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Playing on the barricades:

*Embodied reflections on passion and melancholia in drama education by key practitioners*

Jane Isobel Luton

*A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of PhD with Creative Practice component, The University of Auckland, 2015.*
Abstract

This is the first PhD with creative practice component to be completed within the Faculty of Education at The University of Auckland. This thesis forms the written body of work which integrates with and supports the hour long play I performed at the Musgrove Studio, Auckland, in July 2014. My research explores my loss of passion for drama education after many years teaching drama in secondary schools in England and New Zealand. This loss is described as ‘melancholy’, an aesthetic sense which propels me into a search to re-find my enthusiasm for drama education – an often marginalised pedagogy, art form and subject.

I asked six published international drama educators, who have inspired me, to share their stories about what sustains them in their practice. I developed a new research method ‘embodied reflections’ to generate data. This methodology and thesis is constructed like a ‘well-made play’ and uses a framing device to invite my participants to perform their stories and reflect on them through dramatic conventions. I became the ‘researcher-in-role’ as I facilitated each dyadic drama workshop. These stories were captured on video and subsequently mediated by me using theatrical processes resulting in the public performance of the research. I became a researcher, actor, director, designer and dramaturg. This research is informed by arts-based research and by my own immersion in theatre and the work of Bertolt Brecht and Constantin Stanislavski.

I come to embrace serendipity as I frequently made unplanned, unexpected and surprising discoveries – including the important role Motherhood plays in my experiences. During the devising, rehearsing and performing of my play I begin to renew my passion for drama education. I re-engage with drama as art form and pedagogy. I re-discover how to play, to imagine and to perform. I suggest other drama educators could reignite their passion through playful engagement with their own artform. I finally celebrate my melancholia and accept that – in being a drama educator – I am an artist.

A DVD of the doctoral performance accompanies this thesis.
Acknowledgements

I would like to express my special thanks to my supervisors whose inspiration and guidance have been invaluable: Associate Professor Peter O’Connor for enabling my dream of a PhD to be an embodied one and for encouraging me to accept the challenge to undertake a creative practice component; Dr Adrienne Sansom for helping me find my own body and for supporting my playful sessions in the drama studio.

I am very grateful to my participants without whom this research could not have happened: Professor Andy Kempe, Professor John O’Toole, Mr Ron Price, Associate Professor Peter O’Connor, Professor Jonothan Neelands and Associate Professor Lynn Fels. Thank you for giving up your time to play in a space of possibilities.

My thanks and love to my supportive family: Tim and Alexander for your patience and practical assistance. My everlasting love and appreciation go to my beautiful daughter Holly, for being my co-actor and friend on this journey.

Thank you to: Anton Bentley my critical friend whose positive encouragement and critique were much appreciated; Dane Mitchell, artist whose work inspired me and who kindly allowed me to use images of his installation Barricades, and Geoffrey Heath, reproductions co-ordinator at Auckland Art Gallery. Thank you to Godfrey Boehnke, for the photographs of my performance and to Media Productions at the University of Auckland: Mia Silverman, production co-ordinator, and Michelle Vergel de Dios, production assistant, for their help in organising the video recording of my performance. To Margo Athy, Brendan Theodore and Aaron Paap at the Maidment Theatre, Auckland, who made me so welcome and to Sam Mence of Ambiance Technologies who lit my stage. To the staff at The Faculty of Education who encouraged and advised me: Helen O’Carroll, Hilary van Uden, Associate Professor Louisa Allen, Dr. Kirsten Locke, Associate Professor Toni Bruce and Associate Professor Carol Mutch; and to Dr. Jean Rath. Finally, my thanks to: Dina Cloete, proof-reader; all those who organise Exposure: The University of Auckland’s Postgraduate Research Exposition, for encouraging my research; and my doctoral colleagues in the Critical Research Unit in Applied Theatre who allowed me to experiment with them.
Co-Production Form

This form is to accompany the submission of any PhD that contains co-produced creative practice components. Please include one copy of this form for each part of this thesis that was co-produced. Forms should be included in all copies of your thesis submitted for examination and library deposit (including digital deposit), following your thesis Abstract.

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Please indicate the creative practice component of this thesis that has involved co-production or creative collaboration and the title and public presentation details of the co-produced work.

Performance of a drama entitled Battles and Berricadies: A Drama about Drama. Performed at The Musgrove Studio, Maidment Theatre, Auckland, July 22, 2014 at 7pm, followed by an interactive workshop.

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**CO-PRODUCERS**

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<td>Puppeteer attributed as Actor</td>
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**Certification by Co-Producers**

The undersigned hereby certify that:

- the above statement correctly reflects the nature and extent of the PhD candidate's contribution to this work, and the nature of the contribution of each of the co-producers

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Chapter 1. A Proposal

**Prologue**

A proposal to research drama education through drama using performative inquiry and arts based research inspired by practitioners in action. I develop a new research tool ‘embodied reflections’ to generate stories from key drama education practitioners. A research question is articulated and expressed through dramatic means. I introduce myself as the researcher and a participant alongside my six key drama educators. Theatre and arts-based researchers inform my aesthetic choices in the research. The journey of discovery begins.

1.1. A night at the theatre

Tuesday, July 22, 2014, 7pm: I am standing on stage at the Musgrove Studio in the Maidment Theatre in Auckland, New Zealand, in front of an audience of approximately forty people. I am performing my doctoral drama *Battles and Barricades: A Drama about Drama* which forms part of the first PhD with a creative practice component at the Faculty of Education of the University of Auckland.

*Flashback: Performance*
Figure 1 performing

[PROJECTED ONTO THE SCREEN ABOVE THE STAGE] THE THINKING BEHIND THE MUSEUM IS REVEALED. A DYADIC ENCOUNTER IS CREATED TO ENABLE DRAMA PRACTITIONERS TO EMBODY THEIR STORIES OF MELANCHOLIA AND PASSION. DRAMA IS USED TO GENERATE, SYNTHESISE AND DISSEMINATE STORIES ABOUT DRAMA EDUCATION.

Jane enters with coffee cup in hand, walks slowly around the space considering. Then deliberately steps across the red circle and walks into the space.

JANE

Peter Brook says all it takes for an act of theatre to occur is for one person to walk across an empty space and for another to observe¹ (watches the imaginary person)

¹ Brook (1968)
I have been devising and rehearsing this play for several months driven forward by an excitement and energy I have not felt for a long time. Among the audience two examiners sit unseen in the darkness of the auditorium while I am in the light. I hear murmurs, laughter and feel the presence of my audience. We breathe in the same space but I have become the object of their focus; I am inviting them to hear my voice. My choice to perform my research has challenged me to the core of my being. My play is an hour long and in the first of five episodes I dramatically describe my research, my question, my method and hint at what is to come in my journey. I am nervous and excited and I am lost in my own world of performance as I walk around the red rope which encircles the stage acting as a crossing point between the world of reality and the world of make-believe.

1.2. Introducing the journey

When, in 2011, I begin my doctoral journey, I do not foresee that I will become an actor, dramaturg, designer and director. I do not know what questions I will ask or what areas of drama education I will explore. How does a middle-aged woman and drama educator for over twenty years find herself becoming the centre of attention in this drama space? This chapter begins to explain how I ended up on the stage that night, using drama to research drama. The chapter introduces me and my participants and describes some of the ‘battles and barricades’ which are an integral part of the history, theory and practice of drama education. I describe the way in which I came to understand and articulate my research question. I discover that it is possible to use creative methods – and in this case drama – within research, enabling me to explore my question through the art form and pedagogy of drama education; using drama to research drama.

Performance

Jane

[Addressing the audience] Victor Turner says through performance we come to know ourselves. Nicholson believes we archive our lives performatively. (Move and stand on chair) So I create a dyadic encounter in which key drama in education practitioners and I will use

---

2 Turner (1988)
Stanislavsky’s ‘Magic If’ and imagine the creation of a Museum of educational drama. We will see what lies on the battlefield and beyond the barricades. We will use metaphors and maps, monologues and movement, symbols, and images. We will embody our stories of passion and melancholia in practice. (Step slowly off chair SL) John\(^5\) says the museum must be interactive because drama is not static; it is live and visceral … evanescent and embodied.

1.2.1. Thesis and drama: A unified whole

This thesis comprises both the performance and this written document. The written part of the thesis critically investigates, situates and contextualises my creative practice by drawing on my knowledge, experience, emotions and intuition. The drama I devise out of my data draws on the classical format of a well-made play with five episodes which include a prologue followed by an exposition, a rising action and complication, a climax and a denouement. This is reflected in this thesis which also follows this traditional format. I explain later how the research tool was also similarly structured. I aim to make my thesis, performance and the data generation a unified whole which reflects the metaphor of a journey of discovery. I disrupt the traditional format by drawing on Brecht’s Epic theatre conventions (Willett, 1964). Each chapter opens with a Brechtian placard which foreshadows what is to come in the same way that each episode of my drama begins with a statement projected onto a screen above the stage.

I choose not to recount this research as a linear journey; instead it foreshadows events, it requires acts of imagination, and it contains dialogue and stage directions. My narrative traces my research across time, disrupting chronology and juxtaposing elements as Barone suggests autobiographical accounts do (Barone, 1997). I do this to heighten the tension or emotional quality of the research story I tell. Brecht’s use of a ‘Modelbook’ which was an “attempt to capture for posterity some sense of Brecht’s productions as aesthetic wholes” (Fuegi, 1972, p. 188) is the inspiration for me to incorporate photographs, script and descriptive elements to “interpret and particularize, the play’s actions, characters, settings and ideas” (Jones, 1986, p. 78). It is also an attempt to recover some of the initial aliveness of the performance. I sometimes use images taken

\(^4\) Stanislavski (1937/2013)
\(^5\) John O’Toole, a key drama educator and one of the participants in my research.
from my research, rendered with artistic effects so that they resemble a drawing – removing them from reality into a non-naturalistic state which provides a degree of privacy for my participants. I use four different types of quotation:

Traditional citations from books

*The words spoken by my participants during their embodied reflections*

Journal entries

and extracts from my script.

Each of these are placed in a different font type to attract attention in the same way that a play can excite us through the use of the technologies of costume, lighting, sound and multimedia.

My thesis explores the ways in which drama educators sustain their own practice in a subject that is often marginalised in schools and which is surrounded by a history of vociferous discourses from within its own practice. Its unique contribution to the field of drama education comes from the methods I develop through which the stories of drama education practitioners are generated, analysed and presented during the research, as well as the discoveries I make about what can sustain drama teachers in their work. This thesis is ultimately a personal story because I situate my own loss of passion for drama education and my subsequent inability to play as central to this journey. In the process I try to find ways to reconnect to rebuild my passion and offer these as opportunities for other drama educators to explore.

1.2.2. I am the researcher

I arrive at this research in a melancholic state, although I do not know or use this term when I begin. I choose, reluctantly at first, to make a cameo appearance (Fels, Linds, & Purru, 2008) in the story, not knowing I would, by the end of the research be centre stage. So as I devise and rehearse my drama to re-enact my re-imaginings of the stories I generate during the research, I become a central character embodied in the use of the word I and in the stories and images that are woven into this narrative.

I was trained in England and privileged to have access to an intensive year-long postgraduate drama education course. This introduced me to a range of drama education methods and to the work of many key theorists and practitioners. On the
other hand, I entered drama teaching as the Education Reform Act was passed in England which instigated a new National Curriculum from which drama was excluded as a subject except under the auspices of English. Reactions to this heightened the drama wars (O’Toole, Stinson, & Moore, 2009), and the perception of a widening of the gap between drama education and theatre. David Hornbrook’s seminal work *Education and Dramatic Art* (1989) is on the verge of publication. My tutor, Andy Kempe, asked to read the manuscript by the publishers suggests it is like “finding yourself in a small room with a ticking bomb” (A. Kempe to J. Luton, personal communication, email March 27, 2009)!

My choice to describe some of the difficulties I face as a drama educator in terms of battles and barricades arises from the highly emotive and dramatic language drawn from the academic debates surrounding drama education as I entered into this world. These include “civil wars” and, “paradigm battles” which “took on the appearance of barricades” (O’Toole et al., 2009, p. 117) and “battlefields” (Davis & Lawrence, 1986, p. 70). These metaphors are expressed in the diverse nature of the subject and in the demands it makes on drama educators teaching a subject which appears to receive little recognition from governments, schools, teachers, parents and sometimes even students. I perceive myself fighting endless battles which lead me to a sense of disappointment and disillusionment with teaching drama. However, it was not always thus:

*Flashback: Performance*

**Jane**

1989. Reading University. Last day of teacher training. Notice the happy smile, the warm glow. Oh! [Looking at slide, to audience] Wait a minute, you can’t tell which one is me? I was blonde then, and slim, and wrinkle free, and full of passion to be a drama educator.
I love this photograph taken on the last day of my teacher training at Reading University in 1989. As students about to become drama teachers we are drinking champagne outside Ufton Court, an Elizabethan mansion, in Berkshire, England, dressed in theatrical costume. We have been performing a murder mystery for primary school children who promenade throughout the building to visit scenes in a variety of rooms. On the right of the picture stands Andy Kempe, our tutor celebrating his first cohort of trainee teachers. Little did I know that twenty-four years later I will interview him for a doctoral thesis. The picture reminds me that drama can be both pedagogy and art form, serious and playful. I see my younger self, smiling, excited, about to embark on my first job at a school nearby. I have “a desire to teach, a love of theatre and a passion to work in drama in education” (Schonmann & Kempe, 2010, p. 327) as Schonmann and Kempe suggest student teachers often have at the outset of their teacher training. Over the next twenty years I direct and produce plays, help children pass assessments and exams, introduce and develop drama in schools, enhance new spaces, take children on theatre trips, advocate for the subject in school, become a mother, immigrate to New Zealand, write four drama books and run my own drama teaching classes at home. In 2009 as I begin my Master’s study, I am diagnosed with Hashimoto’s thyroiditis, an autoimmune thyroid condition which accounts for some of the tiredness I have been feeling. When I receive the phone call from my doctor, I am sitting watching my daughter play Rounders at her school. I feel a huge sense of relief sweep over me and take a bite of a chocolate biscuit to celebrate. At least I
have a physical condition that can be rectified through regular medication. But I am still aware that somewhere along the way I have become:

*Still image: Performance*

![Figure 3 exhausted](image-url)

Exhausted, frustrated,

*Slide: The Scream by Munch*

(Holds hand to face to mirror scream image)

depressed.

Behind me is the image of Munch’s *The Scream*, a favourite painting of mine which I have used in school productions and classroom dramas to inspire work. I raise my hands to my face and mirror the screaming expression for it captures my sense of frustration with drama education pedagogy.
Recalling those halcyon days at Reading University I look back at my notes from a seminar given by Andy Kempe in May 1989 about how the proposed new National Curriculum will affect drama teaching in secondary schools in England. They are written in green ink and I notice a heading I underline twice:

‘ACTION’

Underneath I note the calls for a common language across the arts and attainment tasks and programmes of study for drama to be developed. A note of gloom in the centre of the page simply states:

“staffing in the Nat. Curriculum – going to be impossible for the arts”.

This sense of gloom pervaded my own sense of being marginalised, especially as there was a concern about the availability of jobs. Then on becoming a teacher I felt responsible to prove my subject and myself and this was necessarily through an extensive commitment to curricular and co-curricular programmes, assessment, classroom teaching, productions, theatre visits and pastoral care. Neelands recognises that “drama teachers are expected to do a lot for their money” (O’Connor, 2010, p. 109) in the “interweaving, juggling, structuring, balancing that needs to be done in order to knit these long term concerns into the space and time of a planned curriculum” (O’Connor, 2010, p. 109).
After twenty years in the classroom attempting to be “superhuman” (Johnson & O’Neill, 1984, p. 37) I am concerned now that if I admit to a sense of disillusionment or share my worries I will be perceived as “incompetent or inadequate” (Neelands, 1996, p. 159).

1.2.3. Entering the faculty of education

Drama compresses time and in a few sentences I speak about what took over two years to develop. I begin my PhD in 2011, while a full-time Head of Department but leave the secondary classroom in 2012 for full-time study:

Flashback: Performance

Figure 5 may I come in?

And so I knock on the Faculty of Education door.
May I come in?
What for?

(Steps forward quickly, quietly)

Well I’d like to study the battles and barricades of drama education; metaphors drawn from the sometimes vociferous discourses of over a century of practice.

Peter O’Connor is there to greet me as my main supervisor and later Adrienne Sansom will join us on the journey. I have to find not only a question but a
method. In 2013, I recount my sense of confusion and fear in a dramatised performance with fellow doctoral students\(^6\) for which I write and co-perform the following monologue:

**Monologue**

I’m lost in words:
Where do I begin?
Qualitative, Quantitative
Subjective, Objective
Epistemology,
Ontology
What methodology?
Empirical, Theoretical
Narrative, Historical
Paradigm and Praxis
Complexity and Chaos
I’m at a loss.
Interviews and questionnaires?
Critical Inquiry?
Indecisiveness.
Help!! Help!! HELP!!

As I adapt and rehearse some of these lines for my performance of *Battles and Barricades* in 2014, I find myself growing in confidence. My arms stretch out and I dance across the stage twirling around as I speak the words ‘qualitative’ and ‘subjective’. The words ‘quantitative’ and ‘objective’ bring me to a sudden stop and I make the shape of a small box with my hands. This is not planned but rather grows organically as my body responds to the words. I have an innate sense that I must explore ideas through intuition, emotion, subjectivity and embodiment.

It takes many months of writing, thinking, discussing before I am ready to accept that my disillusioned self must open the door to my research question. My negative mood could no longer be ignored but had to be embraced. I must acknowledge the conflict within me between a love for and disillusionment with drama education pedagogy if I am to continue to teach drama. A tingle of excitement runs through me while reading that “new opportunities in research may appear when we accept that emotions are not separable from the reasoning

---

\(^6\) This performance was an embodiment of our arts-based research methods and was performed at several symposiums in 2012 and 2013.
and decision making processes” (Bacon, 2006, pp. 140-141). I am excited to know that my emotions can be acknowledged and are a valid part of academic research since “we are stimulated to take action by an emotion” (Allen, 1979, p. 37). Thus my journey is fuelled from a position of frustration, exhaustion, and depression and a sense of drama education as a site filled with battles and barricades. I must embrace these emotions, let them stir me to action and lead me where they will.

1.2.4. Articulating the question

I acknowledge that I am frustrated as a drama educator and aware of a small voice sitting on my shoulder whispering in my ear. This voice is a critical one, pointing out my failings in the drama classroom. It dampens the joyous moments making me powerless to acknowledge my own contribution to student success or my own achievements. Being conscious of the many possibilities that drama education offers in the classroom I am aware that the curriculum limits those possibilities and demands that I evaluate student work through rigorous and judgemental assessment. I am left questioning whether I am “doing it right”.

A question starts to formulate and be articulated. How does a drama educator negotiate and sustain themselves through the ‘battles’ and ‘barricades’ inherent in the practice of drama in education? As I ask the question I know there may be no one answer; is it possible that a passion for drama can be sustained or that the battles and barricades can be negotiated? I wonder about those who have impacted on my own teaching who seem to have survived, even flourished. If I asked them, what would their reply be? I feel I need to approach and question the key practitioners who inform my own practice. I have a real need to discover if the experiences of these educators can offer insights into how the battles and barricades can be negotiated or confronted. I am aware that most of the practitioners who have inspired me no longer operate in secondary classrooms on a daily basis. This is a problem for me because as I seek their stories I wonder if they have forgotten what it is like to be in the secondary classroom. In telling their stories I realise I must reveal my own story of drama education and reflect on my own practice exploring my despondency with a pedagogy and art form I once loved. This may offer insights for other drama educators feeling embattled by the difficulties they face in the classroom or pressurised by assessment and co-curricular productions.
1.3. Practitioners and participants

I blow the dust off two red folders that contain notes from my drama training course and begin to consider whom to invite. Many names leap from the pages but I also consider practitioners who have inspired me subsequent to my teacher training. After much debate I invite nine educators to take part although there are many more on my list that I could invite. Each of these participants has worked as an educator in a school situation using drama in a variety of ways, but they have also produced published works; theoretical and practical. I send a scoping email first to inquire if they might be interested in taking part. Two, David Hornbrook and Cecily O’Neill, sadly decline my invitation. I formally invite those who express their interest by sending them my participation information sheet and consent form (see Appendix A). The following agree to participate:

**Professor Andy Kempe**

Andy is the Subject Course Leader for the Post Graduate Certificate of Education in Drama at The University of Reading in England and was formerly a drama teacher in secondary schools. As my tutor during teacher training it is he who introduced me to the many possibilities of drama as both pedagogy and art form. I recall his classes as ones filled with experimentation, playfulness and laughter. He led the group through exploratory ways to use a range of texts and approaches in practical applications. My abiding memory is of a wall in the drama studio filled with the photocopied text of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*. During the course of an afternoon we explored themes in the play using wool and pins which formed a multi-coloured spider’s web across the studio wall. We subsequently developed and performed short plays from our thematic findings. It is only now that I reflect on this that I realise there was much in this task that inspires me in developing my doctoral research method.

**Professor John O’Toole AM**

John O’Toole has developed drama and arts education in Australia and is Australia’s first professor of arts education. In 2014 he is awarded a Queen’s Birthday honour for his service to drama education. He began his career in England as an English teacher, writer and performer in educational theatre (John Robert O’Toole, 2009). I was first inspired by John O’Toole when I discovered a
small red book in a second-hand bookshop entitled *Theatre in Education* (O'Toole, 1976). This little book influenced several projects I undertook with students. Reading his articles I am inspired by the ways in which research can be both educational and entertaining. I first meet him at the drama symposiums at Auckland University where I have the opportunity to hear him deliver a paper and take part with him in a workshop.

**Ron Price**

Ron is an advanced skills teacher for drama and theatre and director of training at a secondary school in England where he has taught for over thirty years. He co-founded the Ufton Drama Summer School on which he has tutored for many years. As the Head of Drama he inspired me during my last teaching practicum and in the years afterwards through his courses at Ufton Court where I gain valuable skills in teaching senior examination level drama. The notes and his book (Morton, Price, & Thomson, 2001) become important resources and in my archive I keep his letter wishing me well in my teaching career.

**Associate Professor Peter O'Connor**

Peter becomes my Doctoral supervisor in 2011. Between 2000 and 2005 he was the National Drama Facilitator in New Zealand and although I read and am inspired by his work, it is not until 2010 that I have the opportunity to meet him and attend his first drama symposium which changes my research life. His being both my supervisor and a participant means there are ethical issues to negotiate which are discussed later in this thesis.

**Professor Jonothan Neelands**

Jonothan Neelands is the Professor of Creative Education at the Warwick Business School and Chair of Drama and Theatre Education at The University of Warwick, England. I am introduced to his work through two of his books, *Making Sense of Drama: A Guide to Classroom Practice* (Neelands, 1984) and *Structuring Drama Work: A Handbook of Available Forms in Theatre and Drama* (Neelands & Goode, 1990). Relocating to teach Drama in New Zealand I discover that his work is central in the concepts and language of the National Certificate of
Educational Achievement in Drama. He remains a practitioner in name only until 2012, when I attend a drama workshop he gives in Ireland. I am not left disappointed when confronted by theory in practice and want to discuss it more but I am overawed in his presence.

Without Cecily O’Neill I am left with a dilemma:

**Flashforward: Performance**

[Melony, the critical voice represented by a puppet, leans towards the audience, lowers her glasses and peers out over the audience.]

![Image of Melony](image.png)

Figure 6 where are the women?

**MELONY**

So we’re in the realms of complete fantasy. Why are there so many men in this Museum? Where are the women?

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7 The standards-based assessment system of the Ministry of Education administered by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority [NZQA] for senior secondary school students at Years 11, 12 and 13.
There have been many wonderful women practitioners - Dorothy of course and Cecily - but she was too busy to take part - and Harriet Finlay Johnson - Jane’s particular heroine. These are the people who influenced Jane’s teaching.

As the question is asked a woman’s voice in the audience calls out:

“Yeah! Where are they?” (Audience member, July 22, 2014)

Although there are many women who have developed drama education praxis and published books and articles, this thesis is not about questioning why men have taken lead roles in a field dominated by women. It is my search to re-find a passion for drama education by speaking with those who have directly influenced me. In academia and in secondary schools senior positions are taken by men and in my teacher training notes I still retain the presentation I researched and made on this very subject. It is an irony that the majority of educators are women and that drama education has developed from the work of practitioners like Harriet Finlay Johnson, now often forgotten, Dorothy Heathcote, Cecily O’Neill, Julianna Saxton, and Norah Morgan. Roma Burgess and Pamela Gaudry (Burgess & Gaudry, 1985) are two practitioners trained in Australia who wrote a practical resource which assisted my teaching. As I consider the issue I wonder what differences between how I as a woman and my participants as men negotiate and sustain themselves during the battles and barricades of teaching drama. Their battles and barricades may be different ones from mine, or perceived as unimportant or even non-existent. My participants are mainly men because it is Andy Kempe, Ron Price, Jonothan Neelands, John O’Toole and Peter O’Connor who have most influenced my eclectic approach to teaching.

Associate Professor Lynn Fels

Then in a moment of serendipity I have the opportunity to work with Lynn Fels, the originator of performative inquiry. She asks to experience my method and as a result I find immediate connections between her story and that of other
practitioners whom I had by this time researched. She agrees to be included as one of my participants and encourages my work enthusiastically.

Lynn Fels is the Associate Professor of Arts Education at the Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University, British Columbia, Canada. Although Lynn arrives serendipitously, I claim her as a participant for the contribution she has made in developing performative inquiry and claiming drama as a means through which we can come to understand our praxis.

1.3.1. Elite respondents

The research with my participants takes place between September 2012 and May 2013. I meet John in Australia; Andy, Ron and Jonothan in England. Peter, Lynn and I generate our stories in New Zealand. As a naturally shy person, a paradox possibly for a drama educator, meeting some of these experts whom I have not met before makes me anxious and nervous. Ackroyd & O'Toole warn that “there is often a problem in the power dynamics between the researcher and the research participants, especially if the participants perceive themselves as less empowered and carry less cultural capital” (2010, p. 55). In this research the participants as “elite respondents” (Burke & Innes, 2004, Para 4) in their field and I as a drama educator share much of this cultural capital but it is I as the researcher who feels less empowered in the presence of those whom I admire. It is important though that I hear their stories in order to make some sense of my own. During the research I question my own disjointed journey in comparison with those of my participants and consider whether my role as a Mother and my ‘quiet’ self has prevented me from feeling more visible in the drama education community. As a woman in a marginalised subject I am doubly prone to invisibility, watching the men acclaimed as the voice of drama education. I wonder if my sense of being less empowered stems from my female self and my perceived lack of a voice (Debold, Wilson, & Malave, 1993). My research arises as a result of needing to find and reclaim my own voice.
1.4. Making methods

*Flashback: Performance*

Jane

All the world’s a stage and men and women merely players: *As You Like It*, William Shakespeare.

*(Step back turn chair around and sit as if watching presenters)*

Attending the *International Drama in Education Symposiums* at Auckland University I discovered research-based theatre and ethnographic performance. Discovering that data could be generated, mediated and disseminated was like a light *(Stand, click fingers Light up full on finger click)* illuminating a darkened stage. Performative inquiry; the third paradigm. [Episode 1, Battles and Barricades: A Drama about Drama]

These moments are so significant in my research journey that when I perform them in my play I click my fingers in the darkness and my technician illuminates the stage. This is my theatrical metaphor to describe how arts-based researchers shape, inform and inspire my methodology.

At the first Critical Studies in Drama in Education International Symposium⁸ at the University of Auckland, I am excited and transfixed as George Belliveau embodies the fictional character of Bottom⁹ sharing his research into using Shakespeare in primary school classrooms. I am sitting with other delegates in a traditional and uninspirational lecture theatre now transformed into a performance space surrounded by research artefacts. George wears a costume and addresses us in role. This is the key moment when I recognise what I want to experience in my research. I make a decision there and then that somehow drama must inform and take a central place in my own journey. I begin to explore and

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⁸ *Much Ado About Shakespeare* performed with Sue Belliveau at: Drama and a Pedagogy of Hope: Critical Studies in Drama in Education International Symposium, Faculty of Education Epsom Campus, University of Auckland, October 26-27, 2010.

⁹ A character in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, William Shakespeare.
examine possibilities and a year later at the second symposium, Joe Norris shares his research method, ‘playbuilding’, which is richly embedded in dramatic enterprise (Norris, 2009).

1.4.1. Arts based research and performative inquiry

Seeing George Belliveau’s work performed live and later encountering Joe Norris engendered in me exciting possibilities for disseminating data through drama. My concern was that academic expectations might demand a traditional method of collecting and analysing data. Nevertheless in the last twenty years there has been a move within the academy to acknowledge other ways of exploring and sharing research. Having the opportunity to undertake a PhD with a creative practice component is part of the change within the academy. There are accounts that chart the development of arts-based research methods from the 1970s onwards (O’Connor & Anderson, 2015; Beck & Belliveau et al., 2011) and articles that offer critical questions about engaging in this form of research (Anderson, 2007; Norris, 2009; Saldaña, 2011). There is a particular concern about the need to pay attention to the aesthetic quality of what is produced when we use art forms in research.

As a result of working on an extensive research project into the arts in education James Hoetker realised that using a traditional quantitative approach was not effective in conveying “appreciation, understanding, humaneness, self-respect, creativity, sensitivity” (Hoetker, 1975, p.86). The most meaningful data arose from observing interactions between students and educators in the classroom and the best way to convince people of drama’s value was through:

Demonstrations by students or displays of student work; films; multimedia shows; transcriptions of tape-recorded conversations; fictions based on the evaluator’s experience; videotape recording; or a series of simulations designed to give the audience a vicarious experience of the programme in question. (1975, p.92)

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10 Pedagogy of Possibilities: The 2nd Critical Studies in Drama in Education International Symposium, Faculty of Education Epsom Campus, The University of Auckland, December 1-2, 2011.
What was important was finding out “what drama means in the lives of the students, teachers and their school” (1975, p. 90). Meaning could not be found through “omniscient objectivity” (1975, p. 81) but through the communication of personal experiences which could include autobiographical methods or a novel (1975, p.90) – acknowledging the fictional and artistic form as a valid means of data dissemination.

Victor Turner began using drama to help his students of ethnography engage more deeply in the cultures they were exploring, suggesting that by only “cognizing the connections, we fail to form a satisfactory impression of how another culture’s members experience one another” (Turner, 1988, p. 139). By separating the mind and the body as two disassociated entities the importance of knowledge is placed in the written word (O’Connor & Anderson, 2015) but Turner suggests that the “text is not privileged” (V. Turner, 1982, p. 16) and that we are performative beings. Elliot Eisner called for new ways outside the scientific paradigm to develop research using our imaginations thus “deepening meaning, expanding awareness, and enlarging understanding” (Eisner, 1997, p.5). By developing alternative ways of representing data and acknowledging the place of emotions and subjectivity researchers could engage a wider audience through the senses as well as the intellect. For the drama educator and researcher creating a dichotomy between mind and body, text and embodiment, we may miss opportunities to collect rich data and gain an understanding of human emotions and stories (O’Connor & Anderson, 2015). Using drama might enable an audience to be entertained as well as educated and its processes – used in drama classes and theatre rehearsal rooms – could explore and expand ideas in an embodied manner.

By the mid-1990s drama educators began to call for ways to use drama itself as a research tool (Rasmussen, 1996; Somers, 1996). John O’Toole describes drama conventions as a “particularly fertile field for more subtle and indirect forms of data collection” (O’Toole, 2006, p. 110). In Canada Joe Norris called for drama to be used throughout the whole research process (Norris, 2009) and he embraced the use of conventions and playbuilding as research tools. He considers that drama can be used in all aspects of a research project for the generation, mediation and dissemination of data implying that research does not depend on using traditional forms of qualitative interviewing, opening a space for drama to be central in the research act. Rita Irwin and other likeminded scholars began to question why their
art forms were not as valued in the academy as their written documents (Irwin & De Cosson, 2004, p.27; Fels, 2012). This gave rise to notions of A/R/Tography which situates the artist within research and enables educational researchers to work with “different ways of collecting, presenting, and representing research and inquiry” (Irwin & De Cosson, 2004, p.27). Lynn Fels articulated ‘performative inquiry’ as “a way of inquiring into what matters as we engage in drama or theatre activities” (Fels, 2012. P.51). Researchers and educators could be ‘in the moment’ and engage in “embodied mindfulness and reflection” (p.51). Brad Haseman suggests that performative inquiry sits alongside quantitative and qualitative research as the third paradigm (Haseman, 2007). This third paradigm encourages participants to interact creatively to explore and reflect on ideas through role play and imagination often arising from “Aha! Moments” (Fels & McGivern, p.25). This ability and need for arts-based researchers to ‘feel’ research is vital for it:

recognizes that we know the world through all our senses, through our bodies, and that we can sometimes better represent that knowledge through our bodies rather than through what comes from our mind alone.
(O’Connor & Anderson, 2015, p 26)

Throughout my research as I engage with my participants’ embodied stories there are many “Aha!” moments of resonance which White and Belliveau suggests is “something that can only be achieved when others become connected to the work on both rational and emotional levels” (White & Belliveau, 2011, p.228). Arts based research can be a risky business as Fels and McGivern suggest. By choosing a dramatic framing device to explore ideas their student participants are “transported into an unexpected environment” where they “must reexamine the familiar against the unfamiliar” (McGivern & Fels, p.28). My participants and I will explore the familiar – drama education through drama pedagogy – but in an unfamiliar framed space to encourage embodied reflection.

For Eisner using the art form in research is “an act of discovery and invention” (Eisner, 2002, p239) which can “enable us to step into the shoes of others and to experience vicariously what we have not experienced directly” (Eisner, 2002, p.10). It is this act of discovery and lived experience I seek to share. As I engage in arts based research and performative inquiry to explore my research question it is contextualised and rephrased through drama conventions and explored by my
participants through voice, body, movement and use of space. Other questions arise and unexpected discoveries are made. I am inspired by John O’Toole’s suggestion that “if the medium of our sharing is (partly at least) the message, and the message is art, then the medium should be artistic” (O’Toole, 1997, p 185). I hope that by paying attention to the aesthetics of drama and theatre and to ethical considerations I am discovering artful solutions to research questions.

1.4.2. A new way to interview

I begin, then, by knowing how I may ultimately share my research with others but finding an approach to generate the data is not as straightforward. During my Master’s research I use qualitative interviews with my participants; sitting at one side of a table while they face me on the other. I listen to their words, nod and smile, ask questions and write down notes. One of my interviews is carried out over the telephone. The interviews are informative but somehow routine and mundane; something is missing from these interactions. With hindsight, I wanted to see my participants, move, enact, imagine and retell their stories actively because stillness can prevent important data from being generated and recorded (Kvale, 1996, p. 292). A lack of embodiment may hinder the creation of “vividly enacted and performable stories” (Langellier & Peterson, 2006, p. 154) which could be a significant issue for me as a researcher hoping to create a drama performance from my research data.

Interviews are a popular and an important data-gathering tool but they have their limitations. There is the possibility that the intrusion of the interviewer into the interview has the potential to impose answers or opinions upon the participant (Amis, 2005; Myers & Newman, 2007). Qualitative interviews are an “artificial situation” (Myers & Newman, 2007, p. 3) as they tend to be an encounter between strangers in a possibly unfamiliar location. The interviewee is asked to “create an answer” (Myers & Newman, 2007, p. 3) within the constraints of time which Myers and Newman (2007, p.12) suggest is an act of improvisation. I can embrace and harness this act of improvisation in my research because it is a fundamental part of theatre and drama education, inviting exploration and leaps of imagination through vocal and physical embodiment. Improvisation “can be used to investigate the emotional depth of a situation” (Van Dijk, 2011, p. 23) and to help articulate ideas (Norris, 2009). It does not require a ‘right’ answer at the first or
successive attempts. Improvisation encourages participants to experiment and reflect; a final answer may not be forthcoming and it may be that the reflective process rather than the final product might offer the richest data.

In many ways the qualitative interview resembles a dramaturgical event with “a stage, props, actors, an audience, a script, an entry and an exit” and employing Goffman’s notions of social performance (Myers & Newman, 2007, p. 12). The participants alter their presentation according to the situation they find themselves in (Goffman, 1959) and the participant chooses what role to play, as does the researcher (Myers & Newman, 2007). Like a theatre performance, the interview and the stories that are told can never be entirely re-captured in their original or interview form for like the stage they are “a stylized re-enactment of real action, which is then imagined by the audience. The re-enactment is not merely an imitation but a symbol of the real thing” (Guthrie, 1960, p. 313).

As research participants recall past events, ideas or stories, they re-shape them before expressing them publicly through the words they speak. These stories are no longer the original event but a representation of past events. They are a monologue or dialogue if the interviewer participates in the discussion. What is expressed by the participants is then interpreted by the researcher who re-imagines and makes meaning from the words for an audience. The audience, in reading about the research, may further contemplate those meanings. The process resembles the one in which a playwright, dramaturg or director engages when bringing a text to an audience through the medium of the actor. However, if stories are re-told using only words we may miss details that a re-enactment in a stylised form might tell us. Using drama may explicitly acknowledge that the interview is not actually ‘real’ life and can only ever represent and symbolise moments chosen to express that life. Using drama to invite stories may generate poetic dramas because “if people know they are being tape recorded, they make adjustments both of form and content, they begin to talk for posterity, they begin to be artists” (Bentley, 1964, p. 81). How much richer might that imagination, interpretation and meaning making be if we can see, feel and hear the stories re-told acknowledging them as a theatrical event, recreated from the original? By using a theatrical and dramatic methodology enabling embodiment, I can explicitly acknowledge that my research – while based on actual stories re-told to me as researcher – is mediated through me before being shared with an audience.
1.4.3. Conundrums and challenges

Instead of interviews I wanted to invite my participants to embody their stories. I needed to find a way for drama to be an effective method of exploring research questions. Joe Norris generates data from group interactions through dramatic storytelling. These offer a collaborative approach to research creating emotionally richer stories and “evocative texts” (Norris, 2009, p. 21) which engage the audience in making meanings for themselves. Brad Haseman suggests that researchers can “draw on our own established methods of practice and repurpose them as research methods to address our research questions” (Haseman, 2015, p. 236).

I am excited by the possibilities that drama can bring to my research allowing me to use my own skills in theatre arts, my drama knowledge, inherent emotional and empathetic qualities and my experience of analysing characters and constructing stories with students. As a passionate theatre goer I attend performances not only to watch the play but to experience what the characters may be feeling in my own body. I sense the messages from the gestures, the use of space, the tone of voice and the technologies. I am trusted to interpret the images and mingle them with my own story. At the outset of my research, I imagine capturing the unspoken language through which my participants may reveal their thoughts and feelings. As they are drama educators who use embodiment in their practice, the opportunity to move and re-enact their stories might deepen their telling.

Playbuilding is a group process, as most drama workshops are, but my problem is that each of my participants will be alone in their own drama space watched only by me and my video camera. This is in part due to the international nature of the research and because I want each story to be untouched by any other in the generation stage to make my own comparisons and connections in the analytical process. I wonder if there is a way to bring together the concept of an interview with a focus on embodiment in a dyadic situation and invite my participants to perform their stories alone, only to me. This question was answered for me by Peter Brook, who has challenged notions of theatre for over 50 years and defines theatre as the taking of:
any empty space and call[ing] it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and this is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged. (Brook, 1968, p. 11)

This concept epitomises for me the paradox of theatre: its simplicity and complexity. In its simplicity it is, according to Jerzy Grotowski, “what takes place between spectator and actor” (Grotowski, 1991, p. 32). The communication between the actor and audience is a primeval instinct to which we respond instinctively as “emotion is almost telepathically transferred from the stage” (Esslin, 1987, p. 66). We also respond complexly, as Helen Nicholson believes the body is a “space of possibilities” (Nicholson, 2003, p. 91) which “archives our lives performatively” (2003, p. 90). Our bodies not only enable performance but are imprinted with our experiences. Stanislavski relied on the actor being able to recall the feelings, emotions and sensations of past experiences in the body to use them to “give life to the play” (Stanislavski, 1937/2013, pp. 142-145). As we share these experiences in the theatrical space the spectator can analyse themselves and engage in a “self-search” (Grotowski, 1991, p. 40). Through drama the actor and audience, participant and researcher can investigate, communicate and share their world in a “narrative made visible” (Esslin, 1987, p. 36).

However, I am uncertain how this act of dyadic research might be enacted until another serendipitous moment presents itself. As I sit in a seminar with a group of students, a theatre practitioner tells the story of a significant moment from their work in a school. Reflecting on the moment I write in my journal:

Jane’s Journal

The story concerned the presentation of an Applied Theatre performance in a school which had been attended by a Member of Parliament, invited to watch the work. They held the power to give or withdraw funding for the continuation of the project. The MP was short on time but remained at the performance longer than initially planned.

As P. retold the story he began to use gestures, movement and space, his voice increased in pace and intensity. He moved downstage, narrating, walking briskly beside the imagined Member of Parliament. He appeared to be attempting to hand the MP something; the narration told us it was a research document concerning
the project. The audience, of which I was a member, were no longer just listening but were now observing. We could sense the MP was rushed; that she was not looking at the practitioner. I observed P’s hands outstretched holding the imagined document, eyes looking up as if the MP held a higher status, the physical and vocal pace was fast. P addressed us in the present and spoke to the imagined MP in the past; suddenly I felt the “tingle” or “goose-bump moment” (Probyn, 2004, p. 29). Clive Barker calls this kinaesthetic sense or “body think”, a kind of sixth sense or a, “je ne sais quoi” moment (Barker, 1977, p. 29). I was experiencing the emotion of the moment as if I had been there. In Brechtian terms, the practitioner was standing outside the action, narrating it in the past yet re-enacting as if it was happening at that moment. The narration contained analysis of feelings, the importance of this meeting for the other actors and a description of the MP. The ‘gestus’ or “overall attitude” (Willett, 1964, p. 104) of pleading as the document was held in two hands, revealed to the audience the tension, the excitement, on which rose or fell the dreams of the company.

In this moment of solo embodied story telling I begin to imagine a way to enable my participants to embody their stories.

1.4.4. Generating data: Embodied Reflections

I invite my participants to take part in two interactive interviews with me, each lasting approximately one and a half hours. During the interview I use dramatic conventions drawn from theatre (Grotowski, 1991) and drama education (Neelands & Goode, 1990; O'Neill & Lambert, 1982). These conventions are used to “help frame the constructed world of the drama” (Carroll, 1996, p. 77) and to enable embodied and cognitive responses to my research question. The first interview focuses on the metaphors of battles and barricades while the second explores what sustains praxis. I use visual and textual resources to help locate the issues and generate stories. I use one static camera to video record each interview. While I facilitate the process, my aim is to enable the participants to tell their stories with minimal interference from myself.

Initially I call this method an interactive interview but this does not capture the dual nature of this method: the embodiment and reflection by the participant as they share their responses to the research question. It places too much onus on the concept of a traditional interview although it embraces the interactive nature of the research. Turner suggests that through performance those performing and those observing become “reflexive” (Turner, 1988, p. 81). Reflection is a central concept in theatre and drama education for as we watch plays or take part as
actors we are reminded of seeing ourselves and our world in a mirror (Grotowski, 1991). I play with Turner’s concepts of reflexive and reflective and feel that the term ‘*Embodied Reflections*’ captures both the performative and reflective quality of the research. Embodiment is central to drama education praxis as through ‘doing’, we explore ideas; it is comparable to actors physically exploring texts to interpret and share them. Through the use of voice, body and movement, drama “communicates multidimensionally at any moment an almost inexhaustible amount of information and meaning” (Esslin, 1987, p. 37). This makes it a rich source of data. As the actor or participant embodies their story they are also engaged in ‘metaxis’ where the actor has “a dual awareness of both the ‘real’ and the ‘fictitious’ worlds” (Bolton, 1992, p. 18) being within and outside the action, engaging in and reflecting on what is happening. My participants are encouraged to improvise and reflect, to take their time to reconstruct a story using a more physical approach than words alone. They are invited to draw on their skills in drama education pedagogy, subject and art form and use symbols, images and metaphors.

In 2011, my daughter and I visit the Auckland Art Gallery. As I enter one of the rooms, I am stopped by a large art installation *Barricades* by Dane Mitchell. It fills a whole room of the Museum and speaks to my inner being of the conflicts and difficulties that drama educators encounter in their work. Mitchell does not believe barricades are a fortress but rather that they “seek to force an encounter in the moment” (Mitchell, 2014) much as Grotowski believes theatre is an encounter between audience and actor (Grotowski, 1991). Mitchell deconstructs street barricades into constituent parts including a blue wheelbarrow, a red flag and several Molotov cocktails painted white. Each is set deliberately in its own space, taking on a beauty and significance and forcing me to look again. I consider whether drama education barricades deconstructed and juxtaposed might become moments of beauty and significance inspiring my practice anew. Seeing each piece of a problem in a new light may bring some clarity and new understandings. Mitchell is not concerned “with dating, naming or contextualizing the barricades or the specific locale in which the related works find their origins” (Mitchell, 2014). The same may be so for the practitioner’s barricades. The exact details are not important. Rather, it is the accounts of how practitioners negotiate problems
within praxis that may give me and the community of educational drama insights and inspiration.

Figure 7 Barricades by Dane Mitchell

I purchase two different views of the installation and obtain permission from Dane Mitchell to use them as a resource to stimulate stories with the participants (see Appendix B). Grotowski suggests that theatre is not “an illustration of life but something linked to life only by analogy” (Grotowski, 1991, p. 86). These images of barricades contribute to my analogy of drama education as a war in order that my participants and I can “look beyond the particular to the universal” (Norris, 2009, p. 54).

1.4.5. Research can be a well-made play

In developing my embodied reflections I am conscious that the embodied reflections do not have to be a collection of disjointed and random dramatic activities. Neelands suggests a teacher should act in the drama classroom as a dramaturg creating a lesson which:
needs to be as subtle and crafted as any other dramatic sequence that is planned to unfold its meanings or themes in time and space and which moves the audience, progressively, towards a new felt understanding of the human issues and themes that are being dramatised. (O’Connor, 2010, p. 49)

I realise the embodied reflections must therefore be sequenced with attention to the aesthetics of drama to stimulate an aesthetic response or emotional involvement (Bundy, 2003). I begin to construct the method, building on Norah Morgan and Julianna Saxton’s suggestion to use the “the four stages of the well-made play” (Morgan & Saxton, 1989, p. 5) to develop drama lessons. This construction is traditionally used by playwrights to structure their dramas: exposition, rising action/complication, climax/crisis, and denouement. My participants ‘unfold’ their stories through these phases. I begin by asking my participants to create a symbol of drama education which may highlight aspects of drama education which are significant for them. I invite them to create a family tree and a ‘role on the wall’ to position themselves within the field. The rising action and complication is motivated by the images of Mitchell’s *Barricades*. The tension lowers as my participants explore the significant artefacts I invite them to bring along. These are valuable in generating reflective stories of practice or insights into my participants’ motivations (Sallis, 2010,) because these “solid, material traces of the past provoke a distinct emotional response” (Mackey, 2012, p. 45).

In the embodied reflections I use a metaphor of balancing inspired by Clar Doyle’s sense that “teaching drama is a lot like walking an educational tightrope” (Doyle, 1993, p. 48). It is a humorous simile that captures the juggling that is pervasive in being a drama educator. The tension builds anew as my participants create a battle speech to rally drama educators over the barricade, drawing on Henry V’s speech by William Shakespeare (Shakespeare, 1599/1981). The denouement offers the opportunity for my participants to present their hopes, dreams or vision for the future of drama education. Although this is a traditionally linear dramatic form I embrace Brecht’s non-naturalistic style in my resulting performance to enable flexibility to juxtapose time, space and themes.
Like Heathcote I want to “examine the journey of my life, to constantly review it, and to perceive where I’m at in it” (Heathcote, 1984, p. 23) and so advised by George Belliveau to tell my own story first,11 I become my own guinea pig as I begin the embodied reflections part of my research in September 2012. I capture my own responses to the images, metaphors and texts by presenting my story to the camera in two sessions in my own home. I bring along some artefacts I have chosen from my archive. The other six embodied reflections take place in each of the participants’ chosen locations over the next eight months.

1.4.6. From analysis to synthesis

At the outset of the research I propose to analyse my data using a “script construction” (Donmoyer & Yennie-Donmoyer, 1995) in which I can crystallise the many stories (Richardson, 2005). This process, being a form of synthesis “builds anew rather than revealing the old” (Maguire, 1995, p. 183). After synthesising their stories I plan that drama teachers volunteering to be my actors will rehearse and perform the presentation and share their own stories and experiences as they connect with the text. I envision myself acting as the dramaturg and director of this data drama that attempts to gain an understanding of the lived experiences of my chosen drama educators. However, a doctoral drama journey is never straightforward and my plans change in unforeseen ways as I proceed.

1.5. Thinking theatrically in research

Drama research, writes Cecily O’Neill, is informed by many other fields:

Philosophy, psychology, anthropology and sociology have all been usefully pressed into service to illuminate our practice in drama and to guide us towards appropriate research paradigms. Although these and other disciplines have served us well, we have not always recognized that the most useful sources of illumination and enrichment may lie closest at hand – for example, in theatre and performance studies. (O’Neill, 1996, p. 137)

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11 In a conversation at IDIERI 7 in Limerick, Ireland, 2012.
This research is illuminated by theatre practitioners and theorists, arts-based researchers and by my own love for and immersion in theatre throughout the research journey. My theatre guides in the shaping of the research are Bertolt Brecht, Peter Brook (Brook, 1968) and Constantin Stanislavski (Stanislavski, 1937/2013). Often thought of as being diametrically opposed, Brecht and Stanislavski provide a theory of theatre to weave into my research. Brecht suggests there is much to learn from Stanislavski’s work – not least its social purpose which showed the world as a place of diversity and of contradictions (Willett, 1964). Brecht’s aim to make his audience think and Stanislavski’s to make them feel are integrated to provide multiple possibilities for my research as an eclectic theatrical event which appeals to both the mind and body.

1.5.1. Bertolt Brecht

Bertolt Brecht as a playwright, director and a key critical theorist is integral to drama education inspiring the praxis of many drama educators. His theatre is political and didactic; his plays are stories told in episodic form using non-naturalistic conventions including song, placards, tableaux, gestus, third-person narration, “historicization” (Willett, 1964, p. 140) and other theatrical devices. He embraced theatricality, disrupting the idea that an audience sits and watches a play as a slice of ‘real life’ in a darkened auditorium through a proscenium arch. Brecht wanted his audience improved and instructed rather than “purged by its vicarious emotions” (Esslin, 1984, p. 114). He aimed to distance them from the action and characters through a process of “alienation” (Willett, 1964, p. 71) or “verfremdung” (Fuegi, 1972). ‘Verfremdung’ has the effect of making “in an appealing way, an object strange, yet at the same time to make it familiar and attractive” (Novalis in Fuegi, 1972, p. 190). The audience engages in critical analysis of situations and characters in order to become active participants in the world rather than voyeurs. Drama educators draw on Brecht’s work (Willett, 1964) to challenge students to explore and critique important themes and issues while his methods for making and presenting theatre contribute to the shaping of ideas dramatically “to puncture the illusion of ‘reality’” (O’Connor, 2010, p. xviii). For Brecht there must only be enough illusion to represent reality but not so much that the audience forget they are in a theatre (Jones, 1986, p. 98) Brecht called his drama, epic theatre and his theorising of this as “The Street Scene” (Willett, 1964) informs my development of the methodology that I use.
Epic theatre is based on a simple “model” which uses “the same elements as a street-corner demonstration” (Willett, 1964, p. 121). Brecht asks his readers to imagine a “traffic accident” (Willett, 1964, p. 121) in which witnesses recount their version of the events through narrative and embodiment. The witnesses do not portray their characters realistically to “transport people from normality to ‘higher realms’” (Willett, 1964, p. 122) but rather, like Brecht’s actors, they are expected to “remain detached from the character they were playing” (Willett, 1964, p. 71). The “demonstration would be spoilt if the bystanders’ attention were drawn to his powers of transformation” (Willett, 1964, p. 122) and thus Brecht’s Epic theatre lifts the “veil” (Willett, 1964, p. 194) to reveal the theatricality of the event. Epic theatre was thus based on those elements of storytelling and gesture with which ordinary people engage on a daily basis. The construction of an illusion is not required, rather, it is a re-imagining of events that have happened. These are acknowledged as theatrical and are no longer the actual event (Willett, 1964). Recently Brecht’s use by drama educators has been critiqued by David Davis who suggests his demand for a reasoned response from his audience denies emotional engagement in the drama work (Davis, 2014). However, the great paradox in Brecht’s work is that by avoiding over-emotionalising events on stage and inviting spectators and actors to remain at a distance, emotion and empathy are experienced. At the first production of Mother Courage in 1949 the actors took numerous curtain calls as the audience “sat in mesmerized silence, broken only by sobbing. Deeply, deeply moved by what they had just seen, the audience stood and wept and clapped to exhaustion” (Fuegi, 1995, p. 505). As Brecht suggests, alienation is about making ordinary incidents “seem remarkable to us” (Willett, 1964, p. 140) but contrarily our humanity and our desire to connect will always invite the emotional response.

1.5.2. Constantin Stanislavski

Constantin Stanislavski, actor and director of the Moscow Arts Theatre, places emotion, empathy and imagination at the centre of his actors’ work hoping his audience will believe in the truth being created on the stage. His concept of the “magic if” (Stanislavski, 1937/2013, p. 51) requires the actor to step into belief and ask the question “if this were real, how would I react” (Stanislavski, 1936/1990, p. 94)? This requires the actor to use their imagination for it “acts as a lever which lifts him into a world … of creativity” (Stanislavski, 1936/1990, p. 94).
Imagination, suggests Eisner, is essential in research (Eisner, 1991, p. 186) and the ‘magic if’ enables me to create a research method and find a framing device for my embodied reflections. While Brecht’s actors demonstrate a role, Stanislavski’s are required to retrieve emotions and sensations from past experiences and use them in the embodiment of their role. They must observe facial expressions, and listen to the tone of voice in order to research their roles and gauge how people are feeling. For Stanislavski the process of developing a role is research obtained through observation, imagination and analysis (Stanislavski, 1937/2013). The similarities between research and preparing a play for the stage invite collaboration to inform and inspire each process.

1.6. Disseminating the research

In order to communicate the wide array of stories and narratives told in different times and spaces, my performance and this written text consist of deliberately “erratic meanderings, jarring interruptions, chronological juxtapositions” (Barone, 1997). Brecht’s theatrical methods offer an array of possibilities for such a presentation by enabling the themes, metaphors and stories to be reflected and refracted where they converge or diverge. The improvised spaces of the embodied reflections become my laboratory to investigate the stories of drama education. Like Brecht who used his “theatre as a laboratory to experiment with plays and players” (Weber & Munk, 1967, p. 103) and Grotowski who experimented in his “theatre laboratory” (Grotowski, 1991, p. 33), I use the actor’s body as a “surgeon’s scalpel to dissect himself” (Grotowski, 1991, p. 37). In this laboratory actors and audience, participants and researcher can “find out the truth about ourselves” (Grotowski, 1991, p. 37) as we experiment and play in a search for answers which may not be accessible or which may bring unintended or unexpected results.

The use of artefacts and images in the embodied reflections offer “rich visual material for transfer onto the stage” (Saldaña, 2003, p. 228) and these inform my use of set, costume, props, music and sound. The projected images and slides containing quotations and titles are inspired by Brecht’s use of the placard which “confirmed or contradicted what the characters said” (Willett, 1964, p. 71). They are an integral part of my performance for promoting reflection on issues and themes. The drama performance is followed by an interactive workshop so that I
can “enter into a dialogue” with the audience to hear “other perspectives” (Norris, 2000, p. 48). As the audience imagines their stories intersecting, connecting, juxtaposing or contesting those of the research participants, we can together “critically reflect upon and envision alternatives” (Rossiter et al., 2008).

1.6.1. Ethical considerations

Before the research can begin there are three ethical issues I consider. Firstly my participants are not anonymous. They have been chosen because of their standing in the community of drama education. However, their confidentiality is respected and I agree not to reveal or expose anything that either my participants or I identify as of a sensitive nature. Each participant receives a copy of their transcript and video of their contribution and edits and withdraws data before the scripting of the performance begins. Only one participant requests that a comment be removed, others make useful corrections, clarifications or additions. Even with these agreements I feel uncomfortable revealing some areas discussed and so choose not to reveal some stories, exciting though they are.

The second issue concerns the need to capture the embodied reflections on video to provide data about the use of voice, body, movement and space. In order to protect the participants, the videos are only seen by my two supervisors and me. I transcribe all the data but this process leads to unexpected discoveries and informs my synthesis of the data in new ways.

The third ethical issue concerns my main supervisor being a participant in my research as he has to carry multiple layers within the research relationship. He has the same rights as my other participants to change data but it may be perceived that he could influence the mediation of his stories. My second supervisor is present at major rehearsals in the Faculty of Education drama studio and acts as a sounding board for both of us ensuring that Peter has no added advantage to other participants in the selection or representation of the stories. Because five of my participants are overseas, I put some extracts of rehearsals onto You Tube, only accessible to them, for feedback. Two participants engage in this process and make suggestions surrounding theatrical ideas and enabling my play to be a constant cycle of meaning making. During the process Anton Bentley, an experienced drama educator and theatre practitioner who has allowed me to test my method on him during the development stage, watches two rehearsals and one
of my final runs to act as an outside eye and ensure I am remaining true to my own theatrical and research choices.

### 1.6.2. Problematising the researcher as a participant

As I discuss the ethics of including my supervisor’s voice I must also consider the implications of contributing my own story. I need to be present in the story, because as performative inquirers Fels et al suggest “how could you, the facilitator/researcher/writer fail to make a cameo appearance?” (Fels, Linds, & Purru, 2008). O’Toole suggests that the researcher can be present in the research so long as “we acknowledge our positioning” (O’Toole, 2006, p.30). Eisner suggests the inclusion of the researcher’s voice is one of the strengths of qualitative research as choices are made “according to their own theoretical lights” (Eisner, 1991, page 110). Alan Peshkin proposes that our subjectivity “is like a garment that cannot be removed” (1988, p.17) which needs to be taken account of throughout the research process. In this case my subjectivity leads me to using artistic and performative ways of exploring my question and I position myself as a despondent drama educator using a dramatic lens through which I generate, mediate and disseminate my research. Without this subjectivity and positioning my research question and methodology might be very different. Some elements of my story have been generated through the method I use with my participants. Others which I reveal appear because I have a moment of epiphany when I recognise in the research something which strongly connects or juxtaposes with my own experience. These moments have been difficult to reveal but they lead me into a discovering self and one that enables me to connect to my feelings (Fels, Linds, & Purru, 2008) acknowledge and embrace them. My subjectivity is explicit in the choice of my participants, the metaphors I use and the questions I explore. Problematically this means that some important stories that could have answered my initial question may have been lost; it may mean that my voice is more prevalent than my participants. Eisner suggests that “both omission and commission affect what we convey” (Eisner, 1991, page 111) and my despondent nature may privilege stories of despondency and embattlement over more positive narratives. By using drama I come to understand and embrace my subjectivity for it gives rise to my research and explicitly shapes the choices I make as both researcher and artist. My intuition and emotion is a central feature of my role as a drama educator. This leads me to make some unexpected discoveries.
1.6.3. Teatrum Mundi

One of the most useful presents I have received in recent times is a GPS for it enables me to be more adventurous in my journeys as the calming voice guides me through the motorways and backstreets of New Zealand. It alerts me to traffic cameras and speed limits but it also allows me to disobey its suggestions and make my own way according to my intuition and occasional gentle nudges from the helpful female voice. Neelands suggests all teachers need a map of their “teatrum Mundi” (O’Connor, 2010, p. 113) and this self-search to fill my emptiness and darkness helps me locate a map of my theatrical, drama education world. It helps me find my own way out of the battles and barricades and for a while at least stops me feeling marginalised and anaesthetised. Using drama in research not only enables me to reconnect with the importance that drama and theatre has in my life, but it can also give back “some of the real-life energy, and visual and visceral impact of the original community” (O’Toole, 2006, p. 42). It can bring those stories into the present to “show life as it is being lived rather than to report on events that have already been lived” (Neelands, 2004, p. 33). As the stories are re-interpreted for the stage I attempt to communicate their vibrancy and share with my audience a sense of these educators as a “flesh and blood actual presence” (Neelands, 2004, p. 33).

Flashforward: Performance

Slide: Johnny Saldaña

For as Saldaña asks: “What could be more compatible than employing the art form to exhibit research about a participant’s relationship with the art form?” [Battles and barricades, Episode 1]

1.6.4. Foreshadowing events

Instead of ‘findings’ my journey becomes one of discoveries (Hoetker, 1975; Willett, 1964) which often arrive through embodied presentations or theatrical productions.

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12 Concepts discussed during research with the participants and used within my performance and this thesis.
13 Saldaña (2006, p. 184)
events that speak to my emotions. In Chapter Two I explore the backstory of drama education trying to find some of the personal stories of drama educators confronting and negotiating difficulties. I explore how the play *Oh What a Lovely War* has contributed to the development of drama as a research methodology and how this enables my participants to use their inherent knowledge of drama and theatre to deepen their stories. Chapter Three recounts how as a drama teacher I feel myself sinking into a mood of despondency until, inspired by seeing and hearing actors and drama practitioners, I recognise my scholar’s melancholy. I begin to describe my research in action as I capture my participants’ stories using embodied reflections. In Chapter Four I discuss the process involved in preparing for a drama performance as I embody and experiment with the words of my participants. My final chapter celebrates my own changing relationship with the art form as I re-discover the importance of framing, role play, and imagination in drama education and acknowledge my own voice as a Mother and drama educator.
Chapter 2. Public mask, private brain: A backstory of drama education

Participants’ stories and extracts from my play weave throughout the thesis. The backstory of drama education is told – the battles of the 1980s are revisited. The research participants embody their family tree of drama education. The play Oh What a Lovely War – informs this arts based research. A definition of the aesthetic is shared and ‘connoisseurship’ embraced. Stories of drama education barricades are embodied. Drama educators are the self-preservation society.

Andy Kempe suggests there are two faces to the drama educator. During his embodied reflection he picks up two white masks from a selection of props and reflects on his role as a drama educator:

I wear a mask all the time of my own and perhaps that’s one of the elements that has kind of drawn me into drama to be able to, be able to kind of have a brain ticking behind a public mask. (A. Kempe)

![Public Mask and Private Brain](image)

Figure 8 public mask and private brain

This chapter begins with a brief personal story to share my own battle to become a drama teacher. I then contextualise drama as a pedagogical method and art form by examining some of the stories concerning the history of drama education in the
last century of practice. However, while the history of the field has been told, there is a dearth of material about the difficulties and struggles encountered by drama educators and even less material about how they negotiate theory and practice from a personal standpoint. Drama practitioners appear willing to share their public brain concerning praxis while their private brain remains hidden. I discuss the ways in which images of the drama educator on screen affect my own sense of being a drama teacher. Theatre and drama have always been an important way for me to experience and learn about the world. Therefore, I examine one of my favourite plays to explore the links between theatre making and research. Throughout this chapter I weave in moments from my performance to highlight and juxtapose the stories I discover.

2.1.1. A life-changing pedagogy

When I chose to become a drama teacher, my Father, a civil engineer in flood control and irrigation, who had worked for the United Nations, was sceptical. Paradoxically he enjoyed attending theatre, making cine films and listening to classical music, but felt drama and the arts were to be enjoyed as hobbies or to develop communication and presentation skills. For that purpose, throughout my time at school, he insisted I studied ballet and elocution. When I first expressed a desire to study drama at university I faced my first battle:

**Flashback: Performance**

**TEACHER**

(Hand held out now in a handshake)
You must be Jane’s father. We’re a bit surprised
she wants to study drama at university. She’s quiet by nature.

It was my love of theatre and a desire to teach a subject that could make a difference in the lives of children that led me to be a drama teacher. My Mother had been a teacher so it was ‘in the blood’. Mine is one of the many missionary discourses that are expressed by drama educators in the “missionary zeal that we so easily fall into as we extol the magic of drama” (O’Connor, 2006, p. 358). I believe that drama helps the development of young people (Kempe & Nicholson, 2001), using cognitive as well as kinaesthetic learning styles to explore, create and
present ideas. Drama teaches communication and thinking skills, empathy and insight into the human condition (Kempe & Ashwell, 2000; O’Connor, 2010). Jonothan Neelands believes drama’s value in the classroom lies in social justice, democracy and critical hope where children, “can find their voice, confidence and tools to transform their worlds and stories” (O’Connor, 2010, p. xxi). I believe drama is a powerful pedagogy, dynamic art form and social tool. As a British New Zealand drama educator I begin to explore the published stories to see whether I am alone in my sense of a loss of passion for this pedagogy.

2.1.2. The public and private mask

My public mask of drama educator appears enthusiastic, knowledgeable and in control while my private brain may be feeling despondent and disillusioned. Being the sole member of a department can make drama teaching an isolated occupation (Hornbrook, 1989, p. 136) and “the loneliest times are when practice breaks down, and when the words of thinkers who have spoken clearly to others remain opaque (O’Neill, 1996, p. 136). Theory often lacks a human face and while attempting to make sense of it in practice I yearn to hear a personal narrative which acknowledges that teaching drama is difficult. It is important that we tell our stories of practice, good and bad, so that we can be encouraged or be challenged by them (Burke, 2013). This sharing enables the empathic process which is central to drama and theatre as we “try to find oneself in the other and in so doing recognise the other in oneself” (O’Connor, 2010, p. 122). In this process we move to “identification … when spectators put themselves in the shoes of the character or actor” (Bundy, 2014, p. 118) and instead of talking about someone we get to know them more deeply through the imagination (C. Sanson in UNESCO, 1958, p. 46). The stories surrounding drama education suggests that drama educators have always faced difficulties in their practice but they are incomplete, suggesting few like to share these moments of failure or doubt. Therefore I begin to look more closely within the stories for those personal moments of dissonance and discord which resonate within me. Much as an actor does in preparing for a role, I am looking for the ‘backstory’: the details which add a richer texture to a character. These may be the moments when practitionerers have faced adversity or advocated strongly for their subject but were left disillusioned or exhausted. I want to walk in the shoes of my participants and see the world of drama education from their viewpoint.
2.1.3. Stories of drama educators

The stories from 1912 onwards tell of a century of drama education practice through personal accounts, biographies, practical guides and theoretical writings. Nevertheless the faces behind these stories are almost invisible, which for a pedagogy that depends on human narratives and interactions is surprising. Bolton suggests that drama educators often ignore each other (Johnson & O'Neill, 1984, p. 7) yet it is because of enthusiastic and visionary teachers like Finlay Johnson and Caldwell Cook that drama enters the classroom as a learning tool. Their accounts of practice (Finlay Johnson, 1912; Caldwell Cook, 1917) are rich and evocative and at times these educators’ passion for their work is palpable. They show a variety of approaches in their pedagogy as they play freely with ideas unlimited by theory or assessment. These early days were not tranquil and untroubled times and while the difficulties may not be explicit, they lie in the shadow at the edge of the playing space.

2.1.4. Ælfric

Some practitioners are almost forgotten, others only recently being re-discovered. It is possible that the first drama educator was Ælfric, a monk living in tenth-century England who taught his pupils Latin:

through drama. He would assign his pupils a role – a ploughman, a fisherman, a baker, a shepherd, a monk – and Ælfric would ask them questions about what they did. This gave the pupils a chance to answer in their own words, be spontaneous, individual, inventive. (Bragg, 2003, p. 31)

Ælfric “seems to have invented classroom hot seat role-play” (O'Toole, 2015) and foreshadows “pedagogical theory by a thousand years or so” (Porter, 1997, p. 36). Ælfric’s use of drama enabled students to pretend to be other than themselves while as a teacher he demonstrated “sympathy with the spirit of play natural to boyhood” (White, 1974, p. 41). The concepts of sympathy and creativity, improvisation and role play, reflect some of the values and methods still recognisable in drama education pedagogy today. This story inspires me for it places drama education as a valuable learning tool centuries old and aligned with the rebirth of drama in Europe (Nicol, 1976), but I can only imagine the
difficulties Ælfric may have faced introducing a dramatic approach within a monastic setting.

2.1.5. Harriet Finlay Johnson and Caldwell Cook

Finlay Johnson’s *The Dramatic Method of Teaching* (1912) and her biography *A Little School on the Downs* (Bowmaker, 2002) tell a story of both success and sadness. In her aim to make the classroom a happy place for her pupils and enable them to actively engage in their learning, she met with triumph. She became the source of inspiration as “Egeria” (Bowmaker, 2002, p. 34) for a Utopian vision for education where children could step “into the lives of other living beings” (Holmes, 1912, p. 165). Yet there was sadness as she struggled to cope with undue criticism which “left her feeling drained and humbled; and with a moral[e] so low she despaired of ever looking up again” (Bowmaker, 2002, pp. 113-114). Her tears which stain the school log book show that “all is not well at Sompting School” (Bowmaker, 2002, p. 113) and remain with me throughout the research highlighting Harriet’s humanity. Caldwell Cook who set down his ideas in *The Play Way: An essay in educational method* (1917) returned to the classroom from the trenches of the Great War. It was this experience that made him determined to “help in effecting a lively reform in these quiet and studious places (Caldwell Cook, 1917, p. vii). His book was described as somewhat naïve and dogmatic (Allen, 1979, p. 11) and in a romantic and tragic discourse, he died of a ‘broken heart’ when a newly appointed headmaster told him to “stop all this nonsense” (1979, p. 11). The early days of drama education resonate with a joyful practice, possibly naïve in its vision for a child-centred education but certainly passionate. Nonetheless the battles begin to be fought and the barricades begin to be erected in some of the attitudes expressed towards these practitioners and their praxis.

2.1.6. The theatre – drama dichotomy

By the time of the first drama in education conference at The Bonnington Hotel, London in 1951 (Martin-Smith, 1996) there is an apparent split between the world of theatre and that of drama education (Bolton, 1984) limiting their relationship for many decades (Hornbrook, 1991). John Allen blames Peter Slade for “rationalizing this unfortunate dichotomy” (Allen, 1979, p. 12). At the UNESCO
Seminar on Drama in Education held in Sydney in 1958\textsuperscript{14} delegates, including John Allen, call for stronger “links between professional theatre and Drama work in schools” (UNESCO, 1958). Yet the split continues to grow in England with Robin Pemberton-Billing, drama teacher and author of a book on teaching drama in secondary schools, suggesting that theatre skills in the classroom restrict children’s work making them “an automaton in the hands of the producers” (Pemberton-Billing & Clegg, 1965, p. 18). The paradox in this statement becomes apparent in the list of scripted plays he includes in the appendix. In 1967, he founded the Octagon Theatre in Bolton (“Bolton theatre founder Robin Pemberton-Billing dies,” 2012) where much experimental theatre work is subsequently created and performed and I wonder why this drama educator rejected notions of theatre for children while instigating it for adults, surely leaving drama educators conflicted. Apparently Pemberton-Billing knew what it was like to experience “a five-star flop” (Pemberton-Billing & Clegg, 1965, p. 8) of a drama lesson but sadly the book does not share or reflect on any of these catastrophes.

2.1.7. Dorothy Heathcote

The one figure whose personal life is well documented is Dorothy Heathcote; a seminal figure in the field of drama education so renowned that she was known by many by her first name only. The documentary \textit{Three Looms Waiting} made her teaching familiar to educators, ensuring she had “scores of admirers, acolytes and disciples flocking from round the world to her unassuming rooms in Newcastle upon Tyne” (O’Toole et al., 2009, p. 101). As a result of her visits to New Zealand, interested educators created a professional body of drama teachers to advocate for drama’s place within the curriculum (Battye, 2005). For some of these educators her importance lay in a “recipe for deep experience and real involvement” (Fleming, 1976, p. 90) by children in the classroom.

Peter O’Connor recalls the evening he saw \textit{Three Looms Waiting} and was inspired by “a woman in Newcastle who was doing things with drama that seemed more revolutionary than any poetry I’d ever thought of writing. Yet its impact was as if I had read Homer for the first time” (O’Connor, 2009, p. 21). In his embodied reflection Peter offers as one of his artefacts the VHS tape of the film. When

\textsuperscript{14} Australian UNESCO Seminar on Drama in Education, held at Sydney teachers’ College, Sydney, Australia August 16-22, 1958.
asked by The Archivist to label the item, he writes some words on a blue sheet of paper. Later, during my drama performance, I use the image projected onto the screen behind me:

*Flashforward: Performance*

![Image of handwritten note: THE FILM THAT CHANGED IT ALL]

*Figure 9 Three looms waiting*

These six words capture the impact Heathcote made on O’Connor and the world of drama education. Throughout my research the male practitioners all tell stories about her and the influence she had on them either directly or indirectly.
Flashforward: Performance

Figure 10 the big brown dress

(Archivist grabs the brown cloth hanging SR, turns and moves DSC)

The big brown dress swept in, bursting through the double doors, waving a ship’s rope above its head “pull you buggers pull!”

John re-enacts his first encounter with Dorothy Heathcote. A clever intervention, she wasn’t always so spectacular.

Ron did a workshop with her and calls her massively charismatic.

Andy was intrigued, it’s magical and mysterious – what buttons did she press? But where are the plays?

Jonothan asks: How are we supposed to be Dorothy Heathcote? You shouldn’t make drama so complex and difficult no one can do it. [Episode 2]

Heathcote’s persona appears intricately woven into her teaching practice (Bolton, 2003) and in some accounts she takes on the role of a heroine in a gothic novel
being born on the “haunting, windswept heaths near Haworth, the Brontes’ village” (Wagner, 1976, p. 13) or leaving her loom to train as an actress. It has even been suggested that “wherever Heathcote goes, she generates excitement and even adulation. She emanates power” (Wagner, 1976, p. 14). A recent description of her practice suggests it was “so uncompromising, so innovative and so clearly the work of a master teacher that its effect was often dazzling and even off-putting to ‘ordinary’ teachers” (O’Toole et al., 2009, p. 103).

After my drama performance in July 2014, I receive an email from Susan Battye, a central figure in the development of drama education in New Zealand. She was inspired by Heathcote’s workshops and travelled to England to become one of her students in the 1970s. She recounts her personal experience of Heathcote:

    Handing over the power to the students to decide was the magic and terrifying part for most observers. For how could you plan? Well you could plan if you got up every day at 4am, lit the fire, prepared all the meals in the house for your husband and daughter and devoted yourself to the task. (Personal communication, email, July 24, 2014)

This is ‘superhuman’ and contributes to the mystique of this charismatic woman but it also leaves me, an ‘ordinary’ drama teacher, feeling inadequate for Dorothy is recognised and lauded as both capable mother and dynamic drama educator. In my play I juxtapose Heathcote’s magnetism with Jonothan’s description of Cecily O’Neill:

    **Flashforward: Performance**

![Celtic charm](image)

Figure 11 Celtic charm
ARCHIVIST

Jonothan’s inspired by Cecily O’Neill
Whose Celtic charm
Weaves magical stories
Way beyond his comprehension.
Peter calls her teaching – stunning.

MELONY

Do drama teachers have to be magical, mysterious, and charismatic to be perfect? [Episode 2]

Figure 12 do drama teachers have to be perfect?

2.1.8. Gavin Bolton

Recently Bolton’s theory and practice (Burke, 2013) has been contextualised, highlighting some of the private brain behind the public mask. His own writings give partial glimpses of a reflective practitioner with a sense of humanity, and self-deprecating humour willing to share disappointment (Bolton, 1979, p. 93; Davis & Lawrence, 1986, p. 169). I empathise with his story of the time when “his headmaster’s distressed eyebrows would appear over the pane of glass in the door” (Davis & Lawrence, 1986, p. 6) and he was forced to justify the methods he used within his classroom. The title of his seminal book Towards a Theory of
Drama Education (1979) reflects a hesitant rather than a confident approach but his influence has been instrumental in the development of other practitioners.

During my research John O’Toole, Jonothan Neelands and Peter O’Connor place Heathcote and Bolton into their family tree of drama education. Peter suggests they are:

*forever linked in the family tree. They’re like the grandparents really*  
(Peter O’Connor)

John O’Toole suggests that Bolton has:

*always been my absolute, absolutely number-one influence, I mean, my mentor, I’ve been very fortunate to make friends with him and keep friendship over the years, one of the reasons why I find him so inspiring is that he’s so completely unlike me and so completely unlike Dorothy Heathcote.*  
(John O’Toole)

I begin to recognise that each drama educator brings their own unique skills and personality to the classroom. Jonothan Neelands watches a video of Bolton’s work which has a profound effect on him:

*I had a very close friend Paul Bunyan who I was at college with in Leicester and he became a drama teacher and I was an English teacher. I enjoyed my conversations with him. I became more kind of interested in that. He gave me a copy of Gavin Bolton’s “Towards a Theory of Drama in Education” which I was kind of interested in but didn’t understand and then I got a black-and-white videocassette made by Cecily O’Neill at the London Tape and Drama centre of Gavin Bolton teaching a session called The Outlaws and it changed my life, it completely changed my life. I haven’t got any of it until I saw that and that was, that’s what I want to do, that’s what I want my life to be, I want to do that. It completely changed my life.*  
(Jonothan Neelands)

Whereas Heathcote is a ‘larger than life’ character, Bolton appears to take a quieter approach suggesting that drama educators can be ‘quiet by nature’.

2.1.9. Jonothan Neelands

Jonothan Neelands calls his book Making Sense of Drama (Neelands, 1984) but suggests “it is not an orthodoxy – it is a contribution” (Neelands, 1984, p. iv). His “privileged upbringing” (O’Connor, 2010, p. xiii) inspires him to make drama accessible to students and teachers through a collection of conventions (Neelands
& Goode, 1990) gathered from “the great but often mysterious drama educators” (O’Connor, 2010, p. xvii). I am emotional when I first read the brief insight he gives into his life. I connect to the experience of a privileged education which appealed to the intellect rather than the emotions. In his embodied reflection Jonothan shares his story by drawing a large map of the world on a whiteboard in the studio at Warwick University, where I first began my drama training. In this moment Jonothan is no longer one of the mysterious drama educators, he is a real person using his skills as a drama educator to share his story with me.

2.1.10. The great debate

*Flashforward: Performance*

![Image of a performer with dolls]

Figure 13 the great debate

**ARCHIVIST**

(Announces) The Great Debate!

(Picks up each doll)
Theatre versus drama
Process versus product –
Hornbrook versus Heathcote
David versus Dorothy
DH versus DH

(Bell rings, like a boxing match)

Figure 14 running a flag up the mast for the art form

ARCHIVIST

Hornbrook ran a big flag up the mast for the Art Form.
But what art of drama did he want asks John. The canon of dead white men – says Peter [Episode 1]

These debates culminated in 1989 when the book *Education and Dramatic Arts* (Hornbrook, 1989) heightened the tensions surrounding drama education praxis.
David Hornbrook was a teacher and inspector of drama with a background in theatre, passionate about what he called the “very embodiment of an education that sought above all to captivate the interest of the child” (Hornbrook, 1989, p. viii). In this statement the convictions of Finlay Johnson and Caldwell Cook resonate. The book is written partly to allay his own level of anxiety on hearing children in the playground exclaim “drama’s boring” (Hornbrook, 1989, p. viii) which challenged his confidence. I wonder if he felt a sense of inadequacy and melancholia for he acknowledges that many committed and enthusiastic drama teachers are also exhausted and frustrated, losing their energy and morale in the “harsher educational climate” (Hornbrook, 1989, p. ix) of 1980s Britain. The book attempts to help drama teachers understand and legitimate their drama teaching while advocating for drama education as an art form, as one way to counter its failure to enter the curriculum as a discrete subject in 1987.

However Hornbrook’s disparaging and sometimes offensive remarks about teachers who “pitch their tents of improvisation and role-play in the camps of the armies of the revolution” (Hornbrook, 1989, pp. 52-53) alienated many practitioners because of “his personal attack on ‘Gavin and Dorothy’” (Jardine, 1995, p. 79). The front cover consists of a barricade image: “Le theatre du Soleil [sic] of 1789: The French Revolution, Year one” (Hornbrook, 1989, p. iv).

Chapter 4 is entitled: Dramatic Tension: Barricades and Bewilderment although this was altered for subsequent editions. At times the situation among drama educators in England was so bad that practitioners take sides “sometimes reaching a point when one set of exponents would not talk to its rivals” (Bolton, 1999, p. 174) and some engaged in “denying, even trashing” (Neelands, 2000, p. 75) each other’s ideas and methods.

During his embodied reflection Jonothan recounts his fury at Hornbook’s suggestion that drama teachers did not embrace or use theatre in their teaching. His story is full of emotion, quietly yet firmly expressed. He gestures towards his map occasionally pressing the whiteboard firmly to emphasise certain words:

**Embodied reflection**

*Robert Staunton ... put a copy of Betty Jane Wagner’s book on the table and he said read that and start a youth theatre and the importance of me telling you that is that explains all my rage during the Hornbrook years*
because in my---, there was never a drama teacher who didn’t also do youth theatre and performance it’s what you did. Leicestershire was as strong on its process drama as it was on its youth theatre and I’ve always done youth theatre ever since and I’ve always seen the two together so the lie (Strong hand gesture cuts the air) that there were drama teachers that shunned that has always made me cross (taps the board several times with his fist). (Jonothan Neelands)

Andy acknowledges the way that Hornbrook:

expressed his argument was unnecessarily aggressive and in itself created a barricade. (Andy Kempe)

There is a sense that drama educators create their own barricades as Andy explains using a pink scarf to demonstrate:

I want to talk about barricades … how do I do that? (Thinking … Andy picks up the pink scarf and picks up some foam people) There’s a little group of drama teachers here drama educators here (puts foam people on the floor) with this (Holds the pink scarf) I’m going to tie a big knot because I think all too often in the past, drama you know, drama teachers have got themselves in a big knot and have created (Andy ties a knot in scarf, puts the pink knotted scarf on the floor beside the foam people) barricades for themselves needlessly and again destructively so again I mention yesterday all that kind of dichotomy between Heathcote or Hornbrook which one are you? – was unnecessary. (Andy Kempe)

However, he also tells another side to the story and I include it in my performance:

**Flashforward: Performance**

**ARCHIVIST**

Andy says it’s a paradox, for it was David who introduced him to Dorothy’s work. People said all sorts of terrible things about Hornbrook.

**ANDY**

But they were wrong,
He was a very good, very good teacher,
With some very good ideas. [Episode 2]
I am intrigued by the way some practitioners express provocative ideas in the public sphere. I am equally intrigued by the way they continue to work in the limelight of a very public practice. Most drama teachers never face such public humiliation and if they did, I wonder whether they might not retreat into a private practice or give up altogether. Maybe these practitioners have some inner strength that I lack and this leads to my sense of disappointment? I cannot help but reflect these potential stories through my own experiences.

In more recent times several practitioners based in Australia have written extensively about the praxis of drama education. John O’Toole and Michael Anderson have suggested that the process – product debate is no longer current (Anderson, 2012; O’Toole et al., 2009). This may be because younger teachers have little or no knowledge about the debate that ensued, or educators have now embraced the idea that “they cannot, and will not, restrict themselves to a single restrictive method of working” (O’Connor, 2010, p. 110). However, dismissing barricades does not automatically lead to their deconstruction or destruction and can instead leave an educator like myself feeling frustrated at the lack of their acknowledgement. I relish Jonathan’s story about his rage for it is a human reaction that displays his passion for drama education, his disappointment with the critique of the Hornbrook era – and yet he continues to teach.

2.1.11. New Zealand context

In New Zealand drama is an ‘Essential Area of Learning’ in the Arts (Battye, 2005) and has a place in the National Curriculum. Susan Battye explains:
Drama had gone down the route of a) forming a nationally recognised incorporated society (I co-wrote the constitution) and b) got a Sixth Form Certificate up and running [and this] meant that it could ‘argue the case’ effectively for being a stand alone subject. (Susan Battye, personal communication, email, December 17, 2014)

Drama educators began developing grade-related criteria to assess senior drama. (Bushnell, 1992) but not everyone embraced this assessment approach and during the research Peter admits the criteria left him:

*stone, stone cold. (Peter O’Connor)*

The problem with the New Zealand arts curriculum is that:

> Its content is broken down into measurable components with units that are organised in pre-determined ways. This overlooks the essence of true creativity, which is the being engaged in activities where the outcome – by definition – is unknown. References to the imagination have mostly been omitted. (Van Dijk, 2011, p. 55)

This is a damning comment on what is seen by many as the pinnacle of achievement for drama: to be accepted as a valid subject within the curriculum. The decision to promote an assessment-driven curriculum, which avoids references to the imagination or placing value on the process of creation, appears at odds with the influential role Heathcote played during her two visits to New Zealand. Zoe Brooks addresses the tensions and difficulties that drama teachers faced when the National Certificate of Educational Achievement [NCEA] was established. Her research stems from a “sense of unease about aspects of assessment in drama” (Brooks, 2010, p. 1). For Brooks, drama education is about the process that students undertake but assessment with an “emphasis on public perceptions rather than the living process of the classroom can stifle the very energy that gives drama life” (Brooks, 2010, p. 8). She suggests it is a drama educator’s philosophy, ideology and personal experience that cause them to experience tensions in the pedagogy. This resonates with my own sense of despondency and as a result of my research, I create a fictional scenario, based on data in the embodied reflections, that portrays the tensions of assessment:
**Flashforward: Performance**

**PETER**

Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more;
or close the wall up with our English dead.

**JANE**

*(Applauding)* Well done Peter you’ve got an ‘Excellence’ by ‘applying drama techniques effectively in a dramatic context’ *(Sit on chair as Peter)*.

**PETER**

*Slide: Agincourt*

I wonder what it would have been like to be Henry V at the Battle of Agincourt, leading his men into battle. *(XSL shaking head look back to Peter)*.

**JANE**

Peter, this achievement standard isn’t about that. It’s about how well you use voice body movement and space. Now remember to hand in your supporting evidence about your role. [Episode 1]

Whenever I perform this scene to New Zealand educators there is much laughter in recognition of the limitations that NCEA can impose and the privileging of the written word above the practical exploration of what it means to be human. In the moment of laughter the private brain exposes what lies behind the public face: that assessment is still “a contentious issue for education in New Zealand” *(Cody, 2012, p. 161)*.

For New Zealand practitioner Peter O’Connor, drama’s power lies in its ability to explore themes of social justice and to create a democratic relationship between student and teacher in the classroom *(O’Connor, 2010)*. As the National drama facilitator he expresses his dismay at the role he played in:
moving drama from the margins to the centre. In doing so I made a terrible mistake. I've often, only half-jokingly, said I will be remembered as the person who got drama to be taught in New Zealand – but as badly as everything else is taught. In moving to the centre, nearly all that attracted me to drama and sustained me was either compromised or lost. (O'Connor, 2009, pp. 22-23)

He shares some of the private brain in several of his articles (O'Connor, 1989, 2000, 2009) which helps explain the motivating forces behind his public practice. His suggestion that drama is less effective at the centre of the curriculum contests the goal for drama educators, particularly those in England, who strive for a place for drama within their national curriculum.

New Zealand research suggests being a drama teacher “means a far greater workload involving many more hours than other subject areas seem to require” (Cody, 2012, p. 172). Some teachers describe their role as a “bloody foot soldier” (Cody, 2012, p. 172) and some resent the long hours spent in extra-curricular activities with students, perceiving they are unappreciated and underpaid (Luton, 2010). However Cody believes that the “artistry of teachers may well flourish – provided their passion is not crushed through cumbersome workload pressures” (Cody, 2012, p. 185). The question then is how to sustain that passion and prevent it from being lost. The answer may lie in research that focuses on teachers and their feelings and which is willing to acknowledge that although drama education may be a pedagogy of hope (O'Connor, 2008) it can also be a soul-destroying task. However, it is not necessarily the workload pressures that cause despondency. It is, for me, the battle of the conscience in a constant striving to do the ‘right thing’ in the classroom. Here, I juggle the voices of the academics and those of the students, government, school and parents to find ways to avoid compromising my own principles.

2.1.12. The family tree

To discover how each participant situates themselves within the field, I invite them to draw, create, describe or embody their drama education family. I begin to experience the personal stories live and compare them with my own:
Flashforward: Performance

ARCHIVIST

Andy watched school plays, but audition ... never! It would have been terrifying, a complete anathema. At college, he felt the drama society wasn’t for him. It’s a bit touchy feely, gropey stuff. It’s a bit of a paradox he’s ended up doing this.

(Sit) Ron was a shy little bookworm until professional drama discovered him and took him out of a very unpleasant school situation. The shell broke (gesture). He blossomed.

(XSL) John was encouraged to love drama and theatre by inspiring teachers. He got to play Portia aged 12...

JOHN

I made a nifty figure. We had very good cosies – I had a coat of beautiful velvet grey. Kissing Bassanio was a problem!

ARCHIVIST

Jonothan says he was hugely privileged growing up in a theatre family. It’s the key to understanding his work: giving that to young people who are not as advantaged.

Lynn wonders how many drama teachers who have touched so many children’s lives are forgotten. [Episode 2]

I connect to the shyness expressed by Ron, the sense of privilege shared by Jonothan, the reluctance in joining drama groups described by Andy and the fun to be had performing. This sharing of stories begins to inspire me. Since I began this doctoral study, stories are beginning to emerge in new accounts that acknowledge drama pedagogy as personally challenging and an understanding develops that others may benefit from the sharing of narratives (Burke, 2013). Some educators are recounting stories of their misadventures in the classroom (Duffy, 2015). This thesis contributes to emerging narratives of doubt and
uncertainty where I can find my participants’ “own experiences outlined in mine” (Davis & Lawrence, 1986, p. 4) but which also brings some positive insights into ways to sustain our passion.

2.2. Images of drama teachers on screen

The dichotomy I feel between a loss of passion for drama education and the pride that I have taken in being a drama educator is increased by images of drama teachers on screen (Wales, 2009). I am saddened by the less than flattering portrayal of drama teachers on television. Mr G\textsuperscript{15} the drama teacher at the fictional Summer Heights High School is ‘enthusiastic and passionate” (ABC TV, 2007) and believes his classroom is a haven where he can use his unique teaching methods to “go crazy, let loose” (Lilley & McDonald, 2007). His teaching method involves the students watching him perform in order to learn. Within this parody I can recognise the drama teacher aspiring to work in a different relationship with his students. He appears to be a frustrated actor and while he seeks to be at the cutting edge of education, his self-reflections are often misjudged. Brian Clapper\textsuperscript{16} is a fictional drama teacher in a local comprehensive school in Midsomer Murders\textsuperscript{17} (Horowitz & Graham, 1998). I became an avid viewer of the series for it was filmed in my own home town of Wallingford in Oxfordshire which makes the character of Clapper more alive and real for me. In one scene Clapper leads a warm-up in the school hall with his students, dressed in a casual T-shirt, the sweat pouring off him. Enthusiastically he encourages the class of senior students “remember making pictures now, adventure, explore, reach out, reveal” (Horowitz & Graham, 1998).

Brian Clapper is attempting to create a devised drama with his students about social issues, but he is portrayed as a seedy and unkempt man who crosses the boundaries of school and personal life. In the climactic moments of the story, his students present the “coup de théâtre” (Horowitz & Graham, 1998) he has invited them to create. Clapper becomes lost between fiction and reality and as a result he is left humiliated and in his anger releases a stream of derisive comments towards his pupils:

\textsuperscript{15} The role written and played by Chris Lilley.
\textsuperscript{16} Played by David Troughton.
\textsuperscript{17} Written in Blood, Series 1, episode 2.
I just tried to help … I must have been mad ever to have wasted five minutes let alone five months on any of you. (Horowitz & Graham, 1998)

In these artistic fictions, I try to see beyond the denigration of the drama teacher to the ideal of the passionate educator attempting to empower children’s lives. Instead the images tend to contribute to my own sense of loss.

2.3. Oh, what a lovely war!

I am not the first to use theatre devices to explore public and private faces of battles and barricades. In the 1960s Joan Littlewood and her actors researched documentary evidence of the Great War to develop one of my favourite plays, *Oh What a Lovely War* (Theatre Workshop, Chilton, & Members of the Original Cast, 1965). In my research as in the play, the actors “strip the concept of war of its romantic, heroic associations, to expose economic motives and power struggles that give rise to wars, and to emphasise its consequences for ordinary people” (E. Turner & Dodgson, 1997, p. 235). This juxtaposing of reality and fiction provides social metacommentaries (Turner, 1982) on the events by employing several perspectives in a framed situation; it is both theatrical and critical. The critical lens through which the story is told is apparent in the choices made to frame the play as a music-hall presentation and in the selection of stories and songs that are used. The actors are dressed as Pierrots rather than soldiers and the music-hall context chosen because “after all, war is only for clowns” (Littlewood, 1994, p. 675). Behind the play lies an important question for me: “the facts had been published, but how many had read them?” (Littlewood, 1994, p. 682). The play reaches a wider audience by constructing a narrative surrounding the data and then – through an embodied performance by actors – brings it to new life, although not impartially. It creates a bordered space (Turner, 1988) for audience and actor reflection. The actors themselves become researchers, enabling them to be “more fully inside the cultures they were reading about” (Turner, 1988, p. 146). The stories are juxtaposed (Littlewood, 1994) through non-naturalistic means and “at the end of each performance people would come on stage bringing memories and mementoes, even lines of dialogue which sometimes turned up in the show” (Littlewood, 1994, p. 693). Thus new data was generated as audiences engaged and interacted with the performance. It also told a good story which is “at the heart of theatre” (Anderson, 2007, p. 89). However, one of the barricades to
using drama within research lies in the perception that drama is entertainment (Anderson, 2007) rather than academic. Certainly Brecht debated this issue asking, “what has knowledge got to do with art?” (Willett, 1964, p. 73) and while initially taking an instructional approach he finally accepted the need for theatre to entertain its audiences in order to enter into a dialogue with them. As a member of the audience I engage with *Oh What a Lovely War* because “all art draws on both the intellect and the feelings and pre-supposes that the two work, not at loggerheads but in harness” (Bentley, 1964, p. 104). I am inspired by Littlewood to use a multimedia approach to engage the audience in a real story about real people that draws me into their lives, public and private, and allows me to reflect on the issues. There is an authenticity in the play through the use of documents and data that I wish to capture in my own play. Theatre provides research with an opportunity for researcher, participants and audience to meet together in a shared space and through an aesthetic means to elicit direct and immediate responses to incite the making of meaning. It is cognitive and embodied, objective and subjective, affective and hopefully effective. *Oh What A Lovely War* reminds me that I “must take account of the aesthetic demands of theatre” (Anderson, 2007, p. 89) to communicate effectively and ensure that my performance is “about substance and style, form and feeling, research and art” (Saldaña, 2011, p. 203).

So what are the aesthetic demands of theatre that I must consider in my method and performance? Theatre utilises a wide array of tools to express stories to an audience and while Peter Brook suggests an empty space is all we need. Andy Kempe advises that the aesthetic is best understood in terms of what it is not:

*what is the opposite of aesthetic?... its anaesthetic. What is anaesthetic? It numbs you, it deadens you ... it sends you to sleep. So we would understand anaesthetics. So for Christ’s sake in education we ought to start understanding, appreciating the aesthetic, what is it that makes us feel alive. (Andy Kempe)*

While theatre practitioners train in their art they often work from their sense of ‘connoisseurship’ which is “the art of appreciation” (Eisner, 1991, p. 63). This can be likened to the process through which actors, director and theatre technicians develop their ability to be observant and sensitive to what they are experiencing in theatre. Like my participants, they recall past experiences to inform new experiences; they understand the history and theory of theatre; they draw on
emotional, cognitive and physical experiences to create theatre that communicates to an audience. As connoisseurs of drama education and theatre my participants use their experience and knowledge of the aesthetic to shape the way in which they interpret the embodied reflections. As “educational connoisseurs” (Eisner, 1991, p. 71) they know about “the content being taught and the alternatives to that content within the field” (Eisner, 1991, p. 75). They play with and present a wide variety of dramatic possibilities. The following two examples demonstrate how I and my participants reflect our ability to understand and work within the aesthetic of drama as we generate data. Both examples, Brechtian in style, highlight the way in which the aesthetic of drama can be an integral and important part of deepening responses to research.

**Flashforward: Embodied reflection**

John constructs two sets of barricades with chairs in the centre of his drama studio and begins to embody a group of drama educators. He raises his arms and speaks:

*and you need to put a few people on top of that firing guns (John mimes a rifle in his arms, then crosses stage left and sits on the opposite chairs)*

*and in here you need put some models of people looking very surprised to find themselves being fired at, (Rising inflection with hands raised) “who, us?”(Turns to the researcher and smiles broadly, laughs). (John O’Toole)*

![Figure 16 firing guns](image-url)
Then John’s tone changes and becomes more serious as he details the situation he has described. John uses space, props, voice and body, while playing with the metaphor of battle and barricades to narrate the story and demonstrate the characters. He moves seamlessly between the two while remaining conscious of performing to me as audience and researcher. John is aware he is playing out an imagined scenario to encapsulate the tensions within drama education. Using ‘epic theatre’ he creates a dramatic picture of the opposing views of drama education in England in the 1980s for the audience, while commenting on their foolish nature. There is a contrast between those he portrays as holding a gun and those who appear to be innocent or naïve victims, the rising inflection on the words, “who, us”? John plays multiple roles including that of the Narrator; it is both re-enactment and metaphor. He remains conscious of the framing device addressing the archivist’s assistant, played by me, to request the models be placed within the museum as a display. John is “controlling the medium” (Neelands & Goode, 1990, p. 1) and as the “demonstrator” is able to take “two situations into account” (Willett, 1964, p. 125).

**Episode**

![Figure 17 Jane firing guns](image)

This aesthetic approach to the embodied reflections transitions seamlessly into the non-naturalistic approach I adopt for my re-telling of the stories in the
performance. Using narration I weave John’s story with those of Peter and Andy to create a sense of the barricades of the 1980s. While John’s stories have been detailed and explicit, I choose not to recount certain aspects because, like Mitchell’s *Barricades* (Mitchell, 2014), it is not the precise detail but the general effect which makes an impression on me. Herein lies the beauty and simple complexity of drama. Opinions can be woven into the dialogue; different voices can speak and blend together and then the stories can be retold through a lens. The first lens is the participants’ and the second is mine. My audience may recount and re-embody what they see on stage and the stories will continue to be shaped and owned.

The lens is apparent in Andy’s monologue as he reveals some critical moments in his drama education journey.

*Flashforward: Embodied reflection*

Andy places two chairs side by side upstage right in the studio. He places a mask on the downstage chair to represent his Mother. He pauses to adjust his shirt and reflect and then looking towards me remarks slowly, smiling, as if cautious:

*Okay ... I hope I’ve done this right. (A. Kempe)*

He then sits in the upstage chair so that he does not block his mother, albeit an unseen character. This is a flashback to the time when Andy was a teenager.
Andy sits in front of the imaginary cinema screen and leans forward as if watching a film and laughs; he holds a mask in his hand. He leans back and crosses his ankles, his arms folded over his lap. He then looks towards the screen and gesturing towards himself he begins to narrate, setting the scene:

Andy: I’m at the cinema I’ve gone with my Mum I don’t go very often, it’s “The Italian Job”\textsuperscript{18}. It’s great.

Andy then looks out at the audience, speaking to us directly:

I still love “The Italian Job” after all these years. I’ve seen it loads of times.

During the scene he looks at the cinema screen and then across at his mother:

then I notice that my mum’s crying quietly it’s not the film something else is going on …

Andy returns to watching the film, he pauses and considers. I can see thoughts flitting across his face before he speaks again:

\textsuperscript{18} 1969 film starring Michael Caine
adult world’s. Secrets maybe? (He turns his head as if considering that idea) Drama on the screen, other dramas? (Andy pauses and thinks silently for a few seconds before getting up from his chair and crossing right to exit through the black curtains). (Andy Kempe)

Andy’s teenage thoughts are spoken aloud but are now reflected through the adult Andy. The past and present, public and private collide and the scene reveals a hidden moment using Brecht’s street scene approach. Andy’s use of repetition and short statements leaves questions unanswered. His memories take on a poetic quality (Stanislavski, 1936/1990). These are the aesthetic building blocks of drama.

I experiment with Andy’s scene several times in differing ways but it is too close for my own comfort reminding me of English afternoons, of shared moments with my Mother and imagining fictional worlds. I, too, remember a Sunday afternoon in childhood watching this film and like Andy I am influenced by films to take the path of drama. Instead of including the scene in my play I find that my son has a shirt emblazoned with the title of the 1960s film The Italian Job and a phrase from the song, “we are the self-preservation society”, which accompanies its infamous final scene. I borrow this and peg it on the washing line which I hang across the stage of the Musgrove studio. It joins other artefacts placed on the line as mementos of stories and from which my barricade cloth will ultimately be suspended.
I too am a part of ‘the self-preservation society’ as I try to preserve my passion for drama while English drama educators attempt to preserve drama education itself. I place the two white masks, on which Andy has drawn a comic and tragic face, downstage left on the Musgrove stage where they act both as a symbol for drama education and as a reminder of the private and public brain that my drama is exploring.

2.4. Conclusion: Reimagining the world

Having surveyed the backstory of drama education and considered how my connoisseurship of theatre informs my research, in the next chapter I describe two serendipitous experiences which give me a valuable insight into the motivations behind my research. I begin to acknowledge that my own sense of despondency sits within a wider pattern of my own English culture challenging me to embrace it as central to my research. I describe and reflect on the process involved in mediating my data as I discover unexpected ways of analysing and synthesising the stories, and this, in turn, alters some of my pre-conceived ideas about my methodology.
Chapter 3. Museums and melancholy: Generating and mediating data

Rising action and complication

Melancholy is discovered at a drama education conference in Ireland and embraced as a dramatic lure. A framing device *The Museum of Educational Drama and Applied Theatre* completes the research tool – as a space to imagine and inquire. I become a researcher in role. The tension rises as battle speeches are created and given by the participants. Embodiment is embraced as an act of mediation. I realise that this is a journey of becoming and that I must perform in my drama.

3.1.1. Discovering melancholy

On a damp day in Limerick, Ireland, July 2012, I enter the auditorium at Mary Immaculate College, as a delegate at the International Drama in Education Research Institute (IDIERI). I take my seat among other drama education practitioners. After a short introduction followed by applause, Kathleen Gallagher steps up to the stage and begins her keynote speech. This becomes one of the most significant moments in my research journey as an academic recognises that drama educators can “wither under the weight” (Gallagher, 2012, July) of the many tasks they feel expected to accomplish. Later that day as I am descending a staircase behind Kathleen, I quietly inform her that I enjoyed her keynote, she turns and smiles, acknowledging my comment and we proceed separately to lunch. Our moment of contact is over. She has no idea how significant ‘melancholia’ has become in my life, nor how much it has meant to me that feelings of sadness and disappointment are being acknowledged by the Academy. According to Gallagher many drama teachers suffer from a “loss of ideals and the hyper-judgement of the self” (Gallagher, Freeman, & Wessells, 2010, p. 8) which has been termed “melancholia” (Gallagher, 2012, July) as they struggle to justify drama’s role in the curriculum:

*Flashforward: Performance*

Parents want to know
What this drama thing’s about.
Curriculum and Syllabus?
It has value without doubt.
Employers want the team work
Doing drama can instil;
Creating, communicating,
Time management skills. [Episode 4]

These feelings of ‘melancholia’ are frequently “papered over in our compulsion to advocate for the form and subject of drama in schools” (Gallagher et al., 2010, p. 6).

While I am aware of apocryphal stories and my own it is a revelation and a relief to find academic research that acknowledges this situation. I recognise this is not a modern problem for I am reminded of Harriet Finlay Johnson’s tears (Bowmaker, 2002, p. 113) shed because she was worn down by the effort of “constant diplomacy in the face of what was, at times, sheer ignorance on the part of officials and other critics” (Bowmaker, 2002, p. 77). When I first read her story I connected with my own sense of despondency, which I can now name as melancholia or melancholy.

**Flashforward: Performance**

![Figure 20 that's me! That's me!](image)

*In Irish accent X SR behind chair and stand SL*

Limerick, Ireland 2012, The International Drama in Education Research institute (applauding) Welcome Kathleen Gallagher
KATHLEEN

(Canadian accent) Melancholia - the loss of ideals and the hyper-judgement of the self, drama teachers wither under the weight.

JANE

(Raising hand in air) That’s me, that’s me!
(Thinking, move SR) Argyle describes melancholy as an Elizabethan emotion more aesthetic than depression. [Episode 1]

During the exploration and performance of this moment I feel a mingling of joy and sadness. This is how I felt sitting in the auditorium in Ireland and my emotion memory (Stanislavski, 1937/2013) is being activated in the gestures I use. In Ireland I wanted to stand up and acknowledge loudly this moment of truth for me. The conventions surrounding keynote speeches usually preclude an outburst of this kind but I can include it in my drama and interpret its importance by whispering and repeating, “That’s me”. Through my performance I can speak those words unspoken in Ireland. Each time I rehearse I feel the same sensation again, recognising it as a key moment in my journey. One that looks to my past, acknowledges it and incites me forward to action.

3.1.2. A dearth of discourses on melancholy in drama education

Aside from the discourse on melancholia by Gallagher et al., there appears to be a dearth of such discussions for as these researchers suggest they have only just “begun to document a powerful ‘melancholia’” (Gallagher et al., 2010). Heathcote previously acknowledges teachers can lose their confidence for a number of reasons (Bolton, 2003, p. 7) but she refused to “admit to failures” (Bolton, 2003, p. 41) suggesting to her students “it’s the black dog knock it off” (Bolton, 2003, p. 8). This comment makes me question whether I should be examining my own sense of disillusionment, yet Heathcote believed we should be “complete and completely self-knowing” (Johnson & O’Neill, 1984, p. 23). In the last five years melancholy among drama educators does not appear to have been researched in depth although references to the difficulties drama teachers experience are prevalent (Brooks, 2010; Cody, 2012; Hornbrook, 1989; O’Toole, 1988).
A new book about to be published takes as its theme stories from drama educators who are willing to admit making mistakes. At this stage it is not possible to know whether melancholic feelings were experienced or discussed (Duffy, 2015). When Peter O’Connor expressed his disappointment about drama education being negatively affected by its more central role in the curriculum (O’Connor, 2009, p. 23) he was identifying his own sense of disappointment and disillusionment. Prue Wales suggests that as drama teachers juggle the many demands required of them it “can be stressful, particularly when they find themselves juggling competing discourses” (Wales, 2009, p. 275). However she points out teachers can have different responses to similar situations – “some may feel victimised by a bad experience; others may feel empowered by it, seeing it as a profound learning experience” (Wales, 2009, p.263). I discover in this research how my participants deal with the battles and barricades in ways that differ from my own. By understanding our own subjective natures Wales suggests that we “can grasp a greater awareness of our classroom practices and thus in turn can influence our future work practices” (Wales, 2009, p. 265). By exploring the stories of others I see ways in which I might be able to sustain myself. As my participants play with the metaphors of battles, barricades and juggling I experience something of what makes them passionate or despondent and can reflect on and consider my own story. My participants include advice which I later mediate and fuse into direct addresses to my audience and by doing so create a new discourse that acknowledges and finds ways to address the drama educator’s melancholia.

3.1.3. Serendipity at the Royal Shakespeare Company

In a moment of serendipity, I attend the matinee performance of As You Like It at the Royal Shakespeare Company\textsuperscript{20} (RSC) in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. I am aware of a longing and homesickness which I feel each time I return to England and at the RSC I feel the intensity even more as it is an iconic English place. My parents attended a production on their honeymoon and I have seen several plays both as a student and as a teacher. Stratford-upon-Avon resonates with the Englishness of Shakespeare and the centuries of an archetypal vision of England: thatched cottages and castles. My homesickness heightens my emotive reception

\textsuperscript{20} The 2013 RSC production directed by Maria Aberg; the role of Jaques played by Oliver Ryan and Rosalind by Pippa Nixon.
of the play and my sense of melancholy. The very space excites me: the chatter of the audience, the lights, and the new thrust stage which enables a more intimate relationship between actor and audience. Then the play begins:

**Episode**

![Figure 21 remembering the RSC](image)

I am moved by the non-naturalistic approach, the representational setting appealing to my senses. The framing device suggests an English music festival and the music heightens the mood drawing on traditional folk dances and songs of a bygone age. Suddenly the word ‘melancholy’ leaps out of Jaques’ mouth, as he speaks to Rosalind. It is as if my research again informed my experiences in the
theatre, and has found a nexus, a moment of interconnectivity when ideas come
together through the lens of my emotional state of being. I feel ecstatic, alive and
wipe tears away as they roll down my cheek. As the actor, Oliver Ryan, stands in
his tweed jacket with his hair slicked back, dark shadows under his eyes, I listen
intently to what he says:

JAQUES
I have neither the scholar's melancholy, which is emulation; nor the
musician's, which is fantastical; nor the courtier's, which is proud; nor the
soldier's, which is ambitious; nor the lawyer's, which is politic; nor the
lady's, which is nice; nor the lover's, which is all these: but it is a
melancholy of mine own, compounded of many simples, extracted from
many objects, and indeed the sundry contemplation of my travels, in
which my often rumination wraps me in a most humorous sadness.
(Shakespeare, 1599/1963, p. Act IV Scene i)

The performance is speaking to me in new and refreshing ways. Jaques relishes
his unique melancholy, one of his own making, consisting of many aspects of his
life. He is “perfectly satisfied with himself and happy in his melancholy”
(Gardner, 1963, p. 228). I am intrigued by his acknowledgement of the scholar’s
melancholy, defined by emulation, which equates with my sense of never quite
being good enough; I can never quite emulate those whom I admire, those who
have constructed the theory and practice of drama education.

Some clinical psychologists believe that “by remembering the shared human
experience, we feel less isolated when we are in pain” (Germer & Neff, 2013,
p. 857). Drama offers us a space in which we can share human experiences and at
the RSC, I connect and identify (Bundy, 2014) with Jaques as he relishes his
melancholia. My melancholy is a common experience and particularly for
‘English’ people who have been described as “reserved and prone to melancholy”
(Paxman, 1999, p. 6). Timothie Bright’s Treatise of Melancholy, describes its
states as, “sadness and fear … distrust, doubt, diffidence and despair” (Raddan,

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21 Written in 1568.
Ultimately, “the heart comes to fear everything” (Raddan, 2002, p. 220); and four hundred and forty-four years later I identify with some of those feelings. Freud (Freud, 1917/1957) suggests melancholy can be exhibited through a state of extreme self-criticism and a lack of self-worth leading to a lack of interest and a loss of desire to achieve or to be social which can cause depression and inhibition. This self-destructive process of “anxiety, self-doubt, and depression” begins in adolescence for many women (Debold et al., 1993, p. 10) as we recognise that we are not perceived to be as valuable as men (Debold et al., 1993; Miles, 1989) However melancholy can also endow one with self-understanding and a “keener eye for the truth” (Freud, 1917/1957, p. 245) and in the eighteenth century, melancholy was “held to be an emotion which cleansed the feelings in preparation for new sensations” (Ranger, 1986, p. 33). Grottos and gardens were designed where people could truly experience the enjoyment of the emotion (Ranger, 1986). As an English woman it is as this useful tool that I begin to embrace melancholy as my metaphor for my uncertainties hoping it will make me more alert to insights. I create my own dramatic space metaphorically and actually, at home, in the university drama studio and eventually at the Musgrove Studio and I use it to contemplate drama education praxis. I feel a sense of passion in my melancholia for it is an “Elizabethan emotion, more positive than depression and a valued aesthetic state” (Argyle, 1988). My melancholy opens me to new possibilities.

When I begin this journey I am embarrassed by my sense of disillusionment and loss of passion for teaching drama because “women’s tendencies towards depression, anxiety, and other forms of self-destructive, silent distress are considered simply ‘woman’s nature’” (Debold et al., 1993, p. 8). This may be why I connect to The Scream by Munch using it in my play to represent my own silent scream. The hero discourses and the passionate advocacy that has been part of drama education is also a part of me. I believe drama is a beautiful and exciting way to learn so my loss of passion leaves me feeling that somehow I am at fault. This is possibly why I look to the male practitioners and see in them some skill or ability that I lack: maybe I am too emotional, too self-critical. Although drama can be an inspirational job “when it’s not going well it can be very depressing” (Kempe & Nicholson, 2001, p. 199). Ironically drama education has ‘gone well’ for me, I leave the classroom quietly proud of my students and my achievements.
yet I cannot enjoy and relish these moments. I have a scholar’s melancholy, a sense that other practitioners have some insights and abilities that I do not have. I fear I am trapped within the ceaseless round of assessment, my knowledge and passion are becoming an ever-decreasing circle which leaves me frustrated. Drama in the classroom has become prescriptive; it is manipulated to fit a curriculum. I no longer feel able to explore the issues I once did for the goal is always the short performance to meet a limited and limiting range of criteria. Creativity is limited to finding ways to usurp the system. I have invested time, energy and emotion into a pedagogy which now leaves me exhausted.

Yet there is no advice about how to re-find the passion or the “palliatives we need” (Johnson & O’Neill, 1984, p. 23) to ensure I am re-energised and renewed. My quiet self prevents me from being recognised or even recognising my own abilities. My research becomes a therapy to help me stop my self-flagellation. Neelands suggests that drama education can help students on a “journey of becoming” (O’Connor, 2010, p. 109) and I embrace the idea that I am in a process of becoming. I did not arrive in the classroom fully formed as a drama educator, it is a process that is ever evolving, but when the process feels as if it has stopped, I must find a way to crawl through the

\[ \text{hole in the barricade (John O’Toole)} \]

to see what lies beyond.

**Flashforward: Embodied reflections**

During the embodied reflections and subsequent rehearsals I connect to the stories told of others’ passion for drama education and the investment of self in its teaching. Andy contemplates an artefact he has brought along and which he is labelling for the Museum:

\[ \text{I’ve got some pictures here and they kind of represent some of the things I’ve been thinking about ... pictures that represent the kind of gamut of things you know that I do on the PGCE course. (Andy Kempe)} \]

He takes his time to consider what to write before placing the label and the images on the floor of the studio, and then with a smile and brief laugh he explains:

\[ \text{I’ve put investment down because frankly it’s not just a huge number of hours of my life that have gone into this course but an awful lot of} \]

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thinking (indicates head) and an awful lot of feeling (indicates heart) my heart and soul have gone into this for, my goodness, so where are we 25 years, quarter of a bloody century of being, working here, time I got a proper job obviously. (Andy Kempe)

Jonothan too describes this investment:

**Flashforward: Performance**

**JONOTHAN**

I believe the same things which stop a young person from getting out of that chair (*pointing to the doll on chair*) and moving into that red space are the same reasons that stop them from participating in life.

(Pick up doll; take it to the barricade of chairs)
But drama teachers,
Use their skills and heart
To persuade
Young people
To peep above the barricade,
Dismantle it.
De-structure it. [Episode 4]
This moment captures for me the essence of my job to ensure children can surmount educational barricades regardless of my own emotional state. As Jonothan suggests it takes skill and heart, the intellect and the emotions. As I look at the photograph I see the pain in my face of the pull inside me. I have chosen to invest in other people’s children; I have put them ahead of my own two children because:

The image of the capable woman must never be tainted by the smell of baby powder; efficient women have that side of their lives well under control. Motherhood is like some skeleton kept in the cupboard and most of us collaborate in keeping our children invisible. (Kennedy, 1989, p. 7)

I remember feeling quietly proud as I set off to teach, dressed smartly with my baby son in his car seat. Here, I was the image of the capable woman but behind this exterior I began to mask the beginnings of my despondency. No one saw the struggle to prepare lessons after continuous sleepless nights or find emergency childcare when my son was sick. I feel guilty about wanting to teach when my job was perceived by many to be a Mother (Kitzinger, 1992). My own Mother had given up ten years of her teaching life to care for us but I was determined that my life would be different “for who says that the mother is the best caretaker of the child?” (Lazarre, 1987, p. 60)

3.1.4. Preparing to generate stories

In reflecting on my own archival documents there is so much I have forgotten and a photograph or a piece of writing brings memories flooding back. Yet I am aware that I recall either mainly pleasant or unpleasant feelings, the minutiae of everyday life are often lost unless it relates to a significant moment. July 1, 1979, I recall a telephone ringing on a Sunday afternoon while I am removing roast potatoes from an Aga stove. I put the potatoes in their tin of hot fat down; remove the oven gloves and answer the call from the nurse who summons us to my Mother’s bedside as she dies. How many phone calls have I taken in my life and how many have been forgotten? It is possible that the stories the participants and I tell will necessarily focus on emotional and dramatic moments for they seem to
remain in the body. The embodied reflections enable us all to become actors in our own drama.

The first embodied reflection is my own:

**Embodied reflection: Jane**

![Image](image.png)

Figure 23 my embodied reflection

I am dressed casually in blue jeans, a woolly jumper and no shoes. I am in my living room; a fire burning in the stove as it is cold. The room is cosy and familiar and I try to forget that this is being videoed. I use gesture and movement; I embody ideas in the space. There are moments when there is silence as I write or think. The only sounds are the ticking of a clock, the rain falling and the crackle of the fire. I reflect how different this room is from my last drama studio which was damp and often cold. I consider how this affected the attitudes of my students and my own attitudes.

**Flashforward: Performance**

I’m sorry guys, the drama studio is flooded again; we’ll have to use a classroom. [Episode 1]
This line when delivered makes the audience laugh. The drama space is often at the edges of the school as Jonothan will recount in his studio which is:

sometimes referred to by the rest of this University as Siberia and it’s a safe place. (Jonothan leans across to chairs) and drama studios, dedicated drama studios like this, are often on the margins of institutions of schools and other places. In our schools they are often in mobiles out on the edge of the playground. You know people worry about that and they worry about the lack of respect and status but I actually embrace it it’s important for me to be on the margins it’s important there’s a safe space here where people can come to where things are different. (Jonothan Neelands)

The laughter is a shared moment of recognition when we acknowledge our marginalised status and often inadequate facilities.

I contemplate my own embodied reflection in my journal. I have no guide to lead me through the session and I wonder whether, with an audience present, I might be more embodied and performative. I find the process to be:

an act of confession as well as somewhat cathartic. These were Confessions of my feelings and thoughts about drama in education … It was emotional at times. [J. Luton, 2012, Doctoral Journal]

Along with my emotional responses I think about practical issues that will affect the reflections that will follow.

I realised that I need to capture all the images photographically to ensure they are recorded as this is not easily done in the ER. … I think it is best to gather up the images and then record them afterwards. And at the top of each workshop I feel the need to log the following information. In terms of drama, the elements of place, mood, and atmosphere will form an integral part of this work. What is the location that the participant has chosen, in which they feel secure (or possibly not) to tell their story. I want to record what they are wearing. [J. Luton, 2012, Doctoral Journal]

Three days later I wear black trousers and socks for ease of movement in the second embodied reflection. It is interrupted by a visitor and has to be resumed an hour later; Peter’s first reflection too will be disrupted by a telephone call. This echoes the ways in which drama is frequently disrupted by the life of a school constantly interrupted by bells or by school events. During my time with Ron Price in England the school bells ring frequently leading Ron to apologise for the
As I watch myself on the video I critique my voice, my movement, my body as students do when they watch themselves perform. But the more I watch the video the more I step back to observe how I am expressing myself and I begin to consider why I have chosen those moments. There are many pauses, thoughtful or frozen silences. I have a week until I carry out the workshop with Peter. He reminds me that it does not have to be perfect, because this is a new and evolving methodology. What still concerns me is that as the researcher I could be too invasive within the method and while facilitating the tasks I may ‘steal’ my participant’s time or lead them in one direction. I need to get the balance right so the method is invitational and inspirational. I want to incorporate the idea that there is no one right answer. My fear that I talk too much is not only mine for Ron shares his worry during his embodied reflection:

*My nagging thought is my over-explaining am I talking too much ... Constantly there’s a little voice in the back of my head saying shut up Ron let them get on with it and that and that’s my nagging thought. (Ron Price)*

I smile to myself and connect to the little nagging thought.

Actors are used to working with properties which are realistic, representational or symbolic to help communicate meaning. During my own embodied reflection I began using my artefacts to create my dream of the future, using the poster of *The Scream* by Munch laid on the floor:
Figure 24 Jane's dream of the future

*we listen to the voices of the children not what a governments wants ... the students are developing confidence creativity even if they’re going off to be scientists ... but we have to stop feeling we have to battle. (Jane Luton)*

I place the white pieces of paper across *The Scream* acknowledging my desire to stop my battle. The masks written on and gifted to me by students and the green book filled with encouraging stories of drama remind me some students do acknowledge the positive effects drama can bring them. Being able to use these items has added an extra layer of possibilities to my reflective process.

The next embodied reflection is the first of two with Peter. It takes place in his office, a medium-sized room dominated on the left side by a desk and bookcases while on the right is a round table and chairs. A large picture window allows the sun to light the space. I set the camera up at the left side of the room but find that the distance means I need to move it slightly several times to capture what is happening. Peter sits at the table where he creates his ‘symbol of drama education’ using cardboard and draws his ‘family tree’ with coloured felt-tip pens. Later he stands up and delivers his monologue in the centre of the room. In my journal I note:

*Today I carried out the first part of Peter’s Interactive Interview. It certainly opened up lots of interesting stories … but I still want more activity. I think the choice of the office space was too restricting – it lacks a lot in framing – but at the same time I want their stories. Still thinking on this. ... Do I need to contextualise the whole workshop? The most powerful moments were when Peter embodied what he was saying e.g. the art installation. He said he really liked doing the monologue. [J. Luton, 2012, Doctoral Journal]*

His second session takes place in a much larger teaching space. This is cluttered with chairs and tables but we clear a space in which we can work. This allows him the flexibility to embody his stories by shaping spaces to give them dramatic significance. Between the two reflections I make some considerable changes which give a sense of completeness to the process.

At the completion of his first embodied reflection Peter noted:
I’d really like to have had a three dimensional things to play with ... I think you need a box of stuff. (Peter O’Connor)

I take Peter’s suggestion and begin to contemplate what kinds of items might support dramatic ideas while remaining flexible and open to interpretation. I choose items that I use in drama lessons or that I feel have symbolic meaning to drama education, like the white mask. I create a box of ‘stuff’ placing a selection of items into a gold cardboard box to make it special.

![Figure 25 the final prop box](image)

Sadly due to my travel constraints to England, the props had to be put in a bag. I choose my red Drama New Zealand 2011 Conference bag, with the words ‘Unplugged’ printed in black. It seems like an appropriate container but I do not expect that it too will become a prop in the hands of the participants. The bag eventually becomes a part of my set and is hung on my washing line upstage along with other items either used or suggested by my participants. Many of the contents altered as participants asked for particular items to be included. I begin with masks along with paper and pens. John O’Toole requests a scarf:

*I’m just looking in your little yellow box you don’t have a scarf, how could, how could any drama teacher not come with the scarf either some kind of*
hairbands or scarf to drape over yourself to play the old woman? Don’t you ever play old women in your dramas? You’ve got to have a scarf especially if you’re a bloke if you can play an old woman. How can I be a mother of the IRA boy who’s been killed unless I’m wearing a scarf? (John O’Toole)

Lynn Fels suggests ‘post it’ notes and Andy Kempe:

I’m really interested in that you don’t have any books in your selection. Why is that?

The scarves become significant symbols in my performance. I use three: the pink scarf used by my participants which as John suggests I drape over myself to signify a role. The red and blue scarves are chosen to reflect the colours John uses in his representation of the drama and theatre debate as he places coloured sheets of card on each side of his barricade. They also come to act as my symbols of passion and melancholia.

3.1.5. The voices of the Museum begin to speak

I create a voice-over to play between episode one and two of my performance. Members of my family agree to speak some of the words of my participants and I choose a piece of music to accompany them. This montage of spoken thoughts acts as a link between scenes helping the transition from the story of the development of my method to entering the imagined world I create with my participants and with my audience:

Flashforward: Voice-over

(The stage is bare except for a large red circle of rope a chair USC and some coloured foam human shapes around the edges of the circle. The headlines are projected onto a screen, a voice-over is heard.)

(Participants’ voice over)

– Don’t you ever play old women in your dramas?
– You’ve got to have a scarf?
– The wool – it’s all so neat and tidy and I don’t want to upset you by unravelling it
– You don’t have any books in your selection ... Why is that?
– I find choosing items too restrictive

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- This is a flag.
- What’s it like to be an orange person? Okay move as a yellow person. If you had a green voice what would a green voice sound like?
- This is lovely, what a fun thing to do I think everyone should do this as a form of therapy.
- I like this very much it’s horribly self-indulgent ... I can see and feel things in three-dimensions - I can start making links.
- I knew I’d do all the work it’s a very good methodology.
- Wow this is amazing Jane this is very fun.[Episode 2]

![Image of two masks in red light](image)

**Figure 26 masks**

I include the dissonant voices for not everyone enjoys the props with one participant finding them restrictive while others are childlike in their playful approach to the objects. This is the moment when:

**Flashforward: Performance**

The Voices of the museum begin to speak ...
[Episode 1]

### 3.1.6. Framing the research

The second significant change and one which alters my approach significantly is the realisation that my process is not dramatically framed. There is no dramatic
purpose for the work aside from my doctoral research. My method consists of drama conventions in a constructed format but it lacks a dramatic purpose. To be dramatically purposeful, I need more than participants embodying responses to chosen activities. John Carroll suggests the use of framing “protects the participants while freeing them to voice opinions within dramatic role that would not normally be available to them” (Carroll, 1996, p. 83).

Framing is central to all forms of drama education (Bowell & Heap, 2013; O’Connor & Anderson, 2015) enabling participants to explore and reflect ideas, through a dramatic context. This fictional circumstance provides a distancing effect for participants to step in and out of role (Bowell & Heap, 2013; O’Connor & Anderson, 2015). Victor Turner asked his students of ethnography to focus on certain moments from their research in order to create a “bordered space” for reflection (Turner, 1988). Heathcote describes this as “the frame of reference in which you want the problem to be seen” (Johnson & O’Neill, 1984, p. 151) enabling the participants to “have to think from inside the responsibility of a situation” (Johnson & O’Neill, 1984, p. 142). Metaphorically it is as if we place a picture frame around the subject under investigation which then “propels the participants into discourse” (Bowell & Heap, 2013, p. 56). This is different from a traditional interview because the participants are given a purpose or problem that has to be solved or investigated. As I consider my framing device I recall happy hours spent with students in London, at the Theatre Museum, Covent Garden. When it was unable to survive financially, its flags fluttered outside the building for many months after its closure. Here in this space my students explored the artefacts and technologies of theatre. We used to spend the morning actively engaged in a drama workshop before walking to a theatre to spend the afternoon watching a play. It was always an exciting and joyous day spent immersing ourselves in theatre. I recognise this is the space I want for drama education: an imaginary space but one that my participants could fill with their stories. The framing device provides a safety net as participants appreciate their stories will be shared in the public space of the museum. I decide to call this place the Museum of Educational Drama and Applied Theatre (MEDAT) and with the financial demise of the museum in Covent Garden and because this is an imaginary place, I decide to inform my participants that “money is no object” to which Andy replies with laughter:
so we really are in the realms of complete fantasy. (Andy Kempe)

It is a moment when the framing device and imagination allow us to explore ideas without the limitations that real life might bring. It is not, however, until near the end of the research process that I can imagine what the building might look like enabling me to create a simple image:

![Figure 27 exterior view of MEDAT](image)

It is as a direct result of the stories and my participants’ engagement with this imagined space that gives the Museum its shape. Jonothan and John embody the circle as a significant shape for drama to occur within and later as I mediate these stories I will come to imagine what the inside of the Museum is like.

I introduce the framing device of MEDAT in Peter’s second embodied reflection by asking him:

*to imagine if you will that a museum [Peter moves chair] is just about to be opened up and this is it, The Museum of Educational Drama and Applied Theatre, MEDAT.*

I hand him a laminated flyer that advertises the museum and suggest that he has been asked as a key drama education practitioner to help create displays and artefacts that he can contribute. Along with a frame drama requires imagination and role. I decide to play the role of the ‘Archivist’s assistant’ in order to help create the dramatic situation in which Peter can “re-live or pre-live situations of importance” (Johnson & O’Neill, 1984, p. 49). Using the convention of teacher in
role I became the researcher in role, using all the possibilities of this convention as a researcher. Taking a role is “flexible in its application” (Johnson & O'Neil, 1984, p. 52) so I can be approached as ‘Jane’ when the need arises. I can further the drama by speaking on behalf of the Archivist or express uncertainty about what the Archivist wants, allowing my participants to use their imaginations and interpret resources and suggestions as they choose. Jonothan particularly embraces this and several times acknowledges that he is interpreting a task or resource in his own way. In role I ask Jonothan to create a map of his educational journey including three critical moments that inspired his work. Jonothan stands motionless in the centre of the studio holding his cardboard mug of coffee and smiles:

So in 40 years you’re asking for three moments? (Jonothan Neelands)

I smile gently and reply:

I might allow you a little bit more.

Inside I am worried, have I asked the impossible, will Jonothan play the game and be willing to create a display? I give no assistance or suggestions and after a few moments Jonothan puts down his coffee, picks up a whiteboard marker and asks me to turn the camera around to face the whiteboard. He begins to draw a large map of the world and finally, stepping back from the board, he says:

you’re not getting three, look (Researcher laughs) you asked for a map.

In this moment of laughter I feel there is a shared understanding of the way in which drama frees us from conventional approaches to exploring meanings. As Jonothan suggests:

I don’t believe in rules and laws as I told you and will keep on telling you it’s all theatre as far as I’m concerned it’s what you do with it that matters just because someone’s involved doesn’t make you a good teacher just because somebody is living through doesn’t make it any more truthful than dance or poetry or music it’s, it’s what the facilitator does it’s what the teacher does and why they do it and who they do it with and what their purposes are (gestures for emphasis). (Jonothan Neelands)

Yet, Jonothan works within the constraints of the convention of map making “in order to reflect on experience” (Neelands & Goode, 1990, p. 18). I cannot help but
reflect on this moment many months later, realising that I have experienced the articulator of map making as a dramatic convention making his own map.

3.1.7. Creating battle speeches

The framing device of MEDAT, the use of the imagination, and the convention of teacher/researcher in role finalises the missing pieces of my method. These three aspects of drama education processes are fundamental to the success of this research approach. With the framing device in place the ‘battle speeches’ I invite my participants to create can now be prepared and presented as if on the occasion of the opening of MEDAT. However, there is still one last aspect of drama to be incorporated within the method, that of tension. The topic of battles and barricades offers one form of tension as it invites stories of conflict but offering a problem to my participants has the potential to add a further tension to the drama (Morgan & Saxton, 1989). This tension is not necessarily “a matter of huge terrifying events” but rather a means to develop a “new focus and create new awarenesses” (Johnson & O’Neill, 1984, p. 34).

Flashforward: Performance

JANE

(Trying to hush the group, SFX dies away) Excuse me, Excuse me Ladies and gentlemen the Archivist would like to invite you to create a battle speech, for the opening of this museum; a rallying cry, based on Henry the Fifth.

(Step out aside to audience) [Episode 3]

I then suggest:

JANE

(Back to participants) oh by the way the Minister of Education will be present...

Slide: We just reel from constantly being ‘done with’
The participants’ responsibility is to represent the body of drama education practitioners, to challenge and inspire them while communicating to those in positions of power who have limited knowledge of the pedagogy and praxis. John considers this task:

so what you’re, the archivist is pointing out, is that we have multiple audiences and conflicting audiences with conflicting expectations. (John O’Toole)

John stands at the table in the centre of the studio reading Henry’s speech from Shakespeare’s *Henry V* which I have given him as a resource. As the Archivist’s assistant I place a pen on the table which he picks up still focusing on the text; he is thoughtful, contemplative. He lifts the pad of paper; walks stage right to bring a chair to the side of the table, sits down, crosses his legs and begins to write.

As I juxtapose the images of this moment from each embodied reflection I recognise that we are all sharing a common purpose in the creation of a speech to rally the troops. Each embodied reflection differs according to the participants but this activity is one we all share. We appear like children, in a classroom, engaged in traditional learning, yet one stands, one is on the floor, another beside a table, one writes on their knees. I notice how intently each participant sets about the task, heads bent over paper, pens in hand, contemplating the resource I have given them. Writing is a familiar activity to us:

There tends to be a lot of drawing listening making of things so there’s usually a box like that (refers to basket of pens etc.) ... One of your artefacts should be sugar paper. (Jonothan Neelands)

The intense writing is followed by each practitioner standing to deliver the speeches to an imagined audience.
They are delivered as if they matter, as if they are real. The speech is important for Lynn to express what matters to her in drama education. After performing and reflecting she asks, as Peter does, to give the speech a second time prefacing it with a question:

*So the minister right? I’m talking to those who would take all this away.*

*(Lynn Fels)*

With this confirmation, she imagines the presence of this potentially hostile Minister. Lynn stands on the table, a scroll in her hands; there is a palpable emotion in the room. She is now about to speak to the person who threatens the existence of drama. This is personal but Lynn advocates quietly and passionately:

*We have only this moment (Whispers) here now*

*Breathe (Lynn breathes – taking breath loudly)*

*Breathe with me, you too – (Said to Jane who begins to consciously breathe)*

*To take the time to breathe, sometimes I’m afraid to breathe*

*Listen to the child within you, listen to the child you’ve left behind*

*Can you hear her call, do you feel his presence there with you?*

*Once you were a child at play, once you were a child*

*This thing that we call drama this too is a child at play, forgive yourself, come into play, what we call drama plays us, plays us into being, breathe (Breathes, steps back, drops paper to the ground). (Lynn Fels)*

Some of these words will form the battle speech I construct for my final drama. The speeches created for this imagined occasion are significant for they express the concerns, desires, hopes and dreams of my participants. They are written to
both rally drama educators and as a plea to convince the Minister of the value and importance of the role that drama education can play in the lives of children. They are poetic and emotional. In England they have a greater resonance for as Jonothan, Ron and Andy all suggest, it is a difficult and dark time for drama education threatened as it is by the government represented in the persona (at that time) of Michael Gove.

Andy: Is this to everybody or just to the minister?

Researcher: This is for everybody who is going to be there, but he will also be there.

Andy: ... but he will also be there ... Okay alright.

(Keeps writing)

(13 minutes)

Andy: Bit rough (laughs) okay so these crowds of people wanting to come into our Museum of drama education and amongst them (Said through clenched teeth) our esteemed Minister of State for Education. (Andy Kempe)

The decision to include the Minster ‘of’ or ‘for’ Education amongst the audience incites passionate stories of drama education in England. I feel a sense of the strong emotions that are being directed towards the real Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, and the subsequent speeches become more personal, heartfelt and tense as participants imagine him sitting among the drama educators. Gove becomes the antagonist of the drama; the personification of the ‘knowledge-based curriculum’ as Andy explains:

when he is talking about knowledge what’s he talking about? He’s talking about rote learning and knowledge of facts and figures but with no understanding. (Andy Kempe)

While in England I have the opportunity to see an interview with Gove on television. I have heard so much about him that I expect a frightening and terrifying figure. Instead he speaks calmly from behind his dark-rimmed spectacles and, smiling, suggests that his educational policies bring greatness to children (Lansdale & Gove, 2013, May 12). I place his words on my PowerPoint slide in readiness for the final drama but in an ironic turn of events in 2014, less
than one week before my performance, Michael Gove exits from his role as Education Secretary (“The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP Member of Parliament for Surrey Heath,” 2014).

*We just reel from being constantly being ‘done with’ by ministers trying to show how clever they are so they can move up the ladder. (Ron Price)*

As Gove ascends his ladder, I hastily alter my scene noting that using drama to disseminate research enables it to be current, reflecting the changing nature of the world in an instant. A caption appears over the PowerPoint image:

Figure 29 cabinet reshuffle

Using a small puppet to represent Gove I enact a brief scene:
The puppet is drop-kicked across the stage mirroring an earlier action in the play:

(Pick up small doll)

Slide: Margaret Thatcher Education Secretary, England 1970-1974

MARGARET THATCHER

I want a curriculum that is functionalist and utilitarian and nineteenth century. And let’s get rid of the milk while we’re at it!

(Drop-kicks the doll out to the audience like a football)

This scene developed from participants’ contributions and was embodied into the role of Margaret herself. There is something both naughty and empowering in these moments which seems to be a contradiction: to embody a violent act in what is seen as a pedagogy of hope (O’Connor, 2008). There is an heartening feeling in me that while Thatcher and Gove as education ministers did not value drama (Davis, 2014, p. 49) their roles are transitory while drama continues to be present within education, even if embattled.

Each participant takes a different approach to the metaphor, speeches and images of the battles and barricades. My own response concerns the daily difficulties of
teaching drama in a school. John tells the story of the internecine warfare between the schools of process and product, drama versus theatre, by building barricades from chairs. His battle speech then encourages educators to take a more collegial approach. Andy explores the battles of assessment, and Ron the battles with parents encouraging them to understand the value drama has for their children. Jonothan takes his time before talking about battles in terms of the difficulties students have in gaining the key to the:

fortress of knowledge.\(^{22}\) (Jonothan Neelands)

ARCHIVIST and MELONY (speak the words of Jonothan, poeticised)

(Set up plastic chairs as fortress)
The fortress of knowledge
Has huge high towers,
And locks and gates.

(Knock on door mirror the knocking on Faculty of Education door in episode 1)

You will not pass without a key!
So kids put up barricades,
Impenetrable barricades.

(Stacking chairs in middle crouch down)

VOICES OF STUDENTS

(Represented by one doll)

My friends will laugh at me,
I’m uncomfortable with my body shape,
People will think I’m teacher’s pet,

(Storms off SR, turn chair away from audience, sits)

I can’t be bothered!

---

\(^{22}\) Acknowledged as stemming from Dan Baron Cohen.
The battle speeches also act as a personal rallying cry. Mine allows me to challenge my melancholia:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Don’t give up ...} \\
\text{Remember what brought you to drama,} \\
\text{Be bold, dare to be different ...} \\
\text{Believe in yourself and be true to yourself. (Jane Luton)}
\end{align*}
\]

Each participant takes their own time to create a speech and it is not until John signals me with a look that I invite him to speak:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Imagine that it’s your turn to give your speech to the troops. (Jane in John O’Toole)}
\end{align*}
\]
The battle speeches provide insights into the difficulties within drama education as well as providing a platform for the bravura expressions of solidarity and encouragement, to empower me to start feeling re-energised.

3.2. The Museum of Educational Drama and Applied theatre

My participants are welcomed to MEDAT and handed a laminated publicity flyer at the beginning of each embodied reflection:

*One thing that’s really important to remember with this is that there is no one right way to carry out any of the activities and no one right interpretation. This really is about you and your ideas, being creative and possibly even taking us off into new ideas. If there is something you really don’t want to do then please feel free not to do it.*

*Together we will imagine that this empty space filled with only a few chairs and tables will, through the magic of drama, become the Museum of Educational Drama and Applied Theatre. Using embodiment and drama conventions I will ask you to create your exhibits.*

*We need to imagine that we are in the empty space of that museum, bare walls at the moment – but you may, during the course of developing your space, have cabinets, display boards, multimedia technology to develop your space. Could you take the time now to walk the space and imagine its possibilities as an interactive museum? [Introduction to the embodied reflection given by Jane in role as the Archivist’s assistant]*

Imagining MEDAT immediately generates embodied discussions and enactments about the use of space within drama. In the Faculty of Education at The University of Reading, Andy clears the cluttered space of desks and chairs, pulls the curtains, and illuminates the studio with stage lighting. He sits on a red chair to listen to my introduction, then rises, hands in pockets, and begins to walk around the newly constructed drama studio:

*well ... so there’s a question then what do we fill it with? Do we fill it with artefacts and books and stuff – do we divide it into, I don’t know, different things that might be covered in drama in education so for example, plays, physical theatre, mime, masks, puppets film, multimedia or from what you’ve said you want to look at particular individuals (laughs) which I would have to say would be the least appealing to me because I’d much rather drama in education was about the thing itself rather than individuals who just happened to have made a living out of it*
... Particularly if you want it to be an interactive space because that’s what I’d want it to be ... (Andy Kempe)

Goffman suggests information can be elicited from the scenery (Goffman, 1959) that surrounds individuals. Four of the reflections take place in spaces specially designed for drama; empty spaces, three of them containing blackout curtains and technologies for lighting and sound. The other reflections take place in an office, a teaching space, a living room and a small seminar room. Peter’s office is lined with books and pictures and he refers during the reflection to the photograph of Dorothy Heathcote and himself on his desk. I am unable to book a studio space for Lynn’s visit to the university and she has to work in a small formal seminar room which does not prevent her from embodying her story as she dances around the room, moving chairs and transforming the space into MEDAT uninhibited by the presence of a large boardroom table in the centre of the room. She brings the space alive using her imagination and the props. Allowing my participants to choose their own familiar space seems to make them feel comfortable. Andy and Jonothan use lighting, sound and projections to contribute to the theatrical presentation of their stories.

3.2.1. Video recording

The video camera is essential in this method for capturing verbal and non-verbal data. It is not new research technology for “right from the discovery of photography in the mid-19th century pictures started to become a supplementary source of information for anthropologists” (Evers, 2011, p. 3). I use one camera in a mainly fixed position and stand beside it throughout the majority of the reflections as both facilitator and audience. Occasionally I move the camera closer to capture an artefact or display being created. Because of drama’s ephemeral nature, the video has become a valuable tool in attempting to capture dramatic activity (Dunn, 2010, p. 193) but it can never fully re-create the actual living moment of being present in the work (Dunn, 2010; Hornbrook, 1991). The camera allows me to focus on my participants rather than on making notes, possibly missing key physical moments and failing to interact with my participants as researcher in role. The video is not for public consumption but as an aide-mémoire.
3.3. Transcribing as analysis

I transcribe the videos myself to ensure the confidentiality promised to my participants. I discipline myself to transcribe in the days following each embodied reflection. In total I have about seventeen hours of video. After my own embodied reflection I note that transcribing:

is the time consuming part. [J. Luton, Journal]

However, this task helps in capturing the interactions and the aliveness of the event (Ackroyd & O’Toole, 2010; Kvale, 1996). I can relive the experiences, I can hear where I breathe deeply, or laugh and cry in response to the participants. I can see key images again: Andy’s use of the little foam people lying in a circle on a dark drama studio carpet or Jonothan Neelands encircling a space with red wool, Peter O’Connor looking beyond the barricade to the blue horizon:

![Figure 32 deep blue endless straight to the blue horizon](image)

I see John O’Toole as re-enacts his first meeting with Dorothy Heathcote, throwing her imaginary rope out to her students shouting:

*Pull you buggers! Pull! (John O’Toole)*
I watch Lynn Fels delivering her battle speech from the top of a table as she shouts her joy:

Yes! Yes! Yes! (Lynn Fels)

at being able to study drama at University because she was not going

to be stopped by people who say no.
I recall my excitement at this celebration of empowerment. These images remain with me; I feel them, I hear them, I relive them as I transcribe the data. I still feel the hot sun on my back streaming in through the large windows as I stand at the video camera watching Lynn in a southern hemisphere late summer. I feel the chill morning, promising spring as I catch the train to Wokingham in England to meet Ron Price.

Figure 35 Ron Price

Transcription then moves from being a tedious practical task to one in which I can reflect and remember the moments I have experienced. I can stop the video and look more closely; I can listen again to the words. Transcribing is the first part of analysis as we become:

more conscious of what is going on, either in the interview or in a videotaped situation, assuming the researcher is doing the transcription him- or herself. This heightened consciousness of content and context will deepen our understanding of data. (Evers, 2011, p. 8)

3.3.1. Voice recognition enables embodiment

I am not a touch typist but this lack of skill leads to an important discovery as, in order to speed up the process of transcription and to ensure accuracy, I trial a voice-recognition system designed to respond to the user’s voice. I begin to re-
speak every line aloud and embody my participants’ vocal mannerisms and gestures. Apparently “only on rare occasions will a qualitative researcher actually voice out loud what he or she has collected in the field and transcribed or documented” (McCammon, Saldaña, Hines, & Omasta, 2012, p. 28). I find that I become not only conversant with but immersed in the stories. During the process, I notice

I am developing a deeper or most embodied sense of what the theorist practitioners are sharing. Because I am speaking the words aloud, I am feeling them in my mouth and at times using parroted gestures, this seems more valuable than purely listening and typing. Perhaps not being a touch typist is not such a disability after all! [J. Luton, Journal]

I return to the videos many times during the transcription and mediation process to recapture specific moments in action, to listen more closely to certain phrases or their delivery. Re-watching the videos gives me further opportunities to listen to the words and to describe in more precise details what I see. With the voice-recognition system running I can watch the screen, rather than the keyboard, which is essential to my analysis. I listen, watch, re-speak and gesticulate which helps me to feel the data (Evers, 2011). This voicing aloud becomes an essential tool in my analysis of the data allowing me to “take ownership of each and every single word written on paper” (McCammon et al., 2012, p. 28).

My participants have interpreted the resources I offer them and in turn I re-interpret their stories. While I attempt to be authentic, my transcriptions are my interpretation of the events because as I transcribe the spoken words, I choose when, where and how to include the interruptions, pauses and repetitions within the speech. I describe some moments in detail and others with barely a comment. I use a “pragmatic transcription” (Evers, 2011, p. 9) which allows me flexibility in formatting them like a dialogue. I use my descriptions of participants’ movement and tone of voice as stage directions and as a “way of transitioning research from page to stage” (Saldaña, 2011, p. 71). This prevents the transcription from being merely “static written words” (Kvale, 1996, p. 167) and enables me to capture action.

As Andy Kempe prepares his monologue he uses some of the ‘props’ that I have provided. I describe his movement in terms of stage directions using the
terminology of voice, body, movement and space and upstage, downstage stage right or left to show where my participants are positioned:

(Andy gets up crosses upstage left picks up the pink scarf and a little green person and an orange person and a yellow person. He wraps the pink scarf around the yellow person holding it in his upstage hand, puts on a ‘posh’ voice, stands with hand behind back). (Andy Kempe)

I treat the space as a stage and read the performance as an audience member. I identify the use of dramatic conventions and nuances within the use of gesture and speech underlining words given particular emphasis by participants. Instead of ‘ums’ and ‘ahs’ to show hesitations or a lapse of speech that represents an ongoing thought process, I occasionally use an ellipsis and sometimes a hyphen in the manner of the playwright Harold Pinter who suggests we communicate important information through pauses in our “continual evasion, desperate rearguard attempts to keep ourselves to ourselves. Communication is too alarming” (Pinter, 1976, p. 15).

Jonothan takes a lengthy pause after I ask him to consider the battles and barricades he has found in drama education:

(Jonothan has been looking at the laminated pictures)

Jonothan: (Hums, thinking) Do I have to do the things in this order I’m very stuck on that one (Continues to think)

Researcher: Would you like us to do a different one first?

Jonothan: Yes. (Jonothan Neelands)

There could be several reasons for this hesitation; I might be transgressing a subject he prefers not to talk about, although he knows this research concerns these tensions. I wonder if my dramatic task is unclear or poorly presented or whether he needs to reflect longer on the idea. It would be easy to miss this moment but instead it forces me to reflect on the task and the potential for it to open wounds. However, during the pauses I have to remain calm and allow the silence to be; I have to avoid jumping into the space to invade my participant’s thoughts with my words.
3.3.2. Capturing golden moments

Throughout the research there are many “golden moments” (Saldaña, 2011, p. 28) which affect me emotionally and aesthetically. They often make me cry or smile, become quiet or even shake. According to Hornbrook this resonance is a moment when our understandings of a culture come face to face with “their representations in the culture itself and burst vividly into consciousness” (Hornbrook, 1991, p. 37). They are moments that I identify with whether from an understanding or recognition that lies within the story being told or because what is occurring is appealing to my artistic sense. I begin to capture still images of these from the videos which I use as signposts throughout the transcriptions, assisting me to pay special attention to the use of body language, gesture and facial expression. Even after the transcriptions are complete I return to the videos throughout the rehearsal and writing process to build up a clearer and more precise picture of a moment. I am surprised at how much can be missed in the first, second and even third watching of a moment. The videos remain as the main source of data and the one that I trust.

**Embodied reflection: Peter**

One of these golden moments which affects me is presented by Peter during his second embodied reflection. He is sitting in the centre of the empty space with his arms around his knees which are drawn up to his chin as he begins to embody the role of ‘Roger the Monster’ who is “an animal which lives in a cave in the drama room. This animal was completely devoid of social skills as he was afraid to mix with other people because fun was made of him” (O’Connor, 1989, p. 6). I have asked Peter to recreate a moment when he receives one of the artefacts he has brought along. He chooses the yellow painted rock and then prepares a space to perform his moment. He drags two chairs into centre stage and turns them away from him so that he can lean on their backs. He creates a small area to represent the place where ‘Roger’ lives.
He places the yellow rock downstage on the floor, returns and leans on the chairs putting one foot behind the other. He thinks for a moment, then slowly gets down on the floor and sits between the chairs. His head is bowed, his shoulders bent forward, his legs pulled up; he looks down at the carpet. He appears to be embodying a low-status character or communicating a character that is shy by making himself small and insignificant. Although we read most emotions from the face (Argyle, 1988) they can also be shown in the “movements of the hands and feet, including emotions which are being concealed by the face” (Argyle, 1988, p. 197). ‘Roger’s’ face is tilted down, his body attitude is closed and withdrawn into himself. His legs are tightly crossed which can imply a “defensive attitude” (Pinner & Pinner, 1994, p. 312). Roger listens to the voices of the imagined
children but does not look at them; his eyes downcast. He clasps his left hand in his right hand. He talks almost to himself; his statements and his questions reflect uncertainty and are asked with a rising inflection.

**Peter:** it’s nice of you to say goodbye ... I can’t believe ... that I have to leave ... What? You’ve got gifts? ... Gifts to say that we’ll always be friends? Gifts to say goodbye? You’ve painted this rock? Is it for me? For me to keep forever? Oh I’ll keep it forever. [Peter gets up from the floor] ... there you go. [He picks up the rock off the floor] there’s the moment. [Peter puts the rock back on the table and goes back to the chairs]. (Peter O’Connor)

As soon as the last line is delivered he breaks out of role, stands up and quickly walks forwards to pick up the rock as he says:

*there you go – that’s the moment.*

He then crosses to the table, picks up his mug of coffee and takes a drink. I consider how emotional the re-creation of the scene has been for him. Like an actor he transitions immediately into a different neutral task for he is now offstage as he awaits the next invitation from the Archivist. For several of my participants the act of drinking coffee or tea is a transition between scenes. It reminds us they have left the world of pretence and re-joined reality. I transcribe the moment including my stage directions and incorporate the images as a visual reminder.

This golden moment re-created for his embodied reflection was originally a dramatic role-playing scenario in a real classroom. One moment he is Peter, then Peter remembering himself as the drama teacher and then he is Roger. This is the liminal moment, the crossing over from reality to imagination:

Like the shaman, the actor is, in some sense, possessed by another person ... yet neither is that person someone else: if they were, they might well abdicate control of the performance. (Pickering, 2005, p. 235)

This is a precisely controlled performance; it is noticeable that Peter draws a breath prior to beginning his performance. This intake of breath becomes significant and I see it again watching Rebecca Vaughan embody several roles in *Austen’s Women* (“Dyad Productions Austen’s Women”, 2014) for it symbolises the taking on of life through breath. Peter understands what gestures and vocal
intonations are required to communicate Roger’s fear and lack of social skills. He understands the transition from the real to the performed, from being Peter to being Roger. Layered upon this is Peter, the drama teacher and Peter the university professor, carrying out his embodied reflection to a camera and an audience.

I wonder how the children, all of them with special needs, originally perceive this moment. According to his articles about this significant project, they engage and identify with the monster Roger (O'Connor, 1989, 2000) and for them he exists (O'Connor, 2000). In this moment Peter demonstrates his intuitive ability in the drama form being open to and responding to the voices of the children. I consider how many university lecturers would sit on the floor of a space to recount and relive a moment or would take on a lower-status role to communicate with their students. It is something I see again during the embodied reflections as Lynn and Andy both sit and kneel on the floor space to tell their stories.

At times I seek out more background information to deepen my understanding of an event or idea described in the reflections which allows me to ‘‘indwell’’ to empathize; that is, to imaginatively participate in the experience of another’’ (Eisner, 1981, p. 6). The nature of the work about which Peter reminisces is at times highly emotional and so to engage more deeply in the process and to help me understand its significance I create a poetic text generated from two articles (O'Connor, 1989, 2000) by Peter about the work. The giving of gifts is a rehearsal and ritual to prepare the students who will soon face the death of one of their terminally ill friends (O'Connor, 2000). Knowing this deepens my embodiment of Peter’s moment in the performance at the Musgrove Studio.
In 2012, Jane finds her first golden moment in research.

**Slide: Not a Monster – A pet!**

(Archivist picks up a yellow rock)

This is a farewell gift given to Peter by a boy with special needs, someone on the margins. Peter was playing Roger the Monster that lived under a cloth in the drama room.

(Collects Hornbrook’s blue flag from washing line and wraps it around sits on the floor, arms around knees) [Episode 5]

I walk stage left to a cardboard archive box stamped ‘Peter O’Connor’. I open it and bring out a yellow rock which I have painted and labelled for the performance and hold it as if it is the special artefact first given to Peter. I collect the blue cloth which now hangs from the washing line. I feel a quietness coming over me as I place a scarf over my head to signify the cloth under which Roger hides. I slowly
kneel down on the floor. I have decided not to change Peter’s spoken words for they are precise and poetic.

**Monologue: Andy**

Another of these golden moments which becomes integral to my drama is a monologue created by Andy in which he uses the little coloured foam people from the prop box, along with the pink scarf, to re-enact some of the difficulties he faced transitioning to a new school as a young teacher. It is powerful and succinct. Andy uses imagination, symbol, body, voice, focus, action, tension and his chosen props to interpret and re-create these events seen through the lens of time and experience. He uses a range of voices to portray the characters, one of whom is a deputy principal trained at The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. On arrival at the school he recounts that:

*I very quickly got heartily sick of hearing how wonderful their Calamity Jane was (laughs) these were not the sort of plays that I particularly wanted to do.* (Andy Kempe)

He uses accents to show the people who support and encourage his work. All the while Andy holds the small foam people, manipulating them to represent characters in his drama. As he prepares this he reflects on what he is doing and I am party to his rhetorical questions and decision making:

*So I’m wondering how to represent this (Andy is at the prop table) tricky one. Very tricky, what have we got here? – (Andy picks up the pink cloth)*

![Figure 38 Andy and the scarf](image.png)
I’m going to have this to represent the deputy headmistress. He places the pink cloth on the ground) who had trained at RADA (Said in a RADA way).

After a period of preparation Andy performs his educational journey from being a teenager to becoming a teacher. One of the scenes I embody in my performance resonates for it reminds me of some of the struggles I, too, have shared:

JANE

(Pick up the little people from floor) Andy plays imaginatively with the props.

(Wraps the pink scarf around the yellow person holds it in upstage hand, puts on a posh voice, stands with hand behind back)

ANDY

We have a certain way of doing things here, the school way, Way, Brian, he’s wonderful isn’t he?

(Then turn to talk to little green phone person in left hand, speaking firmly and loudly)

You’ve painted the drama studio black .... People who know a lot more about education then you do designed that studio and they didn’t paint it black.

(Moves downstage right, holds up person in right hand)

It’s an outrage, an outrage, Steven Berkoff in this school that language? That stuff it’s an outrage.

(Puts hands into pockets and Birmingham accent, stage left, smiling)

Hey Andy what you doing in this school is lovely, it’s really exciting what you’re doing mate.

[Episode 1]

John, Ron and Jonothan also recount memories of becoming drama practitioners and I recognise that all my participants have at one time begun their teaching careers in schools as drama teachers and not as well-known, elite drama educators
They, too, have undertaken painful learning steps to become a drama specialist facing a variety of battles in the on-going process of proving themselves and their art form.

3.4. Reflecting on the reflections

Re-playing some of the magic moments or “golden moments” (Saldaña, 2011, p. 28) has enabled me to wander and wonder amongst my data. I have been able to dig deeper for what I have missed during the data-gathering and transcription stage.

In the moment of being present as researcher in role I operate simultaneously in the twin worlds of engagement and reflection and fiction and reality and I understand mediation begins during the embodied reflections. As soon as Lynn Fels begins to disrupt the room, I realise “there are far more than ‘three sides’ from which to approach the world” (Richardson, 2005, p. 934) as I reflect on John moving chairs around the space in Brisbane. Suddenly the preparation of a space begins to take on the significance of an important ritual. The stories are reflected off each other, clarifying and highlighting the importance of space to drama educators. Later, as Andy and Jonothan prepare and re-organise their spaces, it shines more light onto John and Lynn’s preparation of space. However, the act of preparing the space often precipitates the first barricade – as Lynn discovers:

*the first barricade I always confront is this very situation here where we don’t have an empty space we have a space of tables and chairs. (Lynn Fels)*

While John reminds me that:

*one of the characteristics of drama education is you have to spend an awful lot of time moving furniture. (John O’Toole)*

As Andy enters his new dedicated drama studio, we find it is laid out with chairs and desks, so prior to the camera being turned on he clears a space in which he can work. Somehow I find it strangely comforting that even in the academic setting, drama studios are regarded as another empty space that must be filled with chairs and tables. In 2014 after my performance is complete a participant during the workshop expresses the view that:
Empty spaces are so rare, and they are so precious, and they are so privileged, they’re a chance for resistance and to celebrate. So I’ll claim the empty space. (Workshop participant)

During the reflections Andy places the foam human shapes in a circle to signify a drama lesson. Jonothan creates a circle of chairs within the studio and calls it:

the quintessential shape, the symbol that holds it all. (Jonothan Neelands)

**Embodied reflection: Jonothan**

The organisation of the space as a circle is important to Jonothan for it:

symbolises that although I am the teacher and I have responsibility for what goes on I want to try and find a different way of being with you as learners. (Jonothan Neelands)

He ritualistically uses the ball of red wool from the prop box to symbolise the social and dramatic space. He and I know that he is not preparing for a real drama lesson and this is a representation of an event he has taken part in many times. In the real situation he would not lay out a circle of red wool; it is a symbol and an actualised metaphor of his theoretical understandings. He takes his time to slowly unwind the wool having first laid out a circle of chairs while he plays the song *Shipbuilding* by Elvis Costello to highlight the political nature of his work.
He steps outside the circle and begins to share his ideas using vocal modulation and gesture to emphasise the significance of the space within his practice. In this embodied symbol of drama education, Jonothan demonstrates the importance for him in engaging young people in critical thinking, empathy and learning to make decisions for the common good. His students learn they can choose to cross the line between reality and fiction, assume a role and help shape the drama occurring in the space. They are empowered through an experience of a democratic process in the circle which is

\textit{the illusion at least of equality of power. (Jonothan Neelands)}

It is a place where there is an insistence

\textit{on equality of participation and freedom of voice but also restraint in speech and action.}

The circle is

\textit{the space of potential because it’s waiting for things to happen.}

While Lynn embodies her symbol of drama education I am quivering with excitement because I am remembering John’s embodied symbol and seeing the similarities. I recognise their understanding of the importance of preparing a space in which drama can happen. Their incarnation of these shared rituals later resonate with Andy and Jonothan’s symbol making. In these moments I begin to celebrate the differences that separate drama education from traditional classrooms and I mediate and present my participants’ ideas in the play using a poem which is spoken to music:23

\textbf{Episode}

It’s the quintessential circle
The space that holds it all
Dialogic, democratic,
Enter it’s your call

The circle is a symbol
Of equality of power,
Just like a well-made crucible
Through which we can empower.

\footnote{23 Folk Punk by Patrick Coen, purchased from AudioJungle.net.}
A miraculous engagement;  
Interaction to create.  
It is the gold of learning  
Through which we motivate.  

It’s different to a classroom  
With desks all placed in rows,  
Where rules are fearfully followed  
Because the teacher knows.  [Episode 4]

This circle becomes central in the shaping of my performance space and in deepening my understanding that “the circle offers the group a sense of security in its completeness” (Baker, 1973, p. 38) and from time immemorial symbolises a sense of perfection and protection (Tressider, 2004).

3.4.1. Coding conundrum

Prior to mediating and synthesising my data, I am convinced that I will use Coding and in preparation I attend a course on using Nvivo24 and purchase Saldaña’s manual (Saldaña, 2009). However, I quickly find attempting to formally code my data is preventing me from thinking creatively because it does not satisfy my need to physically engage with the stories. Coding is not always appropriate to the task in hand (Eisner, 1981; Saldaña, 2009) and being “a pragmatic, eclectic researcher” (Saldaña, 2009, p. 192) I begin to use those tools which are effective. I explore the stories by scribbling ideas on large sheets of paper (Bird, Donelan, Sinclair, & Wales, 2010) as a way of “finding connections between the data pieces” (Mackenzie & Belliveau, 2011, p. 11). I choose key lines from the transcripts that appeal to my aesthetic sense or remind me of moments in my own education journey. This enables me to explore the stories “cognitively, corporally and figuratively” (Bird et al., 2010, p. 93). I continually revisit the transcriptions, and re-play moments from the videos. I create a large table (Figure 40) of themes, one hundred and seventy-two pages long which grows organically as I cut and paste stories and moments that interest, challenge or intrigue me. I begin with the main themes of this research, battles, barricades and balancing and allow other themes to surface as I re-read, re-watch and begin to re-enact my data. I inscribe notes beside some of the themes and underline text that strikes me as not only informative but poetic and dramatic. Making the table is a creative act that helps

24 A computer software program to help with the organisation and analysis of data.
I wander around the stories to see the themes across participants. I look more closely at gaps when nothing is said by one participant about a subject that is popular. I then use the similarities and the contradictions to “provide structures for the interpretation and appraisal of the events described” (Eisner, 1991, p. 190).

| Power | I love theatre and just enjoying it. I didn’t see as much as I would have liked to in the London shows — going — going to see Antigone and Tio and my son and daughter to see in the national theatre goth gothic environment because I was my daughter’s age when I first went to the national theatre. I still have my ticket from the very first time I went and this is a play I have been to many times and I just loved it. You know, you ask questions: why not genuine questions, you change the power of the teacher in the classroom? (Peter in place, don’t worry they’re only present). And this is the most beautiful moment for a whole range of reasons, not just the little boy explaining to the teacher what’s happening. In terms of shifting the power relations on its head and total belief in the drama and its power.
| wonderful/yes let the play begin p 3 at 2
| One of the recurring subjects which drama is about is about power and power in people’s relationship to each other, p. 2, part 2 (look at how SCT uses power in dramatic stories). Patrick (teacher) is almost an empty chair in the room when they talk about a chair on the table and the teacher is absent. The teacher is absent. The teacher is absent.
| The last serves is to make functional object when we need to write things down or talk, then they can also become a physical barrier between the teacher and the student. It moves a chair in the desk and I found the desk to be my own seat and the desk to be my seat.

Each theme begins to subdivide, and is highlighted by a key word. For example, Under Assessment, I use the following words and phrases that have attracted my attention:

Who cares? Intentions, Ticking boxes, Quantification of learning, Nonsense, Challenges, Impedes learning, A barrier to learning, Scariest responsibility, Being good at drama? Labelling for labelling sake, Thoughtless, Judging.

The phrases I highlight in red make their way into my play as they are poetic and powerful. The themes not only help me to develop episodes in the drama but are

---

**Figure 40 table of themes**

| Power | I love theatre and just enjoying it. I didn’t see as much as I would have liked to in the London shows — going — going to see Antigone and Tio and my son and daughter to see in the national theatre goth gothic environment because I was my daughter’s age when I first went to the national theatre. I still have my ticket from the very first time I went and this is a play I have been to many times and I just loved it. You know, you ask questions: why not genuine questions, you change the power of the teacher in the classroom? (Peter in place, don’t worry they’re only present). And this is the most beautiful moment for a whole range of reasons, not just the little boy explaining to the teacher what’s happening. In terms of shifting the power relations on its head and total belief in the drama and its power.
| wonderful/yes let the play begin p 3 at 2
| One of the recurring subjects which drama is about is about power and power in people’s relationship to each other, p. 2, part 2 (look at how SCT uses power in dramatic stories). Patrick (teacher) is almost an empty chair in the room when they talk about a chair on the table and the teacher is absent. The teacher is absent. The teacher is absent.
| The last serves is to make functional object when we need to write things down or talk, then they can also become a physical barrier between the teacher and the student. It moves a chair in the desk and I found the desk to be my own seat and the desk to be my seat.

In this space we will work on the power of the teacher and we will become an empowering factor. We will work on the power of the teacher and we will become an empowering factor.

---

Richard Sidner
expressed on my barricade cloth and boxes that decorate my stage. I create a poetic text from some of the phrases and words and I speak them aloud, listening to the rhythms and considering if they reflect melancholia or passion.

Figure 41 thematic poem

Some of these phrases contribute to the poem which I directly address to the audience:

Drama’s not about assessment
Ticking boxes, learning skills
That’s a barrier to learning
And what does that fulfil? [Episode 4]

In Brechtian style, the poem remains distinct from the action and I use gesture to avoid sinking into the melody (Willett, 1964) which accompanies it. I “make
visible preparation” (Willett, 1964, p. 45) for the song by unwinding a ball of red wool around the stage space inviting the audience to listen to the words.

3.4.2. Embodiment as a form of analysis

Analysis is not solely an intellectual process. Many other elements enter into it, all the capacities and qualities of an actor’s nature … Analysis is a means of coming to know, that is to feel a play … So that in the process of analysis one must use the mind with utmost caution. (Stanislavski, 1936/1990, p. 19)

I want to feel my participants’ stories in order to share them vividly with an audience. For actors “the value of the research material is realised through exploration and work on the studio floor” (Van Dijk, 2011, p. 22) and so I engage with my data in an embodied way to explore its meaning. I am inspired by practitioners who embody their data as they explore and examine it (Bird et al., 2010). I begin to express ideas and moments physically, listening to my own emotional responses to the material. I use my body as a lens through which to communicate my discoveries. As I work alone, I speak aloud to myself, pretending to be one of my participants, trying out voices and gestures, answering imaginary questions, justifying why I am making certain choices. I find speaking aloud helpful, and as a teenager used this to revise for exams; if I hear the words out loud I know I am thinking and feeling them. My voicing aloud and embodiment becomes one of the most important analytical tool or mode of mediation. In the university studio I find myself moving in a circle during rehearsals and hear the voices of drama practitioners coming out of my mouth. I start to include objects to enhance what I am saying. I play with the little foam people and the balls of wool. I purchase some small children’s chairs to use in the space. This is at first a practical solution to needing several chairs on stage but their bright colours in the dark space come to symbolise the energy and voices of the children we teach.
Figure 42 experimenting in the space

After playing with words and movement, I return to scribbling ideas and spoken text. I set up the video camera and capture some of my rehearsals to watch them with my directorial eye. As I rehearse in a variety of spaces, including a living room, three drama studios and at the Musgrove Studio, I am affected by those spaces. In the large spaces which signal drama I move in larger, more confident ways, while at home I often struggle to maintain my energy as the space is limiting and constrains my movement.

In his embodied reflection John captures the visceral nature of a drama lesson and I create a performative text to encapsulate the performative quality of his story, choosing words and repeating phrases directly concerned with the movement and activity in the classroom space:
Drama is not static.
It is live and visceral...
It moves and changes, evanescent and embodied.
Come in
A scurry of people... moving everything to the side of the room,
Making room to move.
I enter through the door, I move along the wall
Sidle around the edge.
Make a circle,... Sitting on the floor.
Looking at the teacher
Make eye contact, eyeballing each other.
Students and teacher on the same level,
Changing spaces, chairs pop-up, tables disappear, slide into corners.
Warm-up... Moving around in the space without bumping into each other...
Finding a space to have ‘aloneness’ in
Reporters don’t sit on the floor to do press conferences.
Status.
Give them a clipboard and a tin hat and make them feel important in the drama
Where’s the scarf?
Don’t you ever play old women in your dramas?
You’ve got to have a scarf, to play an old woman, especially if you’re a bloke.

How can I be a mother of the IRA boy who’s been killed unless I’m wearing a scarf?
Masks are wonderfully flexible things, they allow people to disguise themselves, feel less exposed
But we’re talking about the externals and the trimmings
We must show immersion, enrolment, engagement.
Without engagement you don’t have anything.
You just have a room full of stuff and pieces and play
Building props and stage,
Building belief in the characters
Building the situation
Building the tension, motivation
Using elements and conventions
Naturalism and theatricality
The core: really deep involvement, experiential role-play,
Emotion
First level emotions
Steep yourself in moments of
Real identification, immersion
Unselfconscious in the moment
You have permission to play
Come out feeling better than you went in.
Be and do with us!

Figure 43 John’s symbol of drama education

I use the final lines of this text in my play to welcome my audience to MEDAT as they foreshadow my hopes for the Museum.

3.5. Realising that I must perform!

Reflecting in the days following Ron’s and Andy’s embodied reflection I am overwhelmed by the sense that it is I who need to perform my drama. These stories are embedded in me and I feel responsible for them and eager to play with the ideas myself. After Andy’s first reflection I come to the conclusion that:

I have not ‘played’ enough – too serious – getting kids thru’ exams – prevents time to play. (Jane’s Journal, May 2, 2013)

I smile in my classroom but I no longer laugh. Yet laughter and humour are a part of all my participants’ reflections, often in self-deprecating ways. I need to play, to laugh and perform. Immediately self-doubt arises to the surface for how can I
perform a play after all these years? This question does not prevent me but rather encourages me to find an answer and proves the point that “a doctoral journey is much more complicated and richer than merely following through on initial plans” (O'Conner, 2014, p. 70).

Being both dramaturg and actor I have a double opportunity to inhabit the words of my participants for the devising and scripting process is an analytical act (Mackenzie & Belliveau, 2011). I begin to take on “multiple theatrical roles – actor, designer, and director – in order to envision its mounting” (Saldaña, 2011, p. 71). The interaction with the material is not something to be hurried as it is important that the “project should be nursed for as long as possible in advance” (Morrison, 1984, p. 17). The devising and rehearsal stage lasts for several months. I draw on my skills honed through directing school productions and student performances to plan and organise but the difference this time is that this is my devised work and my performance.

3.5.1. Let's pretend

I enter my own make-believe world, where the Secretary of State for Education sits among those gathered for the opening of the Museum of Educational Drama and Applied Theatre. I am playing a game of let’s pretend which is a natural part of adult life; the “pretend-real process” (Brown & Vaughan, 2010, p. 86) which enables us to make up stories about the past, present and future. In role as the Archivist I am empowered to speak about drama in education. My son takes a photograph to mirror Ufton Court in 1989 and I reflect on all that has happened in the intervening years. I am celebrating the scholar’s melancholy and it feels good as I create my final drama and prepare to perform.
Figure 44 celebrating the scholar's melancholy.
Chapter 4. Everything is research: Synthesising data through performance

Climax

As the researcher I become: actor, director, designer and dramaturg embracing serendipitous moments. I display and understand data through the technologies of theatre – paying attention to aesthetic choices. Devising a drama leads to discoveries and meaning making as rehearsals begin with my daughter and a puppet called Melony – a critical and melancholic voice. I perform rallying cries for and by drama educators and come to understand the importance of play. My interactive workshop is recounted as my audience re-enact their own stories of drama education.

Every aspect of my life is now immersed in my research, from the time spent looking for the right prop or piece to use in my set, to reading books and seeing theatre. I attend many theatre performances representing work from New Zealand, Asia, America and Europe, from comedy to tragedy, non-naturalism to realism, solo dramatic performances to full-scale musicals. It is a feast for my senses which stimulates and refines my aesthetic consciousness. Through this immersion I can better use drama forms to help me “become more alert, more open to ideas and possibilities” (Bundy, Ewing, & Fleming, 2013, p. 146).

Returning from seeing *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*²⁵ Ron Price describes how:

> on the train coming back we ripped it apart for what we could get from it to use and by Monday we were ordering some of the equipment that they’d used the little rostra blocks which were about to 2ft high by 1ft square and they open and they use them in the most amazing ways and we thought we can do that, that could be very, very useful and we worked out where we could use those ideas, we saw the most amazing physical lift. (Ron Price)

I see this play live while I am in London and relish being in the theatre experiencing the physical and stylised ways in which the story is told through the eyes of the central character taking us on a journey through time and place. I will

²⁵ The National Theatre play based on Mark Haddon’s award-winning novel, adapted by Simon Stephens and directed by Marianne Elliott which was showing in London.
see it a third time in an encore screening in Auckland, paying deeper attention each time to how the story is presented.

To prepare for the multiple roles I need to play, I watch solo actors at work to explore how they make the presence of several characters felt on the stage. Rebecca Vaughan (“Dyad Productions Austen’s Women”, 2014) stands quietly and as the lights dim on the stage she draws a breath and breathes life into each role. I watch intently the subtle differences she brings to each of the eleven roles she performs. I am reminded of the breath Peter draws before stepping into the role of Roger the Monster. Lynn suggests it is through the breath that:

*drama plays us, plays us into being.* (Lynn Fels)

I share many of these theatre visits with my daughter and after each performance we explore our responses. Sometimes we chat excitedly; at other times we walk quietly down the street, our emotions preventing us from speaking. I concentrate on how the stories are communicated by the actors on the stage and how they are structured by the writer or dramaturg. I consider how I am feeling and responding to the performance and what the aesthetic is that makes me feel alive (Bundy et al., 2013; Kempe, 2011).

This immersion in theatre helps me consider what has made me feel alive during the generation of my data. What makes me feel alive again to the possibilities of drama education, to the excitement, pleasure and challenges that drama education can bring? Alive is a sensory experience, where I feel emotions like joy and sadness, where I laugh, cry, worry and even fear.

I look, too, at the visual aspects and listen to the aural effects for these will also be powerful ways to communicate meaning. Images of battles and barricades must be realised on the stage. I juxtapose them with the children’s playground that grows organically using coloured plastic chairs, dolls and puppets. It is a serendipitous moment when I see the little foam people sealed in a plastic packet for sale as they become a vital prop. I enjoy searching for the chairs, dolls and even the brown dress that will represent Dorothy Heathcote. Each object helps to build the environment in which I will set the play, but they also remind me that as a drama educator, like my participants, I am always searching for inspiration. The process excites me and contributes further to a growing sense of aliveness within me.
While I deal with the pragmatics of staging my drama, I continue to devise and rehearse and to feel my participants’ words in my feet and my body.

**Episode: Still image**

![Image of a PowerPoint slide titled "Walk the talk"

Figure 45 PowerPoint slide: Walk the talk

As he draws a picture of an ideal drama educator, Peter surmises that:

*the perfect theorist practitioner is someone who can do, can actually get up and make theatre, drama with people. I would somehow want, want, like dancing shoes – like a ... you know the songs diamonds on the soles of my feet? It’s kinda like someone who can actually walk the talk. (Peter O’Connor)*

I experiment in the drama studio with music and movement and I feel the need to dance to express this idea. I remember that John also draws dancing feet on his ideal drama teacher as a metaphor to represent their

*knowledge and skills and pedagogy. (John O’Toole)*
They have

to be able to move fast the ability to strategise .... And of course that figure won’t be a static figure that figure will change and grow and shrink in some areas (John sits down) and limbs will fall off (Researcher laughs).

I start a simple dance step, feeling embarrassed at first but in physicalising this moment I recognise how metaphors and real life blend in drama. Dancing feet reflect the need for me to be a practical exponent of drama education; an embodied being able to move, twist and turn. In a private moment at home I dance the words around and around the room. The physical act lifts my spirits. I later dance this idea in the space of a studio. As I move and speak about dancing feet I feel inspired. In the performance I narrate this moment of connection, dancing across the stage singing the song Peter has suggested.26

In blending John and Peter’s stories and comparing them with my own I am synthesising not only what a drama teacher might be, but feeling a sense of what we are and can be. It is not for me a dissemination of a concept of the ideal drama teacher but an on-going process of exploration. The importance of this moment is that I allow myself to be playful, singing and dancing yet with a self-deprecating humour, for having danced throughout childhood – taking an endless round of ballet exams – I do not claim a confident body. I need the dancing feet to continue rehearsing and performing and to overcome or embrace my feelings of melancholia.

4.1.1. Exposure

In September 2013, another serendipitous opportunity arises and I enter Exposure: The University of Auckland’s Postgraduate Research Exposition, 27 which takes place in the Musgrove Studio in Auckland. This propels me into an exciting yet terrifying challenge for not only must I devise a twelve-minute episode, I must also perform on stage to an audience with my lines learnt. I have a momentary panic when I fall back on the idea of scripting only to find that I must continue to create through embodiment to learn and own my lines. When I was a thirteen year old, struggling to learn the lines of a poem, my father advised me to walk up and

26 Paul Simon: “Diamonds on the Souls of her Shoes”, 1986
27 Presented by the postgraduate School of Graduate Studies and the Postgraduate Students’ Association, The University of Auckland.
down the hallway speaking the words aloud. This begins my lifelong need to speak aloud ideas to hear them and receive them into my body. For Clive Barker, whose classes I took at Warwick University, lines must not be an end product learnt through mechanical means. Rather they are “the verbal expression of an action” (Barker, 1977, p. 177). So I begin to use gesture and movement, but words and movement become one, so that I do not know if words elicit action or action, words. As I feel the reverberations in my body so I express them in action. The action in turn helps me make sense of the words. For as I learn my lines, I hold the words of my participants within me. This will be the first time I express my research through my own embodied performance. In the weeks leading up to the event I prepare a set of visual images and a cue sheet (Morton et al., 2001, p. 50) for the technician who will control the lighting and sound.

Figure 46 technical requirements for Exposure

I locate the props that I need, find a chair with a circular seat and paint it, learn my lines and have a T-shirt specially printed that reads: Battles and Barricades. I keep my colour palette to mainly red and black, my favourite colours which symbolise power and passion.

---

**Variety Showcase Technical Requirements Form**

Name: Jane Laton

**Name of presentation:**

 VERBAL CONVERSATION between two siblings in a care home

**Name of performance:**

 Jane Laton

**Music/sound credits:**

 N/A

**Set up:** Please discuss your presentation with the technical team

1. I prepare a set of visual images and a cue sheet (Morton et al., 2001, p. 50) for the technician who will control the lighting and sound.

2. I locate the props that I need, find a chair with a circular seat and paint it, learn my lines and have a T-shirt specially printed that reads: Battles and Barricades. I keep my colour palette to mainly red and black, my favourite colours which symbolise power and passion.

---
I begin to find my voice which for actors is “a vital instrument of expression and communication” (Van Dijk, 2011, p. 67) but one which, as we grow up, can be prevented from expressing emotions as “we are bombarded with judgemental comments about the sorts of sounds we make” (Van Dijk, 2011, p. 67). The paradox for me is that on stage I have a voice; I have a certificate proving I passed the grade 6A Guildhall Speech and Drama exam but I cannot use this voice to express how I really feel. I have “silenced myself” (Debold et al., 1993, p. xvi) because of my childhood fear that what I say will be construed as of no value. I have denied my dancing, acting and singing self and the statement that “girls’ most traumatic loss is the ability to live fully and powerfully in their bodies” (Debold et al., 1993, p. 49) resonates deeply within me. For years I blend into the background avoiding putting myself centre stage. In the early years of directing drama productions I am berated by a school governor for hiding backstage instead of being visible to receive positive comments from the audience. I am most alive at home or in my classroom with my students where I am more of an embodied being. I acknowledge this nervousness in my body when I use humour in the performance to comment on my changed appearance since the photograph was taken in 1989. Humour then is my defence against fear as I begin to expose myself to my audience and to my participants.
At *Exposure* the space of The Musgrove Studio is calm, controlled, professional yet somehow magic. I am the centre of attention backstage as the stage managers check all is prepared. I recall moments that stand out as I speak my lines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jane’s spoken words</th>
<th>Jane’s innermost thoughts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full of passion to be a drama educator.</td>
<td>I feel the excitement at the beginning of my drama teaching career and I emphasise the word ‘passion’ but it is quickly juxtaposed with the ringing of the bell to remind me that school is regulated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Image of the scream]</td>
<td>I express my frustration at the pressures, enhanced by the image of <em>The Scream</em> on a screen above the stage. I feel it again within me. But these feelings are momentary, as I pass on through a range of emotions connecting myself to my words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And so I knock on the Faculty of Education door. May I come in? What for?</td>
<td>I feel physically smaller as I look up to an imaginary academic seated at the top of their ivory tower.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Performing is arduous as I use my voice and body as conduits to connect my text and images with the audience. At the conclusion of the scene I am exhausted but exhilarated and re-invigorated. As I feel the audience, laughing, listening, responding to my presence, my spirits are lifted. Rather than being nervous, I finally feel alive. A few days later I leave the *Exposure* prize giving and walk through the grounds of the Old Government House feeling affirmed yet amazed by my first prize win. Suddenly I am surprised by an incongruous sight: a group of students dressed in armour are fighting a mock battle, the sound of their swords crashing around the evening air. Bemused I walk across the road where a large sign on a church spells out in big letters:

**FEEL ALIVE**

Illusion and reality merge and make me laugh out loud. Everything is indeed research and serendipity has been central to my journey.
4.1.2. Serendipity

These serendipitous moments that appear magically throughout my research are possibly not the hand of some metaphysical being but rather something else. Serendipity, a term first coined by Horace Walpole in 1754, is “the making of accidental discoveries” (Merton & Barber, 2004, p. 223). To realise a moment is serendipitous I must have a sense of “curiosity, spontaneity, imaginativeness, a sense of adventure” (Merton & Barber, 2004, p. 226) and as my research journey progresses I become aware of and open to the multitude of possibilities that surround me. I am actively listening for ideas, thoughts and emotions to inspire me. I see something in a book, a play or a piece of art that connects to my research where previously I may not have noticed. I force myself to take opportunities I am nervous to take. I finally understand Lynn’s commitment to performative inquiry and:

*stop moments ... something that tugs on the sleeve.* (Lynn Fels)

These too might be moments of serendipity when we recognise something important in the ordinary, taking time to examine it more closely. Taking the opportunity to catch a bus to the Royal Shakespeare Company, hearing Kathleen Gallagher in Ireland, watching a talk at university, visiting an art gallery, finding the small foam people and entering *Exposure* are only a few of these key moments that have enhanced and inspired my research. Research appears to mirror drama, for drama too depends on moments of serendipity when a play, an actor, a space, a text come together to create a powerful and magic moment which resonates in the audience. My participants also appear to experience serendipitous moments although they do not call them this. As a result of failing his Diploma of Education, John:

*found and stumbled into Gavin Bolton’s course.* (John O’Toole)

Jonothan believed drama to be:

*an easy thing to do you gave your kids idea sent them off into corners got them to come back showed them and clapped so I kind of bluffed my way into a middle school job in Leicestershire. Unfortunately for me Leicestershire was absolutely crown jewel of drama in those days.* (Jonothan Neelands)
Thus begins his dynamic and successful drama education career. While Andy’s trip to the cinema with his mother to see Jean Anouilh’s play *Beckett*, and listening to his sister’s musical recording of *Oh What a Lovely War* serendipitously prepared him for his teacher education course:

>I know something that other people in this class don’t know because I’ve never kind of felt that at school I always felt that everybody was kind of smarter and more well-read. (Andy Kempe)

Our lives are filled with these moments and it is my research which teaches me to embrace them.

**4.2. Rehearsals**

*Exposure* focuses me towards my final doctoral performance. I want to use an intimate setting where my audience can feel a part of the action and having enjoyed the Musgrove space I discuss my requirements with the Programming and Business Manager. I book the studio space for July 22, 2014. This is followed by meetings with the Manager of Front of House Services and those responsible for the technicians who will film and light the show. Various props and costumes have to be found and a programme created. At this point academic research and professional theatre blend and intermingle. I am experiencing both worlds and am reminded of how much lies unseen and hidden from view in the world of drama production and drama education. These preparations are integral to the success of the performance but they are also a continuing act of research; their solutions a form of data and of coming to know through experience. The most difficult aspect of this process is the act of self-promotion for information is to be put on the theatre’s websites and tickets will be sold. I create an image and a title to represent this research. I admit to a certain feeling of excitement when the tickets go on sale and the information appears in the foyer of the theatre.

During my rehearsals I have days when I work in an embodied manner and I am excited, passionate; my brain fills with visual and dramatic ideas. Ideas suggest others ideas and the creative process can flow unhindered. On other days I remain conscious that I am creating this drama to order; it must fulfil certain criteria. I retreat to the computer to write or to read one more article. I lack energy and the

\[28\text{ Margo Athy.} \]
\[29\text{ Brendan Theodore.} \]
confidence to continue. Some days I force myself into the rehearsal space to find my performance mode. As I rehearse, I become aware that I have to find my voice, release the tension in my body and begin to play once more. The word ‘play’ comes to the fore as I move in the drama studio at the Faculty of Education or in an empty space at home. This is an unexpected aspect of the research. When I began the doctoral journey I thought the only things being stretched would be my mind and my fingers as they typed away on the keyboard. I thought I would be directing a group of actors to move and speak my mediated data. Now instead I find myself dancing, moving, singing, shouting, whispering, smiling and interacting with an audience. ‘I must get fitter’ becomes a core mantra; it is by performing that I discover how much hard work it is. At times of despair or as the sweat runs off my brow and I am breathless I remember that teaching in a drama classroom or directing a school play has also required this exertion of energy, this playing of roles, the act of improvisation; the drama teacher, too, is a performer. The difference is that I am having fun.

The process continues to swing between fear and fun as I juggle the needs of research and art. As Lynn Fels’ suggests:

Welcome words welcome characters welcome body emotion feelings
Welcome intertextuality welcome grace welcome the unknown. (1999, p. 18)

I must be open to accepting all ideas and allow the process to be a time of exploration and experimentation for “nothing should be set in stone straightaway” (Morton et al., 2001, p. 156).

At times, however, I am afraid of the process, full of uncertainty and self-doubt but this is not unique because in drama lessons we often face a

fear of falling, fear of failure and it’s the one place where we need to learn and pick each other up. It’s a place where we can stumble, in fact we’re supposed to stumble it’s a place where stumbling is welcome because that’s recognised as a place of learning, another learning possibility. (Lynn Fels)
Andy Kempe advises that we have

*got to take risks you’ve got to be prepared to fail and don’t get upset about it, live with it because it’s not going to come out right first time it might never come out right.* (Andy Kempe)

I avoid the temptation to be ‘perfect’ and embrace my stumbling especially in the early stages of devising but this is easier said than done in a complex process of producing drama that has to both be aesthetically pleasing and also fulfils examination criteria. It is difficult to know what a doctoral performance might look like especially when it is a new process within the university. I move several times between the active embodiment stage and the scripting, returning again and again to each process and engaging in “an ongoing cycle of: discussion, improvisation, exploration, experimentation, selection and rejection, shaping, structuring and sequencing, refining” (New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 2012). The devising process is both cyclical and a “skeleton that supports and holds together the skin, flesh and organs of performance” (Van Dijk, 2011, p. 34). The metaphor of the circle and the body remind me that this performance must be created through embodied means in journey of discovery, possibly without end although there comes a time when I must commit myself and set the words into a script format.

Before typing the drafts, I scribble again in coloured pens on large sheets of paper:
These drafts go through several stages, being created, altered, discarded, re-instated and provisionally finalised but not before they are embodied. No words reach the page without first being filtered through my mouth, my body and my senses. I annotate the printed script which becomes another stage of synthesis as I make new connections often in a blinding flash, deepening my understanding of my data.
Much of my mediation and synthesis process relies on an inner sense that something feels right; it is instinctive. This ability to ‘feel’ a piece of drama should not be cast aside as inconsequential for “anyone who considers herself as a theatre person knows when something ‘works’ – it’s when the magic of theatre appears” (Dolan, 2001, p. 458).

As I continue to mediate, I wonder how many of these stories and images I can tell in my drama. I have to make difficult choices since creating a theatrical presentation means I must “take the boring parts out” (Saldaña, 2011, p. 69). Although my method invites dramatic responses, most of the data is already aesthetically shaped by my participants who are both creators of and actors in their own drama. Rather than leaving boring parts out, for those moments are rare, it is the moments that excite me which I leave in.

My Father was an avid cinematographer charting our family life through Kodak colour film. My analysis process evokes memories of him splicing together his cine films; slicing and gluing, while discarding the unwanted brown film on his desk. He opened his tin of multi-coloured plastic letters and laid them out on contrasting coloured velvet cloths to make his titles. As a dramatist and researcher, I am cutting and splicing together my scenes and heightening their importance by choosing to use them in my drama. I, like my Father, support the scenes with images and titles. My Father was enacting a process of analysis, choosing what images of family life to present to others and making a decision about what would lie unseen, existing only in memory or being forgotten. It is still a problem to decide what to choose and what to leave on the cutting-room floor, for it feels disrespectful to leave stories untold. This, then, is the hardest task for me as both researcher and artist: the pull between the aesthetic and the authentic.

The language of my participants is often poetic, preventing my play from becoming too realistic, yet it conversely takes the language of the ordinary and transforms it into something special.
Embodied reflection

Peter recounts his educational drama journey in a short poetic monologue which he writes in large letters:

Figure 50 Peter’s poetic monologue

He then asks:

Would you like me to present that that (Peter stands, hands in pocket, moving from foot to foot, researcher adjusts camera, Peter thinking) Okay? I’m just thinking you could actually do this in so many different ways (Gestures with right hand) I might do this in two different ways, there will different meanings in both ways. (Peter O’Connor)

He delivers his monologue twice, appearing to enjoy the words and the memories.
In the space of nine lines Peter poeticises the influence of Dorothy Heathcote and John O’Toole on his work. He highlights a metaphor of straight lines which I use in my performance to contrast with my own circuitous drama journey; the straight line represents for me a certainty of conviction:

**Episode**

*Slide: Three Looms Waiting*

**PETER**

Far out!
It was like being “stout Cortez” standing on the edge of Darien, seeing the Pacific for the first time.

**ARCHIVIST**

Peter is a Heathcote boy. He calls her revolutionary. He says if that *(points to head)* ain’t connected to that *(points to heart)* ... social justice it’s pointless. His journey has been straight lines, straight lines *(Gesture)*.
It is mirrored in the straight washing line that runs across the upstage area, while on the floor is the circle. I stretch out my right arm into a handshake and this returns me to a parents’ evening at school when my Father experiences the negative reactions of some teachers to my intention to study drama. I recall the incident particularly vividly for it occurred three days after my Mother died. I imagine myself in the role of one of those teachers and I recognise in that moment the lack of empathy and the limited view of the world that these educators often had. Their words only made me more determined to study drama.

4.2.1. Weaving truth and fiction

Episode

Archivist

Now during her research …
Jane invites each of her participants to imagine the opening of the Museum.
Then:
Juxtaposing
Synthesising
Mediating,
An illusion
Playing,
A pretence, she brings the participants together to plan for this auspicious occasion.

(SFX: Large indoor crowd) [Episode 3]

The words of my participants, while truthful, may be poeticised and the location where they are, fictionalised. Pragmatically and aesthetically I have to adapt my data but I worry that I am taking “a step away from an authentic rendition of the original” (Ackroyd & O’Toole, 2010, p. 61). I consider how I satisfy the need for the performance to be aesthetically pleasing as well as valid in terms of what the participants have shared since there is always the potential to do harm and to manipulate a story for its “juicy bits” (Saldaña, 2006). As a researcher I look for more than great performance moments designed to “astonish” (Conquergood, 1985, p. 7). Richard Sallis constructs a set of principles to prevent him using “sensationalist incidents” (Sallis, 2010, p. 190) but I rely on my inner sense of what is appropriate. The truth, says Peter Brook, “is always on the move” (Brook, 1968, p. 157) and theatrical conventions “announce the presence of illusion,
which is central to the definition of theatre” (Lesser, 1997, p. 197). I walk a
tightrope between truth and fiction, between allowing “my interviewees a fair
hearing while providing the audience with a stimulating evening” (Soans, 2008, p.
42). Robin Soans suggests we can be truthful to participants by “representing
them truthfully in spirit” (2008, p. 41) and he is not averse to creating one
character from two. Since make-believe is at the heart of drama, the audience
should not expect to see the absolute truth on stage but rather a re-creation of
possibly truthful moments, seen through the lens of writer, director and actor. I
accept and embrace the fictionalised and framed world for no amount of verbatim
material will ever make my play an exact re-enactment of events. However, the
events I do show are portrayed as significant and are enriched by their staging.

4.2.2. Structuring the drama

In his embodied reflection Jonothan brings along as one of his artefacts a Daler
pad in which he has always planned his work using diagrams and notes. In role I
ask him to play the role of someone who knows his work. Jonothan reflects from a
third-person perspective:

    he was very, very concerned to try and plan structures so that they were,
    they were journeys, they mirrored, mirrored the theatre experience.
    Students felt as if they’d been on a journey, where the meanings the ideas
    and experiences were deepened and developed as we moved through just
    as we do when we watch theatre. (Jonothan Neelands)

I embrace the free flow of ideas prior to a more formal structuring process.
Between my attempts at devising and my final script, I play and rehearse – from
which a structure begins to emerge. The process is organic as images and patterns,
emotions and intellect begin to synthesise. By using an episodic structure rather
than a linear narrative I show “the complexity of the data” (Donmoyer & Yennie-
Donmoyer, 1995, p. 416) and take the audience on a journey through time and
space to deepen our experiences of the stories. Using a Brechtian approach rather
than a realistic or chronological one allows me to create “connected yet
independent episodes” (Sallis, 2010, p. 189) which are thematically linked and not
necessarily in chronological order (Saldaña, 2003). I flashback and flashforward
in time and make emotional connections rather than causal ones. I play with time

30 The Daler pad is a brand of artist pad full of blank, thick white cartridge paper pages that invite
the creative act to take place.
and space using The Museum of Educational Drama and Applied Theatre as an imaginary space for the action to ensue because my participants never actually meet.

I play with the order of the scenes, leading me to a final shape which differs from my first ideas. My play takes on the shape of the circle, the cyclical drama which gives a sense of unity and completeness in theatre, yet like a circle it has no end. The circularity occurs within episodes and within the play as a whole. At the end of the first episode I climb through a hole in a piece of cloth which represents the barricades in drama education and then, crawling downstage right, I reach my arm towards a spotlight and recount John’s words from his embodied reflection when he suggests that the visitors to MEDAT should:

Crawl through the barricade and see what lies beyond. [Episode 1]

This moment will be mirrored in the last episode but in a slightly different and more dramatic form.

4.2.3. Navigator or narrator?

Museums often have a guide who will help visitors to negotiate their way through the many artefacts and displays. I take time to decide who will act as my navigator through the drama. It is an important consideration because of the need to balance research and art. I want to keep my voice for those moments when I am telling my
story or directly responding to the participants. After experimenting as the narrator in Episode 1, I decide to create an imagined character to guide the audience through the ensuing episodes. Since drama is not a slice of real life lifted from the world and placed on the stage and not all ethnodramatists are realists (Saldaña, 2011) I believe I can create fictional characters to support the story I am telling. It is possible in research to use comedy, satire and fantasy as stylistic possibilities within ethnodrama (Saldaña, 2011). Shakespeare uses the comic clown role in several of his plays to speak truths to and about the protagonists. George Belliveau uses the role of Bottom to act as an intermediary between his research and the audience; the character is chosen by the playwright to “make apparent the theatre and its devices” (Mackenzie & Belliveau, 2011, p. 5). For Norris the ‘Joker’ character, inspired by the work of Boal (Boal, 2002), “acts as an intermediary between audience members and the cast” (Norris, 2009, p. 35).

As the researcher in role I describe myself as the assistant to the unseen ‘Archivist’ of the Museum. John O’Toole, Lynn Fels and Peter O’Connor have a conversation with this imaginary character as they describe the artefacts they have brought along to the Museum. John sends a message to the archivist about his involvement in creating MEDAT:

"tell them I’m very honoured, if it ever happens it would be lovely. (John O’Toole)."

Imagination and reality combine and I find it difficult not to be lost in the fictional world and believe this Museum is to open. It also foreshadows the Queen’s Honour that John will receive in 2014. In deciding to set my play in the Museum it is appropriate that the Archivist herself becomes my narrator and guide.

I begin to seek for a more distanced and critical voice for my play. Speaking about the dead at Agincourt, John declares:

"I don’t think it’s dishonouring your mother or your father to question them. Just to question whether what they did was, what they’re asking

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31 A character from A Midsummer Night’s Dream by William Shakespeare who acts as a guide in the drama performed at Drama and a Pedagogy of Hope: Critical Studies in Drama in Education International Symposium, Faculty of Education Epsom Campus, University of Auckland, October 26-27, 2010.
In this moment John has sanctioned the critical voice; it is acceptable to question our Mothers and Fathers, the drama practitioners who go before us. It frees me to look at these people who shaped my practice. In drawing on the metaphor of Mother and Father I return to the image Peter uses of Heathcote and Bolton as the grandparents of the pedagogy. In questioning them I can navigate my melancholia, for by putting them on a pedestal I have come to resent their innate abilities and failed to recognise my own. I must use the critical voice to express my scholar’s melancholy. I consider incorporating this critical voice in the form of another fictional character.

4.2.4. The arrival of Melony

In contrast to the excitable Archivist this character represents melancholia. She speaks the spoken and unspoken, the critical words of my participants and voices my own questions and thoughts. She adds tension but juxtaposes this with humour, offering a critical edge along which my audience and I can balance through the play. I call her Melony and I come to understand her as my Jaques whose purpose “ridicules human ideals but his attacks are not corrosive” (Gilman, 1963, p. xxix) and when melancholic is usually incisive and “full of matter” (Gilman, 1963, p. xxix). The sense of the clown figure being full of truths is strong and Melony will speak truths synthesised from several participants.

I give Melony a simple backstory by asking myself who she might be and considering if she is me in another guise. I feel her melancholy is much greater than mine which adds a tension between her and the Archivist:

Flashforward: Performance

I am the archivist and I will be your guide along with Melony, my assistant. She is a drama teacher – who’s taking a little break from the classroom. [Battles and Barricades, Episode 2]

During my rehearsals I experiment with some hand puppets but feel these are too small to be effective. I spend a few hours showing my play to my critical friend Anton Bentley who agrees with me and entering his prop cupboard he brings out a large plush chimpanzee which I begin to experiment with. I am intrigued by the
monkey for it offers a possibility for Brecht’s alienation in that it is not human and yet is so closely human that it could represent a teacher. I love manipulating the hands which express the emotion the face cannot.

The next day I search for my own puppet in a local shopping centre, certain that I will know my melancholic character when I find it. Suddenly in a bookstore on top of a high shelf I see a large plush toy, an orange orang-utan with a sad face and beautiful hands. It is almost as if she is hiding herself away from children, avoiding being touched by them.

Figure 53 Melony

I question whether I can really use a monkey to represent the sad and critical teacher but choose her deliberately to be both didactic and to act as a provocation for I am challenged during John and Andy’s embodied reflections to consider drama education as dangerous. For John:

*drama is a transgressive medium, drama colonises cultures, it corrupts and abuses, by taking on something and changing it, of course it’s automatically transgressive. That’s why I love drama! It’s a naughty medium.* (John O’Toole)
One of his artefacts which he brings along is a photograph of an old family toy, part doll, part puppet which has stimulated many discussions and challenged his audiences. He believes educators should push for:

*something that goes beyond the expected, beyond the obvious.* (John O’Toole)

While Andy suggests we should:

*be a bit devilish chucking in the hand grenade.* (Andy Kempe)

I discover that ‘orang-utan’ means ‘man of the forest’ and is a Malay term which – as I was born in Malaya – makes me feel a closer connection to Melony. Brecht began his earliest theatre work as a sixteen year old using puppets (Fuegi, 1987) and later in his career he discovered the powerful effect non-naturalistic representations of humans could engender from audiences (Fuegi, 1987). Theatrically this is true in the productions I see of *War Horse,*[^32] *Kiss the Fish*[^33] and Brecht’s *The Good Soul of Szechuan*[^34] in which the Auckland Theatre Company actors manipulate a small child made of paper and card. As they do so I am sure I hear an audible response of recognition and pity from the audience which includes me. All of the puppeteers are visible to the audience, celebrating the theatricality and artificiality of the form. These puppets vary in their fabrication; none of them speak, but they communicate through their movement as the puppeteers breathe life into their creations (National Theatre & May, 2014). Puppets draw our attention as members of the audience, making us look again and in this they encapsulate Brecht’s desire to alienate while paradoxically eliciting the audience’s emotion (Fuegi, 1987).

During the embodied reflections one participant reveals that:

*I don’t want to get close to children anymore.*

The lines are a universal and painful cry. I face an ethical dilemma because my participant has not asked me to remove this comment, but as the researcher I feel the need to protect my source. Yet, in not attributing the line, am I denying my participant’s voice or leaving my audience wondering who spoke the line? My

[^34]: Auckland Theatre Company, Auckland, 2014.
dramaturgical persona suggests it is a powerful line for Melony and the Archivist to enact together, as if the unspoken is spoken.

**Flashforward: Performance**

**ARCHIVIST**

*(Taking Melony from her chair)*

**Slide: (Roller coaster)** Just when you think life can’t be any better

It is a roller coaster
That makes and breaks your heart.
Children take you right up there
Then Bam!...

(Music stops suddenly; Melony is dropped and taken back to her chair, where she turns her back)

**MELONY**

I don’t want to get close to children anymore ...
I develop this scene during rehearsal to show the contrast between the peaks and troughs of drama education. I am embodying my own journey of passion to melancholia allowing me to get inside my data and wrestle with it, feeling it emotionally and intellectually. As I shout the word, ‘bam!’ the music suddenly stops and all is quiet. Holly, my daughter, who manipulates this puppet, leans over and gently embraces her, lifting her from the stage floor. Holly returns Melony to her seat and turns her away from the Archivist. I pick up her glasses, walk towards her and gently place them on her face. In this moment we connect; human and puppet. I feel a tingle moment as a sense of sadness overwhelms me. I imagine Melony’s feelings (Stanislavski, 1937/2013); I connect them to my own using emotional memory. As Stanislavski explained to his actors, “those feelings, drawn from our actual experience, and transferred to our part, are what give life to the play … All external production is formal, cold and pointless if it is not motivated from within” (Stanislavski, 1937/2013, p. 142).
In this moment is the wonderful contradiction that is theatre: I use a puppet to distance my audience and to make them look again, yet I am subsumed in emotion as I interact with this fictional being. It is a moment of both poignancy and power. I feel brutal throwing Melony down onto the ground but “the puppet is free from human limitations: it can throw itself to the ground in a way no human actor or dancer can do. It can speak the unspeakable” (Currell, 1985). I begin to speak the unspeakable and acknowledge that I, too, am tired of children and this demanding pedagogy.

4.2.5. Barricade building

I choose to hang a physical barricade behind me during the performance and envision a brick wall. I begin painting my barricade cloth on a hot summer day and as the sun blazes down and the sweat runs into my eyes I continue to splash around with paint, laughing and enjoying my interaction with these words and phrases I have distilled from the table of themes. I use different brushes and sponges, sometimes painting with a light hand and at others bashing the cloth fiercely with a washing-up brush filled with brown and black acrylic paint. The making of the barricade satisfies an emotional need to bond with the words and is an important way of consolidating and simplifying my data for I tried “to put the complexity of what [I] need to say into as simple a language as possible. Now that’s the sign of a true data analyst and a true thinker” (Saldaña, 2014, p. 3). Later I hang this cloth on the washing line in the garden and as it blows gently in the wind, I feel a sense of satisfaction and peace for I am grappling with and controlling these concepts of battles and barricades and like Mitchell’s installation, my barricade is becoming a thing of beauty and an invitation to engage with my melancholia.
Figure 56 barricade building

Figure 57 barricade words
I enjoy choosing which bright colour to use for each word and where each word will be placed including NCEA in bright orange paint at the very top of the barricade. During his embodied reflection Peter discusses New Zealand’s national qualification:

*philosophically I hate it with a passion I hate it, the notion of compartmentalising knowledge into little units that you can put in people’s brains.* (Peter O’Connor)

**Flashforward: Performance**

**PETER**

NCEA – that’s the barricade.

In my performance I channel Peter’s words and embrace his boldness. I stand centre stage and gesture firmly indicating this orange acronym. I wonder as I embrace them, speak them and give them meaning whether they are Peter’s words or mine.

Figure 58 NCEA that’s the barricade!
I deliver this statement passionately for it is my ‘naughty’ moment where, by voicing my participant’s words, I am voicing my own. My emotions and intellect connect and drive my arm and voice forwards. I feel powerful but I also shudder slightly because in the audience are New Zealand drama teachers. While I feel that drama teaching is difficult and NCEA compounds those difficulties, other drama teachers may not. However, among the words painted on the cloth, I draw a rope and paint figures, using the template of my little foam people, climbing up the barricade appearing to assist each other up and over the wall. This reflects some of the stories told during the research of the importance of collegiality. John recalls the inspiration he receives from other practitioners:

*the barricades are not actually effective anymore and then on the other side is a picture of all those nice people all those nice young people in Drama Queensland at their annual general meeting having lots of wine and cheese and good fun and electing a bunch of people even younger than themselves to be the new leaders of drama education in Queensland.*

*(John O’Toole)*

I see the concert *The Wall* and am inspired by the large wall of boxes which is constructed on stage. I was born on the day the Berlin Wall was erected and I watched with excitement the television images of its demise. Not long afterwards I visit Berlin with a school group and pick up a small piece of the wall which I keep as a reminder that barricades can be overcome with hope and with commitment. I want to burst through a barricade in my drama and I begin playing with small blocks of sponge. They are too small to be dramatically effective and instead I collect file and archive boxes, fitting items to find in a Museum to construct a second barricade and to create a wall of words selected from my transcripts:

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35 *The Wall presented by Roger Waters at The Vector Arena, Auckland, New Zealand, February 2012.*
During the final episode of my performance the audience hear a rumbling and crashing sound, the lights dim and flash. Suddenly I punch through the boxes and crawl through, a miner’s lamp on my head shines in the darkness. I reach out and mirror the moment at the end of Episode 1. This time I speak Lynn’s words:

*Flashforward: Performance*

Forget your perfect offering; there is a crack in everything that’s how the light gets in.\(^36\)

[Episode 5, Battles and Barricades]

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\(^{36}\) Anthem by Leonard Cohen recited by Lynn Fels during her *embodied reflection* in 2013.
In the first episode of my play I enact crawling through the barricade using a red cloth. I swing it around my head and then open it to reveal a hole. The cloth becomes battle and hope; the crack in everything. During my first enactment of this at *Exposure* I am unable to crawl through because of limited time constraints. Lynn Fels watches the video on YouTube and suggests that indeed I should:

“crawl” through the actual hole that you create – if possible, just try, see what happens … either through the cloth, or through the chair, to bring us back to the beginning. (Lynn Fels, personal communication, email, December 1, 2014)

I practise this for my final performance and find crawling through the cloth requires effort as I balance and wobble before stretching out the material and bringing it down towards the floor so that I can step through.

These two barricade moments have become a synthesis of stories. The Miner’s lamp arises from Andy’s artefact, a lump of black shiny coal that acts as a memento of a process drama about mining and as a metaphor for learning. I feel
like a miner emerging from the subterranean darkness into a light that offers hope for:

Hope is founded on the critical imagination. It is therefore not enough for research to tell us what the world is. Instead it must provide opportunities for communities to imagine what it might be. (O'Connor & Anderson, 2015, p. 19)

I cannot change the whole world but I can imagine what drama education might be like when the barricades have fallen and when drama is given its own uncontested place in education. My imagination is enhanced by physically experiencing the moment as the sound effects reverberate around the theatre, and I knock down the boxes, and hear them clatter on the floor. I feel powerful knocking them down for I am doing more than crawling through the barricade, I am imagining what it is like to be a researcher, an actor, an Archivist and a great drama practitioner. All these give me hope and might sustain me in the future.

4.3. Mother and daughter: Solo to dyadic

My performance uses the convention of multiple role play to show interactions between characters as if several people are on stage at once. The introduction of Melony makes it difficult for me to play multiple roles and breathe life into a puppet consistently. My daughter, who is seventeen and studying drama at school, often watches me rehearse. I think she is intrigued and fascinated if somewhat bemused by a performing Mother and she cannot stop herself from offering advice. This is both critical and encouraging and I am astonished by her insights. She begins to control my music and sound effects during rehearsals so that I can concentrate on performing. She laughs as I attempt to put my spoken poem to music for she trains with a classical singing teacher and understands music as my Mother did: a gift which sadly passed me by. It is a strange feeling to have a secondary school student in the reverse role of critic, teacher and director. Her knowledge has developed in our shared visits to see theatre and in the discussions we subsequently have and through her own performance work. Our shared experiences inform her knowledge of theatre. I bemoan my lack of inherited singing skills but my passion for drama is being passed on to my daughter. I am excited as a Mother and feel a sense of achievement as a teacher. My supervisor
suggests that Holly could act as my puppeteer but I do not want to pressurise her. However, after Holly auditions for the school play without success, after stepping last minute into a lead role the previous year, I feel her sadness so invite her to perform with me. She embraces it as an opportunity to play in a real theatre space. I can now work with my own child and invest my time and skills in my own daughter.

*Still image*

![Image](image_url)

Figure 61 Holly and Melony

The rehearsals become more enjoyable as Holly is present, she makes me laugh and she frequently challenges me to run a scene one more time. Holly prepares the orang-utan for each rehearsal by combing her fur and making her comfortable on her seat. Melony begins to take on a life of her own and we step into a fictional world choosing to engage in a game of pretence. As Holly develops a relationship with Melony so we also become a Mother and daughter at play.
In the ensuing weeks I notice a difference in my relationship with my daughter. I recognise her as a young adult with strong opinions, insights and the confidence I never had. I am not only artist, researcher, actor and educator, I am a Mother. Together my daughter and I share our passion for performance which we celebrate. I am conscious that aside from one or two iterations of this drama, we may never have the chance to perform together again.

4.4. The performance

I wonder if I can now call myself an actor. Lynn suggests:

\[
\text{well the trick is that I’m not a performer right? I tell my students when they come into my class the first-day I’m happy to have you here but if you’re hoping to be discovered by Hollywood or Broadway you’re out of luck because this is a place of inquiry of exploration so I think that’s part of the reluctance of performance. (Lynn Fels)}
\]

John recalls auditions at university:

\[
\text{Ian McKellen who was in my college a year ahead of me, now Sir Ian McKellen, and the quality of people there, there was actually no room for me and I’d audition for something and I’d leave with my tail between my legs and not get any call back …. I’m not a very good actor but I’m a much better teacher. (John O’Toole)}
\]

I include these stories in my performance because this lack of faith in ourselves as performers seems characteristic of drama educators. I ponder whether we feel like second-class citizens to the theatre world or whether drama education is the space in which we feel safest operating. I know that Ron and I speak of the pride we have in the success of students who enter the world of theatre. It is possible that we live vicariously through their achievements, forgetting our own. Andy, John and Peter enact several roles skilfully during the embodied reflections while Ron was a professional actor before becoming a teacher. Lynn and Jonothan demonstrate their inherent skills in presentation as they manipulate space and engage with their audience.

Backstage at the Musgrove Studio pacing up and down waiting to ‘go on’ is a surprisingly peaceful time. I have one moment of fear when I think I have forgotten everything. I breathe deeply and remember I know these lines in my body. I have never felt so prepared for a performance. The words are in me and I
must remain in the moment. As Stanislavski’s fictional actor, Kostya, says when asked how he feels to be on the stage, “I am comfortable, I know what to do, I have a purpose being there, I have faith in my actions and believe in my right to be on the stage” (Stanislavski, 1937/2013, p. 244).

I claim my right in this moment to be heard and – like Kostya – I have a purpose in being on the stage for I have a story to tell.

4.4.1. The programme

I create a four-page programme for my performance which serves a dual purpose: it is a theatrical programme that acknowledges the cast, stage crew, theatre staff, participants and supervisors and also a flyer for MEDAT to guide my visitors through some of the Museum displays and artefacts:

I create four posters to put in the foyer to give some background to the research for my audience. My audience are onlookers and participators within the drama in their role as audience and Museum visitors. As they enter the Musgrove Studio I
have chosen to play music with educational themes. The studio is a neutral space surrounded by black drapes but is now transformed with brightly coloured props and set items. The audience sit in a semi-circular formation which brings the actor and audience into close proximity. Later, during the workshop which follows the performance, they will join me in the open space of the stage which flows without interruption from the front-row seats, formal yet intimate and special.

Figure 63 view of the stage

4.4.2. Set design

I choose not to accept that “that the most you can typically hope for in research-based theatre is a workshop production, or a reader’s theatre presentation” (Mackenzie & Belliveau, 2011, p. 16). Using the technologies of theatre is a vital part of the aesthetic communication of drama and I relish the minimalist use of sets, the suggestion of space through symbols and the evocation of a mood without attempts at realism (Craig, 1914; Jones, 1986). Set designs can vary from the elaborate to the stylised and while audiences expect a “theatre of spectacle, delight and pictorial indulgence” (Ratcliffe, 1989, p. 23), the best set design enables “an environment which allows the meaning of the work to be expressed in all its contradictions, and which releases the actor’s creativity” (Hall, 1989, p. 12).
My set adds another layer of data to the drama. The empty space is encircled by a red rope and plastic multi-coloured children’s chairs and dolls, which foreshadow the playful nature of the space. Their small size juxtaposes and jars with me as the adult actor and questions the role of power in the relationship between child and teacher. The colours contrast with the blackness of the Musgrove Studio space. The garden cane which lies at stage right is a reminder of Ron’s artefact which he brings to his embodied reflection:

*This was actually used to beat pupils with. (Ron Price)*

![Figure 64 the cane](image)

It was last used in 1981, but he whacks it through the air during his embodied reflection making a swashing sound and then holds it tentatively between his hands:

*It’s symbolic … of how the job has massively changed and how much more civilised we are about how we educate and how we deal with children and their needs.*

Ron never saw the cane being used but keeps it now as a prop in the drama cupboard. The symbolism of the cane resonates in the several references made by Andy and Jonothan to *Hard Times* (Dickens, 1854) and which I enact in my play.

My set is non-naturalistic and grows and develops throughout the rehearsal process. When I perform at *Exposure* in October 2013, I use only one chair, two books, some labels, a bell and a whistle. By the time I perform in July 2014, my daughter packs a large plastic crate on wheels with all the props, while my husband carefully balances and ties down the many larger items onto the roof rack of our car. Each piece reflects aspect of the stories that have been shared with me:
the washing line, the chairs, the circle, and the shirts hanging on the line. Above me is the projection screen which displays images and captions that heighten and sometimes juxtapose the action below. The many archive boxes represent the sometimes unseen world of paper which infiltrates drama education but some will become the bricks in my barricade. When we arrive at the theatre on the first of two days of preparation, I am suddenly nervous and excited. Holly carefully and precisely lays out my rope on the stage ensuring it makes the shape of the circle as I unpack and begin to set the space.

4.5. Performing as on-going analysis

It is impossible to disseminate the entirety of the research partly because “there is always more to know” (Richardson, 2005, p. 934) and I know that my drama is not a final dissemination; it is instead a continuing act of analysis. As I juxtapose ideas and play with moments, I am analysing, mediating and synthesising. Each time I rehearse I make changes; I add new material as something else resonates within me. A story is remembered; something suddenly makes sense or connects which failed to do so before. As I write about the process for my written thesis and look at the video and photographs of the performance I continue to gain new understandings. The act of writing now becomes another “way of ‘knowing’—a method of discovery and analysis” (Richardson, 2005, p. 923) which forces me back to the videos, and transcripts of the embodied reflections. During the writing process I present selected moments from my play at conferences and seminars. The evolving script still dances in my head and rolls off my tongue as I am deeply connected to the words and ideas of my participants.

It is a paradox that about to do an exam I still feel in an excited playful state. Play is “a state of mind” (Brown & Vaughan, 2010, p. 60) and I know that my mind is moving from melancholia to an embodied lighter, happier sense of self. I am giving myself time to accept that there must be time for play in my life. Brown suggests that “the impulse to create art is a result of the play impulse” (Brown & Vaughan, 2010, p. 61) so even in my melancholic state a voice cried out within me to play and since I am a drama person it is a play that I feel impelled to create and perform and, in cyclical fashion, I return to a key source of inspiration in the final moments of my play:
Flashforward: Performance

Peter Brook believes a play is play (Brook, 1968, p. 157). [Episode 5]

During this act of play “we learn to be grown up by pretending to be grown up” (Bentley, 1964, pp. 182-183) using play “as a workshop or laboratory for experiment by trial and error” (Bentley, 1964, p. 183). I consider whether I am learning how to be a better drama practitioner by ‘pretending’ to be one of the key practitioners. One of the barricades to feeling passionate about drama education is a feeling that being a drama teacher is often a mundane job and the ordinariness of the everyday experience becomes tiring, but in embodying my participants’ speeches and dialogue I feel a sense of grandeur, something beyond the mundane. Joseph Lee suggests that “to adopt the voice and bodily carriage of Bayard or King Arthur is to go some way toward possessing their spirit and moral attitude” (Lee, 1921, p. 302). As I speak Peter’s opinions about NCEA I am no longer hiding behind his words but embracing them as my own. As I synthesise Lynn and John’s statements into my own speech:

Flashforward: Performance

Typical!
The first barricade is that we don’t have an empty space; we have a space of tables and chairs. Drama needs an empty space (gesture) To suspend our disbelief and inquire In which we can play in a space of possibilities. [Episode 1]

I am empowered and finally understand that drama educators have to disrupt the traditional educational space to create the special place of drama education. The clearing of the space is not a battle or a barricade but a significant and vital ritual.

Adopting a declamatory style to deliver the collage of battle speeches creating a new speech with which to open MEDAT, I feel “a certain elation” (Bentley, 1964, p. 89) and the power and spirit of these key educators in my body. The speeches heightened by music become theatrical and their embodiment makes me feel the passion with which I used to speak of drama. I move to the centre of the stage to deliver the words:
**Flashforward: Performance**

Figure 65 are any of you so mean and base?

**ANDY**

Are any of you so mean and base as to Destroy what here has been made?

**JONOTHAN**

(Music: 'Hero’, begins to raise the spirit, triumphant. XSR) Now is not the time to be modest or humble. Now is the time to speak out very loud and clear as to why drama and theatre are so important particularly in these difficult times. (X USC). And this is the darkest, darkest, darkest time in England for 40 years.
MELONY

It always seems to be the darkest days for drama in England.

PETER

Conformity, Compliance

ANDY

Knowledge-based curriculum

JONOTHAN

When the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the Tiger,
Stiffen the sinews and
Summon up the blood.

(X CS one foot on the chair)

MELONY

Not once more, but
Again and again and again.

PETER

The same story,
The everyday story
Still it must be told.
We will not be stranded as
Spectators to the world.
For our duty, our charge
Is to be actors
In, of and with the world.

(Off chair begin to walk around the foam people)

MELONY

Our duty! Our charge!

ARCHIVIST

Walking in others’ shoes.
Social Justice,
Thinking critically,
Employment skills,
Democracy,
Drama as an art form.
ANDY

Drama as a serious subject in its own right. Will you let what lies within be Swill’d into the wild and wasteful ocean?

(Archivist Brings chair DSC, stands on it)

RON

(XSR) So cry drama for one and all!

ANDY

(XSL) Cry God for drama, Children and all humanity! [Episode 3]

I feel full of the language of drama discourses, the words roll off my tongue, and I feel immersed in drama education theory, history and practice. I am finding a renewed passion in these concepts as I step downstage and speak Jonothan’s words:

Flashforward: Performance

JONOTHAN

It’s a very tiring thing teaching drama And you’re not going to get paid a lot of money And you’re not going to be at the centre of the curriculum And you are always going to be marginalised And if there’s drama in your school It’s only there because someone’s fought to have it there And if you haven’t got that passion And if you haven’t got that determination And if you haven’t got that courage Then go teach something else!

In these words not only does he reprimand, he encourages, he incites to action and he tells the truth that resonates with me. His words are presented almost word for word but set out in a poetic transcript. By presenting it on stage as a speech it assumes the powerful and the poetic.

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By re-enacting the words and heightening the gestures and movement during the mediation and rehearsal process, I feel the rhythms in my own body. The speech is more than a talk that Jonothan presents beside the passion and melancholia wall in his studio; it now becomes a powerful speech shared with a wider audience. I am conscious as I deliver it that it challenges my audience by suggesting there have been battles that surround drama education. It is also a personal challenge to either embrace passion, determination and courage or to exit the school classroom.

Only Ron still teaches in a secondary school on a full-time basis and has done so for over thirty years. He has deliberately chosen to remain as a classroom practitioner for that is what he has always wanted to be. The management systems in place have enabled him to take on senior leadership roles while continuing to teach both students and trainee drama teachers. He explains in an afterthought to his embodied reflection:

*the thing is I took this on from nothing, it was wrecked and I built it up and for many years I wasn’t moving on because I didn’t see why should I go and do a sideways move just to have someone else enjoy all my free resources and things I had built up. The other thing that sometimes people don’t realise about teaching is that there are benefits to longevity in a post you can have a much longer view. However, I’m notorious for getting bored easily and if I was ever bored there would be skidmarks down the school drive in my haste to leave the place.* (Ron Price)

This echoes within me for many weeks and I experiment with its embodiment. I connect to the story of wrecked resources but unlike Ron I have walked away from the resources and facilities and goodwill I have built up. This sense of loss contributes to my frustration and exhaustion. I juxtapose Ron’s story with a fictional scene generated from stories within the research and it becomes part of the climax.
Figure 66 are you coming with us?

PETER

Onward, Onward, Onward! – Are you coming over the barricade with us? (Looks at Melony)

(Music stops)

MELONY

Don’t be silly – I haven’t been in a school classroom for years – I’m not coming back!

RON

Archivist – I never explained why I’ve been in this school for 34 years. I’ve wanted to stay in the classroom ... I wanted to be a classroom practitioner. When I came in here the situation was pretty dire. The resources had been wrecked, there was a pile of stinking costumes in the corner, none of the lights worked, there were no resources apart from an empty space. [Episode 5]
In the forthcoming months I, too, will question whether even newly empowered as I am, I will ever return to the secondary drama classroom. This moment is closer to the truth than I first imagined while synthesising my participants’ comments.

4.5.1. A glimpse of Gavin

During my research and performance I aim to make my participants’ stories “audible and visible, to make of it a projectile which is thrown out into the auditorium and reaches the back row of the balcony” (Bentley, 1964, p. 169). I want my participants to come alive for my audience, for many have never met these practitioners outside their published works. I am passionate about theatre because I want to be confronted by characters in action speaking to me in the shared space. I want to feel their words and hear them breathe. I want their aliveness to make me feel alive.

During his embodied reflection John re-enacts memories of Gavin Bolton. Suddenly in the drama studio at Griffith University I catch my first glimpse of Gavin Bolton. John starts to lower his voice; he pulls a chair up close to the camera, sits down and becomes a headshot in the viewfinder. He begins to give an embodied demonstration of Gavin in action. As he recounts his story, he moves between the role of narrator and the role of Gavin, speaking to a group of children gathered around him on the floor. I find a small photograph of Gavin and use it to further inform my own embodiment as I edit and poeticise the moment:

**Flashforward: Performance**

**JOHN**

There is this little quiet intense gnome-like man crouched on the chair like this

*(Sits on chair)*

“Now what are we going to make a play about? Now it’s no use saying stupid things.”

**ARCHIVIST**

Gavin Bolton is John’s absolutely number one ... mentor.
He’s sharp as a tack ... An amazing teacher, astonishing teacher. [Episode 2]
I am Jane, playing John, playing Gavin. I transcend time and space and in this moment connect to a practitioner who has only been visible to me through his words. For unlike Jonothan I have never seen his work on video. As I place myself tentatively into the family tree of drama education surrounded by those above and to my sides, I am watched by other members of this family. We are sharing our struggles through the very form that we suggest is the most powerful way to explore our world.

Drama education as a pedagogy needs to re-imagine its own world and draw on the aesthetic form that we claim can speak to our emotions and intellect. In the 1980s in England Bolton suggested that drama was “threatened” (Davis & Lawrence, 1986, p. 235) in terms of political and monetary support. Today there is an even stronger strong sense of teachers living through:

*the darkest days in over forty years. (Jonothan Neelands)*

Andy Kempe feels it faces an uncertain future as it is:

*rapidly disappearing from schools ...(Andy Kempe)*

in part:

*because of cockeyed notions of what it means to progress and gain knowledge. (Andy Kempe)*
As he speaks these words he points stage right to an installation he has created earlier. It consists of an upturned table on which he places green cardboard stars as a metaphor for the assessment of children represented by two white masks.

**Still image**

![Still image](image)

Figure 68 the quantification of learning

It is a visual image of the way in which assessment controls education and affects the way in which drama is taught:

>a quantifying method of assessment could impede the learning, it sets up a barrier to learning because some people will just switch off. (Andy Kempe)

There is comfort in the knowledge that Andy, too, struggles with its implementation. His dream for the future of drama education is represented in a simple and yet complex symbol which he creates after consideration:

*Andy: Goodness … (Andy thinks for a while) I’m going to come back to my little friends (says as he moves to put the piece of coal on the table kneels on the floor and begins moving the foam people). A bit tricky not to be clichéd (he begins to move the people into a circle on the floor). There we go (Andy stands up) I think that probably speaks for itself (3 adult foam people hold hands with 3 child foam people, green, yellow, orange, pink).*
Still image

Figure 69 beyond the barricade

Here in this image of the circle is a vision of drama education that engages young people and teachers in a joint venture as they share their skills, ideas and emotions. The use of the circle as a signifier of the space in which we work shapes the staging of the play. My drama performance begins as I enter and walk around the red circle of rope before signalling a conscious decision to enter the space and perform. In this moment I embody Jonothan’s symbol of drama education as a democratic space for learning and as a symbol of my aliveness and journey out of melancholia.

4.6. The interactive workshop

Flashforward: Performance

ARCHIVIST

Jane’s play will not be finished until it contains your voices.
John asks that your tickets to this interactive museum include the opportunity to take part in a workshop. Lynn suggests that you get on your feet and step in. Andy wants to invite you to have a play with the props. [Episode 5]

The workshop is videoed for research purposes only. I hope that my audience – even if they are not drama teachers – feel they can participate without being coerced; a few choose to leave. Those who return after the interval appear to be educators from primary, secondary and tertiary environments. I lead the workshop in the role of Archivist for it allows me to continue the fiction and to feel more confident. My critical friend Anton Bentley has agreed to read the role of the chairperson of the Museum and I enact a short dialogue in the form of a flashback to set the scene and offer a tension:

**Flashforward: Workshop**

**Chairperson**

I hear we still have an empty space to fill in the Museum

**Archivist**

Yes – no one can decide what exhibit to put in there – it is still a space of possibilities.

**Chairperson**

Yes, well, I have had an idea. I hear you’ve had your first visitors through. Perhaps you could ask them to share their ideas as to what could be put in the space. I take it they’re all drama practitioners.

**Archivist**

No, actually we have some doctoral researchers, students from other disciplines; I think we might have an engineer and a criminologist present.

**Chairperson**

I see, well could you ask them all to get into groups and create some brief ideas about what they would like to see in the space. They might want to ask if there are any missing voices, is there anything that needs more explanation

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about drama education, any other practitioners who should be included. They could contest ideas, critique them, examine them. Maybe they want to include something about drama-based research or what life is like in the classroom. They could draw, create a hologram, still images, speech, song – anything creative in any form. Money is no object. I understand they can play with the props?

Archivist

Yes absolutely. I’ll invite them to create an idea for an exhibit and I’ll get back to you when I’ve seen them. Goodnight.

Chairperson

Goodnight and Good luck!

The constraints of time add a further tension but the groups immediately choose items from the extra props I have made available to them. After about ten minutes of frenetic activity the empty space in the centre of the stage is no longer empty:

Figure 70 a disrupted space
Although difficulties are recognised the space is filled with hope as barricades are transformed into ladders and staircases to climb. One group reflects on the hour-long performance and creates a poetic account of key moments from the drama:

![Poem](image)

Figure 71 where are the plays?

As the audience pretend to be the visitors to the Museum and agree to imagine and play, the space is transformed into a space of education and entertainment, of learning and play and of conflict and celebration. One group of drama teachers create a washing line made of wool on a steep incline from the stage floor to join my red washing line across the space. They peg key words and phrases along with some of the foam people onto the line to represent a secondary-school drama teacher’s working week. It is presented with humour but highlights the pressures drama teachers can feel. As the week deteriorates, the children turn into many-headed monsters and yet at the very top of the washing line they peg a series of stars, with a ‘smiley face’ on which is written:
One group takes the coloured wool and weaves a web throughout the space calling out:

*drama, research, stillness, energy, improvising, relationships, connection, audience and joy.*

Their final comment:

*there’s no empty space now.*

This reminds me of John as he opens the blue door in the drama studio, stands and contemplates his displays in the imaginary museum:

*Wow! There’s still a lot of empty space in here I wish I could have filled it up more. (John O’Toole)*

In the same way that my participants’ drama studios and my stage have become places of exploration filled with objects of discovery, so too has the space been claimed by the visitors to the Museum.

In the next chapter I draw together some of these moments and explore what this doctoral journey has meant for me. Like the participants in my workshop I, too, will shout “I claim the empty space” in which to re-find my passion and my voice, using this art form to play and to learn. I claim this pedagogy that offers hope for children as my way of healing and bringing hope to me as an educator and of finding my way back into the light. This is what might sustain me and help me to negotiate battles and barricades.
Chapter 5. Reflections and discoveries

Denouement:

I acknowledge that I am an artist as I reflect on unexpected discoveries which may sustain me in the future. I understand the importance of spaces, play, framing, role play and imagination in drama education and arts-based research. I acknowledge the importance of Motherhood. I recall being inspired by George Belliveau’s performance in 2010 as I prepare to step onto the stage to perform. I welcome my audience to the Museum of Education Drama and Applied Theatre and hope they too will ‘come out feeling better than they went in’.

My doctoral journey has been:

much more complicated and richer than merely following through on initial plans. To my mind, the best doctorates start in an awful muddle, fuelled by a candidate’s burning passion to find out something that neither they nor the supervisor can quite put into words in those first meetings. (O'Connor, 2014, p. 70)

I recall that muddle during those early days but in the intervening years the journey exceeds expectations and takes me to places beyond my imagination. As I come to the end of this research process I feel a sense of a new me emerging, a stronger, more confident me, one that can embrace the battles and see beyond the barricades; one that acknowledges Jane as a teacher, researcher, artist and Mother.

Women “read and write biographies to gain perspective on their own lives” (Bateson, 1990, p. 5) and this journey has helped me gain perspective. I feel more alive having responded to Saldaña’s challenge to think like an artist (Saldaña, 2011, p. 209). My participants have indeed become more ‘human’ in my eyes and in experiencing their journeys told through dramatic means, I feel as if I am journeying out of melancholia. My participants spend their lives engaging in drama which sanctions and encourages reflection. This reflection is a necessary part of the drama practitioner. Rather than being embarrassed by my feelings of melancholy, I recognise them as a part of that constantly reflecting nature. I perform my melancholy for this research in order to engage the dramatic act of storytelling and offer a purpose for the drama to occur.
5.1.1. Changing the title

One of the significant changes that results from my journey is the changing title of my thesis called throughout the process *Caught between worlds: Stories of battles, beliefs and barricades from key drama in education theorist/practitioners*. As I paint the cloth that forms my barricade and decorate the archive boxes with my battle words and burst through them during my performance, I recognise that I no longer feel worn down by my battles and barricades. I type into the empty white space at the front of my thesis: *Playing on the Barricades: Embodied Reflections on Passion and Melancholia in Drama Education by Key Practitioners*. Instead of crawling through the hole I am playing on the barricade where I can see, be seen and voice my feelings and ideas. As I stand on the barricade I can look to the blue horizon, supported by the giants on whose shoulders I stand (Isaac Newton in Brewster, 1855) and be held aloft. Lynn’s suggestion has made its way into my play but it is only now I hear it anew:

*Listen to the child within you, listen to the child you’ve left behind.*

That child wants to play and to imagine and to enjoy the process of discovery but there are some aspects of the child that will be left behind.

5.1.2. Acknowledging my barricade

Acknowledging my own barricades in an embodied reflection was an important moment for me as I write in large letters:
I admit to my self-doubt and this is followed by an image as I explain:

*I remembered ... going through a barricade, an army checkpoint when I was in Ireland, during the troubles, and it was really, really scary. So that’s all those things like the ethos, resources, confidence, government and schools, those things there (Points to picture) parents and I am here ... with ... the sword in hand against here, but actually I’d really rather be here, behind the hedge having a quiet peaceful life, peaceful life ... but there we are and we’re forced to have to fight and I think it can make you very, very frustrated. (Jane Luton)*
I see myself, sword in hand, quietly fighting the negative attitudes expressed towards drama. Contemplating this image now I recognise this is not how I see myself but how I want to see myself: no longer hiding behind the hedge but as a warrior standing alongside other drama practitioners battling for drama without self-doubt. I want to acknowledge that emotion and intuition are my constant guides in the classroom for they are important ways of knowing for women but they are often lost in “shadows of doubt” (Debold et al., 1993, p. 46). So I claim my right to use my childhood and school experiences of inadequacy, of grief and loss to influence my approach to drama education. Intuition is a “sympathetic comprehension” (Hughes, 1967, p. 117) and is my way of understanding the world shaped by traumatic experiences, undisclosed for many years.

The day after my Mother dies, when I am seventeen, the sun shines and I deliberately put on my favourite red dress which my Mother bought for me, and which I still have. I catch the bus to school. In England, in the 1970s we were “still subscribing to a code of behaviour which abhorred displays of emotion” (Paxman, 1999, p. 240) and so I maintained my stiff upper lip for many years. I am absent from school for one day only to attend the funeral. My red dress was the only way I could show my passion, my anger and my love but “when we feel – when we experience the pain, the atrocities, the anguish, as well as the desires,
the joy, and the ecstasies of life – we also think differently” (Sansom, 2008, pp. 214-215).

My experience of inadequacy, loss and early responsibilities and the joy of parenthood do not make me a perfect teacher but hopefully they help toward making me a compassionate one. Experiencing this research and its many moments of joy and even ecstasy makes me think differently. As I speak the words of my participants and the published theorists I think differently, I feel different and I am different. I have chosen which words to speak and how they will be spoken. I have relied on my own intuition and emotion to shape my drama. The construction of my battle image is the beginning of recognition of my own voice and of re-finding my passion for this art form and pedagogy.

5.2. Discovering Motherhood

My research has made me contemplate my role as a Mother. During my embodied reflection I emotionally recall a trip with my son Alex and daughter Holly to the National Theatre in London to see Antigone37 on stage. It brings back memories of my first trip there on July 8, 1977 to see Julius Caesar38 because the play makes such an impression on me that I sellotape the ticket into my diary describing it as “an absolutely brilliant production” (Jane, personal diary, 1977).

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38 Directed by John Schlesinger, with John Gielgud as Julius Caesar and Brian Cox as Marcus Brutus.
I feel a sense of a:

wonderful sort of circular nature that my 15-year-old daughter, sitting in that same theatre where I had first seen the National perform when I was 15, seeing a play two and a half thousand years old and it still had something to say today, just wonderful. (Jane Luton)

Unexpectedly this research enables me to connect more closely with Holly as we discover a new adult relationship sharing our passion for drama and theatre. I still feel guilty for enrolling her in a nursery when she is seven weeks old, in order to continue teaching drama. As I hand her over, asleep in her car seat that first morning, I am told not to worry, but to go and teach. When she is unwell I hold her in my arms as I rehearse a school production or teach a class. I feel unexpressed anger toward the parent who arrives an hour late to collect their child after rehearsal, while my three year old, at school from eight in the morning, is screaming with tiredness and hunger. In England, surrounded by mainly female colleagues who are themselves Mothers, the schools I work at are accommodating and empathetic. In New Zealand, I feel alone, away from friends and family, juggling motherhood and teaching, torn between appearing efficient as a teacher and capable as a Mother. I choose eventually to work part time but still direct productions, take a role on my children’s primary school Board of Trustees, write
two drama books and teach from home. Trying to make myself more available for my children only worsens the situation. My pride will not let me leave drama teaching alone. I am not alone in the juggling that women do in their careers and the way that we are “denied cultural authority to voice these concerns” (Debold et al., 1993, p. 251). As Ron and Andy recount stories of commitment to their jobs over a long period I feel responsible for my melancholia. In my attempt to juggle motherhood and drama teaching I do not stay in a job for enough years to reap the benefits I build up. Yet it is my ‘Mothering’ nature and my role as a parent that enhances my ability to teach drama. I feel I have more insights and empathy than I had before having children. I make a deliberate decision, in New Zealand, to ensure my children and I are not in the same schools. So this opportunity to perform and work with my daughter becomes a special and unique time as we perform, play and learn together backstage and onstage.

My husband and son play together in the garage, welding, fabricating and reconstructing their classic cars, while my daughter and I find an imagined world where we work together as Mother and daughter, friends and colleagues. As we perform together on the stage I am acutely aware of our Motherline (O'Reilly & Abbey, 2000). Holly is seventeen, the same age I was when my Mother died and I in turn the same age as my Mother. This research is not only about looking to key drama educators for insights into how they negotiate and sustain themselves in the difficult times. It has become more about re-finding passion through looking at my own self and my own journey to find what makes me passionate. I come to understand that my teaching self and my Mother self must synthesise to re-form me as a complete being. I recognise the strength and skills of my Mother in my daughter, her ability to sing, her inner confidence, her strength in voicing her opinions. I also recognise the determination and practical skills of my maternal Grandmother who was ten when her own Mother died. When I ask my participants to embody their stories of the battles and barricades in drama education for a public museum I worry that they might share inner personal details which they later regret and remove. Yet personal stories surface for me in my own reflection. Our performance may become one of our Motherline stories that “link generations of women” and that “evoke the dead” (Lowinsky, 2000, p. 227) and one that Holly will tell her daughter about one day. The “strong mother – daughter connection, … is what makes a strong female self” (O'Reilly & Abbey,
and having been denied my own Mother – daughter connection, as my grandmother was, I am now energised in realising that I have contributed to Holly’s passion for theatre and her success in drama.

Each part of my research is making me a stronger self: meeting my participants whom I hold in awe, speaking and embodying their words, stepping into the role of actor alongside my daughter. Each of these steps enables me to listen to my own imagination and to my own voice as drama educator, researcher and Mother. I worry at times whether I am doing it right and then I remember – there are no right answers in drama, and I proceed.

5.3. Drama is fun

But I also rediscover what I have forgotten – that devising serious drama can be fun! Even Brecht eventually accepts that theatre serves more than a didactic purpose “for it needs no other passport than fun…. Not even instruction can be demanded of it” (Willett, 1964, pp. 180-181). My play is a space where I can move and explore; cry and laugh. On the stage, rather than being a silent figure (Debold et al., 1993) I can be heard. I have to conquer my nerves, believe in the work and engage in act of communication with my audience. I have created this play because I am both researcher and artist (Irwin & De Cosson, 2004) and this is a valid work of art.

In performing I discover that I am an actor in denial. As a drama teacher I act as guide and facilitator but fail to recognise my own need to perform and deny myself the opportunity, living the excitement of performing through the performances of my students. I may never perform again but I know that I can no longer tell myself I cannot remember lines or that I am incapable of playing multiple roles to tell a story. I am responsible for communicating these stories and I will do it with energy and passion.

Flashback: Performance

ARCHIVIST

Jane has been rediscovering play on her journey out of melancholia and is inspired by Saldaña’s rant to: (American accent) Get off your ass and perform! (Saldaña, 2014)
I feel joyful and excited which surprises me because prior to my first symposium presentation I begin to shake and my hands run with sweat. Yet backstage I am ecstatic, determined and positive. On stage I find my voice, my memory, my body. I have no desire to be a famous actress but I do aspire through performance to express my ideas and thoughts, my artistic and imaginative self. I am not Judi Dench but I am Jane the actor. My research is providing the platform for healing for “often in this questioning comes a softening spirit towards the self” (Irwin & De Cosson, 2004, pp. 29-30). I may be standing on the shoulders of giants but I no longer feel them tapping on my shoulder telling me I am not doing it right.

During my performance I play over twenty roles, some briefly encapsulated in one or two lines. Some, like Margaret Thatcher and my participants, are real; some, like the Archivist and Melony, are fictional. However, being an effective actor needs guidance and inspiration and so, watching Angels in America (Silo Theatre, 2014) in Auckland, I observe the way in which the ensemble of eight actors play multiple roles. Part One: Millenium Approaches (Kushner, 1992) opens with an elderly Rabbi shuffling onto the stage in a slow methodical movement. It is not until the interval that I am nudged by Holly and asked if I guessed a female actor was playing the role. Alison Bruce’s physicalisation of the Rabbi is so convincing that I have believed in a temporary illusion, accepting it for a moment as a reality (McConachie, 2007). In preparation for this illusion the actor researches, observes, experiments, and drawing from real life uses her imagination to develop her role (Stanislavski, 1936/1990). In the moment when art and real life meet, she communicates truthfulness that speaks to the audience.

We are not only thinkers and doers but as Huizinga suggests “Homo Ludens” (Huizinga, 1971) whose play and performance are closely interlinked. Participants step into a space out of the reality of life which absorbs them intensely while all the time they know they are at play (Huizinga, 1971). The same is true in theatre when we:

    step back from an imaginative immersion in the onstage action to consider the relative skills of the players (and of the designers, the director, and so

on) or to think about the fictional world of the script (and perhaps about the art of the playwright). (McConachie, 2007, p. 557)

The embodied reflections capture stories using the performative skills of my participants as they and I step into a world away from real life and pretend to be any number of characters. We even have toys to play with: the coloured wool and the small foam people delight and encourage play and the making of dramatic symbols. Kempe suggests (Kempe, 2011) that drama education can be both playful and serious, a theme he considers during his embodied reflection:

*drama is a game, drama is a play.* (Andy Kempe)

Yet drama has resonances in real life.

Andy uses the embodied reflection to experiment and examine ideas:

*I think this what I mean by the aesthetic knowledge when I can see and feel things in three-dimensions then I can start making links between them.* (Andy Kempe)

I wonder if as drama teachers we choose our profession because we have an inherent need or desire to play. I recognise that I no longer play as I once did. When I was a child my father built a very large doll’s house which he gave to me one Christmas. The exterior walls were painted yellow; it had a red porch with a green and yellow front door complete with miniature letterbox. Inside the roof and the ceilings he put battery-operated lights. I played with it for years, buying small pieces of furniture with my weekly pocket money and transporting myself into the world of this large house. After his death I had it packaged up and brought to New Zealand where it now sits untouched beside my children’s Lego collection. Sometimes I long to play with it, but I am grown up now and time is short. Directing school productions and devising a drama for this doctoral study is my adult play: when I can imagine other scenarios and characters. The doll’s house is no longer a toy because I have lived out those meanings (Huizinga, 1971) and experiences of home ownership, domesticity and child rearing. They are no longer a game but real life.
Yet if we lose our ability to play as adults then we can become powerless to feel positive emotions (Brown & Vaughan, 2010, p. 43) which is my own state of being at the start of the research process. This ability to play and use our imaginations:

is much more than a simple joy experienced in childhood. Rather it should be an important part of all learning situations, not only the young child, needs ‘what if” opportunities to play, create, imagine and dream. (Ewing, 2013, p. 13)

By imagining possibilities for the research and playing with ideas and roles I find the beginning of hope and acknowledge a sense of my body and feelings. This playing and imagining is “a doorway to a new self” (Brown & Vaughan, 2010, p. 92) and one which Ron has also experienced.

5.3.1. A doorway to a new self

While still a student at school, Ron is invited to perform with The Everyman Theatre in Liverpool. He recounts his story sitting on a chair in the centre of the drama studio, his ankles crossed, his hands folded on his lap, his upper body leaning back into the chair as he remembers. He maintains eye contact with me, speaking towards the camera. But in recounting the effect working on a classical piece of theatre and being mentored by professionals had on him, he begins to relax, he leans forward:

*It was just ... the Shell broke (Ron opens his hands like a shell) I came out of it and I was ... Suddenly found a completely different me through it. I was taken out of this very unpleasant school situation and placed in this theatre with tutors working on this play and it just allowed me to blossom.* (Ron Price)

His hands are clasped and raised to the level of his face, then opened as he embodies the shell breaking. Suddenly his hands return to his lap as he confirms the importance of the moment. He suggests that through this experience he found:

*a completely different me.* (Ron Price)

His language is redolent and rich with images that highlight the ways in which playing and drama empowered him. Yet the story is told without great emotion; it
appears factual and informative; it is in the embodied gesture of the shell that the emotion of this event is shown.

Lynn plays in the limited space of the seminar room embracing it as a playground to explore possibilities. She explores levels, from sitting on the floor to performing on a chair placed on a table. She wraps wool around the space, stands, sits and dances. John builds barricades from chairs and sweeps into the studio re-enacting Dorothy Heathcote. Andy plays with the coloured foam people and the wool. He constructs a barricade from tables and covers it in green cardboard stars. Jonathan encircles the space in red wool and uses multimedia resources to tell his story. Peter makes a cardboard crucible and climbs on chairs and Ron discusses a mask that was made for him that he wants placed in the Museum. The mask reminds him of the annual Summer School which he has run for many years:

so the last night when I’m there in my frockcoat … beautifully embroidered, because I play Charles II at the ball with a huge big wig … with this mask on and posing stick and everything and lots of lace all over the place, love dressing up, this is from there, so as an artefact, it’s the importance of the summer school in my career. (Ron Price)
Aside from the many learning opportunities the Summer School provides for the staff and students, Ron is adamant that:

As well as the fun and excitement of working with gifted and talented people from across the world ... of course it’s great it’s huge fun to do each year ... It’s just great fun. (Ron Price)

Ron’s longevity in the classroom means he has seen students develop their drama skills over several years and been aware of their successes after they have left. He is deeply committed and proud of their achievements. He looks proudly at the prosthetic of *The Elephant Man*[^40] made by a student and asserts:

People underestimate young people; underestimate what they’re capable of. I’m constantly amazed by just what young people can achieve and how creative and imaginative they can be so that’s the one I think I’d choose. (Ron Price)

[^40]: *The Elephant Man* (1977) by Bernard Pomerance, about the life of Joseph Merrick. During the play’s performance a prosthetic is not used by the actor, as Ron Price points out. This prosthetic was created specifically for a GCSE drama examination by a student.
Flashback: Performance

Figure 78 no claims for transformation

JONOTHAN

(Lean on back of chair). I don’t make any claims for what drama does in the long term – I don’t make any claims for transformation.

JANE

(Sit on chair) A great feeling of relief sweeps over me. How can we claim that drama can transform someone forever?

As I perform this scene I feel the breath leaving my body and I sit; I really am breathing a sense of relief because I “may not fully understand the full extent of drama’s potential to bring about change in people’s lives” (Freebody & Finneran, 2013, p. 60) and in this I am sad. The long hours, the commitment may be only for a temporary and fleeting addition to a life. My artefact is a spiral book, made for me by students, full of letters and pictures. On the front cover is typed: Mrs. Luton’s Special Book of Thank Yous. I am moved re-reading their stories about:

the confidence lots of them felt that drama was giving them, and enjoyment, lots of them mentioned productions, as well as a class work so those are special because they come from students. (Jane Luton)
We may not be able to justify drama’s existence as being a transformative process but for some students it is; although we may never know for whom and in what ways.

![Figure 79 images from Jane's archive](image)

5.4. **I am an artist!**

When I first submitted my proposal I did not recognise or acknowledge myself as an artist. I was a teacher, an educator, a facilitator and emerging researcher. Yet in developing my methodology, devising, producing and acting in my data drama I discover, recognise and finally accept that I am an artist. It is not a judgement on the quality of what I do, it is an acceptance that this is how I see, feel and experience my world as a researcher and educator alongside others who are:

- living their work, representing their understandings, and performing their pedagogical positions as they integrate knowing, doing and making through aesthetic experiences that convey meaning rather than facts.

(Irwin & De Cosson, 2004, p. 34)
As I reflect on some of my archival material I recognise that I have been an artist and creative practitioner throughout my life, in the role of director, producer, set designer and drama teacher.

I discover that performing is more necessary to me than I knew. It is vital that I recognise my artist self in my teaching and personal life and allow it to have time to be expressed. The journey is expressed in the biblical adage ‘physician heal thyself’ for as Heathcote suggests “just the lifting of the pressures then makes us ready for something else” (Johnson & O'Neill, 1984, p. 23). In stepping away from the classroom I have the time and space to reflect on and come to know my feelings, even the ones “we don’t know we have” (Fels et al., 2008, p. 48). My discoveries come through rehearsing and performing my drama as I take the words, thoughts, emotions and feelings into my body to understand them (Sansom, 2008; Stanislavski, 1937/2013). Education often denies emotion (Van Dijk, 2011) and this lies at the heart of my melancholia. As an empathetic educator I need to embrace emotion, intuition, passion and melancholia and allow them to guide my drama work. Next time I am in a classroom and I doubt my intuition then, as Lynn suggests many times in her embodied reflection, I must stop and listen to this moment.

5.5. Re-finding my body

Throughout the embodied reflections I stand beside the camera and deliberately avoid interfering or placing myself in a prominent position. Once I have stories to work with it is as if I throw off the shackles and I play and respond to the stories. Even the act of painting the barricades is a sensory and embodied experience. I identify with the arts-based researcher in action:

> She responds instinctively, passionately, critically to what she sees, hears, feels, touches, fears, hopes, dreams and recoils from. She moves, she rests, she draws, she paints, she dances and she feels. She responds with her whole body, and through her senses, to what she discovers. (O'Connor & Anderson, 2015, p. 26)

As I practise the spoken song, dance the words or pretend to be different characters, I am immersing myself in the stories and responding to them
intuitively, sensuously and emotively. Tidying up after my performance is over, I find a bowl of dried paints and a brush I fail to wash up. These bring back memories of the joy I feel crawling over the barricade cloth in the sunshine, choosing and using the colours to encapsulate words and themes.

5.6. Reviewing the method

My participants have illustrated the world of the drama educator and through imagination they and I have been able to “create new worlds, new ways of thinking that enable us to go beyond what is and to imagine what could be” (Sansom, 2008, p. 225). Imagination is my lens through which I mediate the stories; it is explicit. If another dramaturg used my data, a very different play would arise because this play synthesises my participants’ responses through my emotional reactions, my embodied reaction and my own intellectual insights. There is serendipity in using drama to explore drama, using imagination to explore imagination and using theatre to express these ideas.

5.6.1. Researcher in role

My solution to the problem of finding a suitable postmodern interviewing (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003) technique for this research is a pragmatic one. Drama educators are pragmatic, finding answers for problems to ensure that the ‘show must go on’. The method progresses as the framing device is introduced. Within the frame I am not the interviewer but the facilitator who takes on a role as in process drama. Playing the assistant enables me to bring information to the situation from outside to help the participants embody their stories, but it is a lower-status role than that of the Archivist. I am not ‘all knowing’ about the Museum; I am a gatherer of stories. Being in role allows me to be Jane when needed. Peter, Lynn, Ron and Andy all speak to me as Jane but also speak directly to the Archivist on the phone. In role I suggest:

*the Archivist would like to know what uh archival material you’ve got that you might be willing to offer to the museum because she’s not here.*

**Peter:** [Smiling, reading the MEDAT flyer looks up] this is lovely [laughing]

**Researcher:** To describe what you have, very briefly, a little description and a very quick uh idea of what they represent or why you’d like to offer these artefacts. (Peter O’Connor)
Peter describes his three artefacts to the Archivist using a prop telephone. In the first section of his conversation it is obvious that he engages his belief in the imaginary situation and his focus is completely on the unseen character:

**Peter:** Uh right [Holds phone in left hand to ear] Ah right. Hello lovely to talk, yes, wonderful [Crosses his legs, his right arm leans on table, relaxed] well look I’ve got three things here that I think you’d be interested in [Picks up video in cardboard case] ... [Smiles, nods as if responding to the Archivist]

After explaining the importance of the items he decides when to finish the call:

*So those are the three things that I’ve got for the museum. Anything else you need to know just let us know. [Cheerily] Thanks, Bye!* [Smiles puts down phone, picks up coffee cup]

![Peter calls the Archivist](image)

Not all the participants have the opportunity to speak to the Archivist on the phone but it is a simple strategy that enables the participants to take themselves on a journey: asking and answering the questions they imagine are being asked. John
puts the Archivist on an imaginary speakerphone to so that he can embody his story around the studio. He then demonstrates the importance of his artefacts, and, returning to the Archivist, he ends by saying:

*(John addresses the telephone)* I know you’ve got to go now but is that all right? Fine bye! *(John O’Toole)*

Lynn begins by asking the Archivist how she is and ends by suggesting:

*maybe next time we can meet in person and we can double-check what you’ve chosen.* *(Lynn Fels)*

I love these moments when fiction and truth collide and as adults my participants and I play, believe in a situation while all the time know we are playing. Yet within these moments of play is a strategy that encourages the act of storytelling and sharing of truths but on the participant’s terms. I, as facilitator, observe, listen, experience but do not interfere until my participant signals the time has come for me to step back in and expedite the next part of the journey. These moments engage us all in an act of imagination, a fictional world and yet through this fiction, truths are shared.

**5.6.2. Theorising the embodied reflection as Brecht's street scene**

Embodied reflections enable my participants to recount and demonstrate stories incorporating critical reflection and embracing theatricality. My chosen educators are the witnesses standing on the Brechtian street corner of drama education praxis. They experience first-hand the battles and barricades. When the Archivist’s assistant invites them to tell their story they demonstrate those to me and for the public audience they imagine will eventually be present. They communicate their own viewpoint through the choices they make of what to show and tell. The characters or roles they show are not portrayed in depth. I then interpret and juxtapose their demonstrations and the process begins again as I demonstrate to the audience these stories now seen through my eyes.

The act of focusing on simple incidents, which are overlooked or forgotten, has the effect of making them “something striking, something that calls for explanation” *(Willett, 1964, p. 125)* and through dramatic focus, they become objects of interest and reflection. The demonstrator is expected to pause in his “imitation in order to give explanations” *(Willett, 1964, p. 126)* and this is what
makes epic theatre and its child, educational drama, so flexible as a medium for this kind of research.

As I reflect on the research I consider how my participants might have explored the battles and barricades and the dreams of the future if they had engaged in a traditional interview or questionnaire. Might it have changed the research in substantially different ways? I know that my imagination and involvement in my participants’ stories is awakened and I feel more alive seeing their live performances. There is something exciting about being in the same space as the actor, breathing the air they breathe, feeling the space they are in, hearing the sounds they hear and sharing our imaginary world.

It is similarly exciting to be present in an embodied reflection. I experience my participants using the conventions they have helped to create to tell their own stories, and in the act of embodiment they show me their tacit and deep understanding of these forms. They demonstrate their ability to manipulate those forms to affect me, the researcher/audience. I stand throughout each embodied reflection engaged, fascinated, mesmerised, laughing, and even crying. I feel happier because my own innate understanding of drama has enabled me to create a way to replace a traditional qualitative interview with a dyadic framed method that generates stories. I receive an email from Andy:

Really enjoyed the last two days and hope it was useful to you. It was thought-provoking stuff and certainly a whole lot more interesting and revealing than a run of the mill interview would have been. (Andy Kempe, personal communication, May 5, 2013)

After his first embodied reflection Peter declares:

Thank you Jane, one could almost have described it as therapeutic! (Peter O’Connor)

In generating, synthesising and sharing my participants’ stories I am re-finding my own passion. This is not a miraculous passion which makes me want to return to the classroom but a deeper passion for the art form and the pedagogy. I am not alone in the battles of drama education and it is the struggle that leads to reflection. However, Lynn reminds me not to forget the classroom educator:
there’s such a few that rise up and become the big names, the superstars, but honour our unnamed, all those unsung, yeah, the ones who show up every day, every practice in the room. (Lynn Fels)

Maybe it is the everyday unsung drama educators whom I should now approach to further this research and maybe I should offer them the opportunity to tell their story through an embodied reflection. Perhaps we should all take a dose of our own medicine to heal ourselves, for drama can not only excite, inspire and challenge – it can renew a melancholic spirit.

Each embodied reflection reflects the practice of a drama classroom with people engaging in imagining and retelling stories through dramatic form. But each reflection is also a piece of theatre:

composed of episodes rearranged so as to allow the story-teller’s ideas about men’s lives to find expression. In the same way the characters are not simply portraits of living people, but are rearranged and formed in accordance with ideas. (Willett, 1964, p. 278)

The use of drama implies there will be truths and fiction but it will not be a realistic recreation of events for reality can never be recreated. Those ideas which make me uneasy can be expressed through Melony because a puppet can “deal with all our dark sides” (Currell, 1985, p. 4). It seeks to honour my contributors and myself as the researcher, for I do not want to incur the wrath of my participants for manipulating their stories into a fiction in which lie no truths.

I contemplate how the method might be developed to locate more stories, and whether it could invite non-drama participants to embody their narratives. All that is needed is an empty space, willing participants, a box of props, time and an agreement to play and imagine.

5.6.3. The brown dress

The embodied reflections highlight that drama teachers are embodied beings. This is apparent in John’s retelling of the first time he met Dorothy Heathcote. Many months later I can still see John sweeping into the studio as he plays the role of Dorothy. I hear the door slamming shut; I see the imaginary rope swinging above his head. The story is energetic, exciting and alive. It captures more than facts, it
captures the emotion and excitement of John as a young man encountering a woman thought by some to be:

“the greatest teacher in the world”. (John O’Toole)

I see and feel the story for I re-enact John’s moment in the performance juxtaposing it with other Heathcote stories. I put a brown dress onto a coat hanger and place it on the washing line upstage. As I sweep down towards the audience, I carry the dress with me and it comes to represent Dorothy Heathcote in the ensuing stories. After seeing my final performance, Susan Battye confirms to me in an email:

The brown dress – was fitting and fitted to Dorothy’s frame because of course she made it herself. It was universal in the sense that it did not belong to a particular decade or style. This meant that no matter what the students decided to embark on she was ready for whatever they threw at her in terms of a time period, past, present, future and the role that they might want her to take in the drama. (Susan Battye, personal communication, August 18, 2014)

The use of the story and the dress has given rise to more storytelling about the history and practice of drama education.

5.7. Journeying out of melancholia

As I journey out of melancholia, I reflect on how many times the phrase ‘lack of’ has been used in my research and subsequently this thesis. I have described my own lack of voice, self-worth, singing skills, faith, belief and recognition. I recall the first reflection I carry out with Peter, who about to create his symbol of drama education, suggests:

I’m not very good at making things. (Peter O’Connor)

Is this, I wonder, a lack of confidence or a lack of skills? Yet he quickly creates a crucible out of orange cardboard and as he describes the meaning of this symbol he has a realisation:

The other thing which I’ve just thought about then is – the alchemist always failed (laugh). ... May be it’s that whole Gallagher thing about
melancholia. You’re always struggling to create, to be that alchemist in the classroom, to create something new that’s never happened before and you never quite ever get there and you’re never quite sure if you put right thing in or right bit there but the struggle for it is really quite important. (Peter O’Connor)

Figure 81 the wobbly crucible

Peter finishes by pointing to his crucible which sits on the table and, laughing, suggests:

My crucible is a bit wobbly around the edges (Laugh) which might explain my practice (Laugh) so there you go. (Peter O’Connor)

Peter solves the making of the crucible through creativity and laughter and these are important skills for my melancholic self to acknowledge. When I invite Peter to reflect on Doyle’s metaphor of drama teaching as balancing on the tightrope (Doyle, 1993) he suggests that:

tightrope walking is quite fun really (Peter O’Connor)

As the Archivist’s assistant I ask Jonothan whether it matters if we drop anything while balancing high on the tightrope. He listens intently, his left hand in his
pocket and leans on the back of one of the chairs that form the circle. He moves towards the camera, stretches out the word ‘well’ as he thinks:

*Well you know, look I’m a professor of creativity and I’m supposed to say, (Jonathan Neelands)*

At this point he enunciates clearly in a high-pitched voice playing an imagined role:

*“No it’s not. You’ve got to take risks” etc.*

He returns to his own voice and using repetition emphasises:

*but I actually think it does, I actually think it does.*

He walks stage left towards the props table as he continues:

*Drama teachers will beat themselves up (Picks up coffee cup and turns back towards the camera) forever over small simple things that went wrong. (Jonathan Neelands)*

He places special emphasis on the last two syllables of ‘forever’. He understands the contradiction that as a creative practitioner he should embrace failure and experimentation. But Jonothan also expresses our shared humanity as we critique ourselves and fail to do what Lynn suggests:

*Forgive yourself. (Lynn Fels)*

Jonothan’s comments are strangely comforting for I learn that I am in good company when I perceive that I have dropped the ball or slipped off the rope; there is so much at stake on the tightrope.

In the classroom I have been in a state of constant self-critique conscious of those moments when I fail. Jonothan believes this self-flagellation arises from a

*constant dissatisfaction reaching towards a perfectionist ideal. But you will never achieve. (Jonathan Neelands)*

Within the field of psychology a programme of self-compassion has been developed which suggests that “self-kindness entails being warm and understanding toward ourselves when we suffer, fail or feel inadequate, rather than flagellating ourselves with self-criticism” (Germer & Neff, 2013, p. 857). My participants’ acknowledgement that drama teaching can be challenging consoles
me and I speak their words directly to my audience, hoping they will inspire other melancholic teachers:

**Flashback: Performance**

**JOHN**

You will get angry and frustrated and that’s okay.

**JONOTHAN**

This is artistry
You will never ever be satisfied.
You will beat yourself up
Over the things you didn’t do.
Melancholia is
A lack of recognition

**PETER**

Always struggling to create
To be that alchemist [Episode 5]

The voices suggest that failure is a part of artistry and by acknowledging these melancholic feelings and failings more kindly, I can embrace them for positive effect. John recounts a story from his early practice. As he sits on a chair in the centre of the studio, he leans forwards, and uses hand gestures to emphasise and delineate ideas. Then he becomes still, leaning back, his eyes drop and his voice becomes almost monotone:

*the very first lesson I tried out, the Gavin Bolton type drama it was to my... I kind of suppress the memory, but I just remember it was absolutely, (His eyes close for a moment, pause) it was awful. Everything happened that I didn’t want to happen.* (John O’Toole)

Suddenly he becomes animated again as he admits that he prefers not to remember this moment. I love this intimate recollection of failure by a renowned practitioner. Rather than wallowing in melancholia, John has used this event to learn and to continue his practice. He looks out to the camera, gives a big smile and says:
I find I’ve regressed you know (Laughs, researcher laughs) oh I don’t, oh dear, that I’ve become the kind of teacher I don’t want to be. (John O’Toole)

I connect to the smile and the laughter and understand that we all aspire to a vision of the ideal drama practitioner but so often we fail. In looking back, when the pain has gone, we may be able to laugh and learn.

5.8. Imagination in research

Throughout the research my immersion in theatre constantly connects to my work. As I watch Angels in America I listen intently to Harper Pitt’s description of the imagination. For her, the mind:

shouldn’t be able to make up anything that wasn’t there to start with, that didn’t enter it from experience, from the real world. Imagination can’t create anything new can it? It only recycles bits and pieces from the world andreassembles them into visions … (Kushner, 1992, p. 21)

In this serendipitous moment I understand that my use of the imagination in research is about truths even if they have been reshaped and mediated or recycled as Harper describes. I have imagined a method and this in turn has led my participants and me to re-imagine our stories during the embodied reflections. I have then re-imagined their stories into my own imagined version of events. If the imagination cannot create anything new then even in its shaped form we are still working with everyday truths. Peter Brook suggests that:

In everyday life, ‘if’ is a fiction, in the theatre ‘if’ is an experiment.
In everyday life, ‘if’ is an evasion, in the theatre ‘if’ is the truth.
When we are persuaded to believe in this truth, then the theatre and life are one. (Brook, 1968, p. 157)

By using the ‘magic if’ I draw closer to the truth and to everyday life. My imagination has allowed experimentation and its results are full of truths.

41 Production by Silo Theatre at the Q Theatre, Auckland March 29, 2014.
By using our imaginations my participants and I can re-enact events and heighten them as significant in our education journeys. Andy’s moment as he sings with his students before they perform their school production is a stylised re-enacting of many real times when this has occurred. Rather than giving a simple retelling of this recollection, Andy captures my imagination through the aural and visual aspects he employs:

**Still images**

![Figure 82 Andy performs a story](image1)

![Figure 83 Jane re-imagines and re-enacts Andy's story](image2)
When Andy leans back and folds his arms to listen to Damian, I see the warmth of a teacher at ease with his students. I feel this re-enactment memorialises not only one moment but many moments. Andy is symbolising the time when teachers relinquish authority for a production to the students. He shows this by kneeling on the floor with the children he represented with the foam shapes. The children are in a circle of which he is a part, symbolising the sense of unity and equality in this democratic relationship. Andy remains in charge but passes leadership temporarily to the students. The warm-up routine prior to a production beginning is understood to be an important pre-play ritual in which children and teachers engage in community, encouragement, positivity and play. Damian may represent one particular student or many. He is given a temporary leadership role to warm up the group but in a delightful moment Andy demonstrates how Damian disrupts this process by singing an inappropriate song which Andy brings to an end gently.

Through his embodiment he has heightened this moment into a ritual to be embraced and celebrated. I in turn re-enact the ritual in the performance and share it with other drama educators. In this moment they may see their own pre-show rituals, their own Damian moments. The relationship between teacher and student during school productions has been enacted, ritualised and symbolised and in this process it has been given an acknowledged status. My re-interpretation of this event in a theatre has brought reality and imagination together:

**Flashback: Performance**

*(Andy kneels down on the floor beside his semicircle of foam people.)*

You’ve worked really, really hard on this so come on quick warm up … what’s that one that you do Damian? (He sings) It will be good it will be good but it will be good it will be good, oh – yes, all right go on Damian (sings) why do you treat me like a Mars bar you lick my chocolate off and you suck my toffees – ooh, ooh, ooh. Right come on that’s enough (looks at watch) three minutes and you’re on. [Episode 5]

For most drama teachers our classroom lives are very private, played out in front of the children. However, competence is judged in the public sphere of
examination results, parent evening interactions and – significantly – our drama productions. The school production has been my public showing of knowledge, artistry and competence, but “in handing the art over to the ‘crowd’, there is a certain loss of control as one opens oneself up to the scrutiny and judgement of others” (Gallagher et al., 2010, p. 23). This public viewing can contribute to feelings of melancholia and passion but it is an important part of my work and an important ritual. As I face my own performance I comfort myself with Andy’s words:

\[\textit{it will be good. (Andy Kempe)}\]

5.8.1. Inside the Museum

In the few days before my performance I feel an urge to create an internal plan of my Museum to complement my exterior view and put this imagined space fully into a concrete form. I could not have created this plan before the synthesis of the stories for it arises out of my discoveries and out of the imaginings of my participants. I know it is not a real place; it exists only in my imagination and yet within it are contained the truths of being a drama teacher. Working only with the embodied knowledge gained from my rehearsals about what the Museum might contain, I draw it by hand so that I can feel this space.
Figure 84 plan of MEDAT
The Museum begins in symbols and ends in dreams of the future before the visitors crawl through the barricade, but the circle is never-ending. Within it are spaces of possibility and empty spaces in which drama can happen. There are barricades and staircases, there is drama and theatre, and there are symbols and artefacts. Some of the spaces are brightly lit with large glass windows and skylights; others are traditionally dark studio space to enable experimentation and exploration. The building is a practical space of activity and a symbol of drama education. It is a hope for the future, it is a celebration of the past and present; it is real and imagined.

5.9. The data drama as mediation

I perform my play seven months prior to the handing in of the thesis because the performance is an act of mediation. It is not, nor can it ever be, the final word on my research. I reflect on my cyclical diagram drawn at the beginning of my research and remember that I have always seen my performance as a way of inviting more stories in a continuous cycle of research.

Figure 85 research cycle
What I discover is that the act of devising, rehearsing and performing my play is a way for me to inhabit my research, to make sense of it and to allow it to change me. After the performance I continue to reflect on the play, the embodied reflections and my own story. When I receive the photographs and the video I find more moments of revelation and connection which inform what parts of the story I tell in my thesis.

I am surprised by one image which captures the moment in the penultimate rehearsal, when I sit on the stage to recount Peter’s story of the yellow rock. Without planning to I have used the identical position to designate Cecily O’Neill.

I juxtapose these two images on the page with the one of me playing David Hornbrook so that I can see more clearly what is happening. In the first image I am wrapped in the blue cloth that represents Hornbrook in Episode 2, waving a flag for the art form. The third image is my imagined portrayal of Cecily weaving her magical stories as Jonothan has described. Images 2 and 3 synthesise to inspire image 1, highlighting the way in which drama education is a fusion of both the product and process. Peter uses his knowledge of theatre and the art form to create a moment of tension and emotion in a process drama in which his students
engage. As an artist I make an aesthetic decision about how to portray this moment on stage and draw on my training from Andy who does not believe in:

*a particular style of teaching I don’t want to say look it’s all got to be a process drama and no plays or it’s all got to be literature study. I don’t want that you know, I try to give them an eclectic experience.* (Andy Kempe)

The golden moment finds me holding a yellow rock channelling Cecily, David and Peter and the work of child and adult, process and product, art form and pedagogy is brought together to create a new eclectic theatrical moment.

### 5.9.1. Resolutions and revelations

As I rehearse my play for the final time I worry that I have left out so much but “Human beings have the spectacular capacity to go beyond the information given, to fill in the gaps, to generate interpretations, to extrapolate, and to make inferences in order to construe meaning” (Eisner, 1991, p. 21). Rather than a denouement which neatly tidies up the end of a play, this research trusts my audience to continue generating their own meanings from the images and stories I include. Brecht’s wife and leading actress Helene Weigel suggests that “a Brecht play is not finished even when it is on the stage” (Jones, 1986, p. 89). In fact, a play should probably not be resolved for then there is nothing for the audience to consider (Willett, 1964). Instead it should stimulate the audience (Willett, 1964) and “provoke questions” (Van Dijk, 2011, p. 45). Sometimes “it’s more powerful to end with thoughtful answers” (Saldaña, 2009, p. 192) and this makes drama particularly effective as a research methodology, for it encourages new ideas, questions, thoughts and feelings while at the same time providing some answers which are still open to interpretation. I may never fully comprehend drama education for as Andy suggests:

*its greatest strength is that you won’t ever make sense of it ... and that keeps us going because it’s like if we ever found the answer well it would be a bit pointless carrying on wouldn’t it?* (Andy Kempe)

In the Museum Jonothan puts a label beside his first-edition copy of *Making Sense of Drama* (Neelands, 1984):
In my final Episode the Archivist retrieves Jonothan’s book from the fallen barricade, blows off the dust and speaking Jonothan’s words tells the audience with excitement:

**Flashback: Performance**

Oh, this is a first edition with shiny cover of a book, quite rare, that could only have been written at the beginning of a career, by somebody who was on the verge of understanding what drama was about. [Episode 5]
My research inspires me to consider how I can be a passionate educator once again. Much of what my participants share are expressed in their published work. Now, when I read those works, I can envision them moving and speaking, I have experienced their emotions, their connections and their embodied sense of what drama means to them. They now exist for me as a real presence. Even Gavin Bolton is alive for me through John’s embodiment. I never met Dorothy Heathcote but being in John’s presence as he captures the excitement and awe of his first encounter leaves vibrations within me. As I demonstrate my participants and embody their words I feel I am walking in their shoes. I am left with a sense of the importance of spaces, play, framing, role play and imagination as key to both drama education and to arts-based research.

I may originally have felt there was a specific answer to what sustains drama practitioners but “the arts don’t represent a singular truth, but are about revelations of multiple truths” (Taylor, 1998, p. 84) and this research is “an attempt to shed light on what is unique in time and space” (Eisner, 1981, p. 7). It is a journey about emotions and feelings and of finding ways to re-imagine and re-tell drama education stories which in turn replenish my passion and help to sustain it in the future. Each embodied reflection is unique in its aliveness and in its time and place which can never be recreated but can be truthfully re-imagined. My methodology has been the bringer of insights and the opportunity to be imaginative and creative, playful and performative giving me an opportunity for a renewed passion for drama education. To meet and mingle with the community of key practitioners has been exciting and awesome. I use the word ‘awesome’
because I remain in awe of all the participants who are deeply embedded in their praxis. They are vociferous about some of the problems they face but appear to have discourses, undoubtedly well practised, about how they deal with those problems. Each has their own position from which they practise which I interpret from experiencing their embodied reflections. Some of these discourses may be what help my participants negotiate the barricades and sustain them when they feel embattled. They represent what lies at the heart of their practice. Lynn believes in drama as a way to play, to listen to the moment and to be in

a place of inquiry, of exploration. [Lynn, Episode 4]

Jonothan advocates for drama as democratic education and feels that rather than drama being placed in the Arts curriculum:

Drama is part of the humanities end of! [Jonothan, Episode 4]

Andy is passionate about drama as an eclectic art form and as playful inquiry:

**ANDY**

*(Picking up the cardboard coloured stars, scattering them around the stage)*

Drama needs fun, energy, delight, Joy. [Episode 4]

But within this is a serious purpose:

Hard knowledge, traditional education ...
Facts ... thinking without feeling. Where might that lead us? It might lead us to the gas chambers; that’s where it might lead us. [Andy, Episode 4]

Ron too, perceives his position to be one of tremendous responsibility towards the students who need both drama experiences and employment skills. He explores an alternative barricade:

Why are we surviving? We’re surviving because one of our barricades is the pupils themselves they love the subject, they love their drama. [Ron, Episode 4]

Peter questions some approaches to drama education:
Should it be fun? It’s not an amusement ride. [Peter, Episode 4]

He is passionate about drama as a means of social justice which is encapsulated in his work with children on the margins as he plays Roger the Monster. I accept that in my own case the love of drama as both art form and cross-curricular pedagogy must be embraced rather than being seen as a dichotomy, or barricade. I can operate in both fields and embrace my love of the eclectic which emanated from a year spent on Andy Kempe’s postgraduate teacher training course. Perhaps it is this which will renew and sustain me in the future along with my new found sense of play and performance and of being an artist and educator.

5.10. An act of trust and faith

Acting on stage with other performers is an act of trust and faith, for our success lies in one another’s hands. There are some historians who “have shown how the alienation between mothers and daughters has paralleled the devaluation and displacement of women’s work” (Debold et al., 1993, p. 23). Holly and I have grown closer in our relationship as we have a shared job of work to do in performing the play. Mother has taught daughter and daughter has taught Mother. We talk about this and I express my hope that one day the video and photographs of this time will be an empowering memory for her. This performance may be part of the action Feminist writers suggest I can take to ensure my daughter knows the world can be changed (Debold et al., 1993) and which drama educators believe can give us critical hope and “hopefully, hopeful futures” (Freebody & Finneran, 2013, p. 61). But I, too, must accept the change for myself. My embodied reflections and the resulting play demand that I as a drama teacher must confront change, for as Andy suggests:

*I wonder if that’s a struggle, other teachers, dramatists, artists, whatever go through that you want things to be kind of neat and tidy and resolved but at the same time you know you have to sometimes destroy things as well and change the order of things in order to get new insights.* (Andy Kempe)

By revealing my melancholia and by creating a play from the words of my participants, I both create and destroy and from the experience learn anew.
Backstage Holly and I check the props one last time before retreating to the changing room to put on our costumes and make-up. We wait for the Stage Manager to call us to the stage. We laugh and capture the moment in the ubiquitous ‘selfie’:

![Mother and daughter: Selfie](image)

Figure 89 Mother and daughter: Selfie

This aspect of our story is the most unexpected and important discovery of my research. My performance journey begins in 2010, watching George Belliveau transform a lecture theatre into an aesthetic theatre space to share his story of research. In 2015, I feel a richer understanding of what arts-based research means for me and, like George:

I am in the moment, fully awake, breathing the research, living the art.

(Belliveau, 2013)
5.10.1. Finale

I am standing in the light on the stage of the Musgrove Studio with my daughter Holly and together we are enacting the stories of drama education practitioners. We invite the audience to imagine the opening of the Museum of Educational Drama and Applied Theatre.

Figure 90 revealing Melony

As we remove the cardboard box which has hidden Melony from view during Episode 1, she brushes herself down, strokes her hair and begins to live on the stage. In this fictional place an orange orang-utan manipulated by an actor can represent the critical voice of melancholia, while I, a formerly melancholic drama teacher can become the artist and researcher to whom the running of this Museum is entrusted:

THE ARCHIVIST

Welcome, welcome, welcome
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Welcome to The Museum of educational drama and applied theatre;
The unconventional space to be.
We invite you to wander and to wonder
We ask that you engage with the exhibits
Plays and books,
Puppets and masks,
Awards and acknowledgements
Explore the battles and barricades.
Balance on the educational tightrope.
Visit the family-tree exhibit,
Come out feeling better than you went in.
Be and do with us!
Appendix A: Ethical Documentation: Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form

Critical Studies in Education
Te Kura o te Kōtuitinga Akoranga Mātauranga
Incorporating Education Studies, Health and Physical Education, Pasifika and Social Sciences
Ko te Whakatōpu Wāhanga Ako, Hauora me te Mātauranga Kōiri,
Pasifika me te Mātauranga Tangata

Participant Information Sheet: Drama Theorist/Practitioner
Caught between worlds: Stories of battles, beliefs and barricades from key drama in education theorist/practitioners.

I am Jane Luton, a PhD student in the Critical Research Unit in Applied Theatre at the University of Auckland. I would like to invite you to participate in the above PhD research project. You have been chosen because of the contribution you have made to the theory and development of Drama in education and because your work has been instrumental in my own practice as a Drama teacher during the past two decades. This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee. The research project asks how a Drama in Education theorist/practitioner negotiates and sustains themselves through the battles and barricades of drama in education praxis.

The data for the research will be generated through individual Interactive interviews with key theorist/practitioners who lead the International community of drama education. The interviews will use playbuilding and drama conventions to generate physical embodiment of data. The data will be analysed through the scripting process to create a text for an ethnographic performance. The actors who perform the text will be practising drama teachers. The audience will participate in further exploration and discussion to generate shared understandings. The amount of time required by a participant will be:
- Two 1½ hour workshops (3 hours) on the same or consecutive days
- Reviewing video of workshop (3 hours)
- Reviewing/editing transcript (2 hours)

During the interactive interviews the practitioner/theorist will be asked to share some of their experiences within drama in education, exploring the metaphors of battles, barricades and being caught between worlds. It will seek to find out what sustains drama in education praxis. The interview will take place in the participant’s own academic location in a drama space. Practitioners will be invited to bring one or two artefacts which reflect aspects of their teaching journey. The interviews will be video recorded due to their interactive nature. Permission for this to happen will be sought on the consent form. The video will be used for analysis and transcription and only seen by the researcher and supervisor. No parts of the video will be shown during the rehearsal process or ethnographic performance. Participants will be asked to review a copy of the Interview videos and edit the transcripts within 6 weeks of receiving them. Participants have the right to withdraw until the transcript edits are returned. All video recordings (except for the final ethnographic performance) and transcriptions will be kept securely in a locked filing cabinet at The University of Auckland, Faculty of Education under the control of the Supervisor. All electronic data will be password protected. Research
Videos, data and transcripts will be kept for 6 years after which they will be destroyed by deposit in a secure destruction facility.
The findings of the data will be presented through ethnographic performance and written exegesis. The research and the DVD of the ethnographic performance may be published and presented at academic conferences. You will be named in the performance and exegesis. However you will have the opportunity to edit the transcripts. The actors will work with mediated data and will not see the transcripts or original videos of the interviews. For the research in the UK and Australia the researcher shall abide by any local laws relating to data collection and retention. The researcher is happy to answer any further questions about the research that you may have. If you are willing to participate please indicate this by reading and signing the accompanying consent form and returning it in the envelope provided. Please sign both copies and keep one for yourself. The researcher will then contact you to arrange a mutually convenient time for the interviews to take place.

Jane Luton BA(Hons) MA(Hons) PGCE

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For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact:
The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee
The University of Auckland
Research Office
Private Bag 92019
Auckland 1142

Telephone 09 373-7599 extn. 87830/83761
Email: humanethics@auckland.ac.nz

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON
15 June 2012 for (3) years, Reference Number 7961

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Consent Form: Drama theorist/practitioner

Caught between worlds: Stories of battles, beliefs and barricades from key drama in education theorist/practitioners

This consent form will be kept in a locked cabinet separated from other data the University of Auckland, Faculty of Education under the control of the Supervisor for six years

Name of Researcher: Jane Isobel Luton          Supervisor: Associate Professor
Peter O’Connor

I ________________________________ have received a copy and read the Participant Information Sheet. I have understood the nature of the research and why I have been selected.

- I agree to take part in this research by participating in two interactive interviews of approximately one and a half hours each.
- I agree to be named in the exegesis, ethnographic performance and future publications.
- I understand that I will be recorded during the interactive interview by video camera.
- I understand that only the researcher and supervisor will see the interview video tapes and that the researcher will transcribe the tapes.
- I understand that I am able to view the recordings and edit the transcriptions. Any edits I make will be returned to the researcher within 6 weeks of receiving them.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw participation until I return the edited transcripts.
- I understand that the video of the ethnographic performance and the doctoral research publication may be presented in the future by the researcher at academic conferences.
- I understand that data will be kept for 6 years after which the interview recordings and transcriptions will be destroyed by deposit in a secure destruction facility. All data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at the University of Auckland. Electronic data will be password protected.

Please sign and return one copy of the consent form.

Name: ____________________________________________
Signature:

___________________________________________________________

Date: ___/___/_______

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 15 June 2012 FOR (3) YEARS REFERENCE NUMBER 7961
Appendix B: Consent form to use Barricades image

January 8, 2015

Dane Mitchell

Re: Artwork Barricades

Dear Dane,

I am a doctoral research student in the School of critical studies at the faculty of education, University of Auckland. I am currently completing my doctorate with creative practice component entitled: *Playing on the barricades: Embodied reflection by key educators on passion and melancholia in drama education praxis*. Back in 2012 I purchased two copies of images of your installation Barricades from Auckland Art gallery and in email correspondence (May 25, 2012) between ourselves you very kindly agreed to their use.

I am now seeking permission to use the copyright material in my doctoral thesis for the purpose of examination and subsequent deposit in the University of Auckland publically available digital repository ResearchSpace:

The image I wish to use purchased from Auckland Art gallery is:

If you are happy to grant permission, please sign the authority at the bottom of the letter and return a copy to me. You may also add special instructions regarding the attribution statement that I will include in my thesis, and any additional terms and conditions that you require.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me via this email address or on my mobile 00 64 (0)21 056 9929.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Luton
Permission

I, as copyright owner (or the person with authority to sign on behalf of the copyright owner) of the material described above, grant permission for Jane Luton to copy the material as requested for the stated purposes, with no further action required.

Signed: [Signature]  Date: 07/01/15

Attribution statement:

Please note any specific instructions you would like included in my acknowledgement of Copyright Ownership:

Terms and conditions

Please note any Terms and conditions

Of the permission:
References


Taylor, P. (1998). Beyond the sytematic and rigorous. In J. Saxton & C. Miller (Eds.), Drama and theatre in education: The research of practice, the practice of research (pp. 73-88). Victoria, Canada: IDIERI and IDEA.


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