

ABSTRACT

Framed by the experiences of the creation process of *Coming To*, this study aims to articulate the integral role of the performer's personal archive within Physical Theatre practice. As such it investigates the notion of Physical Intelligence and its role in the engagement of the performer's experiences and history within improvisational processes.

This investigation constructs a theoretical frame that allows for a reformulation of the understanding of the mind - body relationship. With reference to the areas of phenomenology, somatics and somatic body work this research argues for an integrated body-mind that recasts 'thought' and 'memory' as embodied processes. It interrogates the notion of the 'body as archive' by exploring the bodily roots of memory, examining the central role of Physical Intelligence in the way memory is inscribed into the body-mind.

It sutures this body-mind integration perspective with a constructionist perspective to explore the ways in which memory, or experience, is layered in and manifest through the body in complex ways. Weaving together the scholarly and experiential voice, the study explores the way in which Physical Theatre processes rely on and harness the performer's Physical Intelligence and in so doing inherently enable the 'excavation' of personal archives.

Through an analysis of the multiple layers of embodied inscription in *Coming To* and their relationship to 'technique', the research makes explicit the principles that implicitly underscore the creation of Physical Theatre works and reveals the extent to which personal archives determine the unfolding of such devised work.