclusion*

Playing attention as the core principle for audience education curriculum has led to the examination of the works of Gadamer, Thom, Ricoeur, Young and others on aesthetic spectatorship, attention, interpretation, and evaluation/criticism. This study, in turn, has been applied to the creation of open-ended questions towards the development of an audience in performance curriculum. Other core recommendations here are that curriculum activities mirror/reflect/resonate with performance activities wherever possible, and that the cooperative participation of performance artists (performers, directors, designers, stage managers) is ideal.

The continuing survival and growth of performing arts groups in our hyper-mediatized culture requires an ongoing focus on audience education. The study of audience through the lenses of contemporary aesthetic philosophy has offered performable curricular applications to arts education.

**Pre-performance II**

**CHAPTER THREE**

**“Shaped Like a Question Mark”:**

**Losing/Locating the Audience**

**in Performance Theory**

**“Shaped Like a Question Mark”: Losing/Locating the  
Audience in Performance Theory**

*Part One – Losing the Audience: Responding to Herbert Blau*

Nearly twenty years spent as a theatre artist and educator has involved me in many significant experiences as both performer and spectator. This autobiographical mine enriches my doctoral inquiry into audience, performance and curriculum, but it also carries with it some deeply-embedded assumptions about the nature and practices of both audience and performance. A number of these assumptions have been challenged and revised in light of reading the very difficult, revisionary, deconstructive and post-modern phenomenological theory of audience found in Herbert Blau's *The Audience* (1990), described by Rayner (1993) as “a monumental work” (p. 3).

Reading Blau, an American former avant-garde theatre director and now a prominent performance theorist, is a forcible experience; he is a deeply psychoanalytical, metaphorical, allusive and elusive writer. The density and abstruseness of his theory apparently makes him easy to overlook, as I did not find this book referenced in any significant way during my Master's thesis literature review of theatre audience education (Prendergast, 2001). And, indeed, the only other major text on theatre audience in performance theory, Susan Bennett's *Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception* (1997/2001) mentions Blau's text once, and only in passing. As Bennett's work was a key text for my Master's level inquiry, it is not surprising that I overlooked Blau in the earlier stages of my graduate research. My omission was supported in a review of *The Audience* in which the writer suggests that, “the book itself, for all its care, will have a very small audience indeed” (Quinn, 1992, p. 73).

As I encounter Blau, he catches me off-guard, de-stabilizes and undermines me as I work towards a definition and deeper understanding of audience. “If the audience is not altogether an absence, it is by no means a reliable presence” (p. 1) writes Blau. I have always counted so much on the undeniable presence, the co-conspiracy in performance, of the audience; how then to enter into dialogue with one who threatens cherished mystifications?

In the process of gathering a doctoral-level bibliography of poetry in research that now numbers over one hundred citations, I only came across one example of an author creating found poems from a literature source (Sullivan, 2001; see also Prendergast, 2003b). This single example in the research literature offers three poems created from the text of John Dewey’s *Art as Experience* (1934), and I was struck with how effectively the found poems synthesized the author’s interest and focus within that philosophical text. I decided to follow suit in my struggle to come to terms with Blau, as the process of creating found poetry puts me in a reflexive place where I am far more able to distill useful material from *The Audience*.

It is a rare theoretical text that lends itself to poetic representation: Blau’s text fulfills the requirements in providing data that is already poetic in nature; metaphoric, imagistic, affective, allusive, rich. *Literature-voiced research poetry* – a term I have invented to describe research poetry that consists of found poems created from theoretical literature texts – helps me synthesize, process and make meaning of Blau’s theory and how it informs my inquiry. The creation of found poems allows me to engage more deeply with Blau’s text. I also undertake here a small-scale reception study of Blau’s text

by reading three book reviews published by prominent theatre/ performance journals and transcribing them through literature-voiced poetic interpretations.

Reading Herbert Blau's *The Audience* (1990) has allowed me to tap into his deep wells of rage and despair at the current state of disconnectedness between performance and audience. He has pushed me to revise my idealized understandings of audience that have been informed by my drama education practice, where actors and spectators are essentially united through dramatic improvisation and exploration. Letting go of much-cherished and long-held ideals is hard, but engaging in the resulting tensions and contradictions has led me to a richer and deeper understanding of audience and performance.

How is one to make sense of these two suites of research poems? As in all forms of ABER, the intention is that the artwork employed will transfer cognitive and affective knowledge from artist/researcher to percipient/reader. But positing that research poems can stand by themselves, analysis-free (as I suggested in my Master's thesis where I used participant-voiced research poetry to present my findings) is a serious error that risks the marginalization and dismissal of ABER as a qualitative research method. Artists working in the artworld very often write statements that explain and contextualize their work for spectators, and I now feel that these kinds of analytical, contextual writings must be employed by *scholartists* (Neilsen, Cole & Knowles, 2001) working in ABER. Thus I write a declaration, below, as a way to bridge between what I have taken from my reading and reception study of Blau's work into the poems themselves.

These research poems, created solely from the text of *The Audience* and from reviews of this text in the literary tradition of *found poetry*, have given me a way to

express my struggles with Blau and to synthesize my new understandings of audience in performance. I have inserted parentheses for effect, or to cite other writers cited by Blau, have changed some verb tenses for parallelism, and have repeated some words. Whether or not they succeed in their task of informing and affecting a reader in the ways I intend is one of the risks that all artists must take on. Lights!

*A Declaration on Audience in Performance*

Performing artists tend to take their audience very much for granted. The rehearsal process does not generally concern itself with the audience, focussing instead on the collective act of interpretation, with an all-powerful director/choreographer/conductor taking on the role of the "audience of one" (Guthrie, 1960). Much talk of audience in the performing arts centres around "development", ticket sales and numbers of bums in seats, not around attending to the audience's presence and response in an authentic, aesthetic and appropriately deeply-thought and deeply-felt way. Audience response becomes constrained to and limited by the parameters of the performance itself, revealed in laughter, silence, applause and ovations followed by polite, diplomatic chitchat at opening night receptions. The only other avenue for audience response lies in the public mono-voice of the critic and in private post-performance conversations.

It is understandable, given this reality, that an audience would become disenchanted with performance, dispossessed of their potential membership in a truly interpretive community. Whereas the alternative popular and applied theatre movements and Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed (1979) may provide some rare and small-scale exceptions to these rules, the mainstream North American performing arts community is generally dealing with its twenty-first century audience in a nineteenth century way. The performing arts are still perceived and practiced as elitist, for white, educated and middle to upper class audiences with credit cards who expect performance to maintain and uphold the status quo. The epic and absurd theatres dreamed of by Brecht and Artaud seem distant ones indeed. Beckett sounds more prophetic when he writes one of the two clowns of *Waiting for Godot*, staring into the audience in horror, saying, "A charnel-house! A charnel-house!" (Beckett, 1954, p. 41).

Today's audience is treated by performance (institutions, managers, producers, artists) with the same kind of respect/fear we pay the dead – deferential, self-interested and monological in attitude. What, then, must we do?

*Herbert Blau's The Audience: Found Poems***the gaze is**

contemplative and heuristic  
 a transfixed eyeball

a reflection  
 of coercive power

(it has a history... theatrically)

the gaze is  
 an emergence from  
 the unconscious  
 it  
 works upon its object

in the security  
 of expressed affection

empowered  
 fetishized  
 embraced

absorbed  
 adored

(in the deliciousness...of the gaze)

a fixation of sight  
 that refuses to see

the gaze is  
 that visual field  
 in which the figure  
 of the audience

arises

and

disappears

seduced by looking  
 on what  
 it cannot see

charmed  
 by  
 performance

(p. 6)

**Dispersed are we... (Woolf in Blau)**

we have lost  
a sense of community

we are divested  
of an audience

(the vast seduction  
of  
dispersive media)

aerials everywhere  
satellite transmission  
headsets in the bush

("this paralyzed frenzy  
of the image" [Baudrillard])

theimagetheimagetheimage  
of dispersion  
itself

(p. 14)

**audience education**

the education  
of the audience: a dubious  
desperate task

a bewildered liberalism  
(dreaming cultural unity)

"What a misunderstanding" [Sartre]

(p. 24)

**audience desires**

a duo-consciousness

seeing and  
watching ourselves  
seeing

a contemplative distance ...

recursive annotations  
of the flow

a perceptual  
vertigo  
that  
haunts the edge  
of trance

magical landscapes  
identifications

precise sensations  
of eye and  
of ear

with  
emotions  
apace

a placing  
of perspective

flattening mystification

putting performance  
back into history

(pp. 116-117, citing Foreman, Yeats, Stein, Brecht)

**the idea of theatre**

the common experience  
of fracture

the desire  
for original unity

the expression  
of the originary

(splitting  
and  
pain)

the mark  
of separation  
of essential  
isolation

(remembrance  
of  
loss)

the definition  
of social space

(together  
as  
*alienated*)

(p. 124)

**listening**

the audience (endless)

sees

if it does

at all

in the labyrinth  
of the ear

(the telltale mark  
of audience)

losing itself thus  
in the circuits  
of the ear

somewhere between  
dreams and events

listening speaks

through the very tears/fractures/punctures/debilities

of language

as the lost plot thickens

in emblooded thought

in the silence at its centre

(pp. 136-138)

**drama**

all we need  
is the audience

*projecting there*

upon  
the  
empty  
space

where there is nothing  
(good or bad)  
but thinking  
makes it so

an erosion of memory  
interchange of flame  
for flame

the oar blade's fading  
foot-  
print

gazing at the unconscious  
(language is theatre)

dissolving the dream  
from the ground  
of original pain

a space for interrogation

(pp. 218-219)

**question**

the observer  
is choked  
with observations [Woolf]

in public solitude  
splendid isolation...

does the configured energy  
of the stage

(articulated humanity)

relieve this  
essential loneliness

(huddled crowd  
in the dark)

deflecting the pain  
in illusion

(or alienation?)

(p. 257)

**dilemmas****#1**

the audience  
has to feel more  
in order  
to see more...

but  
cannot see  
if it feels  
too much

(p. 253)

**#2**

to play the part  
of an audience  
is  
to play the part  
of not playing  
a part...

how  
do  
you  
rehearse  
for  
that?

(p. 298)

**tasks of interpretation**

to unmoor  
 dismantle  
 (dis)empower  
 the dream  
 (in performance)

to release  
 its content  
 into the present

(p. 302)

**To be a proper spectator**

is to be  
 in two places  
 at once:

seeing where *it* is (the art);


seeing where *you* are (watching)

(Foreman in Blau, p. 318)

**quick-witted audience**

to observe  
 observation itself  
 (a remarkable capacity)

to look around corners  
 sevitcepsrep esrever ot  
 (to reverse perspectives)



(Brecht and Nietzsche in Blau, p. 340)

**one sentence**

But  
 whatever the space,  
 the architechtonics of distance  
 is still subject to the (un)synchronous functioning  
 of (even the most radically separated) elements  
 of theatre, from lighting and costumes –  
 their intensity, texture, size –  
 to the nature of the seating, frontal, curved,  
 or in the round;  
 and whether or not the theatre has walls,  
 ambient and internal sound,  
 the density of the text,  
 the style of acting,  
 verbal, nonverbal, gestural magnitudes  
 of thought; not to mention  
 the aptitudes and habits  
 of the spectator himself,  
 what he or she *did* eat (or drink)  
 before coming to the theatre,  
 whether it was raining outside,  
 how much coughing inside,  
 whether or not umbrellas can be checked;  
 and to return to the composition  
 of the audience – long after the omission  
 of slaves, or rowdy aristocrats on the stage,  
 or the dilemma of a spectator sitting  
*in front of or behind* Cardinal Richelieu,  
*unable to see his eyes* –  
 the relative presence  
 of men and women

.

(pp. 344-345)

*Blau Reception Poems*

#1

**The Audience**

oozes ironies  
 seductive sublimities  
 fulsome complexities

paradoxes of  
 utter scepticism

a vision of  
 determined collapse

(desire, event,  
 identity, difference)

and reflective  
 contradiction

a modernist's  
 post-modernism

a shaken phenomenology

of disappearance

(and illusive truth)

unspeakable psychoanalism  
 unsung aesthetics

a discourse of disappointment  
 of pessimism  
 of failure

(a critical necessity?)

in tragic style  
 that holds  
 a transcendental wish  
 for an audience that is

a beautiful promise  
 a querulous being

(shaped like a question mark)

the book itself  
 for all its care  
 will have  
 a small audience (indeed)

(Quinn, 1992, p. 73)

#2

**The Audience**

a big  
dense book  
historical  
wide-ranging

complications invade  
each sentence  
(word by word  
clause by clause)

but  
there is eloquence (of anger)  
beyond the density

damning the commodifiers

imagining a theoretical audience  
(a body of thought and desire)

with... capacities for attentiveness  
habits of sustained thought  
much embloodment

drama a form of dreamwork  
dreamwork a form of drama

the audience ponders  
the nature of illusion

(Whittemore, 1991, pp. 106-109)

#3

**The Audience**

makes no concessions

(difficult, demanding, obscure  
always pugnacious text)chasing down  
the essence of theatre  
questioning  
the very conceptof a theatre  
of essence

a phenomenology of audience

teasing analyses

of sight and sound  
seeing and hearingin constituting  
the  
performance event

entangled in a thicket

of perceptual  
psychological  
discursive  
ideological complexities

challenging cherished mystifications

the participation mystique  
the alienation effect  
the mythos of community

there is no theatre

without separation

actors

and

spectators

divided

within

and

amongst themselves

at every level

unconscious  
cognitive

social  
political  
ideological

what is played out?

not the image  
of original unity

but  
mysterious ruptures  
of social identity  
in the moment  
of emergence

(Auslander, 1992, pp. 411-412)

## **Part Two – Locating the Audience: Spectatorship in Performance Theory for Audience in Performance Education**

What to do, what to do? In a performance world as described by Blau, where the audience is fragmented, commodified and dispersed, what can one do to work in a meaningful way to develop AIP through education? I begin by hanging on to where Blau leaves me at the end of his text, reconsidering the audience as “shaped like a question mark” (p. 383). Although Blau expresses his doubts that audiences can be educated *through* theatre or *by* theatre (see **audience education**, above), his vision of audience as a “community of the question” (p. 357ff.) does suggest how audiences may be educated to become audiences *for* and *within (the community of)* theatre. He sees the theatre as essentially being “a function of remembrance”:

Where memory is, theatre is....for better or worse, an engrailed form of partial knowledge, having the features of an absence that is a failure of memory. (both, p. 382)

Theatre gives us access to our deepest dreams, uncovers our deepest desires, reveals to us our deepest pain. Theatre “marks the limit of our intelligence” (p. 382). Inside this vision of theatre, Blau suggests that the audience, “the agency within us...more or less fitfully and questionably keeps watch over perception” (p. 383). And in order not to fail in this perceptual task, an audience must not fail in its memory, nor in any limits to its intelligence.

All these thoughts lead to education and the beginning moments of a curriculum theory of AIP. This is a curriculum that intends to create an audience aware of its psycho/social/cultural responsibilities and that consists of perceivers/memory-keepers/interrogators in genuine dialogue with performance and performing artists. This audience

will become “suitably qualified”(Young, 2001), well-educated, quick-witted and richly and deeply experienced in many performance forms. Models have existed in some localized and historical spaces and places, and in the theories of radical and revolutionary theatre artists (such as Boal, Brecht, Artaud, and Grotowski) as well as in some Eastern European, Asian and ritual/myth-based cultures (such as in Ancient Greece, from which Western drama emerged). What aspects of these AIP cultures can be drawn upon to create a curriculum model that intends to develop capacities for spectatorship?

An AIP curriculum is seen as the process/practice/pedagogy towards the enculturation of an *interpretive community* (Bennett, 1997/2001; Fish, 1980), preferably working within the form an AIP is experiencing and in genuine dialogue with the performance groups this AIP community encounters. Questioning is a key strategy, as is attending to, hearing/seeing and responding to stories that are, ideally, resonant and/or disruptive within a community’s memories and histories. As Blau says, “the agency within us” of this *intentional community* is to take on the role of “watch[ing] over perception” (both 1990, p. 383), safeguarding the theatre against the dangers of commercialization and trivialization by being present, consistent, committed, perceptive and responsive as AIP. This curriculum model can work with any level of student, from primary to adult, and in multiple educational/ performing arts-centred settings: professional, community and/or educational levels of performances, mainstream and alternative, are all useful and desirable for AIP study.

Carrying these philosophical underpinnings of an AIP curriculum theory forward from Blau’s foundational work, I begin by sketching out the key performance theories that form the basis of the field of performance studies from writers Richard Schechner

(1988/2003, 2002), Bert O. States (1983, 1985), Marvin Carlson (1996/2003, 1999, 2001, 2003), Susan Bennett (1997/2001), Philip Auslander (1999) and Daphna Ben Chaim (1984). I then address how spectatorship in particular has been theorized in performance by other writers. Important terms that emerge from these secondary readings are: The dramaturgy of the spectator (DeMarinis, 1983, 1987); the pleasure of the spectator (Ubersfeld, 1982); the 'I', 'we', 'you' and 'it/they' of audience (Rayner, 1993); spectatorship in a mediatized culture (Auslander, 1999; Klaver, 1995); and an historical perspective on the behaviours/attitudes of AIP (Butsch, 2000; Kershaw, 2001).

#### *The Accidental and Phenomenal Audience: Schechner and States*

Reading the work of performance studies theorist and theatre director Richard Schechner has been one of the deepest pleasures for me in this research project. Schechner writes with a voracious and capacious appetite for performance in all its forms, and he offers a most useful model for this inquiry of an exemplary spectator (as does Marvin Carlson, see below). It is a daunting task to summarize his contributions here, so I will sketch out his more broadly-based understandings of performance in art, culture, society, politics and everyday life before focussing in on his analysis of spectatorship.

Schechner has written papers, editorials and books over the past 35 years that have served to create the interdisciplinary field of performance studies (PS). PS draws on drama and theatre studies, cultural studies, anthropology and various critical theories, what Schechner calls the "broad spectrum" or "continuum" approach to performance (1990; 2002, p. 2). His main argument is that seeing the world we live in *as a performance* allows us to understand more keenly the roles we play, and the roles that are

played for us, in all aspects of our lives. Influenced by Erving Goffman (1959) and Victor Turner (1977, 1986), Schechner's early anthropological studies to India, Asia and elsewhere enriched his understanding of the connections between ritual and performance. Schechner's own theatre directing practice in the American avant-garde theatre from the 1960's to the present also informs his philosophy of performance that he sees, in a postmodern way, as uniquely situated and context-driven aesthetic/ritualistic forms of experience. He says in the preface to the third edition of his key text *Performance theory* (1988/2003) that in his journeys as performance anthropologist and theatre director he "did not abandon the performing arts but placed them in active relation to social life, ritual, play, games, sports, and other popular entertainments" (p. xi). Research in PS, led by Schechner's long-held editorship of *The Drama Review* (TDR), has examined and analyzed a wide range of performance practices, with a special interest in intercultural practices, avant-garde theatre and performance art.

At this point in its relatively brief history of about thirty years now, PS appears to be primarily focussed on what may be considered to be marginal performance practices. For the majority of practitioners and educators in the performing arts PS has little or no relevance, and its scope of influence is still confined to a small (but growing) cadre of theorists in the academy. Schechner himself has recently written about the importance of performance theory as it applies to mainstream performance practices, like text-based literary theatre:

What we have are two very different performance cultures. True, some PS scholars have found niches inside of mainstream theatre departments, but performance studies as an approach is not important to most academic theatre departments—whose focus is fixed on professional training. As for the "entertainment industry" or the regional theatre, the commercial theatre, and even most of what happens off-

Broadway, performance studies is not a presence. Performance studies is a presence in performance art and on some websites.

So what? Why not let mainstream theatre go its way and performance studies its? All well and good, except that as a “performance subject” mainstream theatre is an incredibly fertile area that PS ought to explore. (Schechner, 2000b, p. 5)

Schechner continues in this editorial in TDR with the following questions for PS scholars to consider:

Where to begin building bridges to mainstream theatre? First, and most important, mainstream theatre needs to become a major PS subject. The techniques of fieldwork, analysis, and theorizing that have been used with such strong effect on the broad spectrum of subjects reflected in PS publications needs now to include writing about mainstream theatre .... The questions to be addressed abound: What are the practices of mainstream theatre from a theoretical perspective? How does mainstream theatre relate to “cultures of whiteness”? What is the ethnography of a regional theatre? Why is there a “cult of playwriting”? Why do so many more students train for theatre than can ever hope to get jobs? How does training in the orthodox theatre compare to training for performance in other cultures? I am sure that PS scholars can come up with many more subjects. The point is that the weird blind spot, the blank in PS scholarship that is mainstream theatre, needs to be filled in. (p. 6)

The relevance of this proposed shift in PS is reflected in this present study. I am interested in drawing on the contributions of PS and applying them to AIP curriculum theory. While my interest at present is not on bringing PS into theatre education (although I would celebrate that development), it is very much centred around bringing the critical perspectives of PS into the teaching of spectatorship in the performing arts.

Another important aspect of Schechner’s work is his undying radicalism.

Schechner often prefaces his writings with expressed concerns about the state of the world: “A long neomedieval period has begun” (Schechner, cited in Huxley and Witts, 1996/2002, p. 354); “The current means of cultural interaction – globalization – enacts

extreme imbalances of power, money, access to media, and control over resources”

(Schechner, 2002, p. 2);

We live under terrible stress. Politically, intellectually, artistically, personally and epistemologically we are at breaking points. It is a cliché to say that society is in crisis. But ours, particularly here on the North American continent, seems gripped by total crisis and faced with either disintegration or brutal, sanctioned repression.  
(Schechner, 1988/2003, p. 31)

Thus, his project in creating the field of PS is to apply the critical lenses that allow us to see many aspects of existence *as* performances. This then allows us to see that performances are created, constructed and coded for very specific socio-political purposes – be they reactionary or revolutionary in nature. A central goal of this doctoral inquiry is to broaden AIP students’ understanding of theatre as a performance form that either supports or undermines existing structures of power and authority in society – that it is always far more than “just entertainment”. This suggests that AIP students be taught to see themselves as situated somewhere along a politicized and socially-aware spectrum of compliance/passivity to resistance/ participation in their relation to various kinds of performances, live and otherwise (film, television, Internet, etc.)

Schechner’s theories applied to AIP curriculum allow students to consider performance as “four great spheres...: entertainment, healing, education, and ritualizing - ...in play with each other” (Schechner in Huxley and Witts, 1996/2002, p. 355). While our culture often sees theatre solely as entertainment, Schechner pushes spectators to reflect on what they may be seeing as potentially healing (to selves and to society), educational (that is, geared towards growth and change) and connected to ritualistic practices of diverse cultures, including – historically – our own. Schechner also studies the interconnections between play, games, sports and sacred and secular rituals as forms

of performance, all of which may also interconnect with a given theatre performance (see Appendix A). In his essay “Ethology and theatre”(1988/2003, pp. 235-289), Schechner cites the Russian anthropologist, S.M. Shirokogoroff, who studied Siberian shamanism:

When the shaman feels the audience is with him and follows him he becomes more active and this effect is transmitted to his audience. After shamanizing, the audience recollects various moments of the performance, their great psychophysiological emotion and the hallucinations of sight and hearing which they have experienced. They then have a deep satisfaction – much greater than that from emotions produced by theatrical and musical performances...because *in shamanizing the audience at the same time acts and participates*. (pp. 254-255, italics added)

“Shamanizing” the audience, as an interactive goal of both performers and spectators, is at the heart of this inquiry and its proposed AIP curriculum theory.

In a chapter in the post-secondary textbook *Performance studies: An introduction* (2002) called “Performance processes” (pp. 188-225), Schechner delineates the stages of performance in a way that significantly informs AIP curriculum. As he writes in a suggested activity at the end of this chapter:

Recall a performance in which you were a performer or spectator. Explain what you did or saw in terms of proto-performance, performance and aftermath. If you have enough information, discuss the performance process in terms of training, workshop, rehearsal, warm-up, public performance, context, cooldown, critical response, archiving and memories. (p. 225)

These tasks are ones that I have found very appropriate to include in an AIP curriculum and I have drawn on Schechner’s three part performance model, calling it *pre-performance*, *performance* and *post-performance* in my definition of AIP experience (see Chapter Two; Chapter Four; Prendergast, 2004d). The list of activities that he suggests make up performance processes are most useful for AIP students to consider in their own interactions as well as in interactions with performers (pre- or post-performance). In fact,

these processes are exactly the ones that AIP students undertake in pre- and post-show activities: 1) they are trained as AIP members through facilitated workshops, warm-ups and “rehearsals” for contextualized public performances (preferably in cooperation with the artists involved); 2) they then can “cooldown” and critically respond to the experience (again, preferably with the artists involved) in order to “archive” the performance either in their own performance processes or in personal and social memory, or both.

Two other concepts derived from Schechner inform this study. First, his understanding of performance as a quadrilogue consists of myriad interactions between and among:

1. Sourcers (authors, choreographers, composers, dramaturgs, etc.)
2. Producers (directors, designers, technicians, business staff, etc.)
3. Performers
4. Partakers (spectators, fans, juries, the public, etc.) (2002, p, 215)

Schechner comments on this model that, “A person may belong to more than one of these categories” (p. 215), and that “[t]his performance quadrilogue can be represented as a rectangle with every point connected to every other point” (p. 215). He goes on:

Theoretically, all connections are given equal weight. But in actuality, each performance enacts a specific route around the performance quadrilogue. The route taken around the quadrilogue, and the primacy or dominance of one player category over one or more of the others, reveals a great deal about the performance process of that particular performance or genre of performance. (p. 215)

It is clear that contemporary mainstream theatre practice is a one-way pathway through the quadrilogue, what Schechner calls “Z-path performance” (p. 215), from Sourcers to Producers to Performers to Partakers. The emphasis of this performance model lies in its central focus on Producers and Performers; Partakers are generally viewed and function

as consuming recipients only. The inherent values of this basically non- or limited-dialogical version of performance are the philosophical underpinnings of contemporary North American/Western literary text-based theatre and post-secondary theatre education practices. Understanding this Z-path model helps me see more clearly how the dark vision of alienated, absent, dying theatre audiences drawn by Blau has come into being. Many other forms of cultural performance practice – including rituals, ceremonies and events like rock concerts, web fanzines, weddings, funerals and law trials – involve a much higher level of Partaker/Performer/Producer/Sourcer interactivity, wherein, as Schechner points out, boundaries between these four performance roles can be blurred. Mainstream theatre must, and needs to, re-connect with the ritualistic/ shamanistic and patronage-oriented spectatorship practices that lie in its roots and history. AIP curriculum theory is an attempt to stimulate this kind of return to an intentional and interpretive community of spectators and artists that can be seen or has been seen in other performance practices in our own culture and elsewhere around the world.

The final AIP curriculum concept derives from Schechner's essay "Selective inattention" (1988/2003, pp. 218-222). Here he discusses the differences between an *accidental* and an *integral audience*, in both rituals (consisting of a broad range of local and global cultural practices) and aesthetic theatre. The comparison between the two types of audiences is clearly defined by Schechner:

An accidental audience is a group of people who, individually or in small clusters, go to the theater [sic] – the performances are publicly advertised and open to all. On opening nights of commercial shows the attendance of the critics and friends constitutes an integral rather than an accidental audience. An integral audience is one where people come because they have to or because the event is of special significance to them. Integral audiences include the relatives of the bride and groom at a wedding, the tribe assembled for initiation rites, dignitaries on the podium for an

inauguration. (p. 220)

Schechner goes on to provide examples of integral audiences in avant-garde theatre (“a supportive audience” [p. 220]), Kabuki, coronations and funerals and TV studio audiences. He sums up that “an accidental audience comes ‘to see the show’ while the integral audience is ‘necessary to accomplish the work of the show,’” and he also comments that “the presence of an integral audience is the surest evidence that the performance is a ritual” (both, p. 220.). While this might easily lead me to conclude that the model of an integral theatre audience is ideal for AIP curriculum theory, Schechner surprisingly suggests otherwise:

Interestingly, the behavior of people as spectators differs greatly depending on whether these individuals comprise an integral or accidental audience – and this difference is not what one would expect. By and large, *the accidental audience pays closer attention than does an integral audience*. This is for four reasons: 1) the accidental audience chooses to attend, has often paid to attend; 2) its members attend as individuals or in small clusters so that large crowd action is unlikely – each spectator or small group is a stranger among strangers. 3) An integral audience often knows what’s going on – and not paying attention to it all is a way of showing off that knowledge .... 4) Sometimes the duration of a performance is so long that it isn’t possible to pay attention throughout; ritual performances have a program to fulfill and cannot be fit in between supper and the 11 o’clock news. (pp. 221-222, emphasis in original)

Schechner seems to suggest that it is unrealistic and ineffective to expect to nurture integral audiences for theatre who will necessarily go on in life as primarily accidental audience members. And he also suggests that being an effective and educated accidental audience member means *gaining an understanding and experience of both types of spectatorship*, where one kind can inform and enrich the other and can even begin to happen contemporaneously in performance.

Schechner goes on to explore a separate concept of what he calls “selective inattention” in audiences that offers a model for “ritualizing aesthetic drama” (both, p. 222). In describing a number of examples of avant-garde Euro/American theatre practices (as in, for example, performance art practices, Robert Wilson’s operas, Grotowski’s Poor Theatre and Schechner’s The Performance Group) and multicultural practices (in India, Sri Lanka and Japan), Schechner suggests that selective inattention in spectatorship consists of a heightened sense of presence, community and participation with performance, and, at the same time, a Zen-like “detached vision” of an unconscious scanning process brought on by “relaxing...consciousness” (both, pp. 230-231) in performance. He concludes that “spectators can be trained to enjoy being selectively inattentive” (p. 233) in what amounts to a possible mandate for AIP curriculum theory. I would suggest that the collective and creative preparatory work involved in AIP curriculum is a means to this end, as will be examined in detail in subsequent chapters of this study. Giving the last word to Schechner, I am moved forward in my inquiry by his words (yet again):

We’ve yet to educate our theater audiences sufficiently – so that they can really demand excellence, and not just “an experience”. Again, this is a function of a tradition – for an educated audience, and I don’t mean academically educated, arises in the midst of a living tradition which people experience from birth. A living tradition is one with roots and branches among the people. It can be studied at school but kept alive only in the streets. (p. 224)

This sense of “a living tradition” is the collectively-created experience of AIP curriculum and is taken up by theatre theorist/phenomenologist Bert O. States.

States' (1983, 1985) understanding of the "three phenomenal modes" of the actor immediately appear to me to be equally valid when applied to the audience. He lists these modes as:

I (actor) = Self-expressive mode  
 You (audience) = Collaborative mode  
 He (character) = Representational mode (1983, p. 360)

Clearly, in the second phenomenal position/state described, the actor and the audience are in direct contact. This is the address from the actor to the audience – 'I' speaking to 'You' – or as States says, "if 'we' speaks to itself, it subdivides into 'I' and 'you'" (1983, p. 365). In AIP curriculum, the opportunity is created to extend this experience for the audience, so that the spectator/student is offered multiple possibilities for self-expression and representation in and through the experience of a performance. The spectator/student is also given chances to represent these expressions of self to the performing artists involved, thus becoming the "I (actor)" and allowing the actors to become the "You (audience)" for their preparatory and/or follow-up work. This phenomenal role-reversal is a key concept in AIP curriculum theory and practice, and States' model allows me to clarify my understanding of what is happening when I ask AIP students to share their exploratory and/or responsive creative work with performers.

States calls theatre "this art of transcendental hypocrisy" (1985, p. 206) and this seems to be a paradoxical phenomenological state of being worth considering, too. How can something be "transcendental" and "hypocritical" at the same time? He also defines theatre as "a license for a remarkable exercise in group imagination" (p. 158) where "[t]he actor invites the audience to look through him at someone else – or, recalling the mirror image, at *itself*" (p.159). This is the "He – Character – Representational mode"

described as the third phenomenon of acting, and it is the most haunting, ghostly power of theatre, where we can see both the actor ('I') and the character ('S/he') contemporaneously in performance, sometimes more or less of one than the other (see also Carlson, 1999, and below, on haunting in the theatre). For example, when we see a famous actor perform, it is often more of the actor that we see on stage than the character. This may be because the power of the presence of the actor overwhelms the power to disbelieve. Part of the challenge of AIP perception is to *play attention* (see Thom, 1993, p. 205, and in Chapter Two; Schechner's *selective inattention*, discussed above) between actor and character in a way that heightens the experience of the performance, not lessens it. This takes continuous practice, even for seasoned theatre-goers, and is one of the central pleasures of performance (see also Ubersfeld, below).

Thus, States' model is valuable for AIP curriculum as a teaching tool that aims to move AIP students' understanding of the inter-connected and multi-perspectival relations of the actor/spectator. States says of spectatorship that it is:

[a] marvel of our sensitivity to that zone of behavior within which the act of acting takes place.... [where] one must be able to hold in mind two categories – that of the real and that of the imaginary – that are fused in a single phenomenon. How does one see it as art when the art consists precisely in making it real? (pp.168-169)

This question is a useful one to add to a growing list that will make up a major component of an AIP curriculum theory – a series of open-ended questions that aims to have AIP students think more deeply about the experience and meaning of performance, on a philosophical level (see Chapters Two and Six). To achieve this in practice would be to increase AIP students' understanding and appreciation of the nature and complexity of performance perception.

Continuing this survey, we move from the foundational and phenomenological works of Schechner and States to the contributions Susan Bennett (1997/2001) and Marvin Carlson (2003, 2001, 1996/2003) make to AIP curriculum.

***From Interpretive to Haunted Audience: Bennett and Carlson***

Susan Bennett's book *Theatre audiences: A theory of production and reception* (1997/2001) stands alongside Blau's text as one of only two I am aware of in contemporary performance theory that take up a theorization of theatre audiences. She draws primarily on critical theories of reception and reader-response in literature and then places them comparatively in relation to theatre audience practice. While it can be a fruitful exercise to draw comparisons between *reader* and *spectator* (as we saw in Ricoeur's work discussed in Chapter Two), there are limitations to this approach that become clearer when looking at Bennett in the broader context of Blau's, States' and other performance theorists' work.

On a purely quantitative level, a re-examination of Bennett's text shows me that she spends less than twenty percent of her book on the actual experience of performance for audience (1997/2001, pp. 125-165). What remains is a thorough summation of the work of a list of critical theorists, the majority of whom are non-theatre practitioners or scholars. For example, she takes up the following writers in the course of her study; Stanley Fish, Wolfgang Iser, Hans Robert Jauss, Roland Barthes, Umberto Eco, Laura Mulvey, and John Ellis. She uses these writers, and more, to trace a path through reception theory, reader-response theory, semiotics and film theory. While she does draw on some key theatre/drama theorists, such as Bertolt Brecht, none of them is central to

her text and, as mentioned earlier, she almost entirely neglects Blau's seminal text *The Audience* (1990), cited only once and in passing, although it was published seven years before her study first appeared.

This literature-centred perspective on theatre audience dilutes the impact of the study for the purposes of my inquiry. Theories of audience that arise from text-based (or even film-based) roots neglect the phenomenological complexities, challenges and pleasures of live spectatorship that have been, and will be, taken up by other writers in this present study. I also believe that to carve a curriculum from this material would be to risk slipping into a "deadly curriculum" (as in Peter Brook's notion of "deadly theatre", see Brook, 1968) that lives on the page rather than the stage. Bennett's conclusions are as follows:

What has emerged from this study of the audience is the necessity to view the theatrical event beyond its immediate conditions and to foreground its social constitution. The description of an individual response to a particular production may not be possible or, indeed, even desirable. But, because of that individual's participation in a given culture and the importance of his/her culturally-constituted horizon of expectations of a particular *social* event, it is important to reposition the study of drama to reflect this. (Bennett, p. 184; see also Prendergast, 2001, pp. 28, 118)

Bennett creates a model for this conclusion based on Fish's (1980) notion of "interpretive communities" (of readers) and Jauss' (1982) "horizons of expectations". I have no argument with Bennett's conclusions and agree that *context is all* when experiencing a performance. Anyone who has ever seen a play while hungry or tired or unprepared or angry with a spouse or feeling unwell or too dressed-up or dressed-down or fighting a bad cough or frustrated with bad sightlines or sound or other spectators' behaviour *knows this* (see Blau found poem, **one sentence**, above). And theatre history

and practice is full of rich stories that illustrate this truism as well; stories of both resistant and compliant audiences taking in performances that serve to either undermine or reinforce their horizons of expectations (see Butsch, 2000 and Kershaw, 1999, 2001) . This is how theatre has functioned, survived and moved forward over thousands of years. Bennett does an effective job of pulling theoretical strands from critical theory and drawing them into theatre, and she draws usefully on Brecht (pp. 12-33) and somewhat on Schechner, but she neglects key theories such as Blau's, States', and other performance theory, including the work of theatre historian and performance theorist Marvin Carlson.

Four texts by Carlson, two books and two articles, all carry in them useful concepts for AIP curriculum. First, in relation to my concerns with Bennett's narrow theoretical focus, Carlson's paper "The resistance to theatricality" (2002) takes up the appropriation, often the mis-appropriation, of the notion of theatricality by social science.

In his introductory remarks he states:

Probably the most distinctive feature of theoretical speculation concerning the theater [sic] during the past twenty years has been the cross-fertilization of this field of study with the social sciences. While traditionally theater theorists have most commonly looked to the work of literary theorists or philosophers for inspiration, concepts, and analytic strategies, today they are much more likely to look to such cultural analysts as anthropologists, ethnographers, psychologists and sociologists. The changes in the investigative fields of both theater and the social sciences as a result of this shift have been enormous—indeed the fields themselves have been significantly reconfigured. (p. 238)

This describes the work of many of the writers discussed in this chapter: Bennett draws on literary theory; Schechner on anthropology and ethnography; States on phenomenology and so on. These interdisciplinary investigations have been fruitful for the emerging field of performance theory; however, Carlson argues:

Useful and productive as this cross-fertilization has been, it has not been without cost, for of course any new interpretative grid, any new critical paradigm, inevitably brings some distortion along with its clarifications, and when the clarifications have been as stimulating and productive as those resulting from the growing convergence of the analytical methodologies of theater and performance studies and of the social sciences, then the distortions involved are very likely to be overlooked in the general enthusiasm over important new insights. (p. 238)

Carlson goes on to criticize distorted understandings of theatricality that are to be found in a variety of social science theories. While that particular argument may not be germane to my inquiry here, his cautionary note on how social scientific lenses may move from utility to distortion in the study of performance is most important, and places Bennett's study in a corrective critical perspective.

The main message from Carlson here is to remind me that AIP curriculum theory must remain strongly rooted in the field of performance/theatre, and that to stray too far into diverse cross-disciplinary practices may end up muddying what I intend to clarify in this study; that is, the lived experience of spectatorship applied to curriculum. Indeed, earlier proposals for this study incorporated many more fields than the present study (history, psychology, sociology etc.). As one professor commented to me, following a conference paper I delivered based on this more multidisciplinary AIP model, "This study will take you fifty years to finish!" That professor was right, and I thank her for her insight. It is very tempting, when you begin to see the world as performative, as I now do, to want to apply this lens at random and to find applicable models in the most unlikely places. My sense now is that AIP curriculum theory must draw on other fields with a sense of caution, and not stray too far from its theoretical/philosophical source, the aesthetic experience of performance. Overwhelming young people with spectatorship

models built from materials outside the field of performance risks a lessening rather than an increase in their understanding and appreciation of AIP practice.

Along these lines, if I were asked to provide a reading list for a post-secondary course in AIP, Carlson's book *Performance: A Critical Introduction* (1996/2003) would appear in a prominent position. Placed alongside Schechner's *Performance theory* (1988/2003), these two texts provide a solid introduction to the field of performance and useful understandings of spectatorship in performance. Carlson's text is synoptic in its approach, his goal being to answer the question posed in his introduction and conclusion: "What is performance?" (1996/2003, pp. 1-12, 187-199) This answer carries the reader through many fields (as in Schechner and Bennett) including anthropology, ethnography, linguistics and cultural studies. Carlson also historically positions performance art into performance studies and takes up post-modern concerns of resistance and identity in relation to performance. So, given the cautions Carlson voices regarding cross-disciplinarity in performance theory, how does this text "hang together"? The answer is, extremely well, as one reviewer of this book says:

This book will be an invaluable resource for students, artists, and scholars in performance studies, one that provides conceptual tools to adapt, histories to revisit, and methodological connections to refine. And for those aware of the performance trend and less aware of its history or significance, this book will be an essential part of their homework. (Jackson, 1997, pp. 377-378)

I would suggest this "invaluable" and "essential" quality is due to Carlson's professional history as a theatre scholar and to his extraordinarily high level of adult lifetime spectatorship, of autobiographical/autoethnographical "fieldwork" in performance studies. He carries his reader through a study of performance in social science, performance art and contemporary critical theory, yet never loses sight of the lived

experience of performance. And in his revised conclusion for the second edition of his book, Carlson centres back in to theatre as a key site for the study of performance. While this may seem obvious, performance studies has generally neglected a lot of theatre practice in favour of alternative performance practices (see Schechner, 2000a, and above, on “Mainstream theatre and PS”), as part of a concerted break with traditionally text-based theatre history and dramatic literature practices. However, it is this authoritative voice of theatre experience that I find compelling in Carlson, as it is so effectively interwoven with his synopses of major critical theories and historical practices of performance. And it is this writing methodology that I find most useful for AIP curriculum purposes; the pleating together of theory and practice. The “I was there” quality found in both Schechner and Carlson adds a theatre-centred critical edge to their writing. There is an important sense of living history that is often lacking in texts that centre on theatre/performance theory and neglect to connect theory to practice. Carlson is a theatre historian as well as a performance scholar, Schechner is a director of many decades’ practice, and these research stances legitimize their work in a way for me that is unmatched. They are exemplars for AIP theory and practice and set a model for all spectators to become experienced, open-minded, and fruitfully reflective.

While *Performance: A Critical Introduction* contains many narrative examples of Carlson’s AIP practice, from the 1950s to the present, his subsequent book *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine* (2001) draws even more clearly on his own history of spectatorship to provide a theory of theatre rooted in the hauntedness of text, body, performance processes and performance spaces as inherent qualities of the theatre experience. Carlson says in his first chapter:

Drama, more than any other literary form, seems associated in all cultures with the retelling again and again of stories that bear a particular religious, social, or political significance for their public. There clearly seems to be something in the nature of dramatic presentation that makes it a particularly attractive repository for the storage and mechanism for the continued recirculation of cultural memory. (p. 8)

Carlson theorizes the many levels at which this “memory machine” of spectatorship and theatre-making functions:

1. Within the text that hearkens back to previous versions of the same text (plot, setting, and/or characters), many already known by the audience, as seen in Shakespeare, for example (pp. 16-51);
2. Within the actor’s body that embodies actor and character together (as taken up also by States, above), and plays on the audience’s memories of previous performances by the same actor, or other interpretations of the same character by different actors (pp. 52-95);
3. Within productions that are haunted by previous histories of that text in production and reception (pp. 96-130);
4. Within theatres spaces that are haunted with memories of previous performances held there or events that happened there (pp. 131-164). For example, the theatre where Lincoln was assassinated or where the audience/hostages in Moscow were taken by rebels in 2002 will have been and will be forever haunted by extra-theatrical historical events that took place within their walls.

This model resonates with Blau’s writing about theatre audience as the “function of remembrance” (1990, p. 382) as taken up earlier. The haunted model of theatre and audience processes offers a powerful and engaging metaphor to draw on in presenting

AIP students with ways to reflect upon and make meaning out of their experience of performance. As with Thom's notion of "playing attention" (Thom, 1993, p. 205) and Blau's "community of the question" (1990, p. 357ff.), the image of spectators being haunted by performance is an effective teaching catalyst for use in AIP curriculum. Key questions that emerge from this metaphor include: How do we experience return visits to the same theatre? How do we compare productions of the same play or playwright, or that feature the same actor or actors in another production (including film versions)? What stories haunt the one being performed? What memories of our own experience arise in the encounter with a performance? What social/political/cultural memories arise?

The final contribution to AIP curriculum I have found in the work of Marvin Carlson is "The Theatre Journal Auto/Archive" (2003, pp. 207-211). This column debuted in *Theatre Journal* in 2003, in a most serendipitous manner for my inquiry. As stated in the introduction to the column, initiated by the journal's editor, David Román (2003):

Beginning with this issue, every future issue of *TJ* will feature a senior scholar in the field reflecting on their own theatre-going practices. I've invited a number of scholars to write about their own particular relationship to the theatre and especially the archive that they have written about throughout their careers. The column is meant to be conversational and not critical in the traditional sense of the practice .... The idea here is to invite scholars to write in a personal voice about the archive that matters most to them. The new column is fairly open-ended to allow for a diverse and unpredictable response. (p. x)

Clearly, these columns will create an ongoing reading resource for AIP curriculum.

However, Carlson's initial contribution to this project is particularly useful in providing a reflective piece of writing on *spectatorship as autobiography*:

What keeps me going, and keeps me excited? To begin with, the experience itself, the stimulation of being in a crowd of persons gathered for a special event and all focused on the possibilities of this unique experience. I love equally the enthusiasm of the aficionados of some experimental artist or group gathered in a tiny venue to participate in the latest manifestation of an ongoing project and that of the uptown theatregoer who has perhaps waited a year or more to see at last a popular Broadway hit such as *The Producers* or *The Lion King*. I love the special audiences of New York, where a certain performance will attract primarily a special language community, or an ethnic or sexual community, and the particular energy that these audiences brings to the event itself including the gatherings in the lobby before the show and during the intermission. (Carlson, 2003, p. 210)

Carlson moves into particular memories of seeing Olivier in O'Neill, productions of Shakespeare that have marked his memory and of other "moments of such intensity that they might be called epiphanies" (p. 211). Webster's defines *epiphany* as being "a usually sudden manifestation or perception of the essential nature or meaning of something" and as "an intuitive grasp of reality through something (as an event) usually simple and striking" (1981, p. 381). It appears that the potential of experiencing *epiphanies in performance* is a more than worthwhile, if ideal, goal of AIP curriculum, and Carlson's work provides invaluable resource material to offer student spectators.

#### ***From Mediatized to Aesthetic Audience: Auslander and Ben Chaim***

From the work of these founders in the field of performance theory, I turn to two texts that offer contrasting perspectives on live audiences, Philip Auslander's *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (1999) and Daphna Ben Chaim's *Distance in the Theatre: The Aesthetics of Audience Response* (1984). Both of these performance theory texts have much to offer AIP curriculum theory.

Auslander's (1999) book makes an important contribution to understanding the nature of AIP by thinking through the nature of *liveness* in performance. Auslander's careful critique of the wavering and waning presence of live performance in a *mediatized culture* (i.e., a culture dominated by film, television, video, Internet) leads him to a dark conclusion that:

Currently, mediatized forms enjoy far more cultural presence and prestige – and profitability – than live forms. In many instances, live performances are produced either as replications of mediatized representations or as raw materials for subsequent mediatization.... any change in the near future is likely to be toward a further diminution of the symbolic capital associated with live events. (p. 162)

Auslander and Blau seem to share the fear of the disappearance of live performance into the background white noise of the dominant media culture. However, Auslander is far more accepting than Blau of this societal and cultural shift. Rather than bemoaning the mediatization of live performance, Auslander recognizes, in a consciously unsentimental way, the reality of the shift in our culture that has taken place over the past century, moving from the dominance of live performance (pre-radio, film, television and computer) to the dominance of mediatized forms. While Auslander does not celebrate this shift, and expresses concern about the future of theatre in particular, he is neither reactionary nor negative. He points out that many performance theorists do not consider mediatized performance to be “authentic” or “real” and he sets out to argue against this position: “I argue that the relationship between live and mediatized forms and the meaning of liveness be understood as historical and contingent rather than determined by immutable differences”. (p. 8)

Auslander is laying out a position useful to AIP curriculum theory here because he is allowing me to see that AIP students will enter into this curriculum with a vast store of experience of mediatized performance to draw on. This store should not be ignored, nor should it be considered a hindrance in opening AIP students up to the experience of liveness in performance (see also Klaver, 1995, below). Rather, this honoring of students' horizons of expectations will allow an AIP educator to focus attention on how live performance has coped with the mediatization of culture. As Auslander says, "to put it bluntly, the general response of live performance to the oppression and economic superiority of mediatized forms has been to become as much like them as possible" (p. 7). This insight allows for a critical perspective in AIP curriculum that views mediatized elements injected into live performance with healthy suspicion. For example, students can consider whether or not the use of computer technology, lighting, sound, video, film and so on enhances or detracts from the performance(s) they are attending. They can also consider if and how dramatic structures – plots, characters, settings – may have been appropriated from cinematic or televisual forms, and to what purpose and level of success or failure.

Auslander goes on to focus on two very distinct forms of liveness; rock music and jurisprudence. In the former, he examines the issue of authenticity in live rock music performances and music videos by drawing on theorists such as Jean Baudrillard (who first coined the term "mediatized"), Theodore Gracyk, Simon Frith and Lawrence Grossberg, among others. This is a highly theoretical piece of writing that presents a compelling study of how rock music has been understood and analyzed in aesthetic philosophy and cultural/performance studies. Auslander concludes that, "music video

(has) displaced live performance in its relationship to sound recordings by taking over live performance's authenticating function" (p. 160). In the latter analysis, Auslander examines the public performance of jurisprudence as a form of liveness, and as "one social realm that has offered significant resistance to the incursion of mediatization" (p. 161). Auslander splits his focus in this chapter between the issue of live presence in law courts (the nature of the legal "arena"), and the incursion of video and television cameras into this domain in recent years. He then moves on to consider the issue of intellectual property rights in terms of conflicts and legal solutions around "owning" performance. Again, Auslander prompts valuable thought for AIP curriculum in offering students the opportunity to consider how law is "performed" and how performance – something that is inherently always disappearing and that lives on only in spectator memory (see Phelan, 1993, and Carlson, 1999, above) – can still be legally "commodified" and controlled through copyright in our capitalistic culture.

Daphna Ben Chaim's (1984) text differs from Auslander's in that she focusses on what makes liveness unique in the notion of *aesthetic distance*, rather than tracing its disappearance into the mediatized background of a televisual society. Her purpose is "to examine the major dramatic, aesthetic, and philosophical conceptions of distance, and to discover in what ways, if any, these may contribute to a unified theory" (p. x). Her study takes the reader through the work of aesthetic philosophers such as Edward Bullough and Jean Paul Sartre, alongside drama theorists Bertolt Brecht, Antonin Artaud and Jerzy Grotowski, and film theorists Christian Metz and Andre Bazin. This theoretical journey takes up such important ideas as the disinterestedness of the spectator (pp. 1-12, as debated by Coleridge, Nietzsche and Kant), and the necessity for a spectator to

psychically separate him or herself from a work of art. Aesthetic distance operates like a filter that distils our perceptions when we take on the role of perceiver of fictional worlds. She also focusses on the voluntary nature of spectatorship, the heightened state of awareness that liveness demands and the tension between identification *with* and psychological protection *from* the characters and events of a play (pp. 13-68). All of these key ideas may be usefully adapted to AIP curriculum. It is important for students to consider that disinterestedness does not equal apathy, but simply prevents them from leaping onstage to rescue Ophelia, and is a mark of their voluntary identification with the play. At the same time that they can psychologically protect themselves through the recognition that they are in a fictional world, they can also project their emotions onto the performance in a safe way.

Ben Chaim concludes her study with an assertion that, “The spectator’s awareness that the theatrical event is a fiction fundamentally determines the viewer’s experience” (p. 73). She goes on:

An awareness of fiction is the most basic principle of distance in which there appears to be three distinguishable but interrelated components:  
1) tacit knowing; 2) volition; and 3) perception *as* unreal. (p. 73)

Tacit knowing involves “this double perception of the reality of the medium and the fictionality of the image” (p. 73). This double perception allows an audience to feel intense emotions without danger. Volition highlights our complicity with performance, “to be aware that the image is unreal, and yet to treat it with all the seriousness with which our minds are capable” (p. 74). The unreality of our perception in performance “commits us to a metaphorical mode of thinking, a ‘seeing-as’ .... Because our belief is conditional, based on our own willingness to imagine and our recognition of the image as

unreality, it is 'owned' by our minds" (p. 75). Here we see Ben Chaim elegantly arguing that the strength of theatre lies in its ability to push us into more metaphorical ways of thinking (as opposed to the pervasive literalness of film) and to allow us a sense of ownership of the fictional world that is created in collaboration with artists. These are powerful ideas that are well-worth adapting and sharing with students of AIP.

*From Living to Locating Audience:  
Other Writings on Spectatorship in Performance Theory*

In order to complete this survey of spectatorship in performance theory, I look at the work of a group of writers that addresses a range of issues in AIP useful for this emerging curriculum theory. The significant concepts taken up by Marco DeMarinis (1983, 1987), Anne Ubersfeld (1982), Alice Rayner (1993), Elizabeth Klaver (1995) and Baz Kershaw (1994, 2001) include; dramaturgical/semiotic interpretations of AIP, the AIP as collective experience, AIP alienation and its reflection in AIP behaviour, and the multiple pleasures/challenges of spectatorship.

To begin, Marco DeMarinis, an Italian theatre semiotician, writes on the "dramaturgy of the spectator" (1983, 1987) in developing a theory of a "model spectator" (p. 102) while drawing on Umberto Eco's response theory of the "model reader" who is endowed with "encyclopedic, intertextual, or ideological competence" (p. 103; see also Bennett, 1997/2001). This audience becomes aware of how *open* or *closed* a performance is to reception, interpretation and response:

In a successfully open performance, the perception and interpretation for which the theatre producers call upon the spectator are not rigidly preset. Rather, aside from unavoidable textual constraints, the performance will leave the spectator more or less free .... (p. 103)

He goes on to consider how a spectator's attention is attracted to and manipulated/ disrupted by performance, recognizing the movement from "a diffuse and passive seeing (*voir*) to an actively concentrated and sharply focused watching (*regarder*)" through modes of "focalization, defocalization and refocalization" (both, p. 107). The challenges of selective and playful attention in performance are unique to the performance experience. Film selects and focusses audience gaze, and is endlessly repeatable, unchangeable. The performing arts are more open to interpretation than mediated performances, are transitory and ephemeral in nature, and are therefore all the more challenging because of these inherent qualities. DeMarinis concludes, "that theatrical pleasure arises and is maintained in an unbroken dialectic between the frustration and satisfaction of expectations [in a] fragile balance" (p. 112). For an AIP – suspended between recognition/remembrance and discovery/surprise – this is an awareness important to instill through education.

The theatrical pleasure mentioned by DeMarinis is the topic of Anne Ubersfeld's (1982) contribution to audience/spectator theory. Spectator pleasure is obviously one of the key reasons we engage with performance, and Ubersfeld lays out what she sees as the major sources of theatrical pleasure. These are:

1. Social nature of theatre, company of others
2. Multifunctional nature of theatre, layers of interpretation
3. Active nature of reception, presence, embodiment, sensuality
4. Reading opaque as well as transparent signs
5. Narrative pleasure, myth, fable, story

6. Human speech pleasure, of hearing, of voice
7. Pleasure of the sign (semiotic decoding pleasure), seeing
8. Pleasure of imitation (mimesis/imagery), seeing mirrored/other worlds
9. Pleasure of *bricolage* [creating something from whatever is at hand]
10. Pleasure of memory
11. Pleasure of understanding
12. Pleasure of invention
13. Pleasure of “I is Another”/identification, or of travel/journey
14. Pleasure in transgression; taboos, absences, anxieties, impossibilities
15. Pleasure as a totality, of desire (summarized from pp. 128-138)

This list of qualities of theatrical pleasure will move well into a curriculum model, perhaps most usefully transmuted into questions. In answering questions that focus on the range of pleasures offered by theatre performance, students can consider how they are experiencing/not experiencing these types of pleasure in their development as members of AIP. AIP instructors can also use this list as an assessment instrument, starting with the question: How are students able to articulate their AIP experiences in reference to Ubersfeld’s list?

Alice Rayner’s (1993) discussion of the subjectivity and community experience of audience employs a framework that considers audience through four pronouns: *I, we, you, it/they* (p. 7 ff.):

1. The *I* of AIP is the first person singular, the individual spectator, the solo subject of performance reception. It suggests, curriculum-wise, attending to the individual location and horizon of expectations of the spectator as s/he sees and hears

performance through one set of eyes and one set of ears. AIP students must be given plenty of room to express their individual and unique experiences of performance.

2. The *we* of AIP is first person plural; the audience as social group, as “collective community” (p. 9). She reminds us:

The point is that “we” is perhaps the most radical “shifter” of English grammar because, as in set theory, groups themselves are so variable, the parameters so changeable. In this sense, “we” is the emptiest grammatical form because it is so emphatically rhetorical and available to so many redescrptions and so many temporalities. It takes into account the fact of multiple individuals, but that fact must continually be defined and redefined, formed and reformed over time; it cannot unequivocally refer to a stable identity. (p. 12)

In considering the group, shared, collective social experience of AIP, it is important to consider the multiple and shifting nature of the “we” of the audience: a single audience is made up of men, women and perhaps children, of all ages; workers and unemployed; parents and children and siblings; rich and not-so-rich; experienced and naïve. Curricular reflection of this diversity of “we” is essential to hold on to, especially in the activity of performance analysis.

3. Rayner moves on to the *it* or *they* of audience, seeing this third person pronoun for audience as problematic in reducing the complexities of audience to a fixed object; an object that “becomes available to any ideological, historical or interpretive description” (p. 12). However, “the ‘it’ also identifies a cultural memory” (p. 13). This sense of “the historical unconscious” (p. 13) is important to the nature of audience. Audiences become part of theatre history and cultural memory in their collective and critical responses to performance, and yet must not be simplified as an “it”, a stable entity.

4. Next, Rayner regards in “the second person, you, the audience might be understood as the object of address from the perspective of the performer” (p. 13). She goes on to remark, in what I take to be deeply significant to my inquiry here:

When the audience is a “you” the performer is also a “you” and this relation recognizes a simultaneous subjectivity in which each subject is also an other. It is the ground of the dialogic relation between performer and audience. In some sense it is the rarest form because it demands a high degree of both self and other-directed consciousness that presumes *both performer and audience are partners in dialogue*, (p. 13, emphasis added)

The question at the heart of a curriculum for AIP is: How may an authentic, dialogical “you” relationship between audience and performance be cultivated through education? One suggestion for engaging with audience in a more genuine way is the focus of Christopher Olsen’s (2002) study of theatre audience surveys (Appendix B). It leads him to posit an alternative survey of twenty questions that asks questions that generally do not get asked; these are meant to allow performing arts groups to enter into a closer relationship with their audience and can surely be a valuable tool for this AIP curriculum project as well. Meaningful, dialogical talkbacks between performers and audiences is yet another way that both sides of an AIP curriculum encounter can enter into a “You/you” relationship (see Ellis, 2000; Goodwin, 2004; Conclusion).

The work of Elizabeth Klaver (1995) in performance and media culture puts the practice of AIP in the broader critical context of cultural spectatorship. Klaver’s spectator theory in media culture connects well with Auslander’s work on mediatization and liveness in performance. Klaver recognizes that our understanding of spectatorship cuts across a number of performance media forms – the fields of film, television and theatre/performance studies all have diverse theoretical foundations. From this position

of interdisciplinarity, Klaver asks a number of questions useful to AIP curriculum theory.

I have rewritten her questions in a more curriculum-focussed language in brackets as a way to make her theory more accessible for my purposes:

1. How are looks and gazes theorized with respect to each of the media?  
[How do we see theatre, film and television in different ways?]
2. Does the plurality of the media culture change the way that spectatorship is positioned?  
[In a mediatized world, how important does spectatorship become as something worth understanding, developing and studying?]
3. In what ways can one medium and its (spectator) theory be used to explore another?  
[How may we compare and contrast the different ways and contexts in which we spectate?]
4. Does the transference from one medium to another alter or disrupt notions of viewing?  
[What problems or contradictions arise as we transfer from one to another type of spectatorship?]
5. Can one medium and its viewer-positioning become the radical alterity of another? (p. 310)  
[In what ways does viewing theatre, versus film and television, offer opportunities for resistance to the more dominant mediatized performance forms?]

Klaver considers the spectator positions involved in theatre, film and television as offering “playful intersections” and “the shredding of their boundaries” (both, p. 318), but does not focus on the threat to live performance of mediatized forms; instead, she treats them as equally robust, an idealistic position that Auslander more realistically (if cynically) counters. But curriculum is inherently optimistic, focussed as it is on the potential for growth and change, so Klaver’s work allows recognition of how an AIP is *also and as well* a highly experienced audience of film/video/television.

Concluding this review of contemporary audience/spectator theory in performance are two valuable articles by Baz Kershaw (1994, 2001), the most recent one of which calls for, refreshingly, “unruly audiences”. Kershaw says that he intends to

“trace the history of...the audience as *patron*, to *client*, to *customer*” (2001, p. 135). He argues that “this historical shift indicates a growing acquiescence in audiences, a relinquishing of cultural power” (p. 135). After noting that the study of *applause* as an activity of audience is almost absent in performance literature, Kershaw goes on to pose two avenues for inquiry:

Firstly, raising general questions about how audiences in late twentieth century Western theatre were determined in the practice of their role; and, secondly...posing important questions about how audiences might make the theatre more effective as a community-forming and political process. (p. 136)

Both of these areas seem fruitful for curriculum development. Audience history sensibly needs to be part of an AIP curriculum, and Kershaw’s first question leads into a placement of audience behaviours, attitudes and participation levels in performance into historical context. Tracing the history of AIP along the path of patronage to clientism to consumerism over the last few hundred years is a valuable critical path for students to follow, and Richard Butsch’s excellent book *The Making of American Audiences: From Stage to Television, 1750-1990* (2000) would make an effective text for this purpose.

Performance history contains marvelous stories of potent performance reception:

Stravinski’s *Rite of Spring*; O’Casey’s *Plough and the Stars*; Shaw’s first use of profanity on stage; John Cage’s silent musical composition 4’33’’; numbers of controversial productions, like Tony Kushner’s AIDS epic *Angels in America*, that have sparked deep reaction across cultures and times (see also Blackadder, 2003). This historical perspective leads to the question: How might present day AIP become more involved with increasing the community-forming and political powers of performance? Kershaw suggests:

There is a case...for arguing that contemporary theatre should be much less concerned with creating offence and that its audiences should be encouraged to embrace every possible opportunity to become unruly. (p. 149)

Kershaw's earlier essay, "Framing the audience for theatre" (1994), appears in a sociological compilation called *The authority of the consumer* (Keat, Whitley & Abercrombie, 1994) and provides a larger socio-political background for his more recent work. It is in the critical context of a consumer-driven society that Kershaw asks, "what might it mean to 'consume' a theatrical performance?" (Kershaw, 1994, p. 167). His answer lies in a Marxist analysis of the commodification of the British theatre throughout the 1980s under Thatcherism:

Whereas erstwhile the only object to take home from the show was a programme, the eighties witnessed a remarkable proliferation of theatre sales-lines: T-shirts, badges, hats, posters, pennants, playscripts, cassettes of show music, videos of the making of the show – if it could carry an image and/or title of the production, it was pressed into service. (p. 173)

Kershaw traces the devolution of theatre into a service industry (pp. 176-179) and of performance into a commodity (pp. 179-181). He comments that, "a theatre of prostitution is seen as producing performances that are totally lacking in authenticity" (p. 180). His response to this status quo is to posit "performance beyond commodity" – that is, beyond a capitalist society – where "the *very nature* of interpretation in live performance has the potential to empower an audience in ways that transcend recuperation to and incorporation in the dominant" (p. 181). He goes on to suggest "that it is the personal-psychological that is 'consumed' by successful performance in order to construct a collective subjectivity in the experience of a fictional world" (p. 183). It is in

this collective subjectivity that the resistant and revolutionary power of an audience lies.

As Kershaw concludes:

...the signs produced by the performer invite the audience to attend to what is absent, and in so doing they become producers rather than consumers. Thus, however hard the wedge of commodification is driven between producer and consumer in theatre, performance may always have the potential to turn audiences into collective co-producers. It follows that performance-beyond-commodity is always empowering, so that even as it consumes the audience it provides grounds for enhanced authority. Audiences of performance gain power (as a basis for authority) through *not* being consumers. (p. 184)

Kershaw takes up the larger issue of the radical in performance in his book of the same name *The Radical in Performance: Between Brecht and Baudrillard* (1999).

Radicalizing spectatorship is his agenda in the two papers discussed above, and seems an idea worthy of consideration in AIP curriculum theory. While I would not encourage AIP students to behave in an unruly fashion during a theatre performance, neither would I attempt to censor their honest, informed reactions to what they are witnessing. I have mentioned more than once to my students that if they don't like what they are seeing (at the level of an performance being offensive, not just confusing or alarming), they can always leave, their absence being more powerful than their presence through this performative act. The curricular theory questions that appear here are: What does a radical spectator look like? How does this kind of spectator encounter and engage with performance? How does this spectator resist the commodification and consumerism of performance? Kershaw provides a beginning answer as he suggests that "empowerment arises and authority may ensue when face-to-face encounters – whether in theatre or any other cultural realm – secure the conditions needed to create performance-beyond-commodity" (1994, p. 184). This seems to me to suggest that, 1) empowered audiences

must connect more deeply with performers and performances, as AIP curriculum proposes, and that, 2) “radical resistance” (p. 184) in spectatorship is a worthwhile socio-political goal of AIP curriculum (see Chapter Seven).

Reviewing these selected writings on spectatorship in performance theory has added to AIP curriculum theory development in considering: the disruptive power of audience; the “you” power; the pleasure power; and the powers of interrogation, memory, history, dream and desire. All of these qualities of AIP inform how a spectator can both lose and locate her/himself in performance in a meaningful, and meaning-making, way.

### **Conclusion**

This literature review has traced a path through performance theory that has allowed me to lose my sense of audience in the study of Herbert Blau’s masterful work *The Audience* (1990), to locate it once more in grappling more deeply with Blau (through research poetry) and then to move into other key theories of spectatorship in this field. Where certain writers interrogate my previous understandings of AIP, others reinforce my sense that it is possible to develop spectatorship skills through education. Performance studies field founder Richard Schechner and phenomenologist Bert O. States take up anthropological, socio-political and phenomenological understandings of AIP. Susan Bennett and Marvin Carlson trace connections between various literature and social science-based critical theories and audience/performance. Schechner and Carlson also provide a model of exemplary spectatorship in their writing and AIP practice. Philip Auslander and Daphna Ben Chaim move to the critical and aesthetic edges of contemporary performance theory and lay out new landscapes of possibilities to further

explore in AIP curriculum theorization. These landscapes incorporate views of spectatorship in film, television, music and law (Auslander) and a deeper understanding of the nature of aesthetic distance in performance (Ben Chaim). Additional writers contribute understandings of AIP as powerfully involved in performance processes such as:

1. spectating in a dramaturgical way (Marco DeMarinis);
2. engaging in psychoanalytical pleasure and desire (Anne Ubersfeld);
3. being aware of the subjective and communal activities of spectatorship (Alice Rayner);
4. becoming aware of inter-mediated patterns of AIP (i.e., in film, television etc.) (Elizabeth Klaver);
5. and examining the value of spectatorship becoming potentially radical in relation to commodified performance (Baz Kershaw).

In a diagram that aims to summarize these findings, below, I have listed the qualities of AIP that have emerged in this review, moving from “Lost” qualities to “Located” ones. The former qualities are those which AIP curriculum recognizes and then aims to discard. The latter are qualities that AIP curriculum aims to achieve in practice. I leave this review with a strong sense of empowerment in the potential efficacy of this AIP curriculum theory, in practice, to assist students not only in making sense and meaning of performance, but also making sense and meaning of the increasingly performative 21<sup>st</sup> century world that surrounds them. Spectatorship, as surveyed and defined in this literature review, is both an act of great complexity and one of great worth.

Harkening back to Blau, I am left knowing that an audience “shaped like a question mark” is a potent cultural and social force indeed.

Figure 3: Qualities of Audience-in-Performance from Performance Theory

## **AUDIENCE IN PERFORMANCE is/as...**

### **LOST**

- **Alienated** (Blau, Kershaw)
- **Commodified/Dispersed** (Auslander, Blau, Kershaw)
- **Mediatized** (Auslander)

### **LOCATED**

- **Resistant/Compliant** (Kershaw, Schechner)
- **Accidental/Integral** (Schechner)
- **Selectively inattentive** (Schechner)
- **Self-expressive/Collaborative/Representational** (States)
- **Memory-making/Remembering** (Blau, Carlson, Schechner)
- **Haunted/Ghosting** (Carlson, States)
- **Aesthetic/Volitional** (Ben Chaim)
- **Participatory/Interpretive** (Bennett, Schechner, Klaver)
- **Interrogative** (Blau, DeMarinis)
- **Intentional** (Blau, States)
- **Receptive/responsive/recognitive/surprised** (Bennett, Carlson, DeMarinis)
- **Interpretive** (Bennett, Carlson, DeMarinis)
- **Engaged in Pleasure/Desire** (Ubersfeld)
- **Collective process** (Bennett, Blau, Kershaw, Rayner)

**Pre-performance III**

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**Found Poetry as Literature Review:**

**Research Poems**

**on Audience and Performance**

### **Found Poetry as Literature Review**

The found poems on audience and performance presented in this chapter represent emerging understandings of AIP coming from readings in contemporary Continental aesthetic philosophy and theatre/performance theory. The suite serves to reflect upon, play against and perform with the central topic of this inquiry, that of developing a curriculum theory for audience education in the performing arts. Research poetry used in this context offers an alternative method for understanding and representing key theories and texts in inquiry. This aesthetic and intellectual choice is drawn from my belief that the transitory, ephemeral and affective nature of performance requires a similar form of writing. This kind of language is clearly to be found in poetry, with its unique ability to capture and present aspects of the past (in memory), present (in experience) and future (in hope/fear). This approach also provides a welcome and effective concord of arts-based topic and method that has proved ideal for a literature review project interested in surveying important ideas about live audiences, specifically theatre audiences, from contemporary aesthetic philosophers, theatre artists and performance theorists.

All of the words in these poems are to be found where cited in the original source texts, aside for the very occasional word in parentheses, added for grammatical sense. I have played with line breaks, patterns on the page, parentheses and the occasional use of repetition for emphases. This present work is an attempt to capture a number of different, and valuable, voices and theoretical perspectives through the crystallizing and creative process of found poetry. My hope is that some or all of these poems, written specifically as part of an inquiry literature review, may also have future pedagogical value in

becoming part of the curriculum I envision for audience in performance studies in education.

*Prologue***poetry and theatre**

poetry  
     like revolution  
 is anarchic  
     imaginative  
     compassionate

in opposition  
                     to social order

theatre  
 shapes itself  
 for its own purpose  
 (like revolution)  
                     its anarchic purpose

to re-  
     form  
         (through play)  
                     to re-  
                             create

(Gordon McDougall, in Goodman & deGay, 2000, p. 128)

**prelude to performance**

theatre  
 (in perpetual crisis  
   but  
 indestructible)  
   is materialist

no thought  
   without  
   the body

a strange mirror  
 that  
 brings things  
 close up  
   exaggerates  
           syncopates

(the impossible  
 reigns)

theatre  
 is an acrobat  
   an oxymoron

a hero (who)  
 wipes down  
 his glorious nudity  
 with a rag

a princess (who)  
 is a goosegirl  
 her donkey-  
 skin dress  
 the colour  
 of the moon

a locus  
 for disorder  
   insoluble contradictions

theatre  
 proclaims  
 the unacceptable  
 the monstrous

it is a hole  
the spectators  
must plug  
(as best they can)

otherwise  
their little craft  
will leak

(Anne Ubersfeld, *Reading Theatre*, 1999, pp. 189-191)

*Act I – Contemporary Aesthetic Philosophers*

**drama**

- the art form from earliest days
  - lays the highest claims to spirituality
    - (representation of ideas/  
• innermost suppositions)
  - depends equally
- on an audience

(Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, in Cazeaux, 2000, p. 250)

**art**

art is magic  
delivered from the lie  
of being truth

(Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, in Cazeaux, 2000, p. 250)

**grain**

grain is the body  
the voice the hand the limb as  
it performs, performs

(Roland Barthes, *The Grain of the Voice*, in Huxley & Witts, 1996, p. 54, repetition added)

**Foucault haiku**

in this place/in that  
the fluttering attention  
of the spectator

in a ceaseless exchange  
the observer and the observed  
take part/take part/take

(Michel Foucault, *Las Meninas*, in Cazeaux, 2000, pp. 402, 409, repetition added)

**the spectator**

- i.     may look  
       but  
       may never  
       be looked at  
  
       (a magical ceremony  
       of annihilation)
- ii.    should  
       simply be  
       a pair of eyes  
  
       (fully aware  
       that he is helpless)
- iii.   a projection  
       of impotence  
  
       (if I shout  
       I would be stopping  
       the actor  
       but  
       not Hamlet)
- iv.    someone  
       who is dreaming  
       and knows  
  
       (there is nothing  
       he can do)

(Jean-Paul Sartre, *Sartre on Theater*, in Contat & Rybalka, 1976, pp. 9-10)

**in the theater**

all that is there:

man's desire  
to be outside himself

the better  
to see himself

(not as others see him  
but  
as he is)

(Jean-Paul Sartre, *Sartre on Theater*, in Contat & Rybalka, 1976, p.12)

**what comes out**

the audience  
writes the play

quite as much  
as the author does

(Jean-Paul Sartre, *Sartre on Theater*, in Contat & Rybalka, 1976, p.68)

**the abyss**

separates the players  
from the audience

(as it does the dead  
from the living)

\*silence\*

heightens the sublimity  
the intoxication

(indelible traces...  
of ritual origin)

(Walter Benjamin, in Huxley & Witts, 1996, p. 78)

**theatre and religion**

in each case  
the same story:

the ideal community;

the act that separates  
(error or sin);

the ultimate restoration  
(the living, the dead, the unborn);

the tragic hero (who)  
passes over...

(Roger Scruton, *Modern Philosophy*, 1994/2004, p. 454)

**the audience dances**

the audience dances  
(by proxy) through the chorus  
of the play, the play.

(Roger Scruton, *Modern Philosophy*, 1994/2004, p. 454, repetition added)

*Act II – Theatre Artists and Performance Theorists*

**curriculum actions**

to break down  
the distance between  
actor & audience

to give the spectator  
something more  
than passive

(Bert O. States, *Great Reckonings*, 1985, p. 170)

**i/you**

the stage uses  
"you"  
in its relation  
to the audience

(spoken to)

in the act  
of speech

(Bert O. States, *Great Reckonings*, 1985, p. 170)

**the actor's act**

discarding half measures

revealing, opening, emerging

(an invitation  
to  
the spectator)

an act  
of deeply rooted  
genuine love

paradoxical and borderline

the actor's  
deepest calling

(Jerzy Grotowski, in Huxley & Witts, 1996, p. 218)

**THE CONDITION OF DEATH...**  
**FOR THE CONDITION OF THE ARTIST AND ART**

...this specific relationship  
 terrifying  
 but at the same time  
 compelling

*unremarkable*

*on the other side*  
*opposite*

they astound us  
 as though we  
*were seeing them*  
*for the first time*

set on display  
 in an ambiguous ceremony:

irrevocably different  
 and infinitely foreign

their individuality  
 distinction

their CHARACTER

glaring

almost circus-like

(Tadeusz Kantor, in Huxley & Witts, 1996, pp.256-257)

**this theatre is**

- resistant to official views
- peopled by resistance
- at the frontiers of everyday life
- the urban experience
- the televisual, filmic
- the fine art cabaret
- the street, the factory, the school, the prison, the farm
- the most solid of buildings

(Alan Read, in Goodman & deGay, 2000, pp. 191-2)

**the line**

the line  
between art and life  
should be kept as fluid

(perhaps indistinct)

as possible

(Allan Kaprow, in Huxley & Witts, 1996, p. 260)

**do you think about the audience?**

the audience  
is *there*

(the air you breathe)

the other part  
of the exploration

no theatre  
                without  
audience

no life  
                without  
breath

a pain in your chest  
(aware/unaware)  
like my breathing

the flow  
the flow  
the flow  
                (the whole)

(Elizabeth LeCompte, in Huxley & Witts, 1996, p. 275, repetition added)

**i believe**

i believe  
 in the intelligence  
 of the audience

that the audience  
 wants to create

give the audience food

(not already masticated  
                   organized  
                   painted)

the opportunity  
 to invent

(like a word)

to discover  
 the actor  
 is on the wing

(Robert Lepage, in Huxley & Witts, 1996, p. 283)

**definition**

four great spheres  
 of performance:

entertainment  
                   healing  
                           education  
                                   ritual

in play  
 with each other

(a very serious matter)

(Richard Schechner, in Huxley & Witts, 1996, p. 355)

**the subtext**

a web  
woven from  
"magic ifs"

threads  
in  
a cable

- given circumstances
- figments of imagination
- inner movements
- objects of attention
- smaller and greater truths

(a belief)

*it is subtext  
that makes us say  
the words we do*

(Konstantin Stanislavski, in Huxley & Witts, 1996, p. 389)

**why are we concerned with art?**

to cross our frontiers  
 exceed our limitations  
 fill our emptiness  
 fulfill ourselves

not a condition  
 (a process)

what is dark  
 slowly becomes  
 transparent  
 (the theatre)

to peel off  
 the life mask  
 (in us)

full-fleshed perceptivity

place of provocation

imaged in breath  
 (body)  
 inner impulses

defiance of taboo  
 (transgression)

provides the shock  
 to give ourselves  
 (nakedly)

to something  
 impossible  
 to define

(Jerzy Grotowski, in Goodman & deGay, 2000, p. 25)

**mandate**

the acceptance  
of poverty  
in theatre

stripped of  
not essentials

reveals  
the backbone  
of the medium

but  
also  
the deep riches  
in the very nature  
of the form

(Jerzy Grotowski, in Goodman & deGay, 2000, p. 25)

**audience actions**

to enter into  
dialogical relations  
to accept  
parameters  
to act  
in unison  
to become

(Colin Counsell, in Goodman & deGay, 2000, p. 207)

**the audience**

is always  
the other person

throbbing with excitement  
or menacing  
or grave  
immobile  
attentive

the constant lesson  
taught and retaught

(respect and learning)

as vital  
as speech  
or love

(Peter Brook, in Goodman & deGay, 2000, p. 92)

*Epilogue*

**above all**

drama  
is the art  
of the actor

(Vsevolod Meyerhold, in Huxley & Witts, 1996, p. 306)

**good theatre**

stands  
face to face  
with its audience

(Alan Read, in Goodman & deGay, 2000, p. 191)

**Section Two: Performance**

**Chapters Five – Seven**

## Section Two: Performance

The three chapters found in this section make up the curriculum theory component of the study by taking three different and distinct stances on audience, performance and education.

Chapter Five begins the move from theory to practice by looking at how an understanding of *audience as dramatic chorus* might be applied to the whole curriculum. This chapter is the end result of quite a long line of inquiry that began with my first graduate course in education at the University of Victoria with Visiting Professor William Pinar in the summer of 1999. Encouraged by Professor Pinar to write a term paper that reflected on curriculum studies through the lenses of my own professional and personal interests, I wrote a paper that considered how discussions of ‘voice’ in curriculum studies were limited, in my view. I proposed that curriculum scholars could benefit from an understanding of dramatic voice forms such as soliloquy and chorus as extensions of the terms ‘monologue’ and ‘dialogue’ that I had found being used somewhat carelessly in curriculum texts. Some ideas in this paper found their way into my Master’s thesis as inspiration for my use of found poetry to represent my student participants’ voices as ‘choral soliloquies.’ Later, I rewrote this material yet again into two separate papers, one on soliloquizing as reflective practice and this one that follows, in the context of this study, as a consideration of dramatic chorus model for ideal spectatorship and curriculum (Prendergast, 2003a, 2004b).

Chapter Six offers a move from the whole curriculum reconsidered as dramatic chorus to *AIP curriculum as a specific and important aspect of general arts education*. The question series developed in Chapter Two is revisited and reformulated at the

conclusion of this chapter so as to make the series useful for teachers interested in implementing the study of spectatorship into their teaching practice.

Chapter Seven makes a final move from practice back to theory as I trace the six key qualities of AIP curriculum. In suggesting that these six qualities are underpinning AIP curriculum, I am arguing for the educational significance of this study.

The writing history of this chapter may be of interest to readers interested in arts-based approaches to research practice. The first draft was written in free verse triplets, a constraint I placed on the text to push myself into a succinctness necessary at this late stage in the study. I also wished to experiment with how this form would affect my writing, especially with how it might keep me engaged with image and metaphor (see Conway, Crosbie & Trinidad, 2003). The end results were mixed, with early readers recommending that I revise the chapter back into standard prose while keeping much of the language of the first draft. Subsequent revisions have moved the chapter into a more prosaic essay form, yet there remain passages from the original draft that, for me, are some of the most satisfying I have written in this project.

**Performance I**

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**The 'Ideal Spectator':**

**Dramatic Chorus, Collective Creation**

**and Curriculum**

### The “Ideal Spectator”

*It is always ourselves we see on the stage.... we struggle to make human meaning and sense from what we see before us. (O'Neill, 1995, p. 76)*

*Theatre is the enactment of possible worlds. It is performed in a middle space owned by neither author nor reader....It is a space for negotiation. It is the middle place of the curriculum. (Grumet, 1988, p.149)*

*The chorus are free to support, ignore, question or reject the actions of the central characters, reorienting our response to the rhetoric as they do. They compel us to experience the drama as an ever-changing dynamic relationship, and not as the unfolding of the inevitable. (Rehm, 1992, p. 61)*

Good educators struggle daily to construct learning communities where every member is given a voice, no one is silenced, everyone is given the right to respond to the curriculum as individuals, yet no one student response is privileged over another. This chapter sets out to understand how the functions of dramatic chorus in theatre, specifically within the theatre of Ancient Greece, offer educators the possibility of situating themselves and their students as dramatic choruses in relation to and in dialogue with curriculum; in other words in seeing *chorus as curriculum*. As Rehm (1992) asserts, “Perhaps the most important function of the chorus is to open up the drama to a variety of non-linear influences that a strict narrative can deny or inhibit” (p. 56). If a curriculum can be likened to a “strict narrative”, then re-visioning students' relationship to curriculum as active chorus within the narrative, rather than passive audience to it, offers a very different educational model to consider. A dramatic chorus is in open negotiation and interpretation with the events of the play within which it appears and belongs; it is not removed from or alienated by the action of the play, although these dramatic events still have power over the chorus, as curriculum does over students. It is this kind of metaphorical thinking about chorus and curriculum that led me to consider exploring

connections to dramatic chorus in the field of theatre education and in my own drama teaching, specifically in my theatre-based facilitation of collective creation process.

Thus, this chapter is organized as a reflective practitioner study of an innovative professional theatre audience education teaching project. The reader will be given an overview of the functions and practices of traditional choruses of Ancient Greek theatre followed by a consideration of these functions and practices applied to the curriculum in general, and the drama curriculum in particular. The study may be understood as metaphorical in nature, in that I am applying the metaphor of dramatic chorus to understandings of curriculum and theatre education (see also Chapter One). My findings are that dramatic chorus provides a useful and potentially powerful metaphor for how students may be seen as situated, and may *see themselves better as situated* in a dynamic, critical and dialogical relationship to curriculum.

The theories and practices of Augusto Boal (1979), Joe Norris (1996), Tom Barone (1990), Jonathan Neelands (1984), and Cecily O'Neill (1995) and their notions of theatre of the oppressed (Boal), mutualist curriculum (Norris), conspiracy (Barone), conspectus (Neelands) and process drama (O'Neill), all inform my own teaching of an extra-curricular senior secondary level audience education program in professional theatre. Students in the Intensive class offered through this program, called Belfry 101, are given the opportunity to respond through collective creation to four different professional theatre productions at Victoria's Belfry Theatre (2001 to present; see Web References). The collectively-created theatre piece the Intensive ensemble devises is inspired by these audience experiences and is subsequently performed at the theatre itself. This program clearly places students in the emancipatory role of dramatic chorus in their

collective and creative response to the theatre productions (curriculum) they see and thus serves as an excellent example of chorus as curriculum. It is also an example of ekphrastic inquiry, discussed in Chapter One (pp. 64ff.) as students listen to the call of a series of text-based theatre experiences and reply with an improvisationally-based response.

### *Functions and Practices of Greek Chorus*

Ancient Greek choruses, from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, used movement and song, lyric and spectacle, stillness and silence, and occasionally monologues and dialogues with other characters in order to fulfil their function in the play. Technically, Greek choruses were highly-disciplined, competitive, skilled in voice and movement and capable of shifting in repertory through many different plays in a drama festival as directed, usually by the playwrights. Their collective lyrical voice provided a contrast with the rhetorical voices in monologue and dialogue of the individual actors. As Rehm says: "By providing a different mode from the rhetoric of the actors, the chorus engages the play with an ongoing dialogue with itself" (p. 52).

The function of the chorus in Ancient Greek theatre was to:

- 1) provide spectacle;
- 2) indicate changing moods and shifting fortunes;
- 3) focus attention by supporting/denouncing others;
- 4) serve as the "ideal spectator";
- 5) establish/embody the ethical system/moral universe of the characters/play;
- 6) participate directly in the action;

7) provide information;

8) make discoveries and decisions (Cameron & Gillespie, 1996, p. 227-228).

Over the next two thousand years, Western theatre history would transform the chorus into an individualized character who was seen to embody the collective voice (as in Shakespeare's Chorus characters in *Henry V*, *Henry VIII*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Pericles* or the servant characters in commedia dell'arte and Moliere) that evolved in the current century into the Radio City Rockettes-style musical theatre chorus of background singers and dancers who help to support and advance the central plot. Beckerman (1990) reminds us of the original role of the chorus when he says the function of chorus is:

...in effect giving a performance for the audience. Their expression is usually iconic in that they crystallize a set of values or concretize an observation in an autonomous, detached manner. Their closeness to the audience is further heightened by contrast with the characters. . . . As a result, the chorus mediates between the events and the audience. . . . *We are addressed by the chorus and address ourselves simultaneously.* (p.123-124, emphasis added)

Oscar Brockett (1968/1991) outlines six key functions of the Greek chorus, reiterating a number of functions described by Cameron and Gillespie above. Each of Brockett's descriptions will be followed by a comment on its connection to curriculum.

The chorus serves several functions on Greek drama. First, it is a character in the play; it gives advice, expresses opinions, asks questions, and sometimes takes an active part in the action. (p. 26)

Students are, metaphorically-speaking, characters in the dramatic texts of their curricula. They are empowered through taking on the roles of dramatic chorus members and collective creators and can give advice or opinions, ask questions, and definitely take an active part in constructing curricula-in-action.

Second, it often establishes the ethical or social framework of the events and sets up a standard against which the action may be judged. (p. 26)

The history of Western collective creation in the last century is most often the story of a group of theatre artists drawn together by a shared critical social, political or aesthetic philosophical perspective of some kind. Alan Filewod's (1987) book *Collective Encounters* documents the history of these collective creations in Canadian theatre with productions that dealt with Canadian issues of regionalism, social policies and history. It is a key element of chorus-in-curriculum for the group to share a recognized attitude about all the contexts within which they are embedded: What in the curriculum seems most important to them? Or, conversely, what may be missing in the curriculum that needs to be explored? Here, Augusto Boal's (1979) techniques of theatre of the oppressed, discussed below, can prove most useful in guiding a class in critically-aware and pro-active dramatic engagements.

Third, it frequently serves as an ideal spectator, reacting to the events and characters as the dramatist might hope the audience would. (p. 26)

Cameron and Gillespie also use this term "ideal spectator" in their description of chorus. Students should be the ideal spectators of their education. In this scenario, a caring and committed and connected educational system would enthusiastically invite and support student reactions to the education they are being given; a genuine dialogue about what is to be taught and how.

Fourth, the chorus helps to set the overall mood of the play and of individual scenes and to heighten dramatic effects. (p. 26)

Students' responses to curricula are greatly affected by conditions surrounding those events. Here, the role of the teacher comes into focus. As *choregus*, or chorus leader, a teacher must be conscious of his or her role in creating and sustaining various moods within a curriculum, and for heightening the possible dramatic effects the curriculum may have upon students. Teacher facilitation of dramatic collective creation is an example of *teacher-as-choregus* that will be discussed below.

Fifth, it adds movement, spectacle, song and dance, and thus contributes much to theatrical effectiveness. (p. 26)

If boredom is one of the main problems that students and educators must contend with in schools, as cited by Powell Pruitt (2003) and Taylor Gatto (2003), then the most interesting questions in response here seem to be: How might we experience curricula that is suffused with "movement, spectacle, song and dance"? How might we create theatrically effective curricula?

Sixth, it serves an important rhythmical function, creating pauses or retardations during which the audience may reflect upon what has happened and what is to come. (p. 26)

Envisioning dramatic choral responses to curriculum allows educators and their students to function rhythmically together through collective reflection on what has happened to them in the lived experience of learning. What happens to both students and teachers in the curriculum event can involve meaningful pauses in the exploration of alternate existences; of what is, has been, or may be to come.

*From Boal to O'Neill: Theorizing Chorus as Curriculum*

Dramatic chorus is the attempt that individual voices make to speak together in order to represent the thoughts and concerns of a community: "We need not dissolve identity in order to acknowledge that identity is a choral and not a solo performance" (Grumet, 1990, p. 281).

Now the oppressed people are ...making the theatre their own. The walls must be torn down. First, the spectator starts acting again. (Boal, 1979, p. 119)

In Augusto Boal's theory of theatre of the oppressed, the spectator and the actor, separated for centuries by increasingly elitist forms of theatre, are reunited as in the ancient rituals and become "spect-actors" (1995, p. 13). United in this dual function of actor and spectator, the form and function of drama becomes choral in nature; as a community we become capable of observing ourselves and analyzing ourselves in action. Forum theatre, the primary mode of theatre of the oppressed, plays out an important social or political issue to the community involved. Audience members are then invited onstage to take over roles that can then attempt to change the negative outcomes of a situation, and can work through an issue in a dramatically-engaged manner. Applied to curriculum, the aural vision is of voices in classrooms, of teachers and students, blending together in a chorus created around a sense of common emancipatory social/political/ pedagogical vision and purpose.

Mikhail Bakhtin's (1986) term *heteroglossia*, "defined as the inclusion of all conflicting voices" (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery & Taubman, 1995, p. 298) allows us to see chorus as not the erasure of identity for the good of the group, but rather as each unique voice adding to the harmonious/cacophonous totality of being. This is not the seeking of

consensus, not the democratic rule of the majority; this is what can otherwise be seen as “conspectus” (Neelands, 1984, p. 40) and “conspiracy” (Barone, 1990, p. 313).

In an autobiographical essay entitled “Implementing a mutualist curriculum in a teacher education program: A beginning teacher educator’s story”, Joe Norris (1996) describes how the ideas of theorists from many fields have influenced his teaching practices. Norris’ understanding of conspectus and conspiracy lead directly to his development of a “mutualist curriculum [that] attempts to de-center power by making it explicit and negotiable” (p. 3) in the classroom. His essay embodies a clear understanding of voice as chorus in its political, collectivist and “emancipatory” (p. 3) efforts to create a curriculum where “students need to be willing to bring forth their ideas and examine them in the light of others. However they need not agree. Diversity is the norm.” “Mutualism need not mean all parties have similar beliefs, rather, it is an occasion where all parties accept and value the different opinions of others” (both, p. 15). This is *conspectus*, the term used by British drama theorist and educator Jonothan Neelands (1984):

Conspectus is a more accurate term (than consensus) in that it conveys the sense of a synopsis of opinions, in other words there may be a wide range of opinions (and differences) reflected in the drama... In drama, then, we are saying to children that although we are working together as a group, individual reactions and opinions are still important...The teacher’s role then is to look for possibilities of grouping answers, to look for patterns that establish a conspectus whilst not ignoring or leaving out ‘rogue’ answers that don’t seem to fit at first. (p. 40)

This collective activity of negotiation that includes a “polyphony of voices” (p. 16) is the foundation of mutualist curriculum. Norris arrives at this curriculum theory through the use of Thomas Barone’s (1990) notion of *conspiracy* to engage “writer (reader) and author (text)” (Norris, 1996, p. 3) in a mutualist function. Norris continues:

Barone defines conspiracy (*conspire*) as a breathing together of writer (reader) and author (text) as they strive to find a concrete or practical utopia for pedagogical practice. It is an activity which promotes change, as a new and better world is first of all imagined and later that image of the never reachable new world guides practice in a dialectical relationship. (p. 3)

According to Barone (1990), “conspiracy can be a profoundly ethical and moral undertaking” and is also “a conversation about the relationship between present and future worlds” (both, p. 313).

Norris applies these choral voice-based concepts of conspectus and conspiracy to his pedagogical practice as a teacher educator at the University of Alberta. Norris understands and defines a theory and pedagogy where there can be found 1) the absolute necessity of an atmosphere of trust, 2) the autobiographical uses of personal storytelling/journal-keeping, 3) the primary importance of the creation and maintenance of a community in which there is the full participation and the full voice of each and every member. This is a negotiated curriculum “structured around student choice” (Norris, p. 27). Of course, delivery of this mutualist curriculum is greatly challenged by the institutional conditions of competition and evaluation. Remarkably, Norris’ drama majors over a period of many years received a mutually agreed-upon grade for the whole class. In agreeing on a uniform grade, his classes freed themselves of institutional constraints and competitiveness that may have hindered or prevented authentic artistic

process. This is a powerful example of collective/choral/emancipatory chorus in action as curriculum that can also be seen in the drama education theory of process drama.

Process drama is a contemporary drama-in-education theory and practice of improvised, participatory, lived-through group role dramas that are generally teacher-facilitated, as presented in O'Neill's *Drama Worlds: A Framework for Process Drama* (1995). In defining process drama theory, Cecily O'Neill draws on the work of curriculum theorist Peter McLaren to develop an understanding of this mutually determined, constantly negotiated, chorus-like student-teacher relationship:

In the liminal state, people “play” with familiar elements and disarrange and defamiliarize them .... McLaren regards every teacher, and in particular the teacher of drama, as a potential “liminal servant” whose duty is to engage in a kind of pedagogical surrealism that disturbs commonplace perceptions. This defamiliarization, which he sees as a crucial element in teaching and learning, relates closely to Brecht’s “alienation effect” in theatre....In this dramatic world, participants are free to alter their status, choose to adopt different roles and responsibilities, play with elements of reality, and explore alternate existences. (O'Neill, p. 66)

In other words, O'Neill and McLaren are proposing that teachers and students co-exist in collectively created “alternate existences”; worlds where the understanding of dramatic chorus becomes significant. The defamiliarization effect of teacher as liminal servant within process drama demands the committed instigation and careful maintenance of a shared aesthetic vision of alternative realities, places, times, roles and so on. These are dramatic co-created worlds to be lived in by all involved, surrounded by the present, informed by the past and the future.

*Theory Into Practice: Chorus as Curriculum and Collective Creation*

Process drama offers one model of chorus-in-curriculum as teacher and students co-construct and role-play alternate imaginary lives – often in response to a catalyst such as a story or poem, image or piece of music, issue or idea – that are improvised and performed simultaneously in a classroom/studio setting. A second model moves closer to theatre practice: collective creation. Collective creation is “a theatrical process whereby a group of persons working together develop a production from initial concept to finished performance” (Hartnoll, 1983). Many of the same methods and strategies used in process drama teaching are found in the generative rehearsal process of ensemble collective creation. The main distinction is that this type of chorus as curriculum prepares to share its responsive, reflective, investigative, cooperative work with a wider audience than itself; that is, in performance.

A model of collective creation in response to curriculum may be found in my facilitation of an audience education program in professional theatre at Victoria's Belfry Theatre. Belfry 101 is an extra-curricular program, voluntary and non-graded, for senior secondary students who want to enrich their experience and understanding of theatre. For the price of a student subscription, Belfry 101 students participate in three hour pre-show drama workshops that introduce them to the themes and forms they will find in five Belfry productions per season. These students also have the opportunity to share their exploratory work and to have a post-show conversation with the professional actors in each production. Students from over twelve Victoria-area schools have taken Belfry 101 workshops over the past seven seasons (1999 to present). The program has proved to be an outstanding success, has garnered national and international recognition, and has been

funded by the Hudson's Bay Charitable Foundation and the Royal Bank Charitable Foundation (see Prendergast, 2001, 2002a, 2002b).

In Belfry 101's second season (2000-2001), the Belfry decided to offer an advanced-level class called Belfry 101 Intensive. This class gives a select group of students – those who are considering post-secondary theatre training and careers in theatre – the chance to be part of a collective creation ensemble. In my discussions with the artistic director of the theatre about what kind of performance this class could do, I argued that if the focus of Belfry 101 was always on the plays the students were seeing, then the Intensive class should also share this focus in their playbuilding. I suggested that after each Belfry production and Belfry 101 pre-show workshop, the Intensive class would meet for a post-show session that would feature an in-depth production analysis followed by brainstorming around what it was in the play that most interested the group. The collective creation process would therefore reflect upon the meaning-making the students had constructed out of the experience of a play in performance.

In this way, these students were being given the opportunity to play the chorus in response to the dramas they had encountered. Rather than remaining solely as members of the audience (albeit active and dramatically prepared audience members), this group were being asked, as Beckerman (1990) describes the Greek chorus, to “mediate between the events and the audience” (p. 124). Rehm (1992) tells us that Greek playwrights such as Sophocles and Euripides used a convention where “the chorus question[s] the nature of the song they are singing” (p. 55). He tells us:

The most famous example of a chorus calling its own activities into question occurs in...*Oedipus Tyrannus*. At this point in the play, Apollo's oracles seem unfulfilled, and the shifting eddies of fortune appear so random

that they threaten any sense of human purpose. If such is the state of the cosmos, the chorus wonder, 'Why is it necessary for us to dance?' Their question is self-referential but also tied to the action of the play. Why *should* choruses dance? If events occur only at random, what allegiances are there...? By virtue of the chorus's own self-examination, Sophocles raises a fundamental question about the purpose of theatre. How the audience responds to that question is part and parcel of the way *Oedipus Tyrannus* works in performance. (p. 55-56)

The first Belfry 101 Intensive class followed this reflective model throughout the 2000-2001 season. Each production offered the twelve students in the ensemble (from a number of different schools) the chance to deal with stories of "the shifting eddies of fortune"; about the challenges of adult parent/child relationships, the dangers of one night stands, the desire for freedom and adventure, and the painful process of loss. After each of three mainstage and one studio productions, the class met with me for four hours on Saturday mornings to discuss and develop ideas around what mattered to them most about the play they had seen the previous Thursday night. The sessions generally involved a number of improvised possible storylines that came out of their brainstorming. These improvisations were documented in notes and charts/diagrams by either myself or my University of Victoria theatre student assistant in preparation for performance rehearsals through March Break.

Daily rehearsals during March Break allowed us to polish and shape the improvisations into scenes for our showcase performance, *B101 LIVE*, in the Belfry Studio on Monday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Belfry staff treated the ensemble as if they were any other group rehearsing in the theatre, and we enjoyed full access to costume and props storage, along with technical and front of house support for our show. Each of the four scenes we developed in rehearsal was an approximately ten minute mini-play unto itself that connected back to the play that inspired it, and each reflected how the ensemble

reacted and responded to their original theatre-going experience. While audience understanding and enjoyment of each scene would certainly have been enhanced if the original productions were known, we also made sure that the stories stood on their own, and that they had their own independent dramatic value. The performance played to an enthusiastic full house, including the theatre's artistic director who warmly introduced the project. Following the show, students conducted a talkback session with the audience, an inverted reflection of their own talkbacks as audience members with the professional actors following each Belfry 101 performance. They each spoke with pride in their accomplishment and were, collectively, extremely pleased with their production and their Intensive experience overall.

The Belfry 101 Intensive project has continued successfully from 2002 to 2006 and is ongoing. The unanimously positive student responses to the program are documented as found poems that I call "choral soliloquies" in my thesis study "*Imaginative complicity*": *Audience Education in Professional Theatre* (Prendergast, 2001, pp. 86-101).

### ***Conclusion***

This collective creation/chorus approach to curriculum offers students a collective and creative community within which they can truly belong. It also provides a clear purpose for that community to frame its responses to curriculum events through dramatic processes. These processes involve effective integration of all language arts – speaking and listening, reading and writing – and other art forms such as dance/movement, music, and visual arts. Students working in this theatre form are challenged to discover their

strengths as equal members of the chorus ensemble. Some will be better playwrights, others better actors, dancers or singers, while a smaller group may choose to take on designing, producing and stage managing the productions that are collectively playbuilt and performed.

Presenting to an audience is an integral part of chorus as curriculum. Sharing work with groups outside of the chorus/ensemble/class allows for the possible spread of dramatic conversations around curricula-in-action. Imagine a class studying a period in history, a Shakespeare play, some modern poetry, a philosophical concept, an ethical dilemma or a scientific phenomenon, that can create a collectively-devised dramatic response according to whatever the group decides is most important in their lived experience of that curriculum. Imagine them sharing this work with another class, perhaps in the very form of a Dionysian Greek dramatic festival where many plays, reflective of the social and cultural concerns of their audiences, were performed at one time for many thousands. To imagine these things is to re-imagine education itself and to envision students in dramatic dialogue with and in active response to the curricula they encounter.

This chapter has explored a number of ways through which an understanding of dramatic chorus applied to students' relationship with curriculum, specifically through collective creation, can offer a more engaged, responsive, dialogical and emancipatory educational experience. Grounded in the theories of Augusto Boal and Cecily O'Neill, an understanding of chorus as curriculum is concerned with qualities of mutualism, conspiracy and conspectus and with the creation of collective dramas in response to curriculum. While the focus here has been on drama and theatre education courses

working within this framework, as seen in the post-secondary level drama teacher education program discussed by Joe Norris and in my own senior secondary level audience education program, I have strongly suggested the possible application of this model to general education. It is my contention that a performative model of chorus as curriculum education – consisting of classrooms of teachers and students engaged in dramatic dialogue with curriculum – can offer learning that lasts, in both heart and mind.

**Performance II**

**CHAPTER SIX**

**Theatre Audience Education or**

**How to See a Play:**

**Toward a Curriculum Theory for**

**Spectatorship in the Performing Arts**

### **Theatre Audience Education or How to See a Play**

The emerging AIP curriculum theory developed in this chapter has its roots in Continental aesthetic philosophy, performance and audience studies and theatre/drama education, as seen in the literature review undertaken in Chapters Two, Three and Four. In the performance metaphor that is being applied throughout this text, we now encounter the shift from rehearsal phase – exploration, experimentation and improvisation – to performance phase in the presentation of a curriculum theory of spectatorship.

The rationale for this project's move here from theory into practice is found in empirical research statistics on audiences for the performing arts in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2000; Canada Council for the Arts, 2002, 2001). Recent Statistics Canada (2000) and the Canada Council for the Arts (2002; 2001) reports show a decrease in performing arts attendance in Canada throughout the 1990's (Canada Council, 2002), and a significant increase in home entertainment electronic products purchases (Canada Council, 2002). Fewer than 10% of Canadians participate in five or more performing arts events on an annual basis (Statistics Canada, 2000). Ticket prices at the twenty-nine largest performing arts companies in the country – theatres, orchestras, dance and opera companies – have risen steadily over the past decade (Canada Council, 2001). Most significantly for this particular inquiry, performances for young audiences at the aforementioned twenty-nine companies have undergone a dramatic decline of more than 40%, partly due to provincial government cutbacks to education (Canada Council, 2001). This serious loss of performances for young people, rise of home entertainment theatres, decline in attendance and increase in attendance expenses could have detrimental short and long-term effects upon the growth of future Canadian performing arts audiences.

The rationale also lies in critical understandings of the alienation and commodification of contemporary performing arts audiences by global market forces and by the apparently irresistible pull of technological, mediatized forms of performance such as film, television and the Internet (see Auslander, 1999; Blau, 1990; Kershaw, 2001). Education has generally focussed on audience in mass media curricula over the past two decades, to the detriment of the performing arts. As Philip Auslander concludes in *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, "Currently, mediatized forms [of performance] enjoy far more cultural presence and prestige - and profitability - than live forms" (1999, p. 162). This cultural focus is reflected in curricula, where courses on mass media, video production, film studies and acting for film and television are widely found in schools. How has the field of performing arts education addressed this shift? From my experience, generally they have done so either by accommodating it or by ignoring it. Both of these options are less than ideal, given the underlying threat Auslander sees for the future of live performance: "There is no question that live performance and mediatized forms compete for audiences in the cultural marketplace, and that mediatized forms have gained the advantage in that competition" (p. 6). Thus, this curriculum theory asks how we may bring interdisciplinary understandings of audience, performance and spectatorship into curriculum.

Live performance forms—theatre, dance, performance art, opera, music—offer audiences a crucial counterbalance to the prevailing forces of film, television and other mass media forms of performance. I begin theorizing from the critical stance that these performing arts audiences are generally more challenged—aesthetically, affectively and cognitively—in their reception and interpretation of live performance. Also, due to the

inherent nature of *shared presence* in live performance, the potential exists for authentic, meaningful interactions between performers and spectators in a way that is not possible in most media-based performance forms (Gadamer, 1989; Ricoeur, 1989; Thom, 1993).

Viewing the *audience as performance*, a metaphorical methodological lens derived from performance studies (Schechner, 2003), allows me to study the audience and its behaviours as a performance form in and of itself. Understanding and interpreting spectatorship from that perspective will allow me to begin with a *performative definition of AIP* that will be carried and extended throughout this inquiry. This definition then leads into the creation, implementation and evaluation of a curriculum theory of AIP for the purposes of educating audiences for the fullest potential possible experiences of performance. Also, this curriculum is focussed on enriching the quality of interaction/ dialogue between audience and performance.

A curriculum theory for AIP is a performing arts-based pedagogical response to an urgent educational responsibility; that is, *How do we understand and respond to our ever-greater roles as audience members in a technologically, politically, culturally and economically performative society?* My stance is that the lived-through experience of the live performing arts begins by offering a powerful medium for young people within which they may find relevance and genuine connection with artists and artistic practice that is not generally available through mediatized performance forms. Performance theorist Jon McKenzie writes that, “performance will be to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries what discipline was to the eighteenth and nineteenth: an onto-historical formation of power and knowledge” (2001, p. 176; see also Introduction). A foundational AIP curriculum theory is a direct attempt *to activate young people as*

*audiences in performance* so that they may become more fully aware participants within the multiplicity of performances that make up both artistic practice and everyday life.

### *Theatre Audience Education*

There are a number of possible audience ways of being in attending a play: active or passive; prepared or unprepared; mindful or mindless; interpretive or escapist; “alive” or “dead”. All these terms form the far ends of continuums of states of being for spectatorship. AIP curriculum is interested in moving students, the audiences of the future, from the negative ends of these dualities toward the more positive ones. Therefore, a curriculum for theatre audience education should begin with a clear picture of the kind of spectator it is trying to develop; someone who is active, prepared, mindful, interpretive and alive in his or her interactions with theatre performance.

To begin, it is necessary to look at the current state of AIP with a clear and critical eye in order to identify problem areas that need to be addressed. Although we in North America are living in perhaps the most dramatized and performative culture ever seen (see Blau, 1985; Butler, 1988; Carlson, 2003; Esslin, 1987; Schechner, 1988, 2002; Williams, 1975), much of the performance we experience is what Philip Auslander (1999) calls “mediatized” performance. Mediatized performance is reliant on various technologies for its delivery (i.e., television, film, web, sound, video and light systems, etc.) and is no longer truly “live” performance. Consider a small folk club date versus a huge rock concert, or a fringe theatre production versus the Broadway or film version of *The Lion King*. The two forms of performance – live versus mediatized – are distinctly different from one another, yet one is so clearly culturally and economically dominant

over the other. How do we address this in theatre education, or do we address it at all? Performance theorists Herbert Blau (1990) and Baz Kershaw (2001) remind us that the rich and deep connection between audiences and performance that existed in ritual and early theatre practice has deteriorated over time. First World audiences have become increasingly alienated and disconnected *from* and commodified *by* performance as they have been moved from involved patronage to uninvolved consumerism over the past hundred years or so. Watching film and television, for the many thousands of hours that we do compared to the relatively few hours we devote to live performance, contributes to this passive “numbing-down” of AIP.

Therefore, a critical stance on AIP states that the vast majority of mediatized performance:

1. fragments our audience experience from a collective to an individual one;
2. focuses our attention for us;
3. tells us clearly what we are to think and feel as closed interpretations;
4. cares about our presence and involvement only in terms of numbers and profit margins.

Live performance is otherwise: AIP is challenged to participate in;

1. active, attentive involvement in performance,
2. open, playful interpretation of performance,
3. shared social presence with performance.

Some comments and qualifications for this theoretical stance are required. While I acknowledge that a mediatized performance may contain some or all of the positive qualities of live performance, my stance is that these kind of television shows, films or

documentaries tend to be marginalized – in a similar way to live performance – in our culture. However, it is important that this theory recognizes the horizons of expectations that students bring into an AIP curriculum. Their thousands of hours of mediatized performance experience needs to be valued and built upon, not denigrated and dismissed. This stance also recognizes that, of course, not all live performance experiences are necessarily ‘good’ ones, and that, indeed, many theatre performances fail to entertain or enlighten. AIP curriculum theory aims to assist students in acquiring the critical skills to discriminate in selecting and responding to performance with taste and judgement.

Following a multidisciplinary study of audience, drawing on the fields of theatre and performance studies, drama education, aesthetic philosophy, literary theory, and history, I have developed a working definition of AIP that moves towards articulating a curriculum of theatre audience education:

Audience is involved, both individually and collectively, in three stages of *pre-performance*, *performance* and *post-performance*. The key conditions/functions of *audience-in-performance* (AIP) include: presence and sharing; perception and response; participation and dialogue; creation and imagination; improvisation and performance; recognition and surprise; question and context.

### *How to See a Play*

Mirroring the nature of both performance rehearsal and dramatic process, an AIP curriculum based on this given definition is emergent, processual, experiential, active, creative and driven by open-ended questions. This curricular stance allows students to see performances and their spectatorship of performances as shared experiences shaped by their presence and efforts to open themselves up to be changed by these events.

A performance event is usually bracketed off from daily life and can be divided into three sequential parts: *pre-performance*, *performance* and *post-performance*. These three stages of performance lead to a curriculum structure that is also divided into three parts: *preparatory/predictive* (pre-performance), *attentive/interpretive* (performance) and *reflective/evaluative* (post-performance). AIP curriculum theory posits that audience is always *in action* throughout the experience of performance and is involved in the following stages and ranges of activities:

1.     **Pre-performance** → preparatory/ predictive/ participatory/ ritualistic  
           **Actions:** preparing, predicting, entering and participating
2.     **Performance** → perceptive/ creative/ imaginative/ interpretive  
           **Actions:** seeing/ watching/ gazing/ witnessing, hearing/ listening/ attending, perceiving, interpreting, meaning-making, assisting, feeling
3.     **Post-performance** → evaluative/ critical/ responsive/ historico-politico-social contextual/ interrogative  
           **Actions:** reflecting, evaluating, judging, criticizing, responding, interacting, questioning, discussing

Below are suggested open-ended questions – extended from questions previously offered in Chapter Two – for group discussion, activity and preparation and individual writing that correspond to each of these three parts involved in the process of audience-in-performance. These three stages of performance contain overlapping spaces, and students will respond to performance at their pace and in their own (developing) way. Thus, these questions may be taken up at various points during a performance experience and are not necessarily happening at one stage only. While these questions are written in

first person form, it is important to note that they may also be posed and answered in "we" and "you" forms (the "we" focussing on the audience as collective, the "you" focussing on selected appropriate questions that may be addressed to performers). An example of this shifting in tense and voice is given with the first question, and in the post-performance question series.

***Preparatory/ Predictive (Pre-Performance) Curriculum***

- Who am *I* as a spectator? What do *I* bring to this experience?  
Who are *we* as spectators (i.e. other audience members)? What do *we* bring to this experience?  
Who are *you* as a performer? What do *you* bring to this experience?
- What are my roles and functions within the performance? Within the audience?
- What are my expectations and predictions for the performance, based on prior experiences, knowledge of the company, space, artists, materials involved?
- What are my preparations for the performance? (For example: reading texts, listening to recordings, looking at reviews, interviewing artists, writing/ dramatizing around the themes/styles/genres of the performance)
- How do the program, poster, lobby displays, auditorium, pre-show sound and lighting, and set design (if visible) all help me to prepare for the performance?
- What are the implied or explicit audience social codes of conduct surrounding this performance?

***Attentive/Interpretive (Performance) Curriculum***

- How do I best attend to the performance?
- What actions am I involved in as I attend?

- What elements draw my attention/gaze/ear?
- How open and playful am I in relation to the performance?
- What makes my presence matter? Increases or decreases my sense of presence?
- Where and when was I able to forget myself within the performance?
- How did I connect with the performance? Find myself within it?
- How do I experience time and space/ place throughout the performance?
- What use is made of sound and silence, light and dark, stillness and motion?
- How do I experience the audience?
- What do I bring to the performance?
- What do I take away?
- How am I changed, if at all?

***Reflective/Evaluative (Post-Performance) Curriculum: General Questions***

- What did I recognize in the performance? What surprised me?
- How was the performance relevant to my life and experience?
- How did the performance stimulate my creativity and imagination?
- What puzzled me or confused me?
- What did I ignore or avoid?
- What was illustrated/represented by the performance?
- What were the social, political and cultural contexts of the performance?
- What perspectives were given by the performance?
- How valuable were these perspectives?
- What in the performance generated new thoughts?

- How suitable/significant was the form/content of the performance?
- How true and/or "right" was the performance?
- Where and in what ways does my interpretation agree or disagree with others?
- What can I compare and/or contrast with the performance?
- What new questions has this performance generated in me? How do they shift my being in the world?

***Reflective/Evaluative (Post-Performance) Curriculum: Questions for Performers***

- What was your first response to this play and how has it changed over time?
- How do you experience the audience when you perform?
- What questions do you have for audience members?
- What do you take away from this experience?
- What do you recognize in this play, or in your character? In other words, what seems familiar to you in some way?
- What surprises you?
- What puzzles or confuses you?
- What was most challenging for you in this performance? What did you perhaps ignore or avoid in rehearsal?
- How is this play relevant to you and your life, both professional and personal?
- What are the social, political and cultural values of this play?
- What perspectives on the world are given by this play?
- How truthful or "right" is the play? That is, what does it intend to portray?

- How are you or your character changed by the events of the play? If your character is still living at the end of the play, what do you think the future holds for this person?

Readers will note how rooted in aesthetic philosophic and performance theory-based perspectives a number of these questions are. Reader response theory, Continental views on reader-text relations, reception theory and other contemporary literary-based theories all inform the curricular stance taken here. This is not a curriculum attached to a standardized test. This is an aesthetic experience-based curriculum, rooted in very particular and local contexts (the nature of live performance), that aims to increase the potential for young people to appreciate, participate in and attend live performance throughout their lives; to become true patrons of performance.

#### ***Conclusion: Creating an Audience in/for Performance***

While this question series creates a possible beginning form for AIP curriculum, the content of audience education curriculum will be guided by and through the content of the performance itself. In other words, there should be a clear correspondence between the structure and content of the performance and the structure and content of pre- and post-performance activities. Simply put, studying performance requires experiencing performance. Educators delivering this curriculum are therefore challenged to construct specific and unique activities best-suited to a particular performance; the curricular stance is *learning about performance by learning through performance*. This means that teachers must attend a performance (or read the script) before their students in order to better prepare them for the experience through a variety of mimetic and creative strategies. Improvising, acting, dancing, singing and music-making are all appropriate

tasks to prepare and/or follow-up a theatre, dance, opera, or musical performance (see Prendergast, 2001, 2002a, 2002b).

In addition to teacher and student-centred pre- and post-show activities, AIP curriculum is founded upon a model of audience interaction with performing artists. This interaction can take on many possible forms before and/or after a performance, but is always focussed on enriching both the audience member's experience of performance and the performing artist's experience of audience. Possibilities lie in having students and artists work together in preparation for the performance, holding post-performance conversations/ workshops, or students reflecting and creating around a performance and then sharing this work with artists. This latter strategy offers the joyful and productive role reversal that is an important key to this curriculum, where professional performing artists become audiences for student work-in-process from pre- or post-performance activities. While interactive methods like these have been and are used by some theatre companies, especially in Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA), and most effectively in Theatre-in-Education (TIE), the involvement of mainstream professional theatre artists in educational work with audiences is generally quite low. Most artists consider such involvement as extra-contractual and voluntary. AIP curriculum aims to create a mediated space where audiences and artists can come together in more meaningful and useful ways for both sets of participants.

In addition to the performance theory and aesthetic philosophy theoretical underpinings of this curriculum, drama/theatre education theory and practice offers useful understandings and applications of AIP for curriculum. Theatre-in-education most often involves high levels of audience participation and input into the performance (Way,

1981). Process drama (improvised, role-played, collectively-created drama) effectively erases the boundaries and divisions between audiences and performers as students flow easily back and forth from spectating to acting in the process of drama-making. In the 'performance' of process drama, students are taking on the roles of "spect-actors" as taken up in the Theatre of the Oppressed theories and practices of Augusto Boal (1979). Other writers such as Gavin Bolton (1999), Richard Courtney (1974), Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton (1995), Norah Morgan and Juliana Saxton (1987), Jonothan Neelands and Warwick Dobson (2000), Cecily O'Neill (1995), John O'Toole (1992) and Brian Way (1981) all give curricular theories and models of educational theatre and drama that can be effectively applied to AIP education (see Prendergast, 2001). Fundamentally, if we can re-vision student theatre audiences as process drama participants who are *genuine co-creators of performance* then the ways they encounter and interact with theatre may be significantly changed.

Of course the primary activity of any AIP curriculum is attending performance. My recommendation (ideal as it may be) is that students see performances on a bi-weekly or monthly basis and that an AIP course curriculum be built specifically around each performance experience. While professional productions are important to attend where and when possible, I believe that any and all forms of theatre performance are valuable components of this curriculum. University or high school productions, community theatre, popular or fringe theatre, children's or youth theatre all offer diverse and unique audience/performance interactions. With any production students see, the key curriculum components are activities of preparation, attendance and response, preferably with the cooperative involvement of the theatres and theatre artists involved.

To conclude, AIP curriculum theory holds that educating an audience means opening it up to the world(s) of performance (Ricoeur, 1989) by broadening its horizons of expectations and raising awareness of the multiple roles and functions audience may learn, rehearse and enact *with* performance and performing artists. At a philosophical level, this theory envisions AIP as a truly *interpretive community* (Bennett, 1990; Fish, 1980). Experienced AIP members understand the perceptive challenges of performance and can apply their tacit knowing and reflective powers to the task.

An educated spectator rejects the consumer-driven model of non-participation in performance. This enriched audience community takes on the responsibilities of *theoria*, the witnessing participants in the ritual performances of Ancient Greece, acting as vital and inherently necessary aspects of the shared social experience that is performance (see Gadamer, 1989). Blau (1990) positions AIP as “a community of the question [that is] the repository and watchful guardian of the cultural history and memory expressed through performance” (p. 357). Interrogating performance and consistently holding it to account in terms of what it intends and how it succeeds or fails is at the core of this curricular vision of AIP.

The audience-in-performance curriculum theory presented here is a considerable departure from the status quo where the audience is generally passive, disconnected and voiceless in the mainstream performance process. AIP curriculum theory, in practice, can only work with the fullest authentic cooperation of performance artists and groups. It requires the will and intention of performing artists and audiences to connect and interact with each other beyond the parameters of the performance itself. It requires the valuing of essentially ‘amateur’ student audience members’ responses by professional artists (see

Best, 2000a, 2000b). It requires the co-creation of a facilitated dialogical space to be occupied and filled with meaning by audiences and performing artists. This theory hypothesizes that an audience that is educated to achieve its fullest potential will be of more interest and value to performing artists in terms of engaging in pre- and/ or post-performance interactions. In other words, an educated and enriched audience creates the potential, in its turn, to educate and enrich performance.

**Performance III**

**CHAPTER SEVEN**

**Pedagogy of the Spectator:**

**On Teaching and Learning**

**Through Performance**

## Preface

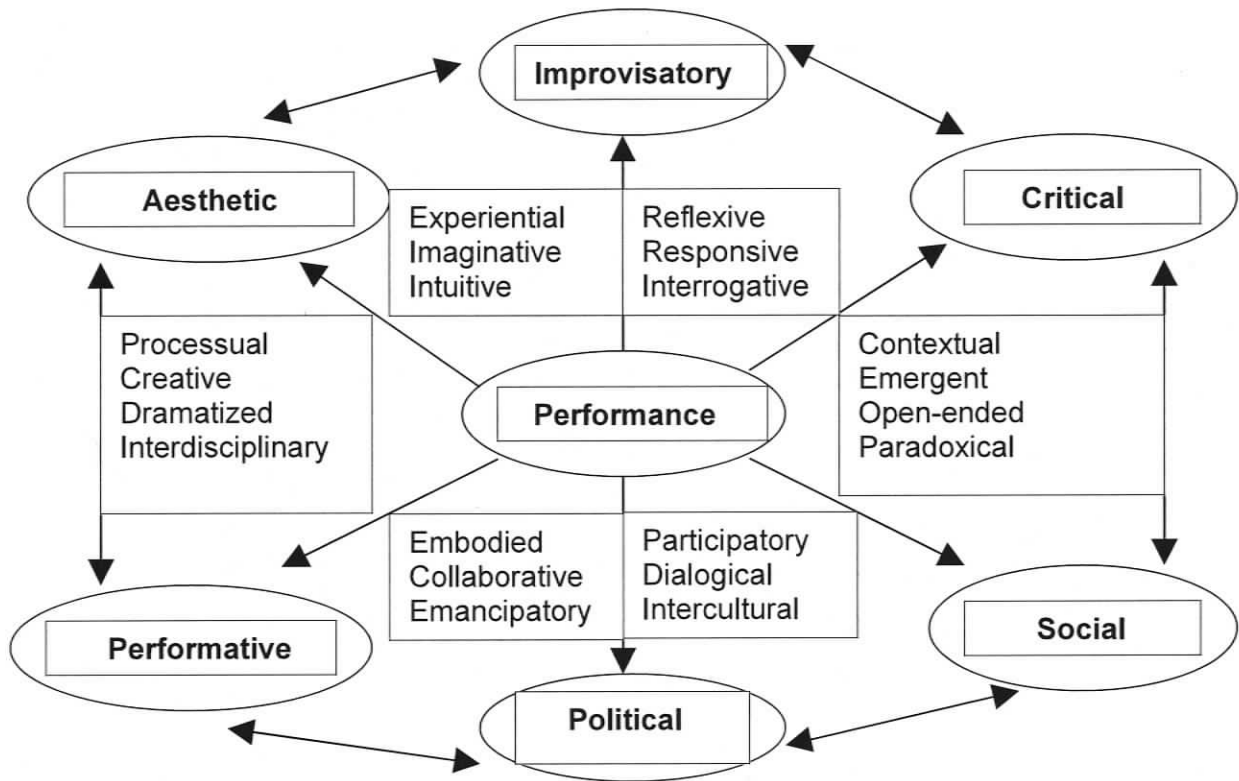
The pedagogy of the spectator, of the audience in performance (AIP), performs within the interstices of drama education, theatre education and applied theatre. Like drama education, this pedagogy is concerned with process over product, and with the building of community through shared dramatic experience. Like theatre education, this pedagogy is interested with introducing young people to an art form that has been practiced worldwide for thousands of years. Like applied theatre, this pedagogy is focussed on creating a space for *students as spectators* to respond to their lived experiences (in this case, of theatre) through dramatic exploration and improvisation and, in some cases, performance.

Following Charles Garoian's (1999; See Figure 4) curriculum model for teaching performance art, there are six key characteristics that constitute the pedagogy of the spectator and this audience in performance (AIP) curriculum. These curricular characteristics are aesthetic, improvisatory, performative, political, critical and social. The curriculum that results is co-constructed, interactive and dialogical in nature, offering teachers, students and performing artists unique and uniquely rewarding challenges in both teaching and learning. There are, in addition, unique problems and challenges to be met and solved in the implementation of this curriculum. The delicate negotiation of an ongoing arts partnership in education requires constant care and attention from all involved (see Babineau, 1998).

The separation of drama education practice and professional/community theatre practice is bridged through this curriculum, a socio-cultural intervention that animates young audiences in their experience of performance, and artists in turn, in their

experience of audience. The end goal of this curriculum is to create a future where theatre returns to its historic role of being an essential place for communal, socio-political reflection, debate and action.

**Figure 4: Pedagogical Strategies of Theatre Audience Education**  
 (based on Garoian, 1999, pp. 46, 73-74)



### **Pedagogy of the Spectator**

AIP curriculum, the *pedagogy of the spectator*, is rooted in three places; drama education, theatre and collective creation/applied theatre. It is essentially unscripted, improvised, exploratory, co-constructed, and concerned with freedom, of both actor and spectator. To place performance at the centre of curriculum, rather than the fringes – a day trip, a lark, a diversion, an add-on, a rarity, or what Paulo Freire calls a “false charity” (Freire, 1970/1988, p. 29) – is to make something that is most often viewed as merely decorative, entertaining and slight, into something other, something substantial and worthy of our sustained attention. Freire calls this kind of pedagogy “true generosity” (p. 29) and it is what I am seeking in both education and theatre practice. A truly generous facilitated interchange between artists, teachers and audiences.

The reasons for this pedagogy of the spectator are also rooted in my own life history, a history of theatre-going, theatre-making, drama teaching and audience educating. Here in this latter task my theatre artist and drama teacher selves are reunited: Working with professional theatre companies and their young audience members, enriching and deepening experiences of performance through drama is, for me, uniquely fulfilling.

How does one teach drama without going to the theatre? Like teaching visual art while by-passing galleries, I suppose. Or music in silence.

This pedagogy of the spectator attempts to do otherwise.

### *1. Aesthetic*

Because the catalyst for this curriculum is a live performance, it is aesthetic in content. Because the teaching is through the art form itself – dramatizing for dramas, dancing for dances, “musicking” (Small, 1998, p. 9) for music – and, as well, is interdisciplinary, intergeneric, interartistic, it is aesthetic in form. Students do not need to know the play, read it, or read reviews. In this case, their ignorance can be bliss. But not the teacher’s: to see the play production as a *pre-text*, the source for dramatic exploration, is a key component of this curriculum (see O’Neill, 1995; Taylor, 1995). The teacher of AIP must commit to seeing the play before students, or at least to reading the script if it is available. The play is the curriculum text, the template for teaching, and it requires careful attention.

In previewing the play, an AIP teacher is looking for fissures, openings, ruptures, pathways, signposts for their students’ journey into spectatorship. I have offered some such signposts elsewhere (see Prendergast, 2001, 2002a, 2002b) and some examples can be found in drama education practice that uses play texts as pre-texts. In the progressive drama education structures found in *Lessons for the Living* (Clark, Dobson, Goode & Neelands, 1997), the titular lesson plan uses quotations from the stage version of *The Diary of Anne Frank* to confront racism and anti-Semitism through role-play. Another plan, called ‘Star-Cross’d Lovers’, draws a powerful parallel between *Romeo and Juliet* and the true story of a young mixed-marriage couple killed in the Serbo-Croatian civil war in former Yugoslavia. A third structure, ‘Eating Peas, Nothing But Peas,’ uses extracts from Georg Buchner’s 1837 play *Woyzeck* as source for a role drama that investigates moral issues surrounding cloning and genetic engineering. Ackroyd (1998)

spins process dramas out of *Twelfth Night*, putting Malvolio's bullies on trial for character defamation, even cruelty. Eriksson (2004) creates a drama structure that draws together a tragic Greek heroine and a tragic contemporary one in the intertwining tales of *Antigone* and Rachel Corrie, the American student activist killed by an Israeli bulldozer operator in Palestine, 2003. Bolton (1999) sticks pins in a rag doll as a way to engage students with Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*.

AIP curriculum, in addition to working effectively across the curriculum – drawing on language arts, history, science and/or social studies wherever relevant – keeps the aesthetic with the aesthetic. That is, student spectators prepare for and follow-up a performance *as artists do*. They are invited to release their imaginations and to engage their voices and their bodies in collective activities of exploration, improvisation, prediction, reflection and response. They are given the space to pre-view and to re-view their own horizons of expectation. Again, as in my Introduction to this text, I welcome the words of Maxine Greene and John Dewey into this curricular conversation:

[T]here is work to be done on the part of the percipient as there is on the part of the artist. The one who is too lazy, idle, or indurated in convention to perform this work will not see or hear. (Dewey, 1934, p. 54)

As I view them, the arts offer opportunities for perspective, for perceiving alternative ways of transcending and of being in the world, for refusing the automatism that overwhelms choice. (Greene, 1995, p. 142)

Although written half a century apart, Dewey and Greene's pedagogical and artistic understanding add substance to the aesthetic quality of pedagogy of the spectator.

## 2. *Improvisatory*

Much attention has been paid by actor and drama educators to improvisation. AIP curriculum, while located in the world of the aesthetic, is unscripted, unlike the plays that provide the sources for its becoming. Acting teachers use improvisation to create spontaneity, depth of character, concentration and deeper attention to internal and external stimuli. Drama educators use improvisation to facilitate both individual and group abilities to engage in liminal worlds, to co-construct alternate realities, to build empathy, to walk in the shoes of the other for a while (see O'Neill, 1995; Turner, 2004, pp. 79ff.).

Improvisation as a central part of audience education follows naturally, as Spolin suggests:

If there is agreement that all those involved in the theater should have personal freedom to experience, this must include the audience – each member of the audience must have a personal experience, not artificial stimulation, while viewing a play. (Spolin, 1963, p. 13)

For Spolin, *audience* is one of the “seven aspects of spontaneity” (p. 14) needed to improvise well. The other six aspects are: games; approval; group expression; theatre techniques; physicalization; and, “carrying the learning process into daily life” (pp. 14 – 15). The latter aspect, of course, is not inconsequential within this AIP curriculum, a place where education and performance meet, with potential positive effects for everyday life.

Pedagogy of the spectator consists of improvisational activities structured in response to the stimulus of a particular play, therein calling on two very different forms of theatre practice – scripted and rehearsed vs. unscripted and unrehearsed. Johnstone

(1999) writes that, “self-revelation should be at the heart of improvising” (p. 27). This curriculum asks students to reveal themselves to themselves and to each other, to their teacher and to the performers, directors, designers or playwrights they may meet. These revelatory processes are stimulated by exploring a play-in-performance through improvisation. Johnstone also points out that: “If you’re going to teach spontaneity, you’ll have to become spontaneous yourself” (p. 55). In teaching this curriculum, I am continually challenged to think on my feet, in the moment, in consideration of what it is in each play that is worth offering and challenging students.

Another key text, by Hodgson & Richards (1966), an early drama education guide, focusses on an understanding of *life as improvised*:

Improvisation is a group activity and learning within the group situation leads to a realization both of man’s [sic] independence and his interdependence. The sense of community thus has an opportunity for growth.” (Hodgson & Richards, 1966, p. 24)

One of the clearest pieces of evidence of the efficacy of this curriculum in action, as it is implemented at Victoria’s Belfry Theatre, has been the ‘sense of community’ shared by students that has led to continuing friendships and theatrical projects beyond the season of the course (Prendergast, 2001). The independence of the individual spectator becoming interdependent with the audience as a whole is another feature of both improvisation and theatregoing. In other words, we are all in this together: Just like life.

In a much more recent article on improvisation, Lockford & Pelias (2004) identify five types of “performative knowledge” needed to improvise: “Communication; Playfulness; Sedimentation; Sensuality; and Vulnerability” (p. 441). While most of these terms need little or no explanation, *sedimentation* is of interest. The authors assert that,

...knowledge...habituated and embedded in the body...comes from

intuitive sedimentation. It is a knowledge that draws upon a place of artistic grounding, a place where performers can call upon past endeavors to inform their choices. It is a place where performers sense what is right without, perhaps, being able to explain why....This place of tacit knowledge is essential to bodily poeticizing and to the work required in moments of improvisation.(p. 436)

The quality of sedimentation is useful to the teacher of AIP in that it recognizes that students bring a lifetime's worth of improvised experiences into theatre experiences.

Lockford and Pelias' notion of knowledge rooted in performativity is the next curricular characteristic recommended for successful pedagogy of the spectator.

### **3. Performative**

When considering the pedagogy of the spectator's aesthetic and improvisatory qualities, one lands quite easily in the place where *performativity* lies, as a key quality of performance itself, as an adjective that describes the noun. In other words: performance *the thing* is performative *in action*.

In a performative world, where politics and culture are daily shows for our delectation and distraction, and where consumerism is equated with citizenship, education's nose is still rooted in a text. Theorists call from their all-seeing perches, "Performativity, performativity, performativity" but educators mostly push this message to the margins and carry on navigating across standardized landscapes of performance as accountability and competition, and, always in the inner ear hearing the snaking hiss, "The text, the test, the text, the test..."

How may we perform our teaching and learning? How may we take back the word *performance* from the test-makers, the standard-bearers, the ideologues with no ideas? We must look to live performance to find what is missing in mediatized forms:

presence, connection, attention, *communitas* (Turner, 2004). In AIP curriculum, student spectators of a play are invited not to read a synopsis, but to stage it. They are invited not to analyze characters, but to experience their struggles through their own drama-making. They are invited not to leave their minds at the door of the theatre, but to bring all of themselves into the performance. And what of the performers? They are invited to witness these students' preparations in dramatic form, to become their audience. They are invited to see the students *show* rather than *tell* what they think and feel. They are invited to become artists who are more involved, more connected, more responsible to their audience. And the playwrights, what of them? How would their storytelling shift if they knew they were addressing a community rather than a set of individuals? How might they be changed? And the directors: What might happen if their audiences demanded the doors to the rehearsal hall be thrown open? If this secretive process was made public? And the professional critics: What if their voices lost their monological powers and were heard as only a part of the chorus of response? Might they reveal their own secret subtexts at play? Dreaming in this way, performance becomes *more performative*, connected, enacted, engaged, alive. The place *to be*.

And, essentially, there is the teacher of this curriculum, who is committed to performative ways of learning; who believes heart-wholly in the myriad ways that performance plays on and with our multiple intelligences; our bodies, minds, emotions, souls. A teacher who pries open the rusty-hinged backstage doors to, as Dolan (2001) says:

The utopic performative...the performer's grace...the audience's generosity... the lucid power of intersubjective understanding, however fleeting. These are the moments when we can believe in utopia. (p. 479)

It is these fleeting moments of grace, generosity and intersubjective understanding that make encounters with performance worthy of curricular and pedagogical attention.

### 3. *Political*

*Who today dares call "the public" to the theatre?* (Schechner, 2004, p. 6, italics added)

Creating a place and space for the audience to become, rather than just be, is a political act. A utopian vision is, of course, a political act of the imagination: "All drama is...a political event: it either reasserts or undermines the code of conduct of a given society" (Esslin, 1976, p. 29). This work, activating the spectator, is an aesthetic, improvisatory, performative and *political* act. To place this work into the larger context of Culture = Commodity is a political act. Offering young spectators the tools that will allow them to see themselves as active cultural citizens and to see performance as a vital participant in cultural conversation, is a political act. This curriculum, in its theory and in its action, is a political act.

To value each and every performance as equally 'good' or 'true' is to fail. Yet it is a delicate act, politically speaking, as the artists and companies who are presenting their work and opening up their practice for exploration and dialogue must *must must* be handled with great care. Teaching AIP, I have always focussed on valuing what I see as worth valuing and what my students see a worth valuing when in the same room as the performing artists involved. However, when we can speak in confidence, the conversation no longer concerns itself with such necessary tact and can flow into weighing worth by Esslin's scale: How does this performance "reassert or undermine"? What is its purpose? Its effect? Are we moved into complacency or action?

In an ideal world we might find all artists willing to expose the works they are performing, and their performances, to communal/critical/political scrutiny. I acknowledge that participating in these kinds of socio-political and critical conversations may not be possible or even desirable for artists until after a performance has closed, because they have a necessary commitment to the process that must not be compromised. However, I can dream of audiences being invited to reflect on a performance with the company who staged it. In this dream, artists and spectators collaboratively create the archive of performance, to be held in the memory of the community who shared in it, as Blau suggests (Chapter Three). To achieve this goal in reality would require a (dramatic) revisioning of artistic training and practice in ways that, today, seem far off indeed. To train theatre artists in this way would be to have them develop a philosophy that surrounds and supports their practice; a philosophy rooted in the historic function of theatre as the place where communities can collectively reflect on stories that matter, issues that matter, debates that matter. Brecht lived not so long ago (1898-1956), yet his inheritors are few (an *Oleanna* [Mamet, 1992] here, an *Angels in America* [Kushner, 1993/1994] there). There are few exceptions to the rule of entertainment for entertainment's sake, the rule of theatre as a place to forget rather than remember, to sleep rather than wake, to console rather than confound or confuse, to distract rather than focus, to amuse rather than anger or arouse. That's the way it is. This curriculum acts in resistance to the status quo, and is for those in teaching and performance who, like me, believe in "a set of values and activities relating to individual creativity, social responsibility, and reciprocity" (Schechner, 2004, p. 8).

### 5. *Critical*

*Characterized by careful, exact evaluation and judgment;  
Forming or having the nature of a turning point; crucial or decisive;  
Indispensable; essential; urgently needed; absolutely necessary;  
Characterized by thoroughness and a reference to principles, as becomes a critic;  
at or of a point at which a property or phenomenon suffers an abrupt change  
especially having enough mass to sustain a chain reaction.  
(<http://dictionary.reference.com/search?q=critical&r=67>)*

Characterized by all these critical characteristics, defined above, AIP curriculum finds itself in relational conversation with its aesthetic, improvisatory, performative and political qualities. In its pedagogy, the teacher must be careful and exact in guiding the evaluation and judgement of performance. In its philosophy, the teacher must be aware that this grounding of the spectatorship of performance as the canvas for drama, dance or music education is a crucial and decisive turning point that makes live performance something indispensable, essential, urgently needed and absolutely necessary. The teacher of this curriculum is thorough and can refer to principles underlying the work, as does a critic. He or she acts as a catalyst that takes the properties or phenomena of a performance and changes them, at least in the minds and hearts of students. As this curriculum moves from a potential to a presence in education, it may sustain a chain reaction that moves live performance from the periphery to the centre of our cultural practices, helping to define them. Curriculum as catharsis, as connoisseurship, as interpretive, as reception and response, is as critical as anything else we do as educators, artists, citizens.

Gadamer (1986) speaks of the spectator as witness, and Blau (1990) of the audience as repository of memory in society, as taken up in previous chapters. Moving from theory into practice asks AIP educators to consider the role of the critic in society.

What is the responsibility of the critic to the audience? What is the responsibility of the critic to the performance? How do the contexts in which a critic exists affect his or her critical abilities (as in writing for larger or smaller newspapers, magazines or journals, on television or online?) How has the role of criticism in performance devolved from a community to an individual activity (in much the same way as audiences have over time, I would suggest)? How critical is the critic? In other words, how vital and significant is the work of a critic to the world of performance?

These questions and their answers, I believe, are essential to AIP education.

Maxine Greene (2000, also cited as a found poem in Chapter One, pp. 33-34) points us in the direction of finding some of these answers as she writes:

Exposure to works of art and the nurture of the capacity to engage with them are what make it possible for us to notice the flower, the moonlight, the songs of birds. Noticing requires more than merely taking note or recognizing .... It requires a release of imagination, a moving beyond mere facts and the cultivation of a dialogical community, important though that is. It requires a space and a community where diverse views can find expression and diverse hopes take form, energized by shared art experiences. (p. 278)

It is the “cultivation of a dialogical community” that interests us in AIP curriculum. And this community focusses in on the critical abilities to engage, to notice , to respond as well as on the creation of a “space and community...energized by art experiences” (p. 278).

## **6. Social**

What distinguishes the performing arts from the visual and literary ones? Above all else, drama, dance, opera and music are social art forms, requiring a minimum of two people

in a shared space who agree to share an experience together as artist and spectator. The witnessing act of viewing a painting or sculpture, of reading a poem or novel, happen in different times and spaces from the original act of creation. Not so in performance, where the acts of creation and reception happen contemporaneously, together in time. Thus, the potential can occur for performance in general, and theatre in particular, to function as a cultural meeting-place. Theatre history tells us this is so, or used to be so.

What about now? Why is it that we come to the theatre as strangers, sitting with strangers, watching strangers? (Is it any wonder we are estranged?) How often do we turn to the person we don't know, right beside us, and engage in conversation with them about what we are seeing, have seen? How often does talk in the lobby at intermission or after the play involve more than those who came and will leave together? Is it any different at the movies? The answers to these questions lie in reaching sideways in this chapter to the political and the critical. A culture that celebrates the individual over the collective and values commodities over communities will obviously create the kinds of alienation I am describing. We must look to larger spectator events, such as sports or concerts (still almost wholly commodified), to find spaces where the distances between strangers may be broken down, inhibitions dissipated, and experience shared in more collective (although not always positive) ways.

The reader is aware by now that the pedagogy of the spectator counters this social alienation of the contemporary audience. AIP students come from many different places to form a theatre-going community that works, plays, attends and responds *together*. As a curriculum theory, I envision groups of students from the same school or from others, coming together through the facilitation of one or more teachers of spectatorship, to share

their theatrical experiences through drama, through performance, through dialogue and celebration. Inspired by the work of Ariane Mnouchkine (Williams, 1999) and Monique Rioux (2004) – AIP students could be into lobbies as group tableaux, or in song or movement, greeting the ‘regular’ audience as it enters the theatre. I imagine that student spectators may lead their fellow citizens (primed, prepared, *present*) into the play. *Like a Greek chorus.*

I have written earlier in this text on how this social function of the student spectator can be understood through the social functions of the Ancient Greek dramatic chorus (see Chapter Six; Prendergast 2004b). But it is French philosopher Hélène Cixous who writes most passionately of the tragic chorus as representing us, the audience:

The Chorus has its own tragedy, that of the powerless witness, the tragedy, always begun anew, of exile, of interdiction, of exclusion, which is the lot of all those who are deprived of that most precious possession: the possibility of *acting*....pinned in place by invisible nails...it writhes in anguish. Riveted to our places as spectators, we are bound by invisible ties, and we recognize, by the anguish that squeezes our hearts, that we are of the same familial flesh... the same as that of the Chorus. (Cixous, 1999, p. 196)

We are a part. Useless to deny it. What happens in Argos happens to us in Paris. We do everything to forget it, but we do not escape. We are in the circle – it concerns us. In its round the Chorus traces the human circle. Marking the rhythm that reminds us: You too, you too. (p. 198)

The social circularity of the pedagogy of the spectator comes into clarity when we begin to see the audience as chorus. Like a chorus, the AIP student has the opportunity to participate in rather than simply perceive the actions of performance, and to chorally-construct the meanings of performance socially with, and for, others (see also Chapter Six).

### **Making it Happen: Problems and Pathways**

Moving this curriculum from theory to practice is the challenge, and like any journey that takes place from the mind to the map, it is littered with obstacles. I have been practising this curriculum in a theatre-centred model for the past seven years, and have conquered that terrain; a small but significant marker on the way to more widespread AIP curriculum implementation. But even this success has had, and continues to have, its struggles, its frustrations, its failures. Three main problem areas are offered here to consider when undertaking the pedagogy of the spectator.

The first challenge is to convince senior secondary students to take the risk of coming to a place they have never been before, to work with someone that have never met before, to experience something they have never done before. Every year I visit schools to recruit students for this program, and although local drama teachers are conscripted into this process as my collaborators, I note how few of them ever appear at the theatre's door themselves. The exceptions prove this rule: there is one teacher who subscribes; one other who comes to support students in their AIP showcase performance; one more (a former theatre director) who takes students to theatre productions as a matter of course. Otherwise, I deal with pleasant, co-operative, hard-working and dedicated drama teachers who don't attend, either regularly or at all, the only professional theatre company in town. The shift I am prescribing here for drama teachers (and other teachers) is a re-focussing of attention from school-based to community-based theatre practice. If drama teachers are to centre their curriculum in and around community theatre practice, what changes?

Second, working with my students over the period of the school year means multiple interruptions, sometimes two or more months between shows; these can hamper a theatre-based AIP curriculum in a serious way. The experience is extensive rather than intensive, although each workshop and performance experience is an intense one. The hiatus between sessions can lead to student attrition, and the extra-curricular nature of this program means there is nothing for students to lose if they stay away, other than the intangible and ineffable loss of a shared dramatic experience and a performance. I have no power over these students; the choice is always theirs to be there or not. Even as I greatly enjoy the freedom I have in relation to students, their freedom to self-select and participate can be a challenge.

Third, the co-operative involvement of the theatre company is a key feature of this journey, and something that can never be neglected nor taken for granted. Performing arts groups, focussed as they are on intense yet short-term projects, find it difficult to sustain a long-term relationship except, perhaps, with funders and subscribers – a cynical but accurate assessment of the economic realities they face to survive. Although I feel valued by my colleagues at the theatre, it is difficult for them to keep the requirements of the program in mind. Visiting actors – as opposed to a resident company member now rarely found in theatre practice – sometimes do not see how their presence at a pre-show workshop is important. Yes, they appear at post-show talkbacks, up on the stage, looking down on the students, answering their questions. But if they do not play their role as audience members in the pre-show workshop, they appear as strangers, not as newly-made colleagues and co-conspirators who are re-connecting with students after a commonly- shared preparatory and performance experience. When I compare these post-

show meetings with those of the over two dozen in the past six years where actors attended part or all of the pre-show workshop and delighted (a universal response) in the students' creativity and playfulness in their preparations to see the play, I see only the loss. So a teacher of AIP needs to elicit and encourage actors with the importance of this role reversal (actor to audience and vice versa) as a way, as *the* way for performers and their young audience members to enter into dialogue, to connect, to co-construct the shared meaning of being both inside and outside the world of a play. This role inversion aspect of AIP curriculum is worth more extended exploration that will be addressed in Chapter Eight.

The service-oriented model of audience education that currently dominates theatre practice – where teacher workshops and study guides are offered as tools of audience development, not education – emphasizes product over process, customer over partner (or friend), singular encounters over sustained relations, snacks over feasts. AIP curriculum offers a five (or six, or seven, or eight...) course meal served and shared over many months. This curriculum is both a map and a feast, a mixed metaphor meant for sustenance and future journeys into performances in spaces and places both near and far, traditional and innovative, easy and difficult to navigate, over the course of a lifetime.

Imagine, if you will, this particular utopia: Every young person, in each community that supports at least one performing arts group, will gain the opportunity to become an active, critical spectator and to have his or her preparations for and responses to these performances attended to, signified, made the focus of curricular and artistic attention. And these performing arts companies will be more regularly visited by young audience members who may well infuse the very buildings they enter with a new vitality and sense of purpose.

The cultural conversations that can and may take place between these partners, these allies, these citizens, these co-conspirators, these artists and apprentices, these constituents, these friends are the most critical, most aesthetic, most improvisatory, most social, most political, most performative ones of all. As Brecht (1970) says:

*You write the happy ending to the play!*  
There must, there must,  
There's got to be a way! (p. 930)

**Section Three: Post-performance**

**Chapter Eight**

### Section Three: Post-performance

Following the AIP curriculum model presented in previous chapters, this post-performance section of the study is interested in activities of reflection, evaluation and response. The questions that guide the development of this final chapter are:

- What are the key concepts and terms of AIP curriculum?
- How may AIP curriculum be put most effectively into teaching practice?
- What current exemplars of audience education exist?
- What, if any, research is being done that resonates with the content of this study?
- Where does future research on this topic need to go?

The writing of this chapter began with a summary statement that ended up moved to the beginning of the Introduction. This recursive move – not uncommon in my experience – reminds me that the process of inquiry is cyclical and never-ending and that all conclusions are partial, open-ended, an invitation for ongoing investigation.

Two core questions have guided me throughout this inquiry process: What's missing? What really matters? Responding to these questions as fully and rigorously as possible – in the context of my interdisciplinary lives in theatre and education over the past two decades – has kept me going over the long and challenging period of time a doctoral inquiry demands. I did not invent these questions, but rather paid (playful) attention to them when they were offered to me by University of Victoria professors Juliana Saxton (at our first meeting in the spring of 1999) and Antoinette Oberg (in a graduate education course on interpretive inquiry). I am very grateful to these mentors for the gift of these questions. I would also suggest that they offer anyone engaged in inquiry useful touchstones to reflect upon and assess what lies behind, around and ahead.

**Chapter Eight**

**What Begins?**

**Audience in Performance Studies**

**in Education**

## **Audience in Performance Studies in Education**

*When the play ends, what begins?* (Bharucha, n.d.)

The curtain has been rung down and the auditorium sits empty and dark. It remains for us to mark in our memories where we have been and what we have seen over these past chapters. It is important, too, that we look ahead, to survey future pathways an AIP curriculum theory opens up for exploration. It is also important, finally, to take a look around at where we are right now; to be in the moment like a performer, senses heightened and aware, as we sift through choices, making some and discarding others. Therefore, this concluding chapter is organized into three parts; *Looking Behind*, *Looking Ahead* and *Looking Around*.

### ***Looking Behind – Speaking Spectatorship In Education***

I see that the greatest value in this retrospective lies in summarizing the key terms and vocabulary of AIP curriculum and pedagogy of the spectator. Highlighting this aspect not only gives potential AIP educators the necessary language for implementing this curriculum theory in practice, but also offers a review of the significant elements of AIP curriculum. Each vocabulary term is followed by a brief definition and reference to a preceding chapter from which it is drawn.

- *Dramatized world/Performative society*. We live in a contemporary developed world that is immersed in drama and engineered by performance (Introduction).
- *Performance as efficacy/efficiency/effectiveness*. It is possible to survey how performance is understood and employed in many sectors of society. Specifically, it

is the *challenges* of performance that drive our culture, economy and technology (Introduction).

- *Audience as historically-active/contemporarily-passive.* Theatre history tells us that audiences used to hold much more power in relation to performance, as patrons who have now become customers (Introduction).
- *Audience as relation/uses and gratification/fandom.* Audience studies, focussed on mediatized forms of performance, considers the power relations at work in performance processes. This field also sees a shift from the *effects* of performance on audience to an audience's *uses and gratifications* of performance. (Introduction).
- *Spectatorship as percipience, criticism, experience, imagination.* Art education takes up the development of an aesthetic appreciation of artworks in particular and of imagination in general as essential aspects of education (Introduction).
- *Audience as verb.* Seeing spectatorship as a form of performance brings the active engagement involved in seeing/hearing performance to the foreground (Chapter One).
- *Performance as metaphor.* Understanding the various metaphors that have been explored in the study of performance lets us see that performance itself is a contested concept, difficult to locate or define with any final authority. This, of course, is one of the central strengths of performance which may ultimately be called *a way of seeing* (Chapter One).
- *Spectatorship as presence, play, witness, opening to the world, self-forgetting/continuing self.* Aesthetic philosophy gives us valuable terms and concepts to express some of the most essential aspects of AIP (Chapter Two).

- *Spectatorship as alienated, commodified, mediatized.* Performance theory problematizes the work of an AIP within the context of technological change and advanced transnational capitalism (Chapters Three and Four).
- *Spectatorship as collaborative, interrogative, interpretive, responsive, memory-making.* Performance theory also explores the more positive, resistant, and even transgressive actions of AIP (Chapters Three and Four).
- *Audience as chorus.* AIP in action shares common characteristics with the dramatic choruses of Ancient Greek theatre. AIP, like a chorus, occupies the liminal space between audience and performance and has the power to respond to, interact with, and comment upon the action of the play (Chapter Five).
- *AIP curriculum - Pre-performance.* Actions and activities in pre-performance involve preparing for, predicting about, entering into and participating with a performance (Chapter Six).
- *AIP curriculum – Performance.* Performance activities involve seeing/ watching/ gazing/ witnessing, hearing/ listening/ attending, perceiving, interpreting, meaning-making, assisting, feeling (Chapter Six).
- *AIP curriculum – Post-performance.* Following-up a performance experience, an audience can engage in reflecting, evaluating, judging, criticizing, responding, interacting, questioning, and discussing (Chapter Six).
- *Pedagogy of the spectator.* Six key qualities of AIP curriculum in practice are; aesthetic, improvisatory, performative, political, critical and social. All of these curricular characteristics are in (serious) play with each other throughout an AIP experience (Chapter Seven).

I now turn my attention to what lies ahead. This forward-facing perspective illuminates the necessity to engage with two final metaphors in this metaphorical study; that of *teachers as performers* and *performers as teachers*. AIP curriculum in implementation requires teachers who understand how performance works and performers who understand how education works. The next section of this conclusion offers both teachers and performing artists a range of readings that highlight the performativity of teaching and the educative possibilities of performance.

### ***Looking Ahead – Teachers and Performers in Conspiracy With Audience***

Good practice in pedagogy of the spectator involves teaching artistry and artistic pedagogy. AIP teachers benefit from understanding themselves as the performers of this curriculum; as actors who play the chorus leader or *choregus*, and as facilitators and mediators who bring students audiences and performing artists into creative curricular conversations. Performing artists equally benefit from taking on the roles of cultural pedagogical workers engaged with their communities and audiences on a deeper and more meaningful level than is currently commonly found.

#### ***1. Teaching as Performance: Educational Performance and Performative Pedagogy***

To begin, teaching as performance is a metaphor that has had some life in recent educational scholarship, primarily over the past twenty years. Pineau's 1994 essay, "Teaching is performance: Reconceptualizing a problematic metaphor" (recently reprinted in Alexander, Anderson & Gallegos, 2005, pp. 15-39) gives an effective historic and theoretical overview of this metaphor at work. She cites much of the literature on

this topic: “Classroom artistry” (Barrell, 1991); “Teaching: A performing art” (Dawe, 1984); *The Educational Imagination* (Eisner, 1979); *Teaching as Storytelling* (Egan, 1986); and, *Artistry in Teaching* (Rubin, 1985). In an interdisciplinary dialogue between pedagogy and performance theory, Pineau discusses performance theorist Dwight Conquergood’s (1989) four qualities of performance and applies them to education; *poetics, play, process* and *power*. These qualities help Pineau highlight performative aspects of teaching practice that she delineates as *aesthetic, innovative, subversive, processual* and *critical*. She then “invites interdisciplinary research into the nature of *educational performance* and the development of *performative pedagogy*” (Pineau, 1994/2005, pp. 36-37, emphasis added).

These areas of inquiry are relevant to the successful implementation of AIP curriculum, as they ask performance-based questions of both the institution of education and the practices of pedagogy. Performative pedagogy is explored more fully by Charles Garoian (1999) and Bryant K. Alexander (2005) in their respective writings about teaching performance art in secondary school and analyzing pedagogy as performance. Educational performance is a topic taken up by subsequent writers such as Elliot Eisner (2004), Max Wyman (2004) and Walter Pitman (1998).

What can education learn from the arts about the practice of education? This is addressed in art education theorist Eisner’s (2004) recent writing. He responds that education, blinded by science and scientism throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first century, has much to gain from seeing education as an artistic practice. Drawing on the work of aesthetic philosopher Herbert Read, Eisner reconfigures the current economics and technology-based purposes of education into those more culturally and

socially-based purposes of preparing artists. As he notes, “the highest accolade we can confer on someone is to say he or she is an artist whether as a carpenter or a surgeon, a cook or an engineer, a physicist or a teacher” (p. 4). He describes, “distinctive forms of thinking needed to create artistically crafted work” that can be applied to education (p. 4). These forms involve,

...a culture of schooling in which more importance is placed on exploration than on discovery, more value is assigned to surprise than control, more attention is devoted to what is distinctive than to what is standard, more interest is related to what is metaphorical than what is literal. It is an educational culture that has a greater focus on becoming than on being, places more value on the imaginative than on the factual, assigns greater priority to valuing than to measuring, and regards the quality of the journey as more educationally significant than the speed at which the destination is reached. I am talking about a new vision of what education might become and what schools are for. (p. 10)

Canadian cultural critics Walter Pitman (1998) and Max Wyman (2004) would concur with Eisner; education performs itself as efficiency and effectiveness over efficacy in contemporary culture and society (see McKenzie, 2001; Introduction, pp. 17-20).

Walter Pitman (1998) writes about *Learning the Arts in an Age of Uncertainty* and concludes that the worlds of education and the arts require “a significant change” (p. 253):

Both teachers and artists must make a commitment to change the perception of the arts to that of a learning tool that will make the full spectrum of knowledge more accessible to young people, and will provide them with the skills and confidence to contribute as neighbours, citizens, workers, and volunteers. The arts, as the basis for an integrated curriculum, will choreograph students’ acquisition of knowledge and skill in a way that their intelligences find most effective, will confront them with the most challenging questions about themselves and the world they live in. That is the ideal both teachers and artists must come to espouse as professionals. (p. 253)

Teacher education needs “to prepare teachers...for a different curriculum emphasizing the cultural...and committed to creativity as the central goal of what transpires in the

classroom” (p. 255). He suggests that a significant shift in thinking must go hand-in-hand with developing arts-based curricula. AIP curriculum provides one model of just such a cultural and creative change in its focus on generating interactive models of spectatorship between artists, teachers and students.

Max Wyman (2004) takes a broader view than Pitman in his recent book *The Defiant Imagination: Why Culture Matters*. Where Pitman’s focus is on arts and education, Wyman chooses to criticize a Canadian society that is wavering in its support of the arts. In a way that resonates with AIP curriculum aims to counter this status quo, he writes:

Modern Western society assigns the arts a place on the fringes of our existence, yet the creative impulse is part of what makes us who we are as human beings. It is in our theatres, galleries, libraries and concert halls, at our community centres and our powwows...in our schools and in our homes, that the limitless expression of the human imagination is displayed. (p. 9)

He goes on to lament: “For decades the remoteness of the artist has been promoted almost as a virtue” (p. 9), clearly a state of affairs this present AIP curriculum theory project intends to disrupt. In his argument for the centrality of the arts in culture, Wyman recommends that government arts agencies such as the Canada Council for the Arts, “[m]ake grants available to teachers who wish to improve their arts expertise and to artists who wish to improve their skills in the classroom” (p. 228). He reminds us:

Providing access to the arts involves more than driving a busload of kids to the theatre twice a year. (p. 10)

And,

There is not much point in sending out touring theatre troupes and dance ensembles to play to students with no developed awareness of what they are seeing. (p. 57)

It is this kind of critical advocacy in arts and education, articulated so well in a Canadian context by Pitman and Wyman, that can create a space for AIP curriculum to live and flourish. For Eisner, Pitman and Wyman, educational performance is the performance of culture in our classrooms; a space where creative, imaginative, artistic and performative pedagogy can enact our teaching and our students' learning through a fuller and more authentic engagement with community and society.

Performative pedagogy is an area that is just beginning to be addressed in educational scholarship (Conquergood, 1993; Giroux, 1997; Mackinlay, 2001; Schutz, 2001). Charles Garoian's (1999) book *Performing Pedagogy: Towards an Art of Politics* describes his teaching of performance art in an American secondary school as a process that, "enables students to learn the curriculum of academic culture from the perspective of their personal memories and cultural histories" (p. 1). Some of the questions he poses in his study are germane to AIP curriculum as well:

How would students' learning be affected if its form and content were determined through a community discourse? What role does art play in the development of community-based curriculum? Is there an aesthetic dimension to curriculum production? How does curriculum function as performance art text? How does a performance art curriculum facilitate civic education? (p. 14)

AIP curriculum is interested in the answers to these questions and sees curriculum as "a community discourse [with] an aesthetic dimension" (p. 14), as does Garoian. He describes his performance art curricula as "transgressive" (p. 40) and "disruptive" (p. 201), and as a "reflexive pedagogy that would transform my classroom into a space where my students could discuss openly the cultural issues that mattered to them most, to play with ideas, metaphors and images, and to create art that represented their cultural struggles" (p. 202). AIP curriculum shares this mandate, "and the notion that cultural

experience and identity are locked into a continual process of construction and deconstruction” (p. 225). These are the philosophical foundations of performative pedagogy.

One other recent text examines *Performance Theories in Education: Power, Pedagogy and the Politics of Identity* (Alexander et al., 2005) in ways that resonate with Garoian and pedagogy of the spectator. This anthology of essays includes Pineau’s work and an essay by co-editor Bryant Alexander (2005) titled, “Critically analyzing pedagogical interactions as performance”. Alexander reflects on his own teaching practices, both successes and failures, in a performance theory framework that helps him recognize the power relations and identity formations at play in his classroom. He concludes:

The classroom is a space of social and political negotiation, a tensive site with competing intentions. These competing intentions are not about the perceived benefits of education (i.e., jobs, employment, self-elevation, self-actualization, and so forth). These intentions focus on the performative processes of education and the struggle of teachers and students to either gain or retain the authority of their own understandings as imbued by, with, and through differing cultural insights and experiences. (pp. 58-59)

Pedagogy of the spectator focusses on “the performative processes of education” and appreciates “differing cultural insights and experiences”(p. 59). As such, AIP curriculum is responding to the metaphor of *education as spectacle* that Alexander defines (quoting communication theorist F.E. Manning) as, “the principle symbolic context in which... societies enact and communicate their guiding beliefs, values, concerns and self-understandings” (Manning cited in Alexander, pp. 58-59). It has been my argument throughout this dissertation that AIP curriculum offers teachers and students new ways to interact with and respond to the spectacle of both culture and education.

This brief review of current scholarship into teaching as performance, educational performance and performative pedagogy serves to suggest some of the necessary conditions for the implementation of AIP curriculum. Teachers must be nurtured and supported to see themselves as performers of curriculum and as interactive spectators in their students' performance of learning (see also Miller & Saxton, 2004). Education as an institution in our society needs to attend more closely to cultural performance as a template for curriculum and to encourage the exploration of power, identity and community as vital pedagogical practice. That is the educational half of this AIP curriculum; the obverse is in the cultural realm of the performing arts and its need to respond more pedagogically to its audience.

## ***2. Performance as Teaching: Theatre That Matters in a Complicated World***

This year (2005-2006) I have received permission from the University of Victoria Department of Theatre to offer a directed studies course in Applied Theatre largely based on this study and its curriculum theory. Theatre 394 – “Audience Process and the Victoria Theatre Season.” – involves theatre students, for the first time since my entry into the department (in 1999), engaging in pre-show workshops and post-show talkbacks with fellow student members of their audience. The course will allow for a post-secondary model of AIP curriculum to be developed, implemented and assessed. Students in this new course will be assigned readings from the bibliography of this study and – through lectures, workshops, performances and talkbacks – will work towards a greater understanding of the role of the audience and the practices of active, critical spectatorship. While I cannot include the results of this post-secondary model of AIP

curriculum in this present text, the implementation of this new course signals a beginning to the kind of change I am seeking in current education and practice in the performing arts.

In addition, these kinds of AIP readings and understandings are of value to the general theatre student population and will help them see themselves as *cultural workers* (Kadi, 1996) who are engaged in collaborative processes not only with each other, but also with their audiences. What I am proposing is a significant shift in philosophical focus in theatre training, from the development of an individual artist who is primarily interested in furthering a career toward the development of a cultural worker who is committed to theatre as a medium for social justice and change. Here I offer a brief overview of the kinds of texts and ideas that may serve to shift traditional ways of training theatre artists, in ways that offer an approach that is more inclusive in both nature and practice.

A global perspective on theatre practice can be found in Richard Boon & Jane Plastow's (1998) edited collection of essays, *Theatre Matters: Performance and Culture on the World Stage* and Rustom Bharucha's (1993) *Theatre and the World: Performance and the Politics of Culture*. Theatre director and dramaturg Bharucha writes post-colonial theory that features performance analyses and social criticism with an international perspective and a focus on ethics in representation. He asserts, from a socialist perspective, that:

There is a lot of dead theatre in the world today, particularly in capitalist societies like America, whose regional theatres are like factories, where plays are manufactured in less than six weeks and performed by a group of actors who remain strangers to one another and the audience as well. Not only are these actors alienated from their means of production, they are, more sadly and irrevocably, alienated from themselves. (p. 52)

Bharucha places contemporary theatre practice into a new context of reflexive praxis that considers its place in a fractured, dispersed and mediatized performance world. This is a perspective worth offering theatre students, alongside their historical readings of theatre revolutionaries such as Artaud, Brecht and Grotowski. Today's theatre students, I believe, need to see reflections of theorists/practitioners as living practice, seen in theatre of the oppressed, theatre for development, theatre in factories, offices, prisons and schools; in other words, as witnessed in the global practices of applied theatre (Taylor, 2003; Thompson, 2003). The essays in Boon & Plastow's (1998) text present case studies and analyses of theatre in relation to state and society in international contexts. Studies on theatre companies and/or productions in Africa, Canada, the Caribbean, Asia and India weave a tapestry of theatre that makes a difference in communities and peoples' lives – performers and spectators together and alike. Effective applied theatre practice offers one of the best complementary models for successful AIP curriculum through its shared concerns with engaging deeply within communities and responding to community needs.

Theatre students could also benefit from reading the British study *Shakespeare Comes to Broadmoor* (Cox, 1992) on the outreach work of the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre, and a community theatre at Broadmoor Prison, a secure psychiatric hospital. The audience response to the Shakespeare productions and workshops performed and shared with the mentally-ill inmates is surprising and inspiring. These are exemplars of professional performing artists who take risks and make the commitment to reach out into the community to share their work, and who benefit greatly

from the experience themselves. The positive therapeutic, educational and aesthetic effects of the Broadmoor experiment are very convincing indeed.

Three other texts merit mention as good reading for theatre students who want to consider issues of engagement and pedagogy with audiences: *How Theatre Educates* (Gallagher & Booth, 2003); *Theatre and Everyday Life: An Ethics of Performance* (Read, 1993); and *Theatre in Crisis? Performance Manifestos for a New Century* (Delgado & Svich, 2002). Editors Delgado & Svich (2002) gather over thirty essays and commentaries from theatre academics and practitioners on the current condition of the theatre in society. While it contains plenty of provocative reading, my focus is on those writers whose thinking resonates with this study and its curriculum theory. Avant-garde director Peter Sellars offers challenges to practitioners in his piece, "The question of culture" (pp. 127-144), including this point directed at teachers of theatre:

Instead of starting our teaching with our presumed success to impress our students, I think it would be far more effective to start with our failure, the failure of our generation to communicate effectively in a society. The fact that the arts are totally marginalized in our societies is a demonstration of the failure of our generation. We've failed to get through, we've failed to connect our self-absorption, our smug self-satisfaction, and created a complete crisis in which the art that we practise is likely to be wiped off the face of the earth. (p. 130)

This quotation is one worth offering all theatre students to contemplate. Sellars' negativity is intended to provoke thought and action in the arts, "to find something that needs to be done and to do it" (p. 132) because, "we can offer the society what the society needs and can't get through political channels, what people need and they can't get through economic channels" (p. 142). One strategy that might meet with Sellars' approval in this activist artist agenda is director/dramaturg DD [sic] Kugler's

recommendation that theatres take the risk to open their rehearsal studios to their audiences:

Open rehearsals signal a radically new audience relationship. The audience that most understands our process – a process that continues through performance – is the audience we are looking for. (p. 96)

We honour an audience by inviting them into the rigour of our process. Armed with that understanding, they will know that performance isn't something we've completed, but a long process we continue to work at, in the presence of, in dialogue with, the audience. (p. 97)

As Kugler says, "If we find the audience an inadequate participant...then I fear it's because we haven't trained the audience how to enter that process with us" (p. 94).

Of course, AIP curriculum would warmly welcome the implementation of open rehearsal practices wherein visits by students to rehearsals could become a vital aspect of learning spectatorship.

I turn now to *How Theatre Educates: Convergences and Counterpoints*, edited by University of Toronto drama education professors Kathleen Gallagher and David Booth (2003). This collection features essays, interviews and shorter pieces by theatre artists, scholars and educators who were invited to consider the title question. I turn to four pieces that are of significance to this study and the case for theatre artists trained as cultural workers presented in this section. Lynn Slotkin's brief memoir of her lifelong practice of theatregoing is a moving testament to how theatre can change us and enrich our lives (pp. 100-105). Playwright John Murrell's and director Richard Rose's contributions eloquently express what theatre and theatre education can and should be (pp. 67-86; pp. 231-238). However, it is the contribution by Walter Pitman that excites my interest as an AIP curriculum theorist and practitioner. He shares his experience of belonging to a church-based theatre-going group that is run in a similar way to a book

club. The goal of this group is to attend a season of plays and follow-up each one with a group discussion that reflects both on the production and on its relevance in a faith-based context. His comments are significant for this study: informal post-show discussion amongst audience members that “takes place after 10 p.m. in theatre foyers, on the street...and in nearby bars and restaurants [is] the largest, most consistently pervasive, and most continuing form of drama education to be found in our society” (p. 163). These post-show discussions are a large part of AIP curriculum theory project as a means of nurturing the potential of young audience members to engage well in such discussions for the rest of their lives.

Finally, theatre students could also benefit from reading selections from Alan Read’s *Theatre and Everyday Life: An Ethics of Performance* (1993). Read offers valuable thoughts on “theatre within the perspective of everyday life” (p. ix). In his chapter “Regarding Theatre” he writes that, “[t]heatre is nothing if it is not understood” (p. 62):

To understand is not a dry theoretical capacity but a practice which combines the physical and the mental in equal measure, and denies that a solely intellectual response to experience is ever possible. (p. 62)

AIP curriculum encourages a way of understanding performance that “combines the physical and the mental in equal measure”; this insight is important for any theatre practitioner who may mistakenly consider spectatorship to be “a solely intellectual response.” Tracing theatre practice through a number of theoretical lenses leads Read to consider the ethics of theatre performance:

The question of how one conducts oneself in relation to the other, how one behaves, is a first philosophy, the precondition for life and the exchange between lives that I assert is theatre’s domain. (p. 93)

**Alan Read - A Found Poem****ethics and performance**

- i.     the spectator's eye  
        watches for an entrance
- when that entrance  
        is denied  
            (by the performance)
- waits for a movement
- when that movement  
        is denied  
            (by stillness)
- the spectator's eye  
        suspects the dance  
        within that stillness
- & can sense  
        the discreetest breath  
            (in passage)
- ii.    where there is no breath  
        the funeral rites begin
- the audience witnesses  
        the entry of the priest  
            (to the body)
- and so  
        everyday life  
        and theatre  
        continue  
            (albeit with understudies)
- ...heightened theatrical  
            expectations
- ...sudden substitutions  
            of the unknown  
            for the known             (p. 95)

Read concludes that, “[i]t is theatre which provides one of the most valuable means through which communities understand themselves and become understood by others” (p. 101). A theatre student who encounters artistic training infused with this philosophical stance (and those of the writers previously discussed in this section) will be provided with a constant guide as to how positive engagements with audiences and communities may and should happen. His or her theatre practice, both present and future, may become that of a cultural worker interested in bettering the world rather than that of an artist solely interested in bettering a career.

This section has focussed its attention on looking forward, especially on looking forward to a time when teachers can see themselves as artists and artists can see themselves as teachers. When these two metaphorical conversions take place, the positive results anticipated by AIP curriculum theory in action, in education, in culture and in everyday life can begin to come into play. In the concluding section of this final chapter, I turn my attention to looking around; seeking and finding practical and theoretical work that supports the theory explored and described in this study and that suggests further research paths into the realms of spectatorship, performance and education.

### ***Looking Around: Models of AIP Curriculum in Practice***

An early proposal for this doctoral project involved a national survey of theatre audience education practice in Canada. While this remains a possibility for future research, I decided instead to explore not what *is* happening, but what *might* happen in the education of audiences in the performing arts in Canada and elsewhere. However, even though my

focus became a theoretical one, I have written about the very few exemplary programs offered to young people by performing arts organizations in North America and beyond (see Prendergast, 2001 for more on this topic). This section is intended as an updated addendum to my earlier writing and offers new models of audience education for consideration within AIP curriculum.

The audience education work undertaken in Ireland by the National Theatre offers fine examples of outreach practice (The National Theatre, 2002), as do Canada's largest theatre companies, Stratford and Shaw (see Web References). England, ahead of the curve in audience education compared to North America, generally speaking, has a nationally funded program devoted to developing new audiences for the performing arts. This program, funded at £20 million pounds by the British Arts Council from 1998 to 2003, offered substantial grant monies to groups and organizations that proposed creative initiatives to attract and nurture those who will "participate in and benefit from the arts" (Arts Council England, New Audiences website, accessed June 20, 2005). The detailed website for this project features an abundance of information on winning projects and other research materials. We need to see more initiatives like these in Canada, alongside the few cross-disciplinary arts education projects funded and conducted on national and provincial levels such as Learning Through the Arts, ArtsStarts in Schools and ArtsSmarts (see respective websites in Web References). The United States, in the face of continual cutbacks to the arts and education by the current government, does have some longstanding and effective arts education programs: Arts Education Partnership; ArtsEdge at the Kennedy Center; Arts for Learning; Lincoln Center Institute for the Arts in Education; Chicago Arts Partnership; and Harvard's Project Zero Research Projects in

the Arts (see Web References). Reviewing these projects and programs confirms for me that other individuals and groups see the significance of the arts in education in general, and of the performing arts in education in particular.

In all my research on audience education I have not found a more effective and exemplary model of audience education and outreach practice than that of Toronto's Soulpepper Theatre. Its founders are veterans of Stratford and/or Shaw and are among the best classical actors in Canada. This relatively young company (founded in 1998) presents a summer season of classic and contemporary theatre to great critical acclaim. I visited the company as part of my research in June of 2004 and met with the education director and her staff. Unique to Soulpepper is its tripartite company mandate that places *youth outreach* as one side of the triangle, right next to *theatre company* and *artist training*. The company's work in schools offers students the chance to play with Shakespeare's language in an inner city ESL classroom. Young people in Soulpepper's in-house programs co-create and perform their own productions with the mentorship of professionals over the course of each summer, and get paid a per diem fee to do so! All of Soulpepper's company members take on some outreach and/or education project throughout the year, and students who participate in company programs are offered either complimentary or discount-price tickets for present and future productions. The Soulpepper model of outreach and audience education sees the role of a performing arts company as a participant in a cultural conversation, engaged with audiences and communities, for the betterment of all. Details of these innovative programs are available on the company's website (see Web References).

On a more academic level, there are a handful of recently-published research projects in theatre studies that pay attention to audience interaction with and response to performance. Goodwin (2004) and Ellis (2000) describe effective ways to conduct talkbacks with audiences. Goodwin focusses on applying a communications model called Coordinated Management of Meaning [CMM] to post-show audience discussions. She contends that, “Audience members frequently want to respond...in kind, and...the facilitation of such events, if they are to be optimally successful, requires not only careful planning and consideration, but special skills” (2004, p. 317). Goodwin outlines these skills as involving “circular questioning” and other communications-based strategies:

To possess the tools and abilities to competently, responsively, responsibly intervene in talk, so that it moves from routine and predictable to surprising, innovative, even transgressive, makes of the facilitator a true artistic collaborator, with the audience, in a creative act. (p. 332)

Good educators will recognize Goodwin’s description as akin to good pedagogy (see also Morgan & Saxton, 1991/1994). Ellis differentiates between a typical post-show talkback and a “community conversation” (2000, p. 91). She describes the difference:

Unlike some question-and-answer sessions at regional theatres for season-ticket holders, where audience members ask questions of the professionals who work onstage and backstage, community conversations typically take place after performances in more communal spaces, with audience members and artists speaking as equals. *The focus is not on understanding theatrical craft or appreciating the skill of directors and designers, but rather on the potential for communities to express their own anxieties and hopes.* (pp. 91-92, emphasis added)

Her recommendations for successful post-show community conversations include:

- 1) The conversation takes place in the performance space, immediately following the performance.
- 2) Everyone is welcome.

- 3) There are no experts.
- 4) Audience members are encouraged to further the dialogue by sharing stories.
- 5) As the dialogue grows, the artists tend to participate less, with audience members encouraged to speak directly to each other. (p. 93)

Both Goodwin and Ellis add to the store of knowledge and abilities required for successful post-show interactions with artists in pedagogy of the spectator. They also offer areas for future research in AIP with emergent methodological designs for assessing the effectiveness of post-show conversations.

Sauter (2000) also makes a contribution to AIP curriculum in his study called "Theatre talks". This Swedish research was actually carried out about twenty years ago, but its conclusions still carry value. Sauter and his co-researchers documented post-show small group discussions of over 180 participants to try to find out "what the spectator thinks" (p. 174). Many of his findings confirm what we may already know; for example, that women attend performing arts more than men. Of interest to this study are Sauter's comments on the difference he found between adolescent spectators and those aged twenty and over:

The division between youths and grownups is so strongly marked that it almost shocked people who worked professionally with educational theatre. In the case of young people, their evaluation of performances, their feelings of empathy, their interest in the fiction, their rejection of complex characters, and their sense of theatrical qualities were all experienced very differently. The dividing line seems to be around twenty years of age: a seventeen-year-old is more different from a twenty-five-year-old than the twenty-five-year-old is from a fifty-year-old. This obviously is something to bear in mind when school classes are sent to regular performances for educational reasons. A classical drama can become as boring as a lesson in geography, and many of the students will never return to either theatre or geography. (p. 184)

While adult spectators focus their interpretive attention on the perceived qualities of the performance, with talk about acting more predominant than that of design or directing, younger audiences prefer to focus on the fictional world and the emotional struggles of the characters. However, the central focus of spectator responses was *acting* in both age groups; whether in response to an actor's work or in response to the character he or she represented in performance. This leads Sauter to conclude that, "spectators in the auditorium react foremost to what they actually have in front of them: the actors" (p. 185), and that, "the study of acting [is] one of the major problems in understanding theatre" (p. 186). Both of these conclusions offer future possibilities for investigation in live audience studies research across a number of disciplines; sociology, performance studies, and drama/theatre education. These findings also offer very useful advice to an AIP teacher; younger audiences will potentially respond more fully to performance-related activities and discussions based in *character* and *setting* (i.e., the fictional world of the play), rather than focussed on the skills of the actor or other qualities of the production. This aesthetic preference has curriculum planning implications for both pre-show workshops and post-show talkbacks or "community conversations" (Ellis, cited above). And actors participating in AIP collaborations should be advised to centre their conversations with students inside the constructs of the play; that is, keep an inquiry going into the past, present and future lives of characters and societies illustrated and represented in the play. This is a common facet of theatre-in-education and other applied theatre practices, where actors remain in-role for post-show discussions or other types of activities with student audiences.

All this practical and academic work I see going on around me is the reward reaped for a deeply-held interest in the interconnecting topics of audiences and education. As I conclude this study – an interpretive inquiry that I have lived and breathed over the past number of years – I am also greatly encouraged to read the latest report from the RAND Corporation (an American non-profit think-tank) on the arts, titled *Gifts of the Muse: Reframing the Debate about the Benefits of the Arts* (McCarthy & Jinnett, 2004). This widely disseminated and influential report examines both the instrumental and intrinsic benefits of the arts and concludes that:

- 1) A wide range of benefits can be gained from involvement in the arts, but we contend that many of them...are gained only through a *process of sustained involvement*. (p. xvii)
- 2) Individuals whose *experiences [in the arts] are fully engaging* – emotionally, mentally, sometimes socially – are the ones who continue to be involved in the arts. (p. xvii)
- 3) The study's key policy implication is that policy should be geared toward spreading the benefits of the arts by introducing greater numbers of Americans to engaging arts experiences. The focus requires that attention and resources be shifted away from supply of the arts and toward cultivation of demand. Such a demand-side approach will help build a market for the arts by *developing the capacity of individuals to gain benefits from their arts experiences*. (p. xvii, emphases added in all of above)

While I resist the capitalist language and mindset of this report, I agree with its findings, and see how effectively AIP curriculum fulfills its recommendations. Also, its more general conclusion, that intrinsic benefits from the arts outweigh instrumental ones (such as improved test scores in math or literacy following exposure to the arts), is one that frees art educators from the endless advocacy necessary to counter the marginalization of the arts in our culture. The RAND report concludes with recommendations that arts and education communities might take:

- 1) Develop language for discussing intrinsic benefits [of the arts].... at both the private and the public level.
- 2) Promote early exposure to the arts [as]... key to developing life-long involvement in the arts.
- 3) Create circumstances for rewarding arts experiences. Arts organizations should consider it part of their responsibility to educate their audiences to appreciate the arts. (p. xviii)

Here is a corporate study that echoes key AIP curriculum theory constructs, giving validity to my own findings from a somewhat surprising (yet powerful) quarter. These are strategic avenues for anyone interested in arts and education to consider when creating AIP curriculum and working towards implementing pedagogy of the spectator as an essential aspect of performance, education and everyday life.

### **What Remains?**

Final moments tend to be difficult. Think about the end of a love affair, a job, a class taught or taken, a trip, a research project. It is the same with a performance. My hope is that the reader will take something away from this text that may remain, or even better, may begin to do its work of persuasion and conversion to the curricular vision that has been rehearsed, performed and reflected upon in these pages. At this final moment I give centre stage to someone far more experienced than I in these matters, Herbert Blau:

As for developing audiences thru [sic] education, well, there you're in a double bind, having picked up on my dubiousness about collective identity... & still wanting to believe in the prospect of (Stanley Fish's) interpretive community. I must say that as I watch the audiences at rallies for Bush & Kerry, especially when they talk of "shared values," what I say in the first paragraph of *The Audience* seems more than confirmed, that whether you're at a convention, a union meeting, a town hall event, a veterans group, Swift boats or fast shuffles, when you have the facsimile of a gathered public, what we think of as an audience, it still seems like more of the same, some vaguely grouped assent (even with otherwise intelligent people) to the better-forgotten

remains of the most exhausted illusions.

Which doesn't mean you oughtn't, in theory & practice, as you think thru your AIP curriculum, try to do it anyhow, that is, the impossible...by which I meant that you do it precisely because it's impossible. But if you do, you have to find the means, pedagogically & aesthetically, to confront in the course of performance, as in writing, what those presumably there have not yet thought. (Herbert Blau, personal email communication, October 19, 2004)

As an educator, theatre artist and curriculum theorist with a long-held belief in change, I cannot agree with Blau's assessment of this AIP curriculum theory project's probable impossibility. But I will accept his encouragement, "to try to do it anyway...precisely because it's impossible." And I hope I will be interpreted by my audience here as having found some aesthetic and pedagogic means to perform in writing "what those presumably there have not yet thought."

In the meantime...I'll see you at the theatre.

## Epilogue

### residuum (n.)

#### #1

what remains (substance)  
left after combustion/  
evaporation

*(Concise Oxford Dictionary)*

#### #2

what remains  
from engagement  
with performance?

what residua?

for me  
what remains?

the undeniable force  
of essential loneliness  
within the protection  
of the audience  
around me

it is final moments  
alone

that mark me  
haunt me

in conspiracy  
with actors  
connecting to  
characters  
who embody meanings

(all for one  
one for all)

the storytellers  
who suffer  
fail  
die  
loveandhateandfeelanddesire

too much

& are left on stage  
or exiting

solitary and silent  
breathing to their last breath

with (and for)  
me

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