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Reforming and Developing a Place for Young South African Actors

A Qualitative Analysis of the Market Theatre Laboratory, Performer Training Programme

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CHAPTER ONE:

The Market Theatre Laboratory in The Apartheid Era

History helps us to understand the present.
It shows how things came to be,
history shows that change is always happening

Mugomba & Nyaggah
1980: 29

The Market Theatre in the Apartheid Era

The Lab forms part of the greater entity that is the Market Theatre. An understanding of this organisation's history, the reasons for its establishment and the conditions in which it initially operated will provide the motives for the creation of the Lab. A critical element of this report is to understand the context in which the Market Theatre was established. Delving into the country's history, particularly into the governmental policies that were enforced forms a substantial part of this research.

This evaluation of South Africa's history clarifies the role the Market Theatre played and the need that was evident by the founders in establishing the Lab; the training segment of the theatre.

The Apartheid Government

The apartheid government formed part of the broader context in which the Market Theatre was established and developed. The segregation laws, restrictions and conditions in which people lived are viewed in analysis. The apartheid government came to power in 1948 bringing with it an ideology of separation. Fundamentally it meant the separating of Black people from White people (Fraser, 1992:46, 47; Omond, 1986). 'Black people' was an umbrella term for Indian, Coloured, Chinese and Blacks. Dividing the nation primarily by race was implemented through strict laws. This resulted in an ethos of inequality, discrimination and prejudice.

A policy of 'no mixing' was instilled. Races were prohibited from participating in certain activities or gatherings, political or social, with individuals of a different race. One of the first laws to be passed was that of the Population Registration Act (1950). The law called for all individuals to be classified into one of the four race categories: White, Black, Coloured or Indian (Fraser, 1992:46, 47; Finch & Jerath, 2007: 334; Omond, 1986).

A national register was created with the numbers of individuals per race group. This grouping of citizens was not only discriminatory but problematic as well. Members of the same family were split into two or more different categories. Coloured families suffered the most from this 'sorting process'. Specific 'tests' like the 'Pencil test' were used to help determine race categories. These 'tests' were demeaning, unscientific and largely devised by the officer undertaking the task. This grouping caused racial discrimination and prejudice against non-whites.

These divisions and the segregation that was experienced gave rise to several political, economic and social problems (Grant, 1993; Omond, 1986).

Laws

Public facilities such as transportation, beaches, restaurants, libraries and toilet facilities were designated to different races. Black people were excluded from certain facilities like cinema, theatre and other kinds of entertainment all together. This law was called the Separate Amenities Act (1953).

The Bantu Education Act (1953) meant that separate schooling was to be implemented. Children were not only educated in separate buildings but different curricula were taught (Finch & Jerath, 2007; Omond, 1986). 'Black schools' were forced to teach a system of Bantu Education and Afrikaans was later enforced as the language of instruction. In 1975, Verwoerd, the architect of apartheid, stated:

> Schools must equip the Bantu to meet the demands which life in South Africa will impose on him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. What is the use of teaching a Bantu child mathematics when he cannot use it in practice? Until now, education drew him away from his own community by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he is not allowed to graze (Verwoerd, 1953 cited in Christie & Collins, 1982: 62).

The effects and consequences of this segregated and narrow approach to education are still evident in the socio-economic problems that are experienced in a current South Africa.

Black children were not taught science or mathematics nor were they taught how to read or write. Instead they were taught menial skills and their labour was developed for the

benefit of the mining industry and for low skill employment only.

The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949) denied the union of inter-racial marriages. A multi-racial couple threatened the Group Areas Act (1950) which was developed to ensure that the different racial groups could only live in designated living areas.

There were specific jobs that were reserved for White men and woman only. Professions such as law, education, mining, engineering, entertainment and medicine were reserved for White people. The other manual jobs (which were heavy labour intensive, such as mine working and building) were given to the uneducated White male and then to the Black males. Despite the same work load and same working hours between the White and Black men, White men were paid more and received preferential treatment.

Non-whites were excluded from the political arena. They were unable to run for political office or for presidency. They were not able to vote in the national elections. There was no political voice for the people classified as 'non-white'. It is within this context that theatres were segregated.

Soweto Uprising

The Soweto Uprising of 1976 were evidence that a new era was being born. An estimated 13 million Black South African youths were retaliating and fighting the government, their laws and the oppression that was being imposed on them by apartheid (Kani, 2008). "A youth that walked out of school with dreams, ambitions and aspirations found it difficult in a commercial South Africa to survive" (Kani, J. personal communication, 13 February 2008). The youth had a deep

seated desire for freedom, rights, human dignity and a living future (Grant, 1993).

The Market Theatre's establishment in the same year formed part of the continuing challenge against the oppressive regime. The Market Theatre was brave and courageous in their endeavour to create a theatre that would welcome all races regardless of any laws or acts that were passed.

The Market Theatre

The Market Theatre took up residence in the Indian fruit market in Newtown. Their mission was twofold; first, to inform the South African audiences of the reality that surrounded the government's laws and activities that they were being sheltered from. The second undertaking was to stage plays both international and local with multi-racial casts.

As a collective they were in opposition to the Group Areas Act (1950) and the Separate Amenities Act (1953) as well as the entire ethos of apartheid. The state sought to obliterate such structures. Such structures allowed for debate, and a platform for the voice of the people that were being oppressed and discriminated against. People were given the opportunity to share and integrate and better understand each other in this type of space. This threatened and brought into question the discriminatory laws that existed. It highlighted the lack of human rights, freedom and lack of dignity towards all people of South Africa.

This is the context in which the Market Theatre was born. The popularity that was gained was due to the way in which the Market Theatre fought against the circumstances it found itself in.

This was an institution that had welcomed both mixed race audiences and casts to perform. State funding was denied to the Market Theatre in an attempt to close the theatre down. Large amounts of funding were given to promote State run theatres namely: NAPAC (Natal), CAPAB (Cape Town), PACT (Transvaal), SWAPAC (South-West Africa) and PACOFS (Orange Free State) (Fuchs, 1990: 4). The actors, directors and crew members were paid well and staged elaborate and costly ballets, operas and other productions. These playhouses were exclusively for White people and were established in white-only areas. "The theatre world was created by Whites" (Molepo, M. personal communication, 21 December 2008).

To survive the lack of funding from the government the Market Theatre became self-funded and relied on financial support from outside of South Africa. Donor funding from the Rockefeller Foundation was the initial support. This independent theatre was one of the first theatres identified as a leader of the 'arts in the struggle against apartheid' (YPCG, 2007: 2). It was a non-racial theatre, which meant audiences, playwrights, actors, backstage crew and designers were of all races. Multi-racial groups created plays that spoke about the truths of the apartheid regime.

> The Market Theatre challenged the apartheid regime, armed with little more than the conviction that culture can change society. The trustees opened the stages and auditoriums to all who wished to be there, regardless of race (YPCG, 2007: 1).

Anne Fuchs (1990) describes the situation in South Africa as the social and economic pressures began to intensify;

> School boycotts, rent boycotts, the break-down of local government in townships, led to the first State of Emergency being declared in 1985. Botha's Rubicon speech in August, which precluded any kind of essential reform or recognition of the need to liberate Mandela and talk with Black leadership, precipitated a catastrophic fall in the rand and the closure of the Stock Exchange while the government re-imposed Emergency controls to prevent further flight of capital (Fuchs, 1990: 53, 54).

Black consciousness was developing and gathering support. The conditions of oppression that people had been subjected to became known to the outside world. The deep consequences of apartheid were being recognised and the realisation was dawning that change was an inevitable reality.

'The government banned the works of Black writers, dead or alive and passed stricter laws clamping down on mixed-race theatre' (Benson, 1997: 21). However these laws did not prevent the casts, writers and directors from meeting and working together (Benson, 1997). No one could escape from the daily conditions imposed by apartheid legislation and their effects. It is a question rather of the strategies theatre practitioners found to enable them to evade oversight and continue to make work which challenged censorship and other laws. A reputation was being developed that the Market allowed and encouraged expression.

The Market Theatre's aim was not merely to give voice to what the government was keeping silent, but to share and tell the stories of the individuals who were being silenced. Dixon Malele describes how Barney Simon thrived on knowing the details of people's lives, and how he wanted to share their lives with others.

> Barney was excited by this. 'You have to tell the truth.' Barney really wanted to expose the horrors of the guard regime at that time. Theatre was like a platform

> for him to do that. The guys came out with a lot of stories they wanted to tell. Barney dealt with this information artistically (Malele, cited in Stephanou & Henriques, 2005: 206).

The apartheid regime along with the prejudicial laws that were passed caused the country to be divided on all levels as discussed above: socially, economically, politically by means of land, resources and the people within. Inequalities became instruments to further segregate society.

The stories shared at the Market Theatre were testament of what was really happening in South Africa. The storylines, characters and plots were used in protest against apartheid. Metaphors were a popular vehicle. *The Seagull* (1976) was the first production in the Upstairs Theatre, not only was the play used as a metaphor to portray South Africa but the programme was too. Below is a segment found in the programme quoted by the playwright and Fuchs comments:

> You say my plays made you cry. Yes, and you're not alone. But that's not why I wrote them…I was after something else… I wanted to tell people honestly: 'Look at yourselves. Just see how absurdly you live' (Chekov, cited in Fuchs, 1990: 40). This must have made any thinking person in Johannesburg's White community audience reflect on the analogy (Fuchs, 1990: 40).

A play is the enactment of peoples' stories, imagined or real. Stories of how the country was being governed and exploited were told through the use of different plays. Personal stories about the lives South Africans were living also were part of the plays which were staged. The audiences shared and recognised the reality that was presented in the theatre.

> The Market Theatre history's is intertwined with South Africa's cultural, social and political struggle for freedom. (It) challenged the apartheid regime, armed

> with little more than the conviction that art can change society (Naidoo, 2006. The Market theatre's 30th Anniversary Brochure p 5, 8).

To understand the Market Theatre, the ideals which the members of this organisation fought for need to be understood. In the above extract it tells of the belief that the arts could create the change that was imminent (Naidoo, 2006).

A place was created that would allow for the voice of the South African people to be heard. These people, Black and White, male and female, came together and documented the history that was being concealed.

The late Barney Simon and Mannie Manim were the co-founders of the Market Theatre. It was the brainchild of Simon, who wrote and directed, and Manim who was the producer-administrator (Stephanou, & Henriques 2005).

They were aware of the need to share, communicate, and be a part of the change that they believed would eventually happen. One of the aims which Simon aspired to fulfil was to 'attempt a theatre that upholds the highest possible standards, that entertains and informs, extends and illuminates life experiences' (Simon, cited in *Mail and Guardian*, June 2006: 1).

New South African plays that were staged at the Market Theatre during the apartheid era were, *Sarafina!, Woza Albert!, The Road to Mecca, A Place with the Pigs, Playland*, *My Children! My Africa!, The Island, Asinamali,* and *Bopha!*. Athol Fugard, Barney Simon, HC Bosman, Percy Mtwa, Welcome Msomi, Zakes Mda, Pieter-Dirk Uys, Gibson Kente, Paul Slabolepszy, Mbongeni Ngema, Adam Small, PG du Plessis, Kessie Govender, Bartho Smit, Maishe Maponya, Deon Opperman, Reza de Wet and Mat Manaka were all directors and writers who contributed to the Market Theatre's

popularity and known for original South African theatre. (YPCG, 2007: 4)

Some of the work was named 'Protest Theatre' or 'Confrontational Theatre' but in essence this was the work of South African's telling South African stories (Kani, 2008). The plays being workshopped and produced by these directors and writers added to the Market Theatre becoming popular in 'realising that all worthwhile art in South Africa was stimulated by work between the races' (Benson, 1997: 9).

This was the context in which the Market was set up. The next building block was the establishment of the Market Theatre Laboratory.

> There was a definite artistic spirit out of which the Market emerged. What I find so extraordinary and moving about the creation of the Market is that the actors physically built the Market. The only real thing guiding them was their principles of freedom, the need for self expression and the fun that they were having. They were up against so much but their hippie innocence and wild artistic bravery, outwitted a whole fascist regime. I think that perhaps this is why theatre often is able to sneak past governments because it is by its very nature so mad and innocent. The regimes can't see them coming and don't take them seriously however, they are able to speak to and move thousands of people in the art of 'lets pretend and tell stories'. In a way the Lab also came from such innocence, that one did not need degrees and to be able to write essays in order to tell stories (Henriques, L. personal conversation, 9 April 2008).

The Market Theatre Laboratory in the Apartheid Era

The Lab

The national and international recognition of the Market Theatre as the home of non-racial theatre was rapidly growing and the pressure to produce more plays in shorter amounts of

time began to weigh on the directors. Simon felt this pressure resulted “in uncreative plays being produced” (Fleishman, M. personal communication, 6th February 2008).

What became apparent was the need for ‘a place of training, a place that could give opportunity, a space for the artists to experiment, explore’ (Kani, cited in Stephanou & Henriques, 2005: 259).

> The Lab would provide a space for the development of new work through project residences during which a small group of people would be given support to work on a daily basis on a new idea in workshop, and through play reading of new plays by aspirant writers. Assist and support theatre works already happening in the communities around the Market when support had been requested by the community through fieldwork, and to provide ongoing training for professional actors on a daily basis (Fleishman, cited in Stephanou & Henriques, 2005: 364).

The Market Theatre Laboratory (the Lab) was created through the inspiration of Simon, the fundraising efforts of Dr John Kani, and the administration of Mark Fleishman. “It connected the townships to the city and to the theatre in the city” (Sichel, A. personal communication, 12 March 2008). In 1989 the Lab was set up as a working, experimental space that would be used to build and develop ideas and use stories to inspire plays that could be staged at the Market Theatre.

> The original thought was to create a place where people could play, where people could develop the ideas they had without feeling they had to commit to an opening night. It was an extension of the idea of workshopping and devising by creating a space to do that. The Market through the Lab could reach out into the community in terms of supporting work that was already happening in the communities (Fleishman, M. personal communication, 6 February 2008).

The Lab was the place envisioned…

> …to encourage young talent and provide space and time for the development of new ideas and new creativity… a place for everyone… people would mix and exchange views and that everybody should know what was going on (Simon, cited in Mail and Guardian, June 2006: 1-2).

In 1985 there were slogans 'Liberation Now, Education Later' (Finch & Jerath, 2007; Kani, 2008). Schools were boycotted and mass protests against schools were the norm for young Black South Africans. The Lab was an alternative home for these students. They offered training and the objectives were for young aspiring actors and playwrights to workshop their ideas and develop relevant and substantial plays together with professionals. All were seen as equals despite age, colour or experience.

> [The Lab was] a place people could showcase their work. Their work could be criticised, given input and could be given help; that was the first reason why the Lab happened. Barney was put under a lot of pressure to produce work very quickly… he wanted a space where people could experiment and work on an idea, it didn't have to succeed or be a finished product (but) people knew that the Market and the Lab was where something could happen with your work, like *Sarafina* and *Woza Albert!* (Cooke, V. personal communication, 28 November 2007).

The Lab was concerned with the stories of the individual, fearing that in the harsh and volatile political state South Africa was in, these stories would be lost. The stories that were shared were predominantly oral stories. It was because of "politics people didn't write things down, it was mostly oral" (Cooke, V. personal communication, 28 November 2007).

These individuals, who were brought together, ironically by apartheid, came to share and develop the nation's

narrative. This narrative that South Africans shared and experienced was similar, one they all related to and were effected by. A shared story of pain and struggle was what they brought to the stage. The Lab's philosophy was that each individual had something valuable to offer despite their race, age or gender. Not all the individuals participating in the workshops were professionals; some were aspiring performers from rural communities.

> The Lab had many facets; Barney wanted to empower school children interested in theatre and he wanted to tell South African stories. This was realised by the Lab and they had the tools to do that. The fieldwork programme was where fieldworkers helped communities to tell South African stories (Sichel, A. personal communication, 12 March 2008).

Exposure via the Lab's fieldworkers and the Community Theatre Group Programme was how word spread as to the work the Market was involved in. The fieldworkers and the community theatre programme are described later in more detail. Disadvantaged communities benefited through these programmes. There was no other exposure or access to theatre or performance training.

> The aim of the Lab was to provide a service/platform for disadvantaged theatre practitioners and community theatre groups. By providing access and support to young performers and theatre-makers, the Lab quickly established itself as the pre-eminent hub of new South African plays and actors (*Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme, Learner's Guide*, PowerPoint Presentation. 2007: 4).

In the workshop process for each play, Simon encouraged the sharing of life experiences and this was carried through to the Lab's community work. The challenge was to portray

experiences that were real, intimate and embedded within the inner psyche. He believed this vulnerability was the 'gem of acting' (Simon cited in Mail and Guardian, June 2006: 2).

"There are many more incredible plays that started at the Lab and went on to The Market and beyond" (Henriques, L. personal conversation, 9 April 2008). Some *incredible plays* that were developed at the Lab and later staged at the Market Theatre were: *Skin Deep* directed by Bongani Linda*, No Room for Squares* directed by Robert Colman, *Tsepang* by Lara Foot, *Jozi Jozi* directed John Ledwaba, *Gomorrah* directed by Pule Hlatshwayo, *The story I am about to tell* by Bobby Rodwell and Lesego Rampoloken and *The Best Wedding Ever* directed by Bruce Koch (Henriques, 2008; Cooke 2007).

The Official Break from Apartheid

The Lab fulfilled a necessity that was required during the years of apartheid. Long before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), people were sharing stories at the Lab. We have looked at the gradual defiance of the laws of apartheid by theatre practitioners, citizens and freedom fighters, now we look deeper into the governmental break. The official denouncement of the old system, this was done one higher, governmental level. This break is important to mention as there are definite links to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the work of the Lab and the victory of the Market.

Pressure was placed on the state to change its' laws and become a democracy that saw all individuals irrespective of their race as equal (Finch & Jerath, 2007). The threat of a civil war was real. Economic sanctions against South Africa were limited from United Kingdom, Europe and the United States of America but severe from Asia and the rest of Africa.

Sporting, educational, cultural/theatre and television boycotts were rife. South Africa became more and more isolated. As the government's policies attempted to separate individuals, isolation from the rest of the world was a result. The refusal of landing rights to South African Airways in foreign countries, the removal of ambassadorial offices and the exclusion from international organisations, like the United Nations and Red Cross, was the worldwide reaction to South Africa's apartheid policy (Fraser, 1992).

In 1990, F W De Klerk, the president at the time, lifted the ban on the African National Congress (ANC) (Fraser, 1992). As a result Nelson Mandela was freed after 27 years of imprisonment along with other political prisoners and exiles were allowed to return home. It was in the mid 90's that the process of reconciliation, healing and acceptance began. (Finch & Jerath, 2007: 414).with the release of Nelson Mandela the road to healing and sharing began.

> It seemed Mandela's release was imminent. We didn't know what was happening. And then it was like walking on a beach where a wave came across the beach and began to recede very fast. You had to stand very still otherwise you would have fallen into the water. That was the energy that was around, and so I abandoned the idea of solitary confinement (Simon, *Vrye Weekblad*, May 1993, cited in Stephanou & Henriques, 2005: 130).

Shifts in the economic and political policies occurred as bans on opposition parties were lifted. Societal and even educational changes were a result of the political shifts.

The first democratic election was held in 1994. The African National Congress was elected as the ruling party and the presidency was taken over by Nelson Mandela. Mandela called for the downing of weapons and for all races, cultures and South Africans to reconcile (Finch & Jerath, 2007: 414;

Fraser, 1992: 51). In 1996 the South African Constitution was adopted and the Bill of Rights implemented. This marked the start of a new, liberated South Africa.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Establishment

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was set up whilst the country began its transformations and when changes in the political, social, educational and economic spheres began. It was to help propel South Africans out of the apartheid era and its segregation into the liberated 'New South Africa'.

These changes were quick and drastic. They resulted in the new government advocating the coming together and the healing of a broken society. The government believed that through the philosophies carried by their party directed by Mandela, South Africa would function as a whole, united in diversity. The ideology around the rebuilding process was for all its occupants to live, work and socialise together without discrimination and prejudice against race, ethnicity, gender, disability or geographic location (Constitution, 1996).

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was set up in 1996; Archbishop Desmond Tutu was the chairman who headed up this commission to uncover the truth of a devastating history formed by years of oppression and to heal the traumatized individuals. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was concerned with people's stories, the suffering they endured and the injustice they experienced. This commission attempted to provide a place for those same people to heal (Taylor, 1998). These stories had been silenced by apartheid and were being revealed for the entire country to bear witness. The aim of this commission was to unearth the wrong doing of the former government and to curb the deep separations between the races. Their vision was to bring

justice to the people who had suffered and punishment to the perpetrators.

The breaking of silence was not a quick or easy process but instead came one personal, traumatic story at a time.

The commission was broadcast on television and radio. It was also documented in newspapers through daily and weekly updates. The public exposure was seen as significant as it represented transparency (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report, October 1998: 99). This was something that had not been upheld by the previous government.

> The dominant narrative of the struggle presented a united front against an oppressive regime, but now South Africa's project (was) to create a country that belongs to all who live in it, united in diversity (Homann, 2006: 2, 3).

Narration, justice and truth were the theoretical underlying principles of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Once it was implemented problems arose around the issues of truth, justice and the measurement of suffering. Many individuals were isolated in that there was a screening process of stories that would be told and which would be left out. These 'measurements' further segregated people in that any story of trauma, joy or pure narrative should be valued in the same way.

Justice and punishment were not clearly defined or followed through. This also added to individuals feeling excluded (Taylor, 1998). Each individual had a story and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission set up the platform for individuals to share those stories. This sharing enabled for perpetrators to be charged and punished for their crimes and so justice was, in many aspects, delivered.

> Unearth the truth about our dark past, to lay the ghosts of that past so that they will not return to haunt us and that we will thereby contribute to the healing of a traumatized and wounded people, for all of us in South Africa are wounded people (Tutu, 1999, cited in Homann, 2006: 3).

All those who lived within the apartheid regime, were either directly or indirectly affected by its laws and implementation strategies. All the stories shared became part of forming the nation's narrative. This was a positive move forward in the direction of reconciliation. However for each individual their past was re-awoken, the trauma relived and re-experienced with the nation watching closely (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report, October 1998). Cornel du Toit describes how this process of communication, trauma, confrontation and face-to-face encounters was necessary:

> [It] does not necessarily mean that neat and precise ways of rectifying wrongs from the past exist or that it is simply a matter of deciding to restructure our identity, wipe our memory, and redefine our character… it is an act of desperation- trying to understand and explain ourselves… Dealing with the past is a historical act of interpretation… we remember history in order to change history. What we have become should not fixate us as if we were confronted by an unchangeable fate… to face the past means to face the person whom you have injured. We must stop speaking about one another and start speaking to each other by jointly discussing our experiences and feelings of hate, anger, guilt, sorrow… it is not only what we remember, but also how we remember, how we interact with memory that co-determines our identity (du Toit, cited in Blumberg, 2000).

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission revealed every detail, traumatic experience and story of the injured individuals. It was broadcast for the nation to witness, 'images

of violence are clearly informed by the plethora of shocking narratives archived by the TRC' (Homann, 2006: 6).

The Lab

The Lab since the early 1990's had been a place for storytelling. People shared in the same way as they did at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The practical methodology was shown to the public. As these plays gained popularity, both on a national and international platform, more and more plays were being generated.

Trust in the country's re-building process resulted in global investments and economic stability and growth. Within this context of rebuilding and healing the Lab was one institution that benefited from new global investments. The Rockefeller Foundation believed in the dreams and hopes of the young disadvantaged South Africans and became a donor for several years. These young South Africans whose dreams were involvement in theatre and performance would now be realised through the donation of this international entity.

> Barney used his international status and influence to get people to help keep the Market and the Lab alive. Barney and John forged relationships with international institutes who helped through donations to give opportunities to children of terrible education (Sichel, A. personal communication, 12 March 2008).

Donor funding by the Swedish International Development Agency and the Swedish/South Africa Culture Fund saw several students travelling overseas to the Lulea Theatre Academy in Sweden.

Simon dies in 1995 so he did not see the results of what he believed in; the effects of democracy and nation building.

He left behind a theatre and working laboratory that for years to come would instil the value of each individual and their story.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was about revealing true South African stories, confronting the trauma that peopled faced during the years of apartheid, allowing for victims to face their persecutor and set a platform for healing and justice to take place. The Lab has a similar role in giving South Africans a platform to voice their 'true South African story', express and share their traumatic and joyous experiences with others. It is these experiences and acts of sharing that create original material that the Lab fosters to create plays and productions.

The Lab played an important role in the transformation years of this country. This study argues that the Lab can once again be pivotal in the transformation that is still a current and contentious part of South Africa today. In achieving this, the Lab needs to make itself available in its entirety to all in the industry. The Lab needs to strive to create non-racial casts, productions and provide a platform for all to have a voice in a theatre that allows them to do so. The stories told at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission were the same stories told at the Lab.

> The great thing today, of course, is that there is a diversity of voices and discourses. During the days of apartheid we all wrote about apartheid because it was the dominant discourse in society ad affected every aspect of the people's lives. Writers get their material from society. They are informed by the discourses of society. There is a symbolic relationship between writer and society (Mda, cited in Wark, 1995).

The Lab's central role began to change as the transformations became evident. The reasons why this change occurred are

numerous. The role of the Lab changed to more of a training institute for young disadvantaged students.

> We changed the focus of the training from being orientated towards professionals to being orientated towards the youth, who were unemployed and interested in theatre but did not have another option of training. That became the notion of what the Laboratory does now (Fleishman, M. personal communication, 6th February 2008).

The need to educate and train these students became central. The realisation was that the youth fought for freedom and their education had been neglected as a result. The poor educational facilities and low quality of education was a result of the Bantu Educational system that had been imposed by the apartheid government. The students for yeas had not been exposed to adequate education and poor facilities in schools added to their resentment of education. Kani explains further:

> [We are] involved not just in theatrical work but social upliftment and provided training to young people who could not acquire theatrical skills because of poor education (Kani, 2005. Extract from the South African National Awards).

Young unemployed aspiring actors were presented with an alternate avenue; training at the Lab. They would not have been able to attend tertiary education because of their lack of a quality education and/or financial backgrounds. This undertaking, aspired to give young people basic theatre skills and give them the opportunity of attaining a job in the industry despite their poor schooling background.

> The teachers impart the information to illiterate students but do not patronise them in any way. The Lab's training programme is an academic and practical

> course made accessible without compromising the work because of illiterate students (Sichel, A. personal communication, 12 March 2008).

The Lab has a long successful history. According to Sichel (2008) and Henriques (2008) most of the entertainment industry is filled with Lab graduates (Sichel, 2008; Henriques, 2008). The Lab in so many aspects is achieving, yet is not receiving the right amount of recognition from the industry or the government, for the high standard of work or graduates being produced (Sichel, 2008; Henriques, 2008).

Conclusion

In this first chapter we have investigated the historical context in which the Market Theatre was born and then later the establishment of the Market Theatre Laboratory. The laws, circumstances and conditions in which South African lived has been described and sheds light on the relevance of the work that was produced at the Market Theatre and the urgency of the work produced at the Lab. The break from apartheid began the countries healing and acceptance process which had already began years before at the Lab. The Lab's relevance and importance is seen in the descriptions and understanding of their mission and philosophies. The next chapter is involved with a more detailed look at the Lab. From the training and Community Theatre programme to the students and the classes offered.

CHAPTER TWO:

The Lab in South Africa Today

Now I am often too busy with the big picture
of fundraising and negotiating with government,
getting money to get this place to work,
getting the marketing right.
When that happens and I lose the little people
with their little stories, I hear Barney slowly saying,
'It is your job to listen to those stories'

John Kani
The World in an Orange:
Creating Theatre with Barney Simon,
2005: 260

The Market Theatre Laboratory

Chapter Two is a description of the Lab; its training facility, community projects, training programme, classes offered, MAPPP-SETA, the curriculum and observations of specific classes. This information has been sourced from annual reports, resources, interviews, the Lab's PowerPoint presentations and my own individual observations.

Training Facility

The role of the Lab has not changed since the official governmental break of apartheid; as training facility for disadvantaged youth. Within the existing synopsis of the Lab, it explains how it is 'the training and development wing of the Market' and explains the overall objective to:

> Provide a life-changing drama experience that is committed to innovative and indigenous theatre, through identifying and developing young acting, directing and writing talent to foster job creation in the performing arts industry (The Market Theatre Website, 2007).

"There was a need to give individuals from poor educational backgrounds a means of survival", this was done through "basic concepts of performance; how to characterise, how to unpack the text, how to understand direction in the simple form" (Kani, J. personal communication, 13 February 2008). The Lab has catered for this market of students and have trained them as professionals and experts in their different fields.

Mary Metcalfe, former Gauteng Minister of Education comments on how:

> Every year on average for the last 4 years (2003-2006), of the learners who reached matric, only 17% of school leavers achieved the standard necessary to proceed to University, 50% passed but did not qualify to proceed to University, and 33% failed (Metcalfe*, The Sunday Times*, January 2007: 1).

These percentages show the number of young adults leaving school without a matric exemption is 83%. Meaning 83% of our South African youth cannot pursue a tertiary education. The Lab is a training institution that caters for this demographic of youth that have an interest in performance or theatre but have not reached the specified requirements to enter into different universities. An article published by *The Sunday Times* stated how only 9.1% of all South Africans have attained a degree (Naidoo, *The Sunday Times*, February 2008). According to Tshwane's University of Technology's Wille de Ruyter this is due to 'poor funding to higher education sectors and the lack

of basic academic skills' (de Ruyter, cited in Naidoo, 2008: 13). As a result the government has allocated certain amounts of money to universities:

> Director-general of Education Duncan Hindle said over the next three years universities would receive R3.6-billion to increase the number of graduates and improve infrastructure and efficiency. "A total number of R439-million will go to the universities of Pretoria, KwaZulu-Natal, Stellenbosch, and Wits to increase engineering graduates; R783-million has been allocated for increasing graduates in science, engineering and technology at 10 universities; and 14 universities will receive R2.1-billion to improve infrastructure and the quality of teaching; R248-million has still to be allocated" (Hindle, cited in Naidoo, *The Sunday Times*, February 2008: 13)

From the figures provided in the above extract it is evident that the government recognises the desperate need for financial assistance in helping raise the level of education. However there is no mention of financial assistance in the arts. The arts have not been included in this monetary breakdown. The urgency of assistance needed for the arts is an ongoing argument in itself. Furthermore students who aspire towards pursuing a career in performance are not recognised by the government. This leaves a surplus of students without financial backing and the desire to study theatre and performance.

At the start of 2007, eighteen new students were registered and began their two year, basic training in theatre at the Lab. These eighteen students formed part of the percentages Metcalfe refers to. They were selected to join the Lab's programme through auditions and started their first year of the Lab's training programme. The fees per year are one thousand six hundred rand. A 50-50 percent gender demographic is upheld every year. The diversity of the student

group who are currently in the course is limited as they are all being sourced from a single common background; disadvantaged background. This has resulted in the development of a homogeneous group. This is in direct conflict to what the Lab fought for during the apartheid years. Theatre and in this case actor training, should be made accessible to citizens of all ages who are interested in performing or being involved in portraying, work shopping or staging stories that have meaning and relevance.

The Students

Daniel Banks describes these specific students as a “brilliant group of young people” (Banks, D. personal conversation, 26 December 2007). The majority of these students who have participated in Lab’s course were introduced to the programme by field workers through the Community Theatre groups. The current students consist of nine young women and nine young men. Their ages range from eighteen through to twenty five. They are from diverse geographical locations and provinces such as Limpopo, Free State, Mofokeng, Port Alfred, KwaZulu-Natal and including neighbouring countries like Swaziland. This results in various different languages, cultures and educational backgrounds prevalent in the group.

This is precisely one of the Lab’s aims; to bring students with various cultural differences together to train and learn through those differences. However the question rose, how culturally different are these individuals actually. How diverse is the diversity present within the class?

Students create a community by learning, exploring and creating original material together. There are several different aims. Some are explained below:

> The aim of the course is to expose learners to a wide spectrum of techniques and methodologies essential for pursuing a career on stage and screen. A holistic approach is central to the philosophy of training at the Lab. Strong emphasis is placed on the critical basics of actor training *(Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme, Learner's Guide*, PowerPoint Presentation, 2007: 5).

The Lab attempts to fulfil a societal need that requires a place for youth to voice their ideas, thoughts and concerns. It enables them to learn about the world around them. They are able to express what it is they are experiencing in their environment through dramatic and theatrical perspectives. The Lab aims to provide a platform for emerging theatre practitioners to create and showcase their work and provide access to theatre spaces, skills and resources. This training programme seeks to give a place to 'the community of semi-professional, professional and marginalised actors, writers and directors' (*Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme, Learner's Guide,* PowerPoint Presentation, 2007: 5). It allows for them to experiment with ideas, gives them the opportunity to teach and learn through experience and work in an area that promotes the talent of the youth.

Community Theatre

Community Theatre groups consist of a handful of fieldworkers who are either working professionals from the industry, graduates of the Lab and/or volunteers. They travel to rural areas and present theatre plays for the local communities. The members of each community, who are interested in creating their own plays are inspired to do so. Fieldworkers source students with limited theatrical knowledge to join the training

wing of the Market Theatre. They also help develop the community's play through suggestions, advice and guidance. A long term goal held by the Lab is to maintain and grow the programme by 'empowering Community Theatre groups locally and in the towns and rural areas of South Africa' so that more original material is generated (*The Market Theatre Annual Report*, 2006/2007: 35).

The individuals that have passed through the Lab and Community Theatre programmes, because of their desire for freedom of expression, need to acquire basic theatre skills. They are exposed to many benefits in the industry and additionally they are being taught by working professionals. The teacher's practical experience within the industry is used as a resource to teach the students and is used to inform and develop the curriculum. Two years working experience in theatre is required in order to qualify to teach these students.

> It's the nuts and bolts of the industry and the teachers' experiences that help the students to develop skills that will get them better paying jobs (Robbertse, D. personal communication, 10 October 2007).

The Learning

The working professionals are referred to as 'Professional Theatre Practitioners' and all work on a part-time basis (*Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme, Learner's Guide*, PowerPoint Presentation. 2007). They assist the Lab in achieving its main objective; 'developing talented young people as employable and creative individuals in the performing arts industries' (*Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme, Learner's Guide*, PowerPoint Presentation. 2007: 5). The students are exposed to external

theatre companies, professionals who all teach and workshop with them and this is where their learning and understanding of the industry is attained.

> Travelling external companies is central to the Lab students' learning. Crewing at the Market Theatre students are exposed to professional productions night after night (Henriques, L. personal conversation, 9 April 2008).

Students are taught by "the best of the industry; best movement, acting and design practitioners" (Sichel, A. personal communication, 12 March 2008).

The two year training programme is a full-time practical course designed to empower previously disadvantaged learners with theatre skills that will focus on their employability and creative initiative. These skills create the foundations of the learning "acquired to enable them to find employment in the entertainment industry" (Robbertse, D. personal communication, 10 October 2007).

This is done by means of practice; through practical workshops, rehearsals and performances with students. 'Drama classes have been delivered on the guiding principle of experiential learning' (*Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme*, PowerPoint Presentation. 2007: 3).

The focus of the Lab is on playmaking and the staging of original material written and performed by the current students. The original works move on to the National Festival of Student Drama in Grahamstown. Devising of this original work is done through group work in practice. The objectives are to:

> Refine individual performance techniques, the writing of original material, screen acting, project management and business skills in the performing arts (*Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme*, PowerPoint Presentation. 2007: 10).

The Lab strives to give young South Africans a platform to discuss their stories, hardships and challenges and using these discussions as a catalyst in the creating process (Robbertse, D. personal communication, 10 October 2007). The stories of the youth today differ greatly from the stories of the youth of 1976 or 1985 or even 1990. Today's youth do not fight for liberation and freedom of speech as these rights have been attained.

> Most of us came into the industry because we wanted liberation and we wanted to expose apartheid as this illegitimate, illegal regime. Once we have achieved that we are left in a vacuum. So what now? You have taken the target; you've taken my confrontational theatre away. We fronted injustice, there is justice now, there are opportunities, although still not equal because of the baggage of the past (Kani, J. personal communication, 13 February 2008).

The vacuum to which Kani refers is a difficulty many artists have battled with (Kani, 2008). What are the issues of society that require exposure for others to witness and take action upon? The necessity to understand and interpret the needs of today's youth is paramount. The youth of today are faced with death, disease, poverty, illiteracy and poor living conditions and so their requirements need to be addressed. It is their realities and hardships that inform their stories, their thoughts and in turn their art. The challenge is for young South Africans to portray their society through creative art forms and be able to do so without fear.

> Public funded theatres are opting instead for safe choices such as escapist musicals and light hearted comedies! Let's take up these issues that are relevant to our times without fear that government arts funding will be with-held. If government funding agencies do with hold funds because we're holding up a mirror to the flaws of government, then that is a test of the integrity of the ideals of our democracy. The content of our theatre productions is still influenced by issues in our societies; and unfortunately, these issues are still defined by race but this does not mean that we should not be exploring these issues within a non-racial or multicultural context (Mahomed, *Artslink,* March 2008).

Many South Africans face the same circumstances. There issues like race as mentioned in the extract, which are still being recognised and not properly addressed. Theatre and entertainment is a powerful way of tackling these issues. Severe problems have been created and are being experienced due to the previous socio-economic structure and because of the expectations and limitations of the current structure.

Artists draw from these transformations as a catalyst for their creative expression. This is their life, their experience and their stories, and this is what they write, talk and perform. The work produced at the Lab has reflected the social and political changes South Africa has undergone in the last few years. Vanessa Cooke, the director of the Lab notes that significant shifts in focus and content have occurred more recently and students are. . .

> . . . tackling different issues, it's becoming more personal, more about people's histories, either their personal lives or the history and myths of their community… (the Lab is) to be a place where discoveries are made (Cooke,V. *Mail and Guardian*, June 2006: 5).

An avenue that has been established by the Lab is that of the fieldwork programme. This opportunity is made available for

employment of graduates in the Community Theatre programme. These fieldworkers collaborate, guide and assist community members in the development of their own plays. These plays which are developed through the Community Theatre programme are entered into the Community Theatre Festival held at the Lab on an annual basis.

This Community Theatre Festival is held at the Lab and all entering groups participate. Judges give feedback and comments for groups to improve and build on their skill and ability to convey their messages through this art form and to improve for the following year. The top ten plays are then entered into the Zwakala Festival. This 'top of the crop crowd' work and improve their plays from the comments given (Molepo, M. personal communication, 21 December 2007). This festival is at the end of every year, held at the Lab, where groups battle out for the prestigious title of Zwakala Winner. The winning play is showcased at the Lab and then in March of the following year, an improved version moves on to the Market theatre's stage (Molepo, 2007; *The Market Theatre Annual Report*, 2006/2007: 36).

Training Programme

I have looked at the undertakings and activities of the Lab as an institution. We turn the focus to the training programme also known as the skills programme, which is offered. A detailed description of the training programme, the classes within and the methodology used will be discussed next.

The training programme is pedagogically based on practical work. Certain forms of practice and the creation of original work is cultivated within the practicality of the classes.

Students are constantly exposed to the industry. This helps them to gain experience and it is this experience that makes them more prepared and better equipped for employment after graduation. They are sent to castings, they appear as extras on television and in films. The students stay up to date with the industry through the working professionals who double up as their teachers.

> As facilitators are working professionals, learners benefit from direct experience and current knowledge. Skills based training is coordinated to enhance and maximise employability of learners upon completion of their two years (*Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme Facilitator's Guide,* PowerPoint Presentation, 2007: 4).

No external work generated or entered into by the individual is permitted without the permission of the education officer and the director. This is done so that work in performing arts or entertainment industry does not interfere with their regular classes. The programme…

> …constantly engages the creative industries to stimulate opportunities for learners and graduates (*Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme* PowerPoint Presentation. 2007: 10).

Adrienne Sichel asserts the Lab's importance and relevance in South Africa today:

> The Lab has given opportunities to lots of graduates to find work and some have aspired to study further. The Lab has a proud track record. They feed the industry with trained people who are leading theatre makers, leading choreographers, major actors, artists and designers. Without the Lab there is no Market. They are the life blood of the Market and keeps it alive (Sichel, A. personal communication, 12 March 2008).

Similarly Banks states the Lab as being:

> A hugely important institution with great potential, wonderful students, and a very committed faculty and should absolutely be supported (Banks, D. personal conversation, 26 December 2007).

It is evident that the Lab is a source to the industry and is one of the driving forces behind the Market. The teachers are professionals and this in itself is the unique quality that the Lab exclusively offers. Sichel believes the uniqueness of the Lab lies within their ability to create and tell South African stories in the manner that Simon had intended:

> They create a very honest professional performance style. They create original work. The people they produce are talented individuals. They offer a broad training which is in some sense Afro centric and European, it's a unique form. (Sichel, A. personal communication, 12 March 2008).

MAPPP-SETA

The training programme has been fully accredited by the Media, Advertising, Publishing, Printing and Packaging Sector Education Training Authority (MAPPP-SETA). In the latter part of 2007, only five of the seven unit standards had been accepted. This meant the programme was provisionally accredited. Subsequently full accreditation was granted in February 2008. The administration of MAPPP-SETA is in reform and has made the process of full accreditation a lengthy one.

The training programme is filled with specific skills that are being taught. These are compared and subsequently aligned to the skills of the unit standards of the MAPPP-SETA. The MAPPP-SETA is governed by the National Skills

Development Act. The skills, knowledge and work done in the classes are monitored for the quality of education and training to be upheld. A lack of full accreditation results in less funding from the government, which in turn creates difficulties that could lead to the students no longer having a place to learn, explore or be heard.

In the context of the Lab being given full accreditation, this report discusses the implications of this accredited programme and the training that is now required. This discussion will include a list of the classes given in the training programme, the teaching pedagogy and theoretical principles that motivate the programme and the curriculum of the Lab.

The Classes

The programme offers official classes and 'value-added' classes in Acting, Diction, Text Interpretation, Directing, Critical Theory, Script Writing, Design, Movement/Dance, Physical Theatre, Creative Movement, Mime, Improvisation, Voice, Singing, Theatre and Life, Stage, Craft, Mask-Making and Puppetry, Stage Management, Theory of Communication, Storytelling, Drumming, Project Management, Screen Acting and Performance Methodology.

These classes have the specific skills and knowledge embedded within, which are accredited with the MAPPP-SETA. All are aimed at teaching the students and equipping them with the aptitude, skills and know how to be able to work and create work in the industry.

The programme is designed to develop and enrich the students' ability in engaging with and sharing, through performance and original South African stories. This engagement attempts to follow the ideologies of "commitment

to justice, human rights, equality and issues like sexism, injustice, racism and judgement are excluded in classes" (Stephanou, I. personal communication, 5 December 2007).

The class *Theatre and Life* is run by Irene Stephanou. This class was created many years ago when Barney Simon still facilitated workshops. Even though Stephanou created the concepts around what was to be taught, Simon helped to structure and extend the content. It is designed to give students a place to communicate and discuss all issues within the industry and beyond. Students are encouraged to talk, discuss, argue and problem solve. It is through this communication process, that Stephanou claims, that the students are able to develop themselves and to reach a point of self awareness (Stephanou, 2007).

> A platform is created for students to attain self-realisation in order to be able to realise themselves, play and explore and explore and explore! They experiment and then they discover themselves. To be stimulated and awoken with no pressure of result or product. They make their own path and create their own journey (Stephanou, I. personal communication, 5 December 2007).

Theoretical Objectives are the outcomes you wish to achieve in the academic arena that will better equip the learner to deal with life and its challenges. What lessons, morals or value system is embedded in the specific academic layout chosen by the educator or facilitator? Stephanou classifies her theoretical objectives for *Theatre and Life* into three categories; Freedom of Expression, Sharing of Stories and Ability to Play.

Looking at her particular theoretical objectives it can be seen how students are encouraged to be present in the space, to communicate and engage with fellow students. Whether this is what takes place within each class is yet to be discovered

but this is what is being aspired towards. There are no pressures in creating a performance or writing of material. Students are given the opportunity to converse and use language and action to help find solutions for their specific problems. These problems are not always exclusive to problems within theatre, performance, or the industry itself but life situations as well.

The way in which this premise is implemented is unknown to me. In-depth observations of classes, lesson plans and methodologies would be needed for a clearer understanding of how these classes are implemented.

Theoretical Principles

Theoretical principles that inform the training programme are contextualised within South Africa's…

> …particular historical, social, political and economic parameters. The principles underlying the activities of the Lab have been guided toward democratic formations *(Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme, Facilitator's Guide*, PowerPoint Presentation. 2007: 4).

The particular formation that informs the underlying principles and envisioned ethos of the Lab's training is democratic. With a democratic approach it is hoped that all are seen as equal and possess something of value. The use of 'democratic formations' is used to inform the Lab's activities and this leads to the need for further research on the following questions which are brought to the fore. The use of the word 'democratic' implies independence and self-governance. The activities are self-governed by whom? Are they run and implemented by the teachers and staff of the Lab or by the students? How much influence and involvement do students

have in the activities of the Lab? The Lab is not an independent entity and can no longer be referred to as such. It is now fully accredited by its affiliation to the MAPPP-SETA. The longstanding connections it shares with the Market Theatre make the Lab an inter-dependent entity.

Curriculum

The Lab works on a 'flexible curriculum' whereby there is little structure and rigidity for the following of a curriculum (Robbertse, D. personal communication, 29 December 2007). The reason for this flexibility is because the Market welcomes international theatre pieces and in turn their practitioners are involved in workshops with students of the Lab. These visiting professionals offer an experience students from other training facilities, like universities, rarely encounter. Their classes are referred to as 'value-added' classes.

The teachers are said to also benefit from this 'flexible curriculum' because they need to put classes on hold as they need to perform, write, design or travel at certain times of the year.

> A lot of the facilitators have worked here a long time and they know the nature of the institute, also by virtue of the fact that there is a certain amount of flexibility required; we can't guarantee that we will be able to satisfy that syllabus if it is entirely locked down. It allows for visiting professionals or visiting productions and companies to come in and work with the students, we feel this is an invaluable way of working rather than sticking to a rigid framework (Robbertse, D. personal communication, 29 December 2007).

Teachers are encouraged to teach what they see to be valuable and beneficial to the students who will eventually

work within the same industry. This trend seems to follow on from Barney Simon's methodology as Leila Henriques explains:

> Processes were dismal, planning and time tables shocking. One worked in the dark not knowing where we would end up. But we always ended up somewhere relevant and exciting and true. The other theatres were sweets, the Market was food. Just being exposed to that level of thinking and creation one forgave the bad planning and the seemingly directionless days. The Lab and The Market has a spirit that is so rare and unique (Henriques, L. personal conversation, 9 April 2008).

This is her description of the past but the spirit of each institution is something that is felt and experienced by all who work at or work with those at the Lab.

Teachers have the choice to select the subject matter and method of instruction, how they source their material, and how they present it.

> The Lab School has always allowed facilitators to broadly determine the nature and content of classes in consultation with the Education Officer and fellow facilitators (*Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme, Facilitators Guide*, PowerPoint Presentation. 2007: 5).

The promotion of performing and creative skills within each individual and the process of cooperative learning is a premise the Lab aspires towards.

> The Skills Programme is a practical course focussed on fostering performing skills and creativity. Emphasis is placed on embedding essential skills in individuals and promoting group collaboration (*Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme, Facilitators Guide,* PowerPoint Presentation. 2007: 4).

By exposing these students to the industry through resources like their teachers and visiting professionals they become aware of the risks, challenges and hardships within the industry.

> You learn lots of things here other than acting, like stage management, design, lights, music and dance. And that's why you must attend every day and every class so you can find what you love and what you are good at (Student A & B. personal communication, 10 December 2007).

Holistic Learning

> A Holistic approach is central to the philosophy of training at the Lab. Strong emphasis is placed on the critical basics of actor training. All learners are required to participate actively in classes. Listening is a dynamic skill which leads to the asking of critical questions. Facilitators relate all practical and theoretical components of their courses to the actual industrial context and praxis (Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme, Learner's Guide 2007: 5).

This extract taken from a PowerPoint presentation designed for the MAPPP-SETA declares the Lab's programme as being holistic. It describes holistic as having included basic actor training where students are encouraged to participate actively. In determining if students are active participants and therefore involved in holistic learning, teachers are told to observe if students are asking questions. As stated in the extract above the students that are listening and involved will ask questions. This is indicative that thinking is involved and the holistic activation process is taking place. It is necessary to analyse if asking questions is the only way of determining if students are actively involved in the subject matter. Is that the only way in which students can be involved? Is questioning

the only mode of learning? There are several techniques that are used and should be used in learning and teaching.

Holistic learning is what is said to be attained through a combination of all forms of learning: affective (feeling), cognitive (thinking), and psychomotor (physical) (Richardson, 2003: Botha, 2004: Meyer, 2006). A balance and integration of these elements need to be included in a classroom for it to be labelled as a class of holistic learning.

Thinking is not the only activity that can help a programme be dubbed Holistic. Emotions and actions are also a part of determining how much of the individual is being stimulated. Are these physical and affective elements being incorporated?

> Learning is always about coming to know something new. This could mean finding out new information, thinking in a new way, or doing something you have never done before (Moll, 2001, cited in Richardson, 2003: 16).

Practice and Theory

The students describe the training programme as being more practical than theoretical.

> 90% is practical and 10% is theory. Its good to have theory but practical, its better and more fun… its simple, you won't forget it, the more you do it the more you are interested in it and you ask, 'What's next?' (Student B. personal communication, 10 December 2007).

The practical workshops were the preferred medium through which Simon worked and created theatre pieces like *Cincinatti - Scenes from City Life, Call Me Woman, Black Dog Inj'emnyana, Outers, Born in the RSA*, and *Woza Albert!* This is how the Lab's training programme is run today; through

practical workshops. There is a definite focus on developing their ideas, new characters, monologues, scripts and interest in the industry through practical means.

> He was more interested in the experience around the creative process... there was no connection between the creative process and the production process (Kani, 2005. Extract from the South African National Awards p 257, 260).

Another student talks about how if the work that they are engaging with is done in a practical manner that...

> …it helps establish it in your mind, it lives in your body… it lives in you. If you only read it then it's only in your head but you don't know where to go from there (Student C. personal communication, 10 December 2007).

There is a definite difference between practice and theory, practices may for some individuals help to solidify and clarify a concept whereas theory is the use of the abstract. According to the comments above a negative connotation accompanies theory because of the intangibility of it, however if correctly accompanied by practical it could be better understood. Let us look briefly at the meaning of each term and the benefits that they harbour and how in turn this benefits the students.

Practice and Process Drama

'Practice connoted the doing, the active, the process. Theory connoted the not doing, the thinking about, or the product' (Taylor, 2000: 5). O'Neill (1995) explains:

> Product, a term that implies conclusion, completion and a finished 'object', both process and product have the disadvantage of being simple terms required to indicate intricate structures (1995: xv).

Practice implies an action or procedure which develops and changes to form a product. Process drama demands action and encompasses change and development through 'complex improvised dramatic events'. These events are executed through action, or practice (O'Neill, 1995: xvi). If these 'events' are repeated they would yield different experiences and in turn different results.

> Process drama proceeds without a script, its outcome is unpredictable, it lacks a separate audience and the experience is impossible to replicate exactly (O'Neill, 1995: xiii).

The question proposed here around the likeness of process and practical have definite links. The simple act of doing and re-doing to achieve a desired result can be seen as the process of achieving that objective. One needs to attempt to understand a concept through the act of trying and re-trying, this is a process. Process drama can be used as a technique in teaching and developing various other skills; imagination, improvisation and problem solving. Process drama can be used with individuals of all ages; students at a primary school level, university students and adults in a theatrical context. All are involved in the journey that unfolds. There are several different ways of initiating a process drama activity, and it is according to the individuals who are embarking on the journey, as to what happens on their journey. Dramatic elements are used in this experience hence it is referred to as having 'improvised dramatic events' (O'Neill, 1995: xvi).

> It evokes an immediate dramatic world bounded in space and in time, a world that depends on the consensus of all present for its existence. Process drama is structured and developed in the same way that dramatic worlds occur in theatre,

> and participation in the creation of these worlds can be intrinsically satisfying, educationally worthwhile, and dramatically significant (O'Neill, 1995: xiii).

The students at the Lab can benefit from process drama and the improvised dramatic events which lie within. The principles that students are exposed to help benefit their future role in theatre as a performer, writer or designer. The principles they are exposed to are improvisational skills, imagination, group work, leadership, critical thinking, the enhancement of creativity and story telling. These can benefit and add to the resources of the Lab students as they approach a career in theatre.

Product

All classes at the Lab are said to run with an outcomes-based ideology. However focus is on practical work. Engagement is done through practical means. Report back, reflection and discussion of the practical work is engaged with as its practical counterpart. The 'thinking about' is however limited because of the deep focus on practice.

In a system that declares itself committed to a holistic way of learning there is no balance between practical and theoretical work that engages the individual in an affective, cognitive and psychomotor manner. Emphasises is placed in some learning areas solely on practical or theoretical. Acting at the Lab is only practical and there is no incorporation of different acting methods or theories. These theories could be practically attempted by learners in a process form.

Theory, or the 'thinking about', as described by Taylor (2000) is dependent on and can enrich the practical work done in a classroom. A balance is needed in classes: where both practical and theory or discussion is used. These two methods

of engaging with the work will enhance the students' understanding. Not enough emphasis is done on talking and discussing the meaning of the work. Each individual should in some way have the opportunity to share their opinions and thoughts on the work done in that class. Discussions and the sharing of understanding can ultimately decide whether the objectives have been achieved or not.

Observations

There were two teachers (A & B) whose classes I was allocated to, to observe and gather information for this report. All classes were held within the same area, the Lab's 'workshop'. It is divided into two parts; the chairs and the 'stage'. The chairs are arranged in cinema formation on a large stand that is raked as if seated in a theatre. The workshop area is in front of the chairs with the floor covered in a black leathery material which allows for movement and floor work. It is a relatively secluded place with different entrances and exits but when class is in process there are very few or no interruptions.

Teacher B's class was involved in film critique when I arrived. There were eight men and nine women present. They had already watched the film of choice and were now 'breaking it down' into genres, themes, scenarios and defining each character's personality and specific choices.

It was within this class that no practical work was done. The entire lesson consisted of discussions, questions and answers. Students sat randomly on the chairs and answered the teacher's questions.

The film critique was done on the movie *Fight Club* (1999). It was about a young man longing for change and a different life. He goes about changing his life however his

methods are ‘questionable’; he uses violence to solve his problems. He begins to realise his mistakes and the damage he has caused in his life, in the lives of those who love him and the other individuals that followed his violent ways.

This film is a great tool in showing students how someone can choose to change their path and succeed. The character in the film does change his path, first to violence but then to something completely improved; he denounces his past actions and those who influenced him in a violent manner. In doing so he protects many people from self-destruction.

The Lab’s students, who come from difficult circumstances, see these examples of change and betterment and so they may be inspired to follow a path of success.

Practical work is the driving mechanism of the teaching methodology at the Lab. However this entire section of film critique was engaging the affective and cognitive sides of the individuals, and not the physical.

Outcomes-Based Education Assessment

Outcomes-based education is evident when the emphasis is placed on producing something tangible that can be assessed and demonstrates the required skills. In producing a product the assumption is that certain skills have been obtained, problems encountered and solved and decisions made throughout the product making process.

At the Lab both formative and summative assessment are used. A formative system occurs when the teaching and learning happens. It is to determine the learner’s current progress. Summative is done at the end of a section or at the end of the year. This is to determine the learner’s overall progress and attainment of the set out objectives. The

formative assessment is done for each different class that the students attend. The summative assessments are done on three different occasions; two Open Days and one at the National Festival of Student Drama. The Open Day assessments are done at the end of the student's first year and the second year. A student's production is presented at the Grahamstown National Arts Festival.

Following each class the teacher is required to complete a 'teacher's report' stating what was done in the class and the exercises that were utilised.

Quarterly meetings are held amongst teachers every year where discussions on learner progress, graduate tracking, training programme, syllabus, changes, expected visitors and any updates to the calendar are made.

Conclusion

The description of the training facility as a whole provides clarity as to what the training programme being offered entails. The information gathered on the current students, gives insight as to what it is these students need. The influence of the MAPPP-SETA will be further discussed later but an overview of the accreditation process has been given. The classes that are offered along with the flexible curriculum give rise to questions around the reality of holistic and process-orientated learning. The concern of a new focus on product has been mentioned and will also be further discussed as this report delves into the identified problems. The next chapter takes a different angle on the way in which the Lab is run. Chapter three discusses the language problems found at the Lab. English dominance is identified through observations. Relevant recommendations are made to combat this language dominance problem.

CHAPTER THREE:

Identified Language Problems

Everyone has the right of freedom of expression, which includes-
Freedom to receive or impart information or ideas,
Freedom of artistic creativity
Everyone has the right to use the language and to participate
in the cultural life of their choice

The Constitution of the
Republic of South Africa
1996: 9, 15

In the next three chapters the focus is turned towards the problems identified at the Lab. Problems such as language, curriculum, outcomes-based education, a new focus on product, homogeneity and a top-down teaching approach are discussed. Each chapter contains solutions and principles to remedy these problems. The solutions are based on integration of theories and methodologies from Peter Brook (1978), Paulo Freire (1968), Constantin Stanislavski (1942), Augusto Boal (1979), Brian Peachment (1976), Jerzy Grotowski (1968), Cecily O'Neill (1995), Brian Way (1967) and Peter Slade (1954). There are simple changes that are needed to create a place that is filled with individuals who are representative of the 'new' South African community. Reasons for their importance and compatibility will be elaborated as the chapters develop.

The Lab's mission, ethos, curriculum and set goals should be made clear to the students and teachers, so that all are involved in the upholding of the envisioned philosophy,

thus aiding the achievement of goals in unison. If all are involved and are aware the benefits and the opportunities that are available, quality of education will be upheld. Let's take a brief look now at the various problems to help create a context and outline of the problems to follow.

Language

The English language has been chosen as the main language of instruction and communication within classes. English is not a first language to any of the students but it is being used in assessment and teaching.

Curriculum

There is no planned curriculum that is used to guide and help teachers to fulfil the stated outcomes of the training programme. A curriculum is needed and should be inclusive of the teachers' input and possibly students too.

Outcomes-Based Education

The outcomes-based education system is a new system that was introduced in South Africa in the late 1990's. The MAPPP-SETA has promotes this form of education. Institutions that are accredited or are waiting to be accredited are required to adopt this system. The implications of this change will be discussed.

Homogeneity

The diversity of race and economic differences has not been established in the class of the current Lab students. The class

consists of eighteen Black students who despite their different areas of living are all classified as ‘disadvantaged’. A class of homogeneity has been created. Whereby the one kind of learner is present and this leads to the lack of diversity.

Top-Down Teaching Approach

A top-down teaching approach implies the teacher is seen as the all-knowing and passes information down to the student. In the early years of the Lab the professionals were involved in working on plays and establishing ideas with young aspiring actors. Now those same professionals act as teachers passing information down to the students.

Language

This chapter will explore the first problem: language dominance where one language has dominated the medium of instruction and the students’ perceptions of theatre. This problem has been encountered as a result of the shifts and changes that were caused by the change of government in 1994. The Lab may be seen as not having adapted to these changes.

English Dominance

There are language difficulties among the students. This study argues that a classroom should be inclusive of more than one language and race. By having other languages and races this forms a true representation of the South Africa we live in today.

English is the predominant language used at the Lab. English as a dominant language is a problem not isolated to the Lab alone but is a global issue. People all over the world are attempting to find solutions for this 'language problem'. It is not necessarily a 'problem' that needs to be changed, but rather drawing attention to the consequences of a dominate language is the intention of this chapter. The recommendation is a use of other languages as well in the teaching of these students who are not proficient in English. English is used to communicate with teachers, fellow students and in the writing of scripts and monologues. One student attributes this to keeping the peace.

> For the sake of peace we all had to agree to one language but we all translate for each other and when one person talks in English then half way changes to Xhosa or Zulu we don't mind (Student A. personal communication, 10 December 2007).

A number of questions are raised about English. Why is English chosen as the primary mode of communication? Why is English the chosen language, capable of creating peace among non-English speaking individuals? In the statement above the student explains 'we all had to agree'; this could reveal the forcing of individuals into making a choice of one language over another. It is not evident who is placing pressure on whom, directly or indirectly, however the way of defining why English has taken prevalence should be noted.

These students were asked what other languages they speak, outside of class. "We speak different languages to different people. To my boys I speak 'tsotsi taal'; we even speak Afrikaans to Dan and the others" (Student C. personal communication, 10 December 2007). Sharing of thoughts and ideas not only clarifies but develops our thinking and the

commonality is what builds a community. If the language being used inhibits the student's ability of comprehension, the chance to discuss or clarify thoughts it can be viewed as limiting the students and creating obstacles based on language choice. The teachers are also inhibited by the language barrier and this fact needs to be addressed.

> Language is a problem across all drama institutions at the moment, I know in my classes this is also an issue. However one finds ways around this and a new exciting style emerges. I suppose the Lab should lead the way in this regard (Henriques, L. personal conversation, 9 April 2008).

New exciting styles of teaching have been seen in classes held at the Lab, but through the awareness of these styles and the correct assistance may establish these *new exciting styles* as real solutions for 'language problems' (Henriques, L. personal conversation, 9 April 2008). These 'new' ways are techniques and methods that do not involve a heavy emphasise on language to be fully engaged. Active participation where the communication is through the body and its expression rather that the use of English.

Observation

Teacher B

During the class that handled film analysis, I observed gender issues and gender inequality. The male students were the only ones answering and communicating with the teacher. The entire discussion was dominated by the male teacher asking the questions in English with only a few of the students answering, not all the students were engaged or participating in the discussion. The possibility arose that the women were unfamiliar with this film and so comments and answers were

few. The genre of action and violence would possibly not appeal to young women and so the men related to the film more closely. As a result the males were seemingly more engaged and answered in English. However the students had watched this relatively contempory film the week before in class. Students A, B, C, D and E who dominated the teacher B's questions were all men. None of the nine women present answered a single question. The rest of the men and the eight women were not engaged in what was meant to be a class discussion. The teacher should be aware of this and encourage the women to engage in a language of there choice, and so indirectly break this pattern of male-dominated answering.

> Students A, B, C, D and E completely dominated teacher B's questions. Seems they are very confident in speaking and answering. Teacher B has not noticed that none of the women have answered. I wonder if they feel *this is a male teacher, all the characters in the film are male, and violence is predominantly a 'male-thing'. What can I offer to a male dominated conversation?* Yet I feel if they were encouraged by any of the dominant males in the class: teacher or male students, they would have something insightful to offer because it is coming from a different perspective. Is this how all theory classes are run, men answer and woman listen? (Observation Notes, 2007: 9)

This extract shows that the male students A, B, C, D and E dominated the conversation and intimidated the young women to the extent that they did not participate. Another question which becomes relevant within this context: are the young women feeling inadequate in participating in theory based classes? They do not answer or get involved in discussion: are they beginning to disregard and dislike theory or discussion? It appeared as if students were not encouraged to offer their

thoughts, nor were they presented with opportunities to talk, discuss, question or negotiate.

Are there gender issues or gender biases within society that are emerging in this class of students? Is this observation solely a cultural matter and not language based at all? These are some questions which were raised as a result of the issues that emerged upon the participation and interaction that was noted in the class discussed. Whether this was due to language, culture or perception the reality is embedded in the fact that this issue is not being addressed at any level. This in turn led to the realisation that it was more aligned to an issue of language in the one class in comparison to the next.

The answering and analysis of these questions would require further observations and interviews with the young women so that a specific and informed study can be compiled. In accordance with this research, the Lab programme is encountering problems related to several issues. During the class observation discussion topics that emerged as a result of this paper were specifically language, gender, curriculum and teaching methodology. These concerns are discussed hereafter and examined in the context of this study. Further investigative and statistical surveys would need to be activated. This would enable analysis to support factual assessment and statistical evidence of the exact needs and requirements on the subjects raised.

Teacher A

‘My Body in Space’ was completely based on practical work. In the first two classes teacher A used complex words that appeared to make students feel intimidated and uncomfortable. When students were asked to apply these

terms to the exercises they were doing, students began to discuss and talk among themselves in confusion. They turned to those around them and were asking questions in their own languages. I assum that the questions being asked were based upon the terms which were used and not explained. Students were pointing to their stomachs, discussing, translating and pointing to the 'solar plexus'. Suddenly there was a foray of discussion in other languages which led to the students becoming disruptive. Teacher A saw this as a 'discipline problem' among the students, and documented this in the daily report book.

The teacher's lack of explanation had led to confusion and great student discussions and translations which in turn led to internal negotiations. Had it not been for fellow students translating, the meaning of the work would have been lost.

> 'Solar plexus'? 'Mise en scene'? Surely they do not know what these words mean? Either way the teacher should have explained or recapped just to make sure. The teacher should have made an assessment and retraced the learning steps, in order to bring the team to a common level of understanding. Questions were not addressed to the teacher as the relationship that exists is not conducive to such interaction. These issues are problematic and are inhibiting the students in participating fully in the exercise. They stop and ask their friends to help but the teacher is unimpressed. One student does not look like she understands anything (Observation Notes, 4 October 2007: 24, 25).

From this observation note it is clear that the purpose and willingness to ask questions is limited. A scenario arises when excessive talking is not addressed and is inhibiting learners from participating. Learners must feel comfortable to express their thoughts, their interpretations and their lack of understanding certain points if they are not doing so they are

not fully active in the class. If these objectives are not reached it results in a situation where the language and the words being used cause an alienation from the material being covered.

It was in this very class that two students fell asleep. This could have just been a coincidence but it is indicative of a situation in which students are unengaged. The use of specific terms without an explanation isolated them from the entire exercise. Seen already are two different classes; one discussion and one practical. Both resulted in the un-engagement of certain students. A balance of practice and discussion is needed to enhance full participation and minimise isolation.

Language in the class

The students are encouraged by the teachers to speak in any language they feel comfortable in, be it mother tongue or not (Robbertse, D. personal communication, 10 October 2007). However an opportunity to speak freely in one's own language was limited in the few classes I observed. I never heard teacher A or B in any of the six classes ask students to write, introduce or speak in a language of their choice. Students did not engage in an informal manner with the use of an alternate language. Confidence and understanding of the material covered will not develop if informal discussions are not entered into.

It is within these discussions or informal conversations that students get to ask further questions about the meaning, the purpose or terminology that is used in the class. If a platform like this is created where students are afforded the opportunity to clarify and talk about the work covered they become confident and own their learning process. This is a

way of assisting the *new style* Henriques refers to. They are present but are not being correctly tapped into to provide the class with the full benefit.

These discussions need to be done with fellow students in their own language or a language that they are secure with. If the students are at ease with the material and the language, English does not become daunting but manageable and they are empowered by this process. When their understanding is valued because specific time is set aside to unpack and to help all understand equally a successful result may be achieved.

Joachim Mind defines identity as a 'reflection, which rouses only where recognition is involved' (Mind, cited in Stedman, 1932: 17). Even though this may be seen as an 'outdated' explanation and attributed to the physical reflection, it applies to the simple act of listening to someone speak. This can never be outdated as it is a fundamental act of recognition. In this engagement, acknowledgment is given to what is being shared. The individual who is sharing experiences self-esteem. By not allowing for different languages to be used in the class, directly or indirectly, recognition for that specific language is lost, as is the loss of self recognition if others to not engage in one's own story. Through the sharing and engaging with others we discover our likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses.

Stuart Hall (1997) explains representation as containing different processes that contribute to the production of our understanding the world around us.

> Objects, people and events are correlated with a set of concepts or mental representations which we carry around in our heads. Without them, we could not interpret the world meaningfully at all. The meaning depends on the system of concepts and images formed in our thoughts which can stand for or represent

> the world, enabling us to refer to things both inside and outside our heads (Hall, 1997: 17).

An individual imitates and uses so much of what they perceive around them in developing their own representation of 'their world' and some aspects which are not welcome in that world are rejected. Hall (1997) goes on to evaluate the way in which we represent the world through language.

> Representation is the production of the meaning of the concept in our minds through language. It is the link between concepts and language which enable us to refer to either the 'real' world of objects, people or events, or indeed to imaginary worlds of fictional objects, people and events (Hall, 1997: 17).

In order to name and describe our thoughts we need language to make those concepts comprehensible to those around us. We are social beings and conversation can only take place if there is at least one listening individual and one speaking individual.

Maybin (2001) speaks about language and its origins within the 'social interactions, where language use is always motivated and therefore framed within…different social groups' (2001: 65). She also describes how words are only half our own, it is only when 'the speaker populates it with their own intentions, their own accent… adapting it to their own semantic and expressive intention' that they indeed become their own (2001: 67).

We learn how to speak, develop our thoughts and question other ideas by being involved in conversations, with those around us. 'The trouble with words is that you don't know whose mouth they've been in' (Potter, cited in Maybin, 2001: 68). This is a flippant way of looking at the words we choose to engage with, or to explain our inner thoughts, but it

shows how socially we share what we think and say with others through social engagement. It is about making the implicit, explicit.

We do so by drawing from our learned realities and experiences. We describe ourselves and the environment around us with learnt words and expressions that we have been exposed to. Roland Barthes' (2003) work and understanding of realities and the stories that individuals use to inform their word choices can be used to understand the students at the Lab and their variant vocabularies and choices of word usage.

The students are in essence, speaking with the voices of others. The voices of others contain the words of their teachers, the playwrights and directors who teach and influence them. Their words and opinions which are being used have their intentions and interpretations embedded within them, but they are somewhat 'borrowed'. These 'borrowed words' come from the communities we have grown up in, interact with from school, work and university, parents, role models, authoritative figures and peers. The young artists engage with the performing industry as community members because their connection, learnt words, meanings and intentions would have been informed by those who taught them. They develop their understanding of the business through their teachers. The instructor chooses to expose the students to specific aspects of the industry and so the students absorb this along with the vocabulary that accompanies it.

> Theatre usually requires the study of scripts, and drama which may eventually include some use of script but in no way depends on it. Unfortunately, whilst drama continues mainly within the domain of English, the tendency is for teachers of brighter children to look upon theatre and scripts as the correct

> starting place, regulating drama to an alternative activity useful to those who are unable to read fluently (Way, 1967: 10).

If students were excluded from theatre because of their level of communication in English, the Lab would cease to exist. Its primary role is to provide basic theatre training to youth from a disadvantaged educational background.

> We must be careful when using the word disadvantaged, the Lab students are disadvantaged economically. They cannot afford tertiary education and there are others who because of their terrible education do not have a matric pass (Sichel, A. personal communication, 12 March 2008).

Students A, B and C that were interviewed agree that through the year they became more confident in speaking and expressing themselves in English. It was not surprising that when students were requested to volunteer for the interview the same students that had been observed as dominating the class discussions came forward. This shows that there are confident English speakers who grab opportunities, like the interview while others are reticent and remove themselves by their actions.

These clearly confident students explained how they never feel forced to use English but rather encourage each other to try to converse as much as possible. Depending on the various teachers, other African languages are included in some classes.

The ability to communicate and teach in a language that the students can relate to and understand, changes the way in which they learn and engage with the material in a positive way. It changes the way in which they assimilate knowledge as they are receiving information from a recognisable primary source. By hearing the information in English which may be

their second, third or even fourth language, the information is being understood as a secondary source. Translation, comprehension and alternate connections are required to make sense of what is being taught in English. Using a combination of alternate languages; English and isiZulu or Xhosa and English allows for further and in a sense quicker comprehension. The University of Cape Town, Drama Department has included Xhosa as a major in the Performer's Diploma. Changes such as this, is a positive adaptation. It shows how this university is at the forefront of transformation (Nebe, W. personal communication, 17 March 2008).

This research does not suggest a complete exclusion of English but the recommendation is rather that other African languages are used in the teaching instruction and in the assessment of their work presented by students. Metcalfe (2007) agrees with the premise of teachers learning different languages so as to be better able to aid their students in accessing their work:

> We need teachers to become more confident in teaching both 'first' languages and the 'second' languages – and we need more teachers fluent in more South African languages. We should teach them to read in a language they can understand first (Metcalfe, *The Sunday Times*, January 2007: 3).

In teaching South African students, consideration around speaking a South African language needs to be looked at. New ways of dealing with and handling the different languages and translations need to be implemented so that students do not sufferer because they do not understand what is being said. Learning a language is difficult however encouraging teachers to do so will benefit the students in their classes.

Observation

In teacher A's third class of *My Body in Space*, seven men and seven women were present. Students were asked to volunteer to stand in the middle of the 'stage' say their name and occupy the space with their presence and energy. Once again the same students were the first to volunteer, students A, B, C, D and E. The use of volunteers as a tool in teaching is useful and does not separate any single individual in an intimidating way. This intimidation may isolate students from the process especially if they are not willing, lack confidence or feel forced to engage.

> Despite the mixed seating arrangement of women and men, it seems that the same five men are volunteering again. They speak English to the teacher and some times translate and speak to others in different languages… The girls only respond once the guys have already given their opinions. The girls do not stick to English but change into other African languages and a class discussion forms (Observation Notes, September 2007: 9).

The line of argument that this observation is focusing on is that students in the class allow for students A, B, C, D and E to predominantly ask and answer questions, volunteer and engage with the teacher. They are aware of those particular students' ability to speak in English and so allow them to. The rest of the class gets involved in the discussion once the confident few share and answer the teacher's questions. This is one adaptation style done by students to incorporate other students who are trailing behind because of the language barrier. This was not recognised by the teacher nor was it used again as a tool to assist those few non-English speaking students.

Other languages were ‘introduced’ once the women began talking and explaining things.

> Those same men are volunteering to start the activity or to show others what has been instructed. Not only are they confident in answering but in practical, on the floor work, too (Observation Notes, September 2007: 18).

This could indicate how students who are confident in speaking English and are ‘made’ to do all the talking and volunteering while others follow and are translated to as the class proceeds. ‘No one encourages the girls to answer questions’ (Observation Notes, October 2007: 25). Some teachers are possibly unaware of who is always answering and who is always silent. If a student answers correctly the assumption made by some teachers is that the entire class therefore understands. However this may not be true in all circumstances and the teacher needs to become aware of the level of participation from each student.

In the teaching of these students, teachers are aware of the language and literacy problems. They may be depending on those few who are clearly able to speak English and communicate it to others whose ability to speak as confidently, is lacking. The confident speaking students help other students to understand the material being covered. The question raised is, who is doing the teaching? Are there alternative ways of explaining and teaching to students with limited English ability? Can this mode of teaching be developed and used further at the Lab and at school level? Or is there a negative forcing of English on students? Do they feel inadequate to answer because they feel they need to answer in a particular language? These are some questions which were raised through the observation of the class practices. Further research is required in understanding the

relationships between the English teacher and the non-English student. Limited knowledge of the methodologies used by each teacher needs to be explored. The number of languages used and how frequently they are used could be tallied for further examination, along with alternative methods a teacher uses to convey meaning.

The students who can communicate in English, but not as competently as those taking the lead, take a back seat as a result of their lack of confidence in the language. This passive behaviour leads them to limit themselves and gives rise to a feeling of inability to share their ideas, opinions and understanding of the material being covered.

If the work or terminology used is not understood students are unable to put the work discussed into practice. Placing the skills, theories or ideas into action will not take place. Students cannot understand and so cannot put it into action.

Teacher A's first and second class started with warm-up exercises that required various body movements, group work and concentration. "I'm doing this to bring them into the space" (Teacher A. personal communication, 13 September 2007). However students were not interested and were disruptive and noisy.

> The students were not interested today; they were talking, sleeping, being silly and in my opinion 'invading' others' personal space. This was not addressed by the teacher but instead he told them, 'You are not following instructions. You are meant to be aware of each other not hurt each other, you are being silly' (Observation Notes, September 2007: 1-2).

The class was disrupted by bored and confused students. They were not being silly as the teacher pointed out to them several times. The work and outcomes were not achieved because the

students did not understand what was required of them and the teacher could not understand why students were not participating in the way in which he had envisioned.

The emphasis on verbal communication being done in English is prevalent and seems to take over from other languages in a class environment. This emphasis suggests to students that theatre is an English activity. In order to learn more about theatre one must learn more about English. It gives the misconception that this language carries a higher status than other languages. Students were asked what books should be made available to them at the library; they answered “more English books, a few in our mother tongue but because theatre is mostly in English we need new English books” (Student A, B & C. personal communication, 10 December 2007).

This statement demonstrates students’ preoccupation with the spoken communication and how they perceive the theatre as an English process. The same theatre that in the past included all languages and races and thrived on diversity is being seen as a theatre which functions with one language. This is the reality in the entertainment industry (Nebe, W. personal communication, 17 March 2008). Being able to communicate freely in one’s chosen tongue allows for an individual to be confident in what is being communicated. Their thoughts are clear and the ability to find the ‘correct’ words to express their opinions is easier than if they were working from a limited vocabulary.

According to Cummins (1991) there are two kinds of languages proficiencies: basic interpersonal communication (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). BICS is when an individual communicates with everyday, informal language. The context in which the language is used is familiar to that individual and the same, limited vocabulary

is utilised. It is predominantly used in discussion with friends and family. This language proficiency may take up to two years to acquire (Cummins, 1991). CALP is when one is proficient enough in a language to succeed in more demanding cognitive contexts and academic conversations (Cummins, 1991). This language proficiency level can take five years or more to learn. CALP is what students are learning in the classroom, as they are required to think, analyse and answer in a specific language. At the Lab the dominant language used is English and so students learn and develop a vocabulary in English to explain theatrical terms and concepts. The thinking about and expressing ideas, opinions and creativity is encouraged to be done in English and so the processes such as Theatre are seen as English. At a school level learners are taught Science, Mathematics and Biology predominantly in English and so they learn how to use and explain these subjects in English.

If a language is being forced this inhibits the individual from being able to project a message with freedom of choice. The pressure placed upon that individual is immense and the individual may not wish to engage again for fear of embarrassment. The interaction and participation will then not function at a satisfactory level. The students will not be challenged to project their maximum, as they will be confined and restricted and will hold back. It is not the explicit intention of the Lab to foster English as the dominant form of communication in learning about and making theatre, but the implicit messages embedded in the pedagogical approaches suggest otherwise.

This is called the hidden curriculum. The values, objectives and representations of the world the teacher carries are taught through the choice of methodology and through the pedagogical approach employed. It is not always

seen in what the teacher teaches but in the way that he teaches. Teachers are indirectly portraying that there is a hierarchy among different languages. Some languages hold a higher value and thus are more frequently used in discussions and in an academic context, this is also due to the universal usage of a specific form of communication.

Let us bring together the problems within the language spectrum that have been identified. One language presides over the others and this leads to an indirect portrayal of language status. Students are experiencing a lack of confidence in speaking and sharing their ideas and opinions in the 'language of consensus', the lingua franca chosen is English. This is what has been observed, however it is by no means the ipso facto. The reactions observed are what was demonstrated and projected by the students. The females in the group appeared to struggle to express themselves in the class where as the males were leading the discussions. The pressing question is what can be done to rectify and provide solutions for the above?

Full understanding comes when the words and concepts used to communicate an idea are understood by the individual and are used in a practical manner and not solely by asking questions.

> If you speak to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head, if you speak to him in his language, that goes to his heart (Mandela, 1996).

This is something educators who are engaging and teaching students who speak different languages, either at the Lab or in schools need to consider. So much of theatre and drama involves other aspects of the human being not just the intellectual, 'there is little correlation between I.Q and the ability to do drama' (Way, 1967: 10). This is where the theory

of holistic learning may play a significant role. There are other ways of learning that are non-lingual and can be used at the Lab to overcome language barriers.

> Barney's work was not about words. It was about people's emotions. And then I understood that actually Barney was closer to Africans in his technique, because African theatre or drama is not really about words. We say few words and we do much in action and emotion. Working with Barney was a revelation (Ngema, cited in Stephanou & Henriques, 2005: 190).

This African methodology needs to be re-instilled at the Lab in their current training programme. The Lab is dealing with African students who require and can benefit from this system on non-lingual holistic training. Students may be encouraged to show their understanding of the work through their body as a static picture or movement skit or a portrayal of different facial expressions or the action of emotions. Informal discussions, reflection or report backs should be used and should be done multilingually. This attempts to help students express their thoughts, understanding and ask questions through a medium in which they feel comfortable to use. According to Freire, 'men are not built in silence, but in word, in work and in action-reflection' (Freire 1968: 76). This includes the emotional, physical and the metaphoric. We express not only in the written but in spoken language too. This is Freire's understanding of how individuals cannot be passive but rather have something to share (Freire, 1968:76). The young actor has alternative skills other than intellect and literacy and these should be used as a resource.

Universal Language

Peter Brook's (1978) belief in a 'universal language' is rooted in the ability of individuals to communicate. However these individuals are from various communities, backgrounds and countries and so 'normal' communication in the same language is almost impossible. They speak different languages and their cultural practices are different. There are commonalities that can be found and celebrated. These commonalities help them to communicate and perform together. A universal understanding from one human being to another can be achieved through the non-lingual. This recognition of the ability of fellow human beings to communicate without words would otherwise never have been discovered had Brook's unlikely community of actors participating in *The Conference of the Birds* (1978) not have occurred.

> The purpose of theatre is… making an event in which a group of fragments are suddenly brought together… At certain moments this fragmented world comes together and for a certain time it can rediscover the marvel of organic life, the marvel of being one (Brook, cited in Smith, 1972: 52).

The suggestion is that the students at the Lab adopt this method of communication which employs the commonalities of individuals in creating new original work. The languages which are different should not limit the students in creating in different forms of communication. Not forgetting the powerful ability of the body to communicate through body language.

Following a commercial form of theatre making is not necessarily what the Lab aspires towards. It has been noted that they encourage new ways of engaging with theatre. At times they function as individuals and other times as a working whole. They spend time together and learn each

others ways, their behaviour and interactions. These are the aspects that form a productive team.

In the Brook's *The Conference of the Birds* (1978) he used actors who spoke different languages which he felt resembled the various species of birds. They are all birds so the likelihood of discovering similarities is more probable than if they were different animals.

> At the end of their travels they are rewarded with the revelation that the God they seek has always lain dormant within themselves. 'I am Thou, Thou art I' implies a further union - that between all living things is God (Mitter, 1992: 105).

These connections and similarities within each other override the differences we have created among ourselves through language, culture and geographic placements. The simple detail of us as cognitive human beings, who can breath, think and communicate, is what connects us all.

So in creating a new community of individuals who have no prior connections or established friendships is a challenge. The students at the Lab have been trained in the same facility, attend the same classes with fellow students and teachers, been given the same opportunities in the industry and sharing similar backgrounds and economic statuses and this is what overrides the difference of languages.

Another form of communication is the ability to listen and to observe an individual in action.

> It is possible to listen to a couple having a row in the house next door and be able to tell from the rhythm, tempo and tones of their voices, the exact nature of their row and its developments, without hearing any words (Frost, cited in Roose-Evans, 1984: 176, 177).

Leila Henriques discusses how she, along with the Lab students were exposed to the notion of universal language in different workshops. It need not be the language of words which you can comprehend because it is the language of theatre that you connect with through mind, body and emotion.

> I have attended workshops hosted by the Lab in many different languages and these have been some of the most fruitful. Some of these include Yoshi Ouida who spoke in very broken English and in Japanese. He spoke of the sonority of sound and universal sound. I didn't understand but completely understood. More recently, also hosted by the Lab, was the Swedish company Unga Klara led by Suzanne Osten. The workshops were held in broken English and Swedish. The group that attended was very mixed and every one contributed equally. I also have attended workshops run by the National Theatre at the Lab. As an English speaker I can honestly say I was more creative and felt more comfortable with the Swedes. I am not suggesting that the use of only English is not a problem at the Lab, but I think it is more about the spirit of the teacher than in which language they speak. The other point is as a student at the Lab one is constantly having workshops with global theatre luminaries: incredible people from Peter Brook, to Jeremy Herron from Newcastle Theatre to Lara Foot etc. (Henriques, L. personal conversation, 9 April 2008).

It is evident that the Lab has in several respects indirectly included and addressed language difficulties. Whether this is being incorporated into all classes is unknown. This study suggests that there remain work to be done.

Language as Oppression or Liberation

Augusto Boal (1979) believes in communities sharing one key element, oppression by another. This shared factor of being oppressed, either by another individual, another social body, a

governmental system or by one's own self is what Boal sees as connecting us as a global community. He refers to the differences in language and how 'the illiterate are not people who are unable to express themselves: they are simply people unable to express themselves in a particular language' (1979: 121).

The language situation at the Lab can be seen as one language oppressing another. Yet because it is done with no direct force the 'oppression' is not recognised. Brook uses the language differences while directing so as to build connections between his actors whereas Boal sees it as a mechanism that reinforces oppression.

The Lab's actors who are instructed in English, what some may refer to as the 'coloniser's language', are expected to freely express and perform in this medium which for many is their second, third and even fourth language. (Odhiambo, C.J. personal communication, 17 October 2007).

Yet Brook is challenging directors and teachers alike, that language, culture and nationality should not cause barriers and limitations for the work that can be produced. Instead by using non-lingual and dynamic elements this is what adds to a piece or to a classroom rather than takes away from the experience. Thinking and using methods not necessarily conventionally used is what is being encouraged. Brook's 'projects include an element of physical and vocal work geared towards further extending the actors' technical skills' (Hodge, 2000: 178). His use of ritual, physical and vocal ability through sound, song and dance are what informs the connections between individuals who cannot communicate through a common language.

Brook's universal language has links to the 'new language' found in Forum Theatre (Boal, 1979). It is to show…

> …in practice how the theatre can be placed at the service of the oppressed, that they can express themselves and so that, by using this new language, they can also discover new concepts (Boal, 1979: 122).

Brook would see this 'new language' of theatre as a means of understanding the universal community and the similarities between the individuals. This language need not be of words or sentences but rather of an Artaudian manner; sounds, actions and movements used to express the message from within. The 'non-verbal elements of consciousness… and the call for a more sensuous and physical actor' is needed to bridge the gaps caused by language differences. (Hodge, 2000: 7). The use of the body was encouraged first when interacting with a text. It caused a move away from the intellectual and the over thinking of the meaning of the text to an embodiment and communication through the use of an individual's greatest tool; their body (Brook, 1978; Artaud, 1970). In understanding the text or the task of the performer, he has to be seen as an 'athlete of the heart, who had to make use of his emotions as a boxer uses his muscles' (Hodge, 2000: 7, extrapolated from Artaud, 1970).

Innate commonalities are discovered when communities are formed. Brook and Boal speak of communication and each one of them envisions the ability to create a community that can communicate. In creating a working community a commonality like 'universal language', this is what leads to the strengthening of communities. The solutions for the individual are discovered from the sharing of others within the group. It is in the Forum Theatre setting that the empowerment of one individual is dependent on the whole (Boal, 1979). Many empowered individuals lead to an empowered community. This empowerment is where individuals are able to make

constructive decisions, follow their desired path to succeed and help empower other young individuals.

This is not to say the Lab is not engaging in such activities to instil empowerment but a more focussed approach may be needed if change is to be recognised.

South Africa as a Member of the Global Community

Communities in South Africa may be an ideal target group for Forum Theatre. The various languages being used on a daily basis within the country, discrimination, the lack of quality education and the clash of Western, Eastern and African ideologies, all contribute to the challenges this young democratic state is faced with. Language problems are being spoken about but very few solutions are being suggested and implemented. Public forums need to be created where parents, students, teachers and government language policy makers can interact, discuss and find new solutions for this country's language problems. If English is seen as the language used by the global community, the perception interpreted by an individual is by attaining this language, the global community can be tapped into. English is being encouraged and enforced. The question with this enforcement is what is being compromised to accommodate the learning of English? This study does not attempt to block the value of this global commonality but rather question why are African languages being sidelined as a result? Since English has such a powerful influence more of an active preservation of African languages needs to be instilled.

Economic and social realities create new class divisions that exist and have started to grip our newly formed nation. This is the new form of prejudice, discrimination against people of different economic backgrounds. Ways of breaking

this kind of discrimination need to be implemented directly after this has been recognised as a relevant problem in our society. This recognition need not be in theory but through action.

The impulses, ritual, body action, vocal sounds and songs that Brook (1978) utilises as his 'universal language' should be used at the Lab. By creating a practicing multilingual classroom this forms part of the move towards the country's successful transformation. Metcalfe points out:

> In multilingual communities the challenge of linguistic and cultural separation remains, but urgent action must be taken to promote instruction in languages that best support learning (Metcalfe, *The Sunday Times*, January 2007: 3).

This shows the need for action and how inclusive behaviour sends a strong message for the youth to follow. These recommendations attempt to find various probable solutions for language dominance.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have explored language dominance as a problem amongst students of the Lab. Through the observations noted several other problems and questions were raised. Universal languages, commonalities, alternative languages, non-lingual methodologies, are some of the recommendations made to help the Lab adapt with language transformation. The next chapter describes the second problem of the training programme which does not have a structured curriculum. This is investigated along with the benefits of acquiring a curriculum that is accessible to teachers and students alike.

CHAPTER FOUR:

Curriculum and Outcomes-Based Education:

Going through life without vision is like getting into a car
without a driver; it's not going to go anywhere.
Very little happens in life unless we have a dream and when dreams die,
life is like a broken-winged bird it cannot fly

Norman Nel
Words to Set Your Speech on Fire
2006: 36

The subsequent chapter will explore the reasons behind the Lab's lack of a structured curriculum. It also includes the importance of a curriculum, why planning and setting goals are vital in the performance industry and should be included wherever possible.

Timetable

A timetable is a schedule which sets out specific times for specific classes or events that will take place. The purpose of a timetable is to allow for further planning and goal setting around the classes or events already positioned on the timetable. At the Lab students are given a new timetable each week informing them of which classes they will be attending. "The schedule is worked out on a weekly basis according to facilitators' personal availability" (Robbertse, D. personal communication, 14 February 2008).

This is problematic because students may be learning that planning is not essential and can be done weekly or not

at all. This encourages a lack of routine. If the timetable is given to the students every week a dependence upon that given timetable is developed.

As aspiring actors, the understanding of further planning, goal setting and deadlines should be reiterated in their training. The importance of goals and deadlines is lost. Professionals work with dates, time frames and deadlines and planning is essential if all deadlines are to be met. By giving students a limited preview of what is forthcoming, leads to inadequate planning and goal setting in their professions.

Students should be given a timetable that is at least a month in advance so that they can take ownership of their learning, setting appropriate goals and upholding the deadlines which are set. This will allow for preparation and a forecast into what is required and how it can be achieved in the time allocated. This opportunity will develop a vital skill that will be used when they are working professionals in any industry.

Curriculum

Another problem is the lack of a structured and detailed curriculum that is followed by the teachers. A curriculum is generally comprises the specific subjects or aspects that will be taught in a course at a school or tertiary level. The curriculum is set up ‘to transmit a body of knowledge’ (Smith, 1996).

The training programme has a list of the classes in which they intend on teaching. Aspects of each subject and what will be taught is not stated. A structured curriculum that can be followed by students and teachers alike and be monitored by the educational officer is not offered. A question around the

consistency of teachers and the material that is being taught is raised. If a structure and record of what is taught is not kept the material that is taught to one group of students will differ the following year.

The stipulated classes which form part of the curriculum and which are aligned with the MAPPP-SETA's unit standards are Acting, Diction, Text Interpretation, Directing, Critical Theory, Writing and Design. The classes which are offered but are not recognised or aligned with those same unit standards are referred to as 'value-added' classes. These classes are Movement and Dance, Physical Theatre, Creative Movement, Mime, Improvisation, Voice, Singing, Theatre and Life, Stage, Craft, Mask-Making and Puppetry, Stage Management, Theory of Communication, Storytelling, Drumming, Project Management, Screen Acting and Performance Methodology.

> Classes are in most instances aligned to unit standards as developed by SAQA. Where classes/curriculum are not referred to specifically or are insufficiently covered by the scope of these unit standards – such classes will be considered 'value-added' (*Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme*, PowerPoint Presentation, Facilitators' Guide, 2007: 4).

It is important to state as a training facility what subjects will be taught but so to, is it important to indicate, what within these broad topics, will be taught. Within each class what is being covered is unknown. Interviews with each teacher and the scrutiny on their lesson plans and other documentation would be required in order to completely determine what is really being taught.

Stephanou the teacher of the *Theatre and Life* class explains that having a curriculum causes "too many formal

barriers" and inhibits the teacher to change and adapt the classes according to who is being taught and their particular needs and wants. According to Stephanou: "the students create their own curriculum" (Stephanou, I. personal communication, 5 December 2007).

Similarly, Robbertse believes that flexibility in the curriculum is to benefit the students and the working professionals:

> It's an unwritten curriculum. There are guidelines that inform what is being taught and we follow them in terms of ensemble work, team work, which carries on into the last year where the focus is individual work. By not being flexible will eliminate experience from the students that they otherwise would have had (Robbertse, D. personal communication, 10 October 2007).

Production companies who work at the Market Theatre come to the Lab and hold workshops with the students. Having a rigid timetable or curriculum does not allow for these companies to workshop their chosen material at times that suite them. Companies and working professionals know in advance as to when they are required to travel and these dates should be provided to the Lab for their own planning. Students fall victim when not sufficient planning is done and changes which disrupt their routine are made every week.

This lack of planning and organization allows for teachers to have the flexibility in lesson planning, deciding on appropriate resources and methodology that will be employed.

> The most important single factoring in the use of drama as a genuine part of education is the teacher. It would be preposterous to pretend that a teacher needs no preparation for doing drama (Way, 1967: 8).

The extent of preparation done by each teacher for each class is unknown as this did not form part of the scope of this study. However these are working professionals with limited time for research and preparation for classes. Cooke explains that the teachers “have a basic idea of what needs to be covered, but because we work with professionals who are not teachers, we have to keep it flexible for them to cope” (Cooke, V. personal communication, 28 November 2007). They are seen as experts in their field in which they teach and should recognise certain requirements in teaching students. These requirements are lesson plans, goal setting, year and monthly planning so that the students benefit from the routine, goal setting and deadline keeping that is set up. If the teachers are not engaging in such activities of planning and goal setting this implies that the students are not either.

Educating is not the only profession that requires goals, planning and structure. Being an artist these professionals are is dependent on goals, planning, preparation and deadlines. This too is what needs to be taught to students.

The lack of preparation makes it difficult for the educational officer to monitor what is being taught. Overlapping, repetition and leaving out of specific components of the programme may result from having ‘an idea’ of what needs to be taught.

Smith (1996) explains how the ‘learning is planned and guided’ through the use of a curriculum.

> We have to specify in advance what we are seeking to achieve and how we are to go about it. Objectives are set, a plan drawn up, and then applied, and the outcomes (products) measured (Smith, 1996).

The lack of curriculum leads to the lack of planning and ability to monitor what is been taught and what is being omitted in

each class. Banks shares his thoughts on how "it may be time for some new blood in terms of curriculum development and methodology" (Banks, D. personal conversation, 26 December 2007). More detailed investigations are needed on what content is being taught and how it can become or form part of the curriculum.

> The Lab has done fantastic work over the years and has developed a valuable prototype for acting. They need to document their method and curriculum so that it can be replicated successfully elsewhere (Sichel, A. personal communication, 12 March 2008).

If the objective is to teach and develop specific skills, those skills need to be identified and incorporated and documented into the curriculum. Once they are clear and a detailed method is established in teaching and encouraging those skills, the assessment on whether they have been achieved or not will be easier. A plan of action that is clear and transparent is developed through the planning of what needs to be taught and how it will be taught.

Curriculum Planning

A curriculum is a forecast of what is next on the training schedule and/or event calendar. A curriculum stipulates what will be taught, learnt and expected from learners and facilitators alike. There is a misconception about curricula. It does not necessarily mean product-orientated. Whereby it is completed based on what is the end result, and what topics were covered. The curriculum can mean process- orientated as well. In that the learner's progress, understanding and abilities are taken into consideration. A curriculum is dependent on the way it is created and implemented that

either orientation could be favoured. They should be seen as a guideline and aid rather than an inflexible, teacher's document. It allows for planning, goal setting and routine.

The staff should all be involved in the curriculum creating process. This will provide a guideline and encourage clarity on what is expected from each class. Events that are planned in advanced will form part of the timetable and so inform the curriculum. Circumstances such as visiting professionals, teachers requiring leave for professional work and/or holidays will cause the curriculum and timetables to be disrupted. However, the ability to monitor and measure what has been taught and what needs to be taught from before the disruption can be clearly identified. Transparency should be for all; teacher and students know about the activities and classes ahead of time. Overlapping, repetition and exclusion of certain classes or events are not offered.

> A problem with many curriculum guides is that they present objectives and content in a static and lifeless manner seemingly ignoring the fact that people have to make a curriculum happen. Any good drama teacher knows that curriculum is a lived experience; it is negotiated with colleagues and students- a fallible event dependent upon the abilities, moods and backgrounds of those who construct it (Taylor, 2000: 7).

This curriculum need not be conceptualised by the educational officer alone but amongst the staff, through suggestions, ideas of what has worked and what has not.

Annually the curriculum should be adapted according to the demand and needs of the current or new incoming students. The methodologies should too be discussed and agreed upon, this will ensure the ethos of the Lab will be carried and enforced right through to the way in which the

material is taught, assessment assessed and individuals encouraged.

Students can be included in the creation of the curriculum as well. They can be requested to evaluate the relevance of each class and the material covered. The teacher's daily reports can advise as to what other aspects of theatre or drama could be included. This would ensure a fulfilment of the student's particular needs and in this manner keep the items covered in the curriculum relevant.

A curriculum which includes the thoughts, opinions and ideas of the students can be called 'a curriculum in harmony with the student's 'real' interests, needs and learning patterns, this curriculum would provide the means by which the natural powers with the child could be harnessed' (Brouillette, 1996: 8).

Young students are able to transform and modernize the curriculum, the art industry, theatre and the way in which entertainment is viewed. They are able to do so if given the opportunity. Youth allows freedom from limitations, they are connected to the global community on an hourly basis and the ability to access information is easily at their finger tips.

> Training programmes tend to train students for the field as it is. This is how they become known and are judged as being 'good' programmes – they have a high degree of graduates working successfully in the field (TV, film, and theatre ect.). However, what many young artists want to do- and I think this is true of many if not most of the Lab participants I met is to revolutionise the field. To create stories that pertain to them and their lives, create new genres and approaches to art making, be revolutionary in their art making. Most training programmes do not work in this way (for one, many of them would lose governmental funding if they did) and so many/most students end up capitulating, being trained in old ways, and then building a career out of the very sort of work they resisted as students. There is something to be said for traditional and learning craft and

> technique. And there is also urgency for innovation, to keep moving culture forward, to open new cultural dialogues and find ways to enfranchise previously marginalised segments of the population (Banks, D. personal conversation, 26 December 2007).

Looking at different lesson given at the Lab, lesson preparation should also be required. It does not need to be followed to every written detail because one cannot predict everything that may or may not happen in a drama class. It is necessary to make cognitive allowance of the necessity to be flexible in a curriculum. This allows for a learning process and understanding that takes place by the use of interaction and active participation of all the students and the teacher inter alia. The lesson plan serves as a guideline for the facilitators and it maintains the focus of the learning programme. It is a form of documenting the course and initiating the building on and development of the programme as covered in each class.

This documentation can be used to help write a detailed report of what was covered in the class in the report book. The report book containing the teacher's reports of all classes can be used at staff meetings and the annual curriculum planning sessions. Goals and deadlines are visible and can be worked on together. Timetables form part of notifying students of events and activities where sufficient planning can be a positive result.

Conclusion

We have in this last chapter explored the misconceptions and benefits around timetables and curricula. Planning and goal setting is viewed as vital activities that should be engaged in unison. The suggestion made is for all to be a part of the curriculum planning process. The following chapter addresses the Lab's move away from a training programme solely based on practice-orientated learning to a more product-orientated learning approach. It is important to understand the OBE system. The MAPPP-SETA is influenced by an Outcomes-Based ideology and the students of the Lab are products of an OBE schooling system.

CHAPTER FIVE:

The Importance of Process in Learning

The only man who is educated is the man who has learned how to learn;
the man who is has learned how to adapt and change;
the man who has realised that no knowledge is secure,
that only the process of *seeking* knowledge gives basis for security.
Changingness, a reliance on *process* rather than
upon static knowledge, is the only thing that makes
any sense as a goal for education in the modern world

Carl Rogers
Freedom to Learn
1979: 104

Outcomes-Based Education

The Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) system is not necessarily part of the content that the Lab is teaching but rather an envisioned way or method of teaching. OBE is based on producing a product for assessment. It is focused on delivering a product that was created by a group of individuals collaborating together to fulfil specific prerequisites.

Within the Lab's *Skills Programme* PowerPoint Presentation, there is a description of how 'the Skills Programme is a practical course focused on fostering performing skills and creativity' *(Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme*, PowerPoint Presentation, Facilitators' Guide, 2007: 4). This proposes that the fostering of these skills, performance and creativity is done in a practical manner through workshops and exercises that develop and encourage performance skills. However in the next paragraph it clearly states how all

'classes are 'outcomes–based''. (*Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme, PowerPoint Presentation,* Facilitators' Guide, 2007: 4).

This is inconsistent with the original principles of a workshop based system of learning. In qualifying for accreditation from the MAPPP-SETA certain key elements are required within a training facility for it to be deemed competent for accreditation.

MAPPP-SETA

Within the MAPPP-SETA policy documents the provider (in this case the Lab) is required to complete and submit the required documentation. This documentation is a breakdown of the Lab's management system, financial and asset management, the learning programme being offered, details of the facilitators, assessors and moderators used through out the year (The MAPPP-SETA website, 2008). A scrutiny of the organisation's background, business plan, and financial conditions are looked at and evaluated. An in depth questionnaire is required to be filled out with regards to the Learning, Assessment and Moderation Management (The MAPPP-SETA website, 2008). There are twenty one questions and of the twenty one, seventeen handle the assessment process done in the provider's training. Questions around the relevance of their assessment, the pre-assessment process, assessment tools, formative and self-assessment, the assessor's role, qualifications and feedback is the MAPPP-SETA's focus (The MAPPP-SETA website, 2008). Embedded within this document is the focus on assessment and product producing activities. It is made explicit in the MAPPP-SETA documents. The Lab is required to share a similar focus.

The MAPPP-SETA is not focused on what is being taught or the methodology utilised by teachers but rather on how the students are assessed and by whom.

In order to answer these comprehensive questions, the Lab needs to be very clear on their assessment process. A move towards, a more assessment driven programme has benefited the accreditation process. MAPPP-SETA is based on the Outcomes-Based Education system and has had a great influence on the way in which the Lab assesses and views the methodology of each class. Being clear on what is being assessed may be a positive perspective, but allowing for that to become a prominent focus may cause a loss of valuing the process behind the product.

The assessment that is currently used at the Lab may or may not be influenced by the above process of the MAPPP-SETA. The Lab's understanding of the importance of monitoring each individual's progress may substantiate why there is a new focus on outcomes. Training of actors has a long history filled with different methods and systems used to instruct, guide and teach young performers. As training has had varying methods so has the way in which an individual teaches.

Education has a long history of change, reform and development. Methods that were successful in one period were unsuccessful in another. Looking back at the contexts that surrounded different educational systems and principles that were born leads to an understanding of why they worked. Change is constantly happening and this change can be seen in the needs of the youth.

Now we will look at the Outcomes-Based Education system and how it is implemented at the Lab and the advantages and disadvantages it offers students.

OBE at the Lab

The majority of the Lab students were taught under the Outcomes-Based Education system at a school level. This system aspires to expose learners to principles of holistic and cooperative learning through a learner centred approach. Adopting this way of thinking it impacts on the way in which a teacher teaches. An attempt at having a more inclusive view of the resources available is for example how the students' prior knowledge and skills can be used as assets in the learning process, adapting the way in which the individual is seen. The individual as an isolated entity is a valuable resource but looking at a group of capable individuals broadens the scope. Making the students central to their own learning; learner-centred approach not only creates an awareness of the self as a constructive tool but the group as well.

Paulo Freire (1968) was an influential educationalist whose ideas and beliefs formed and influenced many schooling systems, specifically in the OBE structure.

Freire (1968) believes that the majority of teachers do not trust in the child's ability to offer knowledge or information but rather depend on them, the teacher, to give them the knowledge. This system of learning is what he calls the 'banking technique' where the teacher 'banks' information into the child's mind and withdraws it at the end of the year, through examinations (Freire, 1968: 76). Freire encouraged the empowerment of the learner and the consciousness of the teacher to realise that the learner always has something to offer.

The 'banking technique' is a one-way teaching process also known as a teacher-centred approach where there is no emphasis placed on the learners' critical thinking development, understanding, questioning, and the giving and

sharing of their own acquired knowledge or analysis of the work (Freire, 1968: 76; Rogers, 1979).

Freire promoted a learner-centred approach where the learner is more involved in his learning and the sharing of knowledge. Education can be used to encourage critical thinking and the empowerment of individuals whereby they believe in change and self betterment. Through the OBE system the education of individuals aspires to achieve critical thinking through empowering the individual. By being able to…

> …develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves: they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process and in transformation (Freire, 1968: 83).

It is not about giving the information or knowledge back as a parrot but critically engaging with it and making it their own and seeing the change that is possible.

One could argue that OBE originally intended to place the child at the centre of the learning experiences, as a contributor and active participant. This intention would seem no different from the Freire's theoretical convictions that the child has a right to engage critically with his own learning. This engagement may be seen as a holistic engagement where the mind, body and heart may be exercised at different times of the learning.

The OBE system however also has another underlining principle; group work. This is also known as cooperative learning. 'Its strategy promotes the development of academic skills, cognition, linguistic skills, affective factors and social skills' (Botha, 2004: 12).

Cooperative learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information, the group of academics, teacher and students alike, learning together must have the

ability to speak and listen equally to each other. With regard to the Lab it includes facilitator and students. This is the theory behind the strategy, and if these principles are used correctly in practice this ideology could be very successful.

> OBE is based on the unrealistic notion that every child in a group can learn to the designated level and must demonstrate mastery of a specific outcome before the group can move on. The faster learners are not allowed to progress, but are given busy work called 'horizontal enrichment' or told to do 'peer tutoring' to help the slower learners, who are recycled through the material until the pre-determined behaviour is exhibited (Schlafly, 1993: 17).

The policy makers and theorists of the OBE system are not aware that students do not learn at the same pace or at the same level. This is due to the simple fact that not all individuals are the same; each has a unique ability of communication, learning and understanding of the world around them. Multi-intelligences, language difficulties and prior knowledge affect the way in which they learn and at what pace.

Even though cooperative learning along with its benefits are what is being encouraged within this system, the building and development of the individual is lacking. Not all intelligences are recognised in the classroom, this results in different students achieving differently in each class. This structure is based on social interactions which are encouraged in producing the desired outcome.

For the individual to work within a group, share previous knowledge and experiences, that individual must choose to do so. He must be able to see the value in collective work and not be forced to engage. There must be an awareness of his ability to contribute with others. All must realise that they have something to contribute. If this is not realised at an

individual level first, the student may feel incapable and insufficient when working with others. By forcing this upon the learners the benefits are not recognised so the task and the benefits of the system are lost.

This removes the learner from identifying the value of a process and working as a group. The process involves the freedom to make mistakes, explore the capability of change and be critical of what is meant by these changes. Utilising one's own skills and learning and sharing from others' abilities forms part of a process. Students at the Lab are being taught predominantly in a teacher-centred way. The teacher has the knowledge and passes it down to the student. Freire refers to this way of thinking as disempowering for the learners; students are represented as 'empty vessels' (Freire, 1969:76; Rogers, 1979).

The teachers at the Lab need to recognise how they were taught the knowledge they are now teaching. Most of it was gained by practice and experience in the industry. Some have tertiary qualifications and were taught in a similar way but most of what is taught is from their 'bank of experience'. Many of these teachers were not schooled within the OBE system; many were taught under apartheid education's hierarchical 'top-down system'.

The benefits of group diversity are not encouraged rather an ethos of competitiveness is instigated. South Africa is a country where its people come from various living conditions, economic backgrounds, languages, cultural and racial differences. These features all add to what should be seen as, resources to be used, not as differences to create further divides. The Lab is not advocating a demographic that is representative of a post- apartheid South Africa. 'The goal is not to force friendships but to use human diversity as a strength,' according to Vermette (1994: 38).

'In the group each learner is held accountable for his own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others' argues Botha (2004: 16). This cannot be achieved if the group cannot value all the differences and distinguish them as resources.

Disadvantages of OBE

Fulfilling specific outcomes with regards to skills, values, attitudes and knowledge all devised by the OBE policy forms part of this system. The argument, of the relevance and ability to assess ones knowledge or skills development rages on between parents, teachers and the policy makers at government level (Meyer, 1999; Botha, 2004 Schlafly, 1993).

Different activities and tasks are given in order to achieve desired skills. The outcome is conveyed to the students so that they are aware of what is expected. It involves…

> …assessment criteria (which) make it clear to both assessors and learners how assessment will take place. Assessment is more objective and fair as a result of the predetermined assessment criteria (Meyer, 1999: 5).

The students work together to achieve what is stipulated, no initiative is instilled to reach beyond what is expected. A development of average achievers may be a result where students know what is expected and they deliver no less and no more.

'Despite the many advantages and benefits of an OBE approach it does have some drawbacks in the South African context' (Meyer,1999: 6). Once these ideologies are placed within the classroom, in this case the Lab which is filled with eighteen students of different cultural backgrounds, language

capabilities, previous learning capacity and different personalities, it is then difficult for the system to be as successful as once thought or expected.

It is not effective at stimulating and addressing the needs of the individual. The current Lab students are from impoverished areas, where education levels differ dramatically from those at government or private schools in the city. Resources and governmental support differs. The quality of teachers also varies to the extent that one finds that certain township schools have unqualified teachers. They face far more difficult conditions and add to the failure of the OBE system because they cannot work at the pace of others but develop at their own speed.

These students from rural areas are not encouraged to read or to think critically and develop arguments that question and develop their understanding of the world. They are grouped together with others and individualism is not developed. Resources are not readily available and governmental support for these 'side-lined' schools is limited.

In education:

> We fail the most vulnerable through this perpetuation of the inequality of quality. Its vicious cycle of unemployment and poverty is the result of poor education (Metcalfe, *The Sunday Times*, January 2007: 1).

The consequences of the OBE system and neglect of improvement in rural schools results in the Lab having to deal with illiterate students with a lack of self-confidence and ability to express their needs and wants. Reading for example is a skill that is lacking in students from poor educational backgrounds. Reading proves to be an overwhelming endeavour. It is recognized that reading affords a great power in enabling individuals, it is thus seen as an insurmountable

obstacle and a root of detestation begins. This creates an automatic separation between a potential reader and reading material.

> Reversing the appalling performance of our children in literacy and numeracy skills that facilitate ongoing learning right from the first years of school has to be a national priority… (Metcalfe, *The Sunday Times*, January 2007: 3).

For the past four years a requirement in the programme has been a matric certificate. The certificate does not carry a matric exemption but merely a matric pass. These students receive a low matric pass which does not qualify them to enter into universities or other tertiary institutions. The result; students go through to the Lab having poor literacy skills.

> Every year on average for the last 4 years, of the learners who reached matric, only 17% of school leavers achieved the standard necessary to proceed to University, 50% passed but did not qualify to proceed to University, and 33% failed (Metcalfe, *The Sunday Times*, January 2007: 1).

Dual-Education

Several leading educators have noted that a dual-education system has taken root in a post-apartheid South Africa. Dual-education is due to the class differences developing in schools (Metcalfe, M. 2007; Jansen, J. 2007). It means that there is no one type of leaner; their economic lifestyle and educational backgrounds differ along with culture and language. There are class differences between different types of schools; private, model C, government and township schools.

> Patterns of school performance are significantly influenced by socio-economic context, and race and class coincide in South Africa. Thus we perpetuate historic inequalities in our schools. When schools were managed and differentially resourced by education departments organized on a logic of racial and ethnic divisions the matric exam was 'separate' (but never equal) for children of different races (Metcalfe, *The Sunday Times*, January 2007: 1).

We are continuing a system of division developed under apartheid. However it is no longer based on race but on economics. The Lab does no longer hold the status and influence it once did during apartheid but can be seen as an isolated institution and indirectly excluding individuals of different economic backgrounds reinforces the inherent dual-education system that has taken root in contemporary South Africa.

> In urban areas, we have seen mass migrations of children out of localities where they live to what is perceived to be a 'better' education in towns and suburbs. This freedom of choice and movement and the consequent diversity of schools in less-poor areas is to be celebrated – but it is a tragedy that this has depleted poor communities of the resources that might make a difference to quality and to hope (Metcalfe, *The Sunday Times*, January 2007: 5).

Even though the Lab is found in the city of Johannesburg, it doesn't portray the potential diversity Metcalfe alludes to. It is exclusively reserved for students of disadvantaged backgrounds and doesn't represent graduates from both aspects of the dual education system. The Lab is facing the *tragedy that is depleting poor communities of the resources that might make a difference* in the experiences and learning of their fellow students (Metcalfe, *The Sunday Times*, January 2007: 5). In essence the Lab is losing out on benefiting from the diverse community of South Africa. Students of

advantaged educational backgrounds offer a different resource to those students of a disadvantaged education system. Peer education is a powerful educational tool that isn't been harnessed here.

This exclusion is what the Lab and the Market fought against in the apartheid years. The exclusion has taken a different form in a contemporary setting: the exclusion is now based on economic status. We are constantly hearing how students in universities are constantly being turned away because they have not paid their fees. 'Tertiary institutions require an upfront fee of R5 000, an amount which is very difficult or impossible for these students to acquire' (Letseka, *The Sunday Times*, February, 2008: 13). With several bursary schemes, private and corporate funding along with the university's own financial assistance several applicants benefit, but there are many more that do not.

This is discrimination through the vehicle of economics. The smaller training institutions are indirectly excluding students who are able to pay fees and universities are excluding students who are unable to pay. The implied tone is that universities are for students who are able to pay without assistance. The wrong message is being portrayed. All institutions should alternatively be striving to include potential students from different economic backgrounds. The Lab has a high quality of training that is being offered but it is not being freely offered to all aspiring actors because of their monetary standing.

OBE has in post-apartheid schooling caused class and economic divides. The Lab is perpetuating and creating new divides, by offering the training programme to a predetermined category of students. By limiting the auditions to a specific type of individual the Lab has formed an exclusive union of homogenous individuals.

Homogeneity

The Lab has developed a pattern of only including young Black students, who emerge from a poor economy and weak dual-education system, into the training programme. Diversity of the students is minimal and disregards the value of diverse individuals creating, expressing and sharing together, in a common space.

> [They] need, in addition to the training they are receiving, teachers/mentors who are closer to their own cultural and creative experience. There are still quite a lot of intergenerational and intercultural dynamics there that one finds in drama programmes all over the world (Banks, D. personal conversation, 26 December 2007).

Even though Banks is referring to teacher and mentors alone, this research challenges the race demographic of the class and not necessarily the professional teachers/mentors. This report is not inclined to claim that the only aspiring, poor students are Black but rather that the White students and other minority groups, despite their economic statuses, are not being reached or included.

> In a 58-page report compiled by Higher Education South Africa (Hesa), which states 'the formula used to allocate funding for higher education should be reviewed to accommodate poor White students. The formula was 'racially based'. However, given the increasing number of poor White students, the present formula needs to be changed so as to provide for these students (Govender, The Times, February, 2008: 7).

What can be established from this extract is that there are a growing number of White students who are not able to attend universities because of economic difficulties. The question

raised is what happens to these White, unassisted students? Some of the Black students who are rejected for the same reasons are located at the Lab so why are there no White students? Lack of knowledge of the training available, advertising does not reached potential participants irrespective of the race. The festivals run by the Lab are done in poor communities and so awareness of what the Lab offers and is involved in is concentrated in those key areas alone.

> The sad disappointment for me is that over the years when we started in 1990 we had an influx of all the young people of South Africa: White, Coloured, Indian and Black. But now as soon as South Africa became a democracy we had less and less White students at the Lab. I suppose for some either education, abilities and access. The privileged are now able to go straight to universities and other schools. It was very important at that stage that we showcase to the world that we were focused on all the youth of South Africa. But we cannot stop working because some flowers are no longer in the garden (Kani, J. personal communication, 13 February 2008).

This explanation by Kani is specifically referenced to the students at the Lab and their homogeneity. Ismail Mahomed in an *Artslink* article on 'Theatre and Transformation' describes the entertainment industry as having similar exclusivity problems; race being the most predominant (*Artslink*, March 2008).

> Race is a defining factor in the transformation of the (entertainment) industry. The challenge for the transformation of the theatre industry has to be driven to the largest extent by both the public funded theatres and through policy of those governmental institutions which fund these theatres. We need to welcome each other into our playpens and allow each of us to make that journey of discovery to befriend each other's work. By first transforming our minds as artists, then only can we set down on the road to transforming our industry. What we have is

> theatre trying to sell itself as a liberal institution where people laugh together, cry together and create together but we have failed to demonstrate that it is an institution where the foundation is built on the core values of our new democracy which is about equal opportunity and equal access. Public funded theatres are guilty of racial stereotyping by putting industry players into racial pigeon holes. Public funded theatres are guilty of lacking the guts to be adventurous and to explore multi-cultural casts that break the racial conventions in which so many of our artistic directors are trapped. We need to recognize that while the issue of race is still a central issue in navigating a transformation strategy for the theatre industry. We need to take the challenge and the responsibility to redirect and channel our industry. We have the responsibility for creating a space for diversity in our theatres. This challenge is in the hands of the chief executive officers and the artistic directors of public funded institutions, the funding agencies and the Department of Arts and Culture but most of all, it rests with all of us, who should all become willing partners to this process but who are not! (Mahomed, *Artslink*, March 2008).

Mahomed is posing this challenge of change to several key players in the industry, namely the 'public funded institutions'. The Lab, since its new accreditation is classified as a 'public funded institution' and should take up this challenge, re-address homogeneity and create diverse theatres, as there once were. The Lab has influence over the industry's future performers; the students currently at the Lab.

The Students at the Lab

These students have strong similarities as well as differences. They are similar in that they share the same kind of backgrounds; living and educational. However all the students who attend the Lab are Black and from a disadvantaged economic and educational background. This is removed from the initial aim of bringing students from different backgrounds,

races and cultural upbringing together in one place, so that they may create together through their differences. There is no socio-economic integration. This results in division, separateness and a vacant space where inter relations should be formed and nurtured. The supposed differences such as, geographic areas of living, languages and social upbringing are not evident because of the commonalities of the students entering the programme. It is through these similarities that their ability to form close bonds is easier. You can relate more quickly and with less effort to someone who may look similar, in terms of race than to a person who looks different. South Africans should be made aware of the extra effort that is involved and should be encouraged by the industry leaders to make more of an effort to form working bonds with various individuals from different racial, economic and cultural groups.

The ability to form a community based on commonalities would be easier as opposed to forming a community with very different individuals. The assumption attached may be that considering these different individuals come from various backgrounds and cultures similarities cannot be found. Thus the experience that would arise from an integration of differences as opposed to similarities is not explored (Sichel, 2008; Kani, 2008). Interacting with individuals from various different backgrounds develops a skill that is required when living in South Africa because of the diversity of each individual; it should be celebrated and enhanced.

This homogenous group is based on individuals who were unable to achieve a matric exemption. This low standard of passing is due to the low standard of education and leans toward implying that the individual in this group lives in a rural area or attends a low resourced government school. Class distinctions begin to emerge. They remain separate from

others who may appear ‘cleverer’ and/or ‘richer’. A likeness to the separate education systems in the apartheid era is seen in this system of exclusivity. A creation of separate training facilities for different class groups is evident and will entrench itself in years to come if action to counter this is not taken. The prejudices in pre 1994 were based on race and today they are being bred in accordance to educational background, class, status and economic income.

The self esteem and personal worth is reduced because they are indirectly being told that this training is for low matric passes only. The standard of training being offered is not below average and should not be viewed in such light. Universities are not the only institution providing training that is beneficial. By being registered with MAPPP-SETA gives a status to the training, as it is recognised as meeting the specified requirements. Accreditation is vital for others not knowing what the Lab training entails they may look and see what official approval has been given. Students should not be made to feel they are receiving below-average training because of their former school results; they should appreciate and recognise the benefits they are exposed to.

Solutions

The post-apartheid educational system has several problems and is constantly being reformed and adjusted. These adjustments are caused by the shifts and the assortment of needs and changes required in the transformation of South Africa. The transformation process needs to be recognised and methodologies and programme implementation needs, need to be re-evaluated.

> The importance of the Lab is to look at the present and find its usefulness in the present. Companies go away for an indaba to re-look at their mission statements, reinvent it and come back and re-launch themselves. It needs to repaint, it needs to close and reinvent itself in the definition of what is required today. Step back and look at the given. How do you remodel yourself into the new country? Otherwise transformation and development is going to pass you by (Kani, J. personal communication, 13 February 2008).

By moving away from the ethos of bringing together individuals of all races into one building to create, workshop and explore it is losing a keystone of what the Lab is ultimately known for. It is in these workshops that this community which is representative of a post-apartheid South Africa that another fundamental principle and asset of the Lab exists; the working process.

Involving more of an integrated group of students to be trained at the Lab the culture of class distinctions and dual-education which is prevalent in the schools they all come from will limit the differences between the students. By being given the opportunity to work together commonalities will be found and they will outweigh the differences of economics and backgrounds.

The auditions should be open to all matriculants interested in pursuing a career in the arts irrespective of race or economic background. The fees requested are minimal but should not determine who may enrol and who may not. The lab students have been exposed to the Community Theatre groups and the Community Theatre Festival whereas other students living outside these communities are not exposed at all. These community outreach programmes 'advertise' to a selected group of students. Other students are being excluded. Advertisements and exposure about the Lab, the training programme and the Community Theatre Festival should be

made available to a variety of potential students in different schools, rural and urban.

This shift in including other individuals of different races and economic brackets will benefit the Lab and place it in the forefront of the transformation process. The MAPPP-SETA accreditation along with the Lab's move towards a more product based type of education and has ensured a positive positioning for change. As mentioned before there has been a great amount of pressure placed on the Lab to reform and adapt to an outcomes-based system. This would mean a move from a workshop (process) style of teaching to more of an outcomes-based (product) methodology.

The Lab has a valuable tool which is used to train young actors, the tool of practical training. This practical element lends itself to being process drama. By using this method as a strategy within actor training classes, a sense of sharing and benefiting from each other will replace the competitiveness that is present. Imagination will be stimulated and developed, improvisational skills enhanced and utilised all within the class as a group and when working on their own individual material.

> This (is) a powerful and engaging strategy worthy of thoughtful implementation and can be coupled with teachers' personal styles and behaviours to increase success (Vermette, 1994: 36).

Conclusion

There are definite beneficial properties found in the outcomes-based teaching approach. Both the advantages and disadvantages have been noted. OBE is not without fault and changing the Lab's pedagogy to a product-orientated pedagogy will not benefit the students in the same way as a process-orientated method.

We will look now at the final chapter which deals with the final problem; the loss of process-orientated learning. The reasons for this shift between process and product and why process is important and why it should be maintained as the main methodology of the training programme at the Lab.

CHAPTER SIX:

Principles within Process Drama

Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea,
never regains its original dimensions

Oliver Wendell Holmes
Paul Hanna, The Success Motivator,
2006: n.p

Product versus Process

A combination and an inter-action of both theory and practice are needed for a full exposure to the performance and entertainment industries. In developing one's ability, skills and potential in these industries an individual must engage in practice. In developing expertises and skills, practice is needed and for the understanding of skills theory is needed. Phillip Taylor (2000) explains the term whose use is to explain a classroom that is involved with practice and theory, this is called drama praxis.

> The word 'praxis' brings these two aspects of theory and practice together, seeing both as a part of a complex dynamic encounter. Drama praxis is characterised by an active and improvised encounter controlled by a particular educational context (Taylor, 2000: 5, 7).

In suggesting a more process-orientated learning does not suggest the exclusion of theory. It implies that theory is

embedded within process drama along with practice. The training methodology has turned a focus upon product and assessment. This new focus may be beneficial but process and drama praxis is falling victim. Their benefits and value should be recognised. Next we look at the benefits that exist within process drama.

Stanislavski's 'hope was for (his work to be) a guide… a handbook, not a philosophy' (Carnicke, cited in Hodge, 2000: 7). Strasberg describes the actor as having the ability, through resolve and originality, to 'create out of himself' (Strasberg, cited in Hodge, 2000: 7). Brook believed that 'the only method to give results was a fusion of several different methods' (Brook, cited in Mitter, 1992: 1). These academics share the ideology that no single method of teaching, acting or directing is absolute. A variation and combination of several forms is what establishes a holistic actor. In order for the actor to experience these different guides and techniques, practice is needed. An actor is holistic if he is able to draw on his emotions, his thinking and acting skills to assist in performance. He is aware of the different aspects of himself that can be used in a performance. The individual is required to use the theories and methodologies as a guide not as the unwritten rules to performance. The individual should be used to gather and discover the truth around their understanding of 'inner truth on the stage' (Stanislavski, cited in Roose-Evans, 1984: 7).

The Lab is envisioned to be a place where individuals may discover and perfect their particular crafts. The way in which it has been done in the past is by a practical approach where action and exercise is used for their development. In the Lab documents to the MAPPP-SETA they declare themselves product-based and fulfilling the pre-stated outcomes. However certain questions are raised as to how

much focus is placed on the product for a system to be named outcomes-based? Is this, product concentrating system a viable way of teaching performance? Are process and the advantages found within, being lost because of this move towards a new system?

A search into the Lab's reasons behind the change from process to product will be investigated along with a view to answering the questions above.

Product and OBE

The Lab's classes are said to be run with an 'outcomes–based' ideology which implies a focus on product and not on process (*Market Theatre Laboratory Drama School Performance and Theatre Skills Programme*, PowerPoint Presentation. 2007: 4). However you cannot have process without reaching a product of some sorts, whether it was the desired product of not something was achieved. It is through process that product occurs.

Identified in the previous chapter, the advantages and disadvantages of the OBE system were outlined. However this new focus proves to be a further problem. When the product is placed before the process the result is process being minimised and the discoveries made within are also reduced. The Lab's mission has been about basic training in performance through workshopping ideas, theories and creating prospective performances. However there is "no pressure to commit to an opening night" merely the opportunity to develop their ideas for potential plays (Fleishman, M. personal communication, 6th February 2008).

There should be no pressure in committing to a product in a place developed for an entirely different purpose. That

purpose is for practice and workshopping where mistakes are made, individuals play and experiment.

The Lab ought to re-look at their pedagogy within each class and make observations of what the focus is and the importance thereof. Why is the practical constituent being offered within the programme so vital in developing one's craft? The advantages and potential for process drama, imagination, memory and play which can be used are further discussed accordingly.

Even though process and product bleed into each other at certain points of their progression they are very different procedures. Theatre has been seen as the product and drama as the process (Way, 1967). Each of these disciplines involves process and product. Watching a theatre production you are not likely to see the process that led to the end product, in a classroom you are more likely to see the evidence of a process in action. Process has the 'basic premise of developing people rather than drama' (Way, 1967: 8). The Lab is filled with eighteen students, who because of their compromised education and underprivileged home circumstances require an education that can meet their needs in aspiring towards improvement of their previous circumstances. The Lab is a place to offer this specialised education but in many aspects can be the leader in a new pedagogy which directly deals with transformational issues of South Africa. This is the foundation that forms part of this research's intention. This intention is to contribute toward the development and improvement of the Lab's learning processes in order to benefit the student long after they have graduated. For many years this has been done and successful students have time and time been produced (Sichel, 2008). The replacement of the Lab's practice-orientated approach is not being suggested in this report but rather a process-orientated

learning approach is more of an additive to the existing methodology employed at the Lab. A look at what benefits can be acquired through using process drama in a classroom such as the Lab will be further examined.

Process

O'Neill (1995) is concerned with the kind of process that occurs in a classroom called process drama or drama in education. She further explains how this technique requires 'improvisation as a vital source of dramatic invention and discovery' (O'Neill, 1995: xvi). Process drama and devised theatre do not require a predicted outcome, the use of a script or an audience for it to take place successfully, but it does take place. A text or the 'pre-text' as it is called is used merely as an impulse to start the process, not to guide it. The ideas or inspiration that the students at the Lab bring to be developed and worked upon with others would be called the 'pre-text'.

A product cannot exist without acknowledging the process that created it. A play inspired by a 'pre-text' does not exclusively mean the written word but could be something verbally expressed or an object that was seen. It is within the time that lapses between the 'pre-text' and the play that the learning happens. Students engage and add their opinions, use their imagination and different abilities in generating a more substantial entity. They learn from each other and it is herein that new skills are developed: skills which do not form part of the required syllabus.

> Group work is a powerful tool that is used to facilitate group discussion and group interaction, where giving and sharing is evident and the social process is used for learning (Clifford, Davison & Herrman.1998: 156).

The focus should be on developing the individual along with developing a level of independence from the group. Allowing and creating a space for mistakes, ideas and for the growth of their unique identities.

Practice is understood by the students as the exercises and practical floor work they engage with on a daily basis. Process is seen as practice however activities like reading, researching, thinking and discussing also form part of process drama. Drama praxis; theory and practice as one. On the opposite spectrum, theory is understood to be purely reading and according to the students who were interviewed, they do not like or enjoy reading and so there is a natural reluctance to participate in theory. Reading about theorists' methods or techniques is not the only way of engaging with that kind of material. Students feel intimidated and limited if most of the work that is being taught is in a set format and follows a defined system of ideas and methods. They can however be engaged in a practical way, dependent of each teacher's style. In this interview a students told of the difficulty of reading and the accessibility of practical.

> You read and read and read, that is theory, we don't have time to read all the theory it's better if you do it practically, reading is over there… practical is here and its quick for me to understand it (Student A. personal communication, 10 December 2007).

Brian Peachment (1976), describe the aim of 'good drama teaching lies in the ability of the teacher to stimulate the pupils to a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them' (Peachment, 1976: 18). 'Good drama' and the correct stimulus are found in process drama, where participants are stimulated by practical and theoretical means. Individuals are constantly thinking and engaging with the

world around them. They are no longer passive but active and thinking about the external world and their own internal world.

Practice, through a workshop method is how the teachers of the Lab engage with the material being taught. The MAPPP-SETA requires a focus on product. However this will not be easily or quickly implemented and will take time and planning. In theory, the Lab is following an outcomes-based system but in practice they are workshop bound. The ideologies of group work within the OBE system are well thought out and offer students many advantages but these rewards can be found in process drama as well.

The simple act of incorporating process drama as a focus in classes at the Lab will develop the individual's confidence. There is a belief that they, despite their circumstances or misfortunes, are a resource. It is imperative that an awareness of the fact that the individual has something valuable to offer to themselves and to the group is realised. This must be instilled and must form the core of the progress that is developed.

Another way of developing the individual's confidence and building the self as a worthy resource leads us to turn our focus to the principles used by Stanislavski (1942). Keeping in mind that this is one method that can be used and does not need to be used in its totality but the guidelines and ideas are what we later extract. The principles of imagination and using oneself as resources are further explained. A belief that if these principles are utilised at the Lab as a part of the specific methodology the students will benefit and prosper from valuing themselves and understanding their ability to add to character building.

Imagination and Emotional Memory

Constantin Stanislavski (1942) was a theatre practitioner and theorist who developed techniques for actor training. These techniques were designed to develop the actor's ability and awareness of himself as a resource. The psychological processes that occur within a single human being are what form the basics of his ideologies of the personal self. Stanislavski (1942) believes that one's inner thoughts, the use of senses, emotions, memory, imagination, body and its physical actions, and personal objectives, are all connected to each individual and should be used in their entirety. They assist an actor and develop his character and performance on stage. Strasberg similarly believes in the personality as a source of discovering truth on a stage (Strasberg, 1987; Grotowski, 1968). Grotowski and Strasberg are other innovative theatre practitioners that in some way have been influenced by the original thinking and evocations made by Stanislavski.

Stanislavski pioneered the process of acting known as 'psychological realism' (Hodge, 2000: 15). All these formed part of what has come to be known as, *The Stanislavski System*. This system along with its principles still influences theorists and actors alike. The system…

> …was based on experience, that the techniques he had advocated in it were based on his analysis of the reasons for his success as a practicing actor (Mitter, 1992: 17).

This system of acting was developed by Stanislavski observing himself as an actor on the stage. Constantly questioning and comparing performances and attributing his best rendition to the psychological thought processes that accompanied them.

In being able to perfect a skill, in this case acting, one should be open to self criticism that forms constructive change and development of the skill (Stanislavski, 1942). By creating a space where the young actor from the Lab is able to observe himself in action he is able to critique and listen to the critique of others in a constructive and interactive manner. This is one way of approaching the issues of self confidence. Boal (1979) also saw the advantages of this, observing oneself and taking action as an individual in a group of other individuals.

Strasberg (1987) attributes his learning to Stanislavski and his trust in the individual as a whole capable of being a resource. In naming the individual as a resource it implies that the individual has his own emotions, actions, thoughts and imagination that can be used to help a performer and a performance. These 'resources' should not be taken from other people but rather by using one's own, thus rendering a performance that is more authentic and presenting an experience that is remembered because of the unique and real feelings portrayed. 'Acting (is) the process of living on stage' and should be filled with the real emotions and experiences that an individual has already experienced and is using again for the purposes of the stage (Strasberg, 1987: 63).

Stanislavski encouraged his actors to 'live in character off stage' as well as when playing the character on stage (1987: 44). This is to discover the character's truth, their mannerisms, subconscious realities and feelings through impromptu activities in their daily lives. 'Similarly, in Grotowski's theatre, actors play their characters by playing themselves' (Mitter, 1992: 79). Mitter (1992) talks about an integration of stage life and real life, to develop a character's personality that has real elements, where both aspects are

exposed to each other and the benefits are seen on the stage through the 'realness of the character'(Mitter, 1992: 79).

You cannot have one aspect without the other; a delicate and unique balance is needed. As humans are social beings and rely on the interactions with others and the solitude of ones self, each person's balance will be different.

> Out of this comes living in harmony with one's own personality and with one's own destiny; parallel with it comes the growing horizons of awareness of and understanding of other people' (Way, 1967: 178).

Brian Way explains how the human being is capable and dependent on the balance of both the psychological and social interactions.

The truth that needs to be discovered on the stage, where the imaginary situation is played out, is where the actor draws on their own real memories, emotions and thoughts, which they themselves have experienced in the past. There is a 'need to encourage our writers to be taking the challenges which connect their writings with the experiences of real people' (Mahomed, *Artslink*, March 2008). This report's intention is to recognise that both the psychological and social aspects of life need to be used together to create an actor able to use all as resources.

'The essence of theatre (is) to become another, in the theatre a person can become that reality and literally embody it' (Stanislavski, cited in Mitter, 1992: 9). By using oneself as a resource and remembering that the self is an intrapersonal and interpersonal being that both can be drawn upon equally.

Hall (1997) explains how it is…

> … simple enough to form concepts for things we can perceive, like people, chairs, but we also form concepts of rather obscure and abstract things, which

> we can't in any simple way see, feel or touch, the concept of war, death or friendship (Hall, 1997: 17).

Using the body and its past experiences, emotions and feelings, once felt by the individual, can be used to assist in performance. The actor's representations of the world around them add to the 'memory' of the character. These representations can be both tangible and intangible. When the situation is played or a specific line is said, the created memory filled with emotions and experiences is evoked and used for that character to appear completely real. Drama engages both the head and the heart. Learning through drama relies on the active involvement of our mind, body, feelings and spirit and so doing, a holistic actor is born. 'It demands interaction between people… it is a social process… and for this reason is ideally suited to working with a group' (Clifford, Davison & Herrman, 1998: 156).

Stanislavski places value in the human being, a human that is capable of mental development, psychological processes, a feeling and emotional being with the ability to attach meaning to one's character through personal experiences and the embodiment of the self. Developing the ability of distinguishing the similarities and differences that exist between ones self and the character, and then using both to create a full character.

> It consists not of individual concepts, but of different ways of organizing, clustering and classifying concepts and establishing complex relations between them. We use principles of similarity and difference to establish relationships between concepts or to distinguish them from one another. The mixing and matching of relations between concepts to form complex ideas and thoughts is possible because our concepts are arranged into different classifying systems (Hall, 1997: 17).

In *An Actor Prepares* (1942) Stanislavski explains how at a workshop with his director Tortsov, he and his colleagues played out a scene which they had already done several times before. It was here that he was introduced to the phenomenon of emotional 'realness' (1942: 153).

Stanislavski and the others in the class described that they were absorbed in the activities of the scene and 'repeated exactly what (they) used to do… 'We really felt what we were doing' (1942: 154). The director agreed that they were feeling something, but that was only because they were not dead, however what they were feeling, described the director was 'not genuine but rather an imitation of what they had felt from the first time they realised what the scene was about' (Stanislavski, 1942: 154).

> You preserved the whole staging, the movements, the external actions, the sequence and every little detail of grouping, to an amazingly accurate degree. One could easily be lead to think that (the actors) had photographed the set (Stanislavski, 1942: 155).

This was a representation of their ability to remember how they had once felt not in fact their ability to connect with what they felt as it was happening. In doing so this would have created new and real feelings and emotions and in turn would influence their gestures in a real manner. Feelings that were not imitated from previous rehearsals would make it authentic in that moment. 'All external production is formal, cold and pointless if it is not motivated from within,' according to Stanislavski (1942: 155).

> If the internal process of feelings is genuine and real in the moment the external reactions will not be falsely portrayed but rather feed off what is happening on the inside (Performance Journal, 2007).

Both Stanislavski and Freire were against a 'parrot fashion' approach either on the stage or in a classroom setting. They believed that repetition may be seen as false and the genuine reaction to the situation is lost. The limitation and manufacturing of emotions or information has no engagement or real reflection from the individual themselves but rather of what they think it should be.

As mentioned Stanislavski (1942) uses the internal process which he describes as influencing the external actions or gestures of an actor, in a real and authentic manner. Contrary to this he also describes that when observing a real external gesture, for example the way in which a person walks, and this too may create a real internal process accompanied by real emotions.

Grotowski shares his enthusiasm and is…

> … determined to use the theatre not, like Brook to unsettle the audience, but deeply to inspire the spectator to adopt faith in the feasibility of change (Mitter, 1992: 81).

If the young actors at the Lab could understand and become aware of how their situations that surround them may be used to assist them in performance their circumstances will not seem so daunting but rather they will see how they may change them. By being aware of the potential and changes that can occur within each individual's life enables them to imagine and to believe that change is possible.

> It is not possible to be something without knowing it. To 'realize' is both to 'apprehend clearly' (to know) and to 'convert into fact' (to be) If one can only inhabit what one is aware of, and if people are strangers to themselves, then it follows that one can only be oneself if one knows oneself (Grotowski, cited in Mitter, 2000: 83).

Being aware of the environment and the different individuals who occupy the same space that you do, is what an actor should be concerned with, awareness. An awareness of others and their ability to enhance each other's performances, the actor needs to be aware of his processes, both the internal and external that can be drawn upon.

> Drama, despite its general intangibility, affords one facet of tangible help by providing the opportunity of fulfilling for a short space of time some of the tempting 'ifs'. Through drama it is possible to *try out* what happens if… what it feels like if…what it really means if…one is someone else or has this that or other circumstances in life. And out of this trial and error slowly emerges, at a deep level, the simple awareness of the truth: 'No, I am not really like that… I don't really want to be like that…' and the positive corollary of I see - that is me: I am like that and such and such is where I fit into the scheme of things' (Way, 1967: 178).

Piaget (1964) believes in the cognitive development of each individual and is mainly concerned with…

> … how we obtain, process and use information. Piaget sees the individual as actively engaged in an ongoing process of adaptation where people are constantly confronted with new information from their environment; the physical and the social world around them. (They) are involved in constructing or building progressively more complex 'maps' of this world in an attempt to understand and adapt to the world' (Donald, 1997, cited in Linington, 2003: 32).

Community

Stereotyping and classification is learned at an early age where children are indirectly taught about inclusion and exclusion. The ideology of Forum Theatre is that no one member of the community is isolated and ridiculed but rather invited on stage to suggest a solution for the character's problem. Boal (1979) and his team of actors observe the members of the community and identify real oppressions, problems and situation. The oppressions are turned into stories that are presented to the community members (Boal, 1979). However because these stories resonate with the community members and they in some way relate to what is being shown the intention is to help them see that change is possible. The community are invited to change the situations being presented on the stage so that the oppression is eliminated (Boal, 1979). Most significantly this implies that the stories and environments explained are real and so the emotions that are evoked and remembered are just as real as the change that is created and the solutions which may be inspired.

Hall (1997) explains how an 'imagined community' is based on stereotyping and…

> …is part of the maintenance of social and symbolic order. It steps up a symbolic frontier between the 'normal' and the 'deviant', the 'accepted' and the 'unaccepted', what 'belongs' and what does not or is 'Other', between 'insiders' and 'outsiders', Us and Them. It binds all of us that are 'normal' into an 'imagined community' (Hall, 1997: 258).

A suspension of disbelief is created, not only in believing the characters on stage but that the community does not isolate or exclude through judgement and stereotyping. By creating a

forum where issues that the students at the Lab are facing solutions can be found, discussed and be implemented. These students as described before are a community and so a Forum Theatre can be used to help deal with their oppressive situations. By using a Forum Theatre their circumstances can be viewed as something that can change and can rather be used as resources in their performances as opposed to something that holds them back.

The young actors from the Lab should be allowed the same area of safety, to question, to make mistakes and to share their personal thoughts, suggestions and problems with others. However an understanding of stereotyping and judgement should be dealt with. Attempts at eradicating issues within the working space should be agreed upon by all. It is an integration of the individual and the social to create an actor able to engage in both realms.

Play

Play is a termed activity that involves games, activities for enjoyment, to interact and amuse oneself.

> Any game worth playing is highly social and has a problem that needs solving within it - an objective point in which each individual must become involved (Spolin, 1999: 5).

By engaging in games and in play, the imagination is stimulated and summoned. Not only is the mind in action but the body, voice and memory as well. Peter Slade (1954) categorises play into two forms; personal play and projected play. Personal play is when the child is self involved and the interactions happen within that individual.

> Here the child is completely involved, mentally, imaginatively and physically. This is the kind of play where the child *is* the cowboy riding across the prairies, he *is* the motorcar winning the speedway rally, he *is* the little canoe hurtling over the rapids. He is usually very active in personal play. His absorption is total, and his sincerity is without question (Slade, cited in Malan, 1973: 7).

Slade's second kind of play is projected play. The child projects what is happening in his mind through imagination, memory and emotion upon different objects. These objects can be cars, dolls, plastic animals and/or puppets.

> Here the child is physically relatively still: he sits or lies; and the play happens outside of himself, outside of his physical self, it is projected onto objects. The play happens every bit as imaginatively, every bit as real-ly, for the child, but the child is not physically involved (Malan, 1973: 8).

These two forms of play should be utilised as methods in the training programme. The students are engaging and dealing with various abilities: action through physicality and mental processes through emotions, imagination and cognitive action. Burton (1955) explains that the child is in fact doing two things:

> He is *trying out* life experiences, experimenting with the life around him and with his own particular self, investigating, particularly, experiences which he is likely to have to encounter in fact. And he is *playing out* his fears, repressed desires, anti-social behaviour, which the social conventions around him do not allow him to give expression to (Burton, 1955, cited in Malan, 1973: 8).

Play according to Burton (1955) is the 'trying out' of the life and the world around a child and the 'playing out' of the emotions he feels about his environment. Play is not an

exclusive activity reserved for children only but should be encouraged and employed at the Lab.

Malan (1973) goes on to explain how short the process of play is, and how instead of allowing the child to express and be explicit about his feelings, schools drive learning and education in its place. Filling up on knowledge is the order of school, high school and universities and play is forgotten. It is in many respects where the learning and preparation for the world occurs.

> This natural, powerful and fundamental impulse - the impulse to play - must be used in education as a means towards healthy and full maturity. Any attempt to educate without using a main dynamic of human cultural development seems rather foolish (Burton, 1955: 16 cited in Malan, 1973: 9).

The Lab promotes process. I believe this should continue despite the pressure of accreditation and the changes that are required. The suggestion is to use process drama in practice and it is through this process that the students are seen as a resource and where play can be used along with imagination, emotional memory and improvisation. Imagination and play form the foundations of understanding and engaging successfully in improvisation.

The students at the Lab need to engage and 'try out' life experiences, different to the experiences in which they have found or still find themselves in. The ability to imagine oneself as another with better circumstances may inspire students in some way to strive for that better life. Each individual is unique, their dreams differ, their circumstances differ and their personalities differ. These differences can be used as tools; Malan suggests that it is used in a drama class through process drama to further strengthen the process.

> The basic element we use in drama is each individual personality, and each individual personality is going to be different in one way or another. Whereas most education tends to seek out the sameness in individual personalities - the things which we can measure as common to everybody: we all know our seven-times table - drama-in-education tends instead to go for and develop the differentness in individual personalities (Malan, 1973: 11).

The 'individuality of the individual' as Brian Way (1967) puts it, is what is developed through the process (Way, 1967: 3). Individuality is required in the performance industry and the training process that students enrol into should extract it out of each student. Within process the pedagogy of top-down teaching is eliminated. The principles of process drama include a facilitator who is a mediator between the student and the material being learnt. Facilitation of the drama is vital for a process to be learner-centred.

At the Lab the historical way of teaching was to incorporate a workshop space filled with experienced and aspiring theatre practitioners. They would work in harmony, discovering, teaching and learning together (Robbertse, 2007, Cooke, 2007).

'The initial impulse was for ongoing training for professionals' (Fleishman, M. personal communication, 6th February 2008). They were to train along side others who were not of equal experience so as to see and benefit from each other as resources. Learn as they worked together. Now however the top-down approach is where professionals are no longer learning with the students but teaching them basic theatre skills, how to act and react with props and cast.

Workshops given by students to fellow students will result in the gaining of confidence because they are made to recognise their knowledge and see themselves as a resource. Teachers will discover that they too learn from student and

the work that is presented in the workshops. Instead of feeling inadequate and likened to an empty vessel, students feel valuable to the class. Pair workshops is where the students, gain from researching together, not in a daunting process on their own but working with someone. These workshops can be both practice and theory: drama praxis. The valuing of theory will be re-instilled, students will be able to engage with theory in other classes because they have learnt to engage and use it to assist them in their workshops.

By incorporating process drama which lends its self to play, imagination, emotional memory and improvisation, the top-down teaching will change to a facilitation of the working material and will ultimately benefit the students.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have explored the new product-orientated learning approach and the influences behind its new pronounced focus. A solution around incorporating process drama to enhance the process-orientated learning approach is made and explained. Through the explanation of the principles and aspects which are found within, the benefits are revealed. The aspects imagination, emotional memory, play and improvisation are suggested in order to play a more prominent role in the teaching methodology at the Lab so that the students are developed as more of a resource to themselves and to their fellow performers.

CONCLUSION

Ordinary people have extraordinary possibilities
when they throw open the doors of opportunity.
It brings out the best in them and we frequently see amazing
results from the most unlikely people. It matters not where you have come
from of where you have been. There is always a reason why you should unleash that
ability that has been dormant within you all the time

Norman Nel
Words to Set Your Speech on Fire
2006: 26

In this report a historical context has been established for the reader to understand the framework in which the Market Theatre and then later the Market Theatre Laboratory were born into. This context sheds light on the role and the societal needs that these institutions fulfilled during the apartheid and post-apartheid eras. The break from the apartheid regime formed the context in which the Lab was developing in. The role of the Lab has been defined by the nature of change in South Africa. This study has specifically attempted to examine the current nature and purpose of the educational training programme for actors at the Lab. The study has raised several questions and issues pertaining to performance training at this level in the South African context. Issues around transformation have been identified.

The students, teachers, classes and the training programme's methodologies and accreditation process all form part of the investigated work and the analysis thereof. This provides a clear understanding for the reader as to what the Lab is and the role it plays in South Africa today.

This study has demonstrated that South Africa is confronted by an educational system that is at odds with the needs of the current learners. Quality of education is lacking and learners are facing discrimination because of this. 'The hard reality is that we are not making the progress we need in the two most critical dimensions of education performance: quality and equity' according to Metcalfe (2007: 1).

This report has addressed the specific issues that have been identified and deemed as problems at the Lab. The intention has been to highlight the realities found at the Lab amongst the students. Problems noted involve language dominance, dual-education, homogeneity and exclusivity, lack of curriculum planning and the loss of a process-orientated learning pedagogy. This study has argued that these current problems are a result of the transformation in which the country has undergone and is still facing. It does not attempt to discredit the successful work done at the Lab in the past and current years, but rather draw attention to areas of transformational concern. These transformation offshoots have not being adequately addressed by the students or the teachers at the Lab and this has caused further problems. These problems can be easily resolved through simple recognition of their presence and consequences. Difficulties and adaptation to the country's transformation is not being recognised and thus the problems are not being actively tackled. It is through this study that attention is drawn to the problems noted above.

Recommendations have been made and substantiated as to why alternative transformations would aid the learning and developmental process, in order that the students and the training programme may benefit.

Multilingual assessments, classes and teachers are recommended to minimise the language dominance prevalent

in classes. A specific effort needs to be made in the acceptance of new students every two years. Availability and accessibility needs to be made to students of various economic backgrounds, race demographics and experience. This will provide a class of Lab graduates having the ability to draw from a wider perspective of resources. Additionally the Lab students will be at the fore front of having had a unique and specifically focused learning experience, providing that the Lab can be a leader in addressing and resolving the new socio-economic situations which can be found in our young democracy.

Curriculum planning needs to be a made a focus at the Lab. Teachers, the educational officer and the students need to collaborate to develop a working process-orientated curriculum. There are misconceptions around timetables and curriculum that have to be addressed so that forward thinking, planning and goal setting can be established for all at the Lab to attain together.

The final problem that was addressed in the report was the issue around the accreditation of the Lab's training programme with the MAPPP-SETA. Specifically this study reveals a move away from the original process-orientated learning approach established as one of the first pedagogy used at the Lab. The new focus which is a result of the pressure by the MAPPP-SETA's accreditation is to follow a more product-orientated approach. This has lead to the loss of valuing the process and the development of the individuals working within the process, before the product is developed. Assessment and producing a product is the focus that the MAPPP-SETA expects the Lab to follow in line with other accredited facilities. This approach would contradict the original vision of the Market Theatre Laboratory as developed by the late Barney Simon.

The Lab needs to value its original pedagogy. As there are certain changes evident in a contempory South Africa this practice-orientated approach need not be eliminated but adapted along to compliment these changes. Process drama is a way of altering and adding to the original pedagogy. It is through this way that methodologies are not excluded but all are incorporated in developing a holistic, practical, multilingual and culturally diverse curriculum devised by all who utilise it.

In the final chapter the value and benefits found in process drama are reflected upon. I argue in Chapter six that there is a need to develop the self-confidence and expressive range of individual actors in training. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds are exposed to disease, desperation, death, economic difficulty and hunger on a daily basis. They are made to grow up very quickly and miss the opportunity to be the children and teenagers they are. They have no chance to play, explore, and develop themselves as individuals. There is a lack of confidence, self-awareness and security.

Through process drama students learn to play, imagine, explore and develop their selves. The developmental principles have not been engaged upon and need to be encouraged. Specific drama in education/process drama embedded within the curriculum needs to be available to the students so that they may have a real opportunity to escape, imagine, dream and play. This is needed for these individuals to be productive, self-sufficient and reliable citizens. Their poor education did not expose them to the basic principles that nurture confidence and esteem. The Lab can be a place where they can be exposed to the journey of self discovery, and in addition the individual can be used as a resource in performance. Imagination and improvisation are stimulated

through process drama which adds to the creativity of not only the process but the end product as well. Emotional memory is encouraged to be used as catalysts for productions and as resources for performances. Realisation in others as resources is stimulated with equality being enhanced. Play is another aspect found in process drama that has benefits of inspiring creativity and imagination. These are some of the recommendations made within this study to assist the Lab's training programme to become a prototype and a leader in South African actor training.

The relevance of this research is important in that further research can be undertaken to investigate the training programme of the Lab in more depth and other facilities that are available to post-matriculants. It is a way of monitoring and evaluating what is being taught and what is not. Training facilities should be supervised by MAPPP-SETA closely and the necessary levels of development can be implemented accordingly. This report believes the work being done at the Lab is valuable and with certain changes the Lab can once again be in the forefront of actor training in South Africa.

The Market Theatre Laboratory can eventually work as a communication hub, where new ideas, designs and work by writers, directors and actors could be showcased and developed by one another together in a safe place of creativity and confidence. The Lab will allow for inter-sections between schools from different social spectrums, different communities, theatre groups, universities and other training facilities, professional theatres and the broader profession. This communication hub will network and activate sustainable training programmes and in so doing will reach all these entities above in a positive manner that will help grow and develop their performance output.

The Lab needs to develop their own training and implement a rigorous and contempory style that other institutions and facilities may use and adapt for themselves. Despite the lack of recognition, this establishment is achieving; it is servicing the community which create within. It is training the youth of the industry and giving facilitators an opportunity to practice and learn from the students they interact with. The Lab is doing something sustainable for the South African youth and achieving this with limited recognition and limited support (Henriques, 2008).

The continued development of the Lab is essential, and runs parallel with the transformation of South Africa and the growth of its theatre industry. There is a need for an institution to lead the way in transformation adaptation in the entertainment industry. The Market Theatre and the Market Theatre Laboratory were the leading pair in opposing the wrongs of the apartheid regime and in so doing unearthed real South African stories. The Market Theatre Lab can show the way forward in the creation of a diverse, democratic society for all who live in it. It is about how we value future generations of individuals.

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Interviews

Vanessa Cooke, Current Director of the Market Theatre Laboratory, Interview at the Market Theatre Laboratory, 28 November 2007.

Dr John Kani, Founder of the Market Theatre Laboratory, Board member of the Market Theatre Foundation and Actor, Interview at the Market Theatre, Johannesburg, 13 February 2008.

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Irene Stephanou, Teacher at of the Market Theatre Laboratory and Author of *'The world in an Orange: Creating Theatre with Barney Simon',* Interview at Rosebank, Johannesburg, 5 December 2007.

Telephonic Interviews

Adrienne Sichel, Journalist, 12 March 2008
Mark Fleishman, Former Administrator of the Market Theatre Laboratory Head of Drama at University of Cape Town, 6th February 2008.

Personal Conversations

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APPENDIX A

Dear Interviewee 2007

I am a Masters in Dramatic Art student enrolled in the School of the Arts at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. I am completing an independent research project under the supervision of Mr Warren Nebe, Head of Dramatic Arts at the University. One requirement is that I select and collect data on the topic of my interest. For this research project I have chosen to investigate the training programme being offered at The Market Theatre Laboratory, Newtown, South Africa.

At this time I am seeking answers to research questions that will lead to the complete understanding of the way in which The Lab's training programme is being implemented today. Questions about their principles, aims and methods along with discovering who the current students are all forms part of this investigation. The Lab has been recently been accredited and now officially is recognised as an educational institution, with the Media, Advertising, Publishing, Printing, Packaging, Sector Education Training Authority. (MAPPPSETA.)

Please read through and sign the consent form attached, this will allow your experiences and information given in this interview to be used within the analysis of training programme.

I would like to thank you in advance for your time in helping to add to the understanding of The Lab and The Market Theatre and each ethos. Your contribution to this limited body of knowledge, I hope will enhance and develop the existing training of our actors today. The results of this study will be available upon your request.

Thank you
Sincerely,

E. E Constantinides

APPENDIX B

Interviewee Consent form

Name and Surname: _____

Institution of your training: _____

Institution in which you teach/ work: _____

Gender: _____ Race: _____

Your Age range:
_____17-19
_____20-25
_____26-30
_____31-35
_____36-40
_____41-45
_____45-50
_____50 and over

I, _____ hereby give consent to the researcher of this paper to use the contents shared in this interview. I am aware that at any point I may request a copy of the completed report or transcribed writing of this interview. If at any stage of the interview I feel I would like to be referred to as 'anonymous', I am welcome to request that privilege.

Any grievances I may have, I am aware that I am able to communicate them with the researcher or with her supervisor at any point.

Sign: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C

Questions

Dr. D. Banks
Mr. M. Fleishman
Dr. J. Kani
Mr. M. Molepo

- How were/are you involved at The Market Theatre Laboratory?
- What were its fundamental principles, aims or goals?
- What were Simon's aspirations for The Lab?
- Are you aware of the training programme being offered at The Lab?
- What theoretical paradigm underpins the training programme?
- What do you find unique about The Lab?
- In your opinion, what are some of the problems that The Lab faces?
- Do you think The Lab is a relevant and productive platform for voices in a post-apartheid South Africa?

APPENDIX D

Questions

Ms. V. Cooke
Mr. D. Robbertse
Ms. I. Stephanou

- How were/are you involved at The Market Theatre Laboratory?
- What were its fundamental principles, aims or goals?
- What do you find unique about The Lab?
- In your opinion, what are some of the problems that The Lab faces?
- Who are the students that attend The Lab today? (Background, language, schooling)
- What, in your opinion are the needs of these students?
- Do you think there is a need for more racially integrated facilitators and/or students?
- What does the performance training programme, being offered at The Lab entail?
- What theoretical paradigm underpins this training?
- How is this training programme located within the broader education framework?
- What are the outcomes of the training programme?
- What problems or difficulties do you think these students face?
- Within the training programme, or within your classes, is there space for the student's personal stories to be shared?

APPENDIX E

Questions

Current students at the Lab

- Why did you choose the Lab and not UCT or Wits?
- What does the Lab offer you?
- What do you aspire to do after these two years?
- What is Dan Robbertse's job?
- What is Vanessa Cooke's job?
- What language are you taught in?
- What other languages do you speak in the classroom?
- Do you share your stories in class, and are you comfortable to do so?
- What subjects are your favourite and why?
- What facilities are offered to you as students?