

Stanislavsky and Psychology: Programme

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Schedule (UK Time)

Wednesday 13th November

Time	Room 1 Zoom Link	Time	Room 2 Zoom Link
14.00-14.15	Welcome		
14.15-15.15	<u>Keynote speaker</u> Vittorio Gallese <i>The Relational Body - Embodied Simulation and its Role in Social Cognition.</i>		
15.15-15.30	Break		
15.30-16.30	Panel Discussion Richard J. Kemp, Joelle Ré Arp-Dunham, Inga Romantsova <i>Stanislavsky in Action</i>	15.30-16.45	Paper Presentations Valerie van Mulukom <i>The Psychology of Stanislavsky's Psychological Realism</i> Thalia R. Goldstein <i>The Habits of Mind as Framework for the Psychology of Acting</i> Darren Tunstall <i>Stanislavsky and the Problem of Attention</i>
16.30-17.00	Break	16.45-17.15	Break
17.00-17.35	<u>One-to-one Discussion</u> Steven Brown <i>in conversation with Vladimir Mirodan</i> <i>The Character and the Actor's Sense of Self</i>	17.15-18.15	Panel Discussion Zoë Glen, Jessica Hartley, Ilona Roth <i>Neurodivergence and Stanislavsky: experience and pedagogy</i>
17.40-18.15	<u>One-to-one Discussion</u> Yanna Popova & Joanna Raszczek-Leonardi <i>Acting and Being: On the Psychology of How One Becomes Another</i>		
18.15-18.30	Break	18.15-18.30	Break
18.30-19.45	Paper Presentations James Brown <i>Guilt in the System: The Buttonmoulder's Challenge</i> Vladimir Mirodan <i>"Tenants of the Internal World": Character Work as Projective Identification</i> Tomasz Kubikowski <i>The Feeling of What Happened: Affiliating Stanislavsky to Antonio Damasio</i>	18.30-19.45	Paper Presentations Alan Powell <i>Emotion regulation in the acting process</i> Alexandru I. Berceanu <i>Creating and performing memory</i> David Edwards <i>The Application of 'Voice' & 'Volume' when performing psychological trauma</i>
19.45-20.00	End of Day 1		

Thursday 14th November

Time	Room 1 Zoom Link	Time	Room 2 Zoom Link
13.15-13.30	Welcome to Day 2		
13.30-14.30	<u>Panel Discussion</u> Benjamin Askew, Joe Oliver, Ross McIntosh, Jessica Kinsey <i>The ACT of Interpretation: Drama Through the Prism of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy</i>		
14.30-14.45	Break		
14.45-15.45	<u>Keynote Speaker</u> Lisa Zunshine <i>Stanislavsky and Metacognition</i>		
15.45-16.00	Break		
16.00-17.10	<u>Paper Presentations</u> Lorna Nickson Brown <i>Crafting Character: Cognitive Science and the Art of Creating an Actor's Identity in the Social Media Age</i> Shyam Prakash M <i>Stanislavsky in Indian Cinema: Method Acting, Character Development, and Freudian Psychological Insights.</i> Jon Weinbren <i>Are you for real, Konstantin Sergeevich?</i>	16.00-16.35 <u>One-to-One Discussion</u> Korina Ioannou & Gareth Kennerley <i>Reciprocal Partners: CFT Meets Acting</i> 16.35-17.10 <u>One-to-One Discussion</u> Georgina Sowerby & Emma Chappelle-Hedges <i>"I contain multitudes": integration and multiplicity in the actor's sense of self.</i>	
17.10-17.25	Break	17.10-17.25	Break
17.25-18.35	<u>Paper Presentations</u> Heather L Corwin <i>Somatic Psychology and Michael Chekhov: A Perfect Pairing</i> Dan Leberg <i>Stanislavsky's Flow: Reimagining Acting as an Insight Cascade</i> Olu Taiwo <i>Transcultural behaviour: reading nonverbal codes concerning human activity not familiar to us</i>	17.25-18.35	<u>Paper Presentations</u> Gu Jingsheng <i>Fill The Gap – When the Stanislavsky System Met the Suzuki Method in China</i> Hansel Tan <i>Rasa and Reconnaissance: Towards a Method of Affective Analysis</i> Benjamin Askew <i>What's Your Problem? Case Formulation as a Framework for Character Analysis</i>
18.35-18.50	Break	18.35-18.50	Break
18.50-19.20	<u>One-to-one Discussion</u> Brent Roberts <i>in conversation with Vladimir Mirodan</i> <i>Acting and the Sociogenomic Model or 'Can the Character Transform the Actor'?</i>	18.50-19.50	<u>Panel Discussion</u> Aaron Taylor, Douglas MacArthur, Javid Sadr <i>Practiced Ordinarity: Stanislavsky and the Psychology of Screen Actor Training and Performance</i>
19.20-19.50	<u>One-to-one Discussion</u> Mark O'Connell <i>in conversation with Benjamin Askew</i> <i>The Performing Art of Therapy: Identifying objectives in the "scene work" of life</i>		
19.50-20.20	<u>One-to-one Discussion</u> Rhonda Blair <i>in conversation with Amy Cook</i> <i>Beyond the Psyche: Stanislavsky's System and Cognitive Ecologies</i>		
20.20-20.30	Close		

Zoom Links

Symposium proceedings will take place across two Zoom rooms: Room 1 and Room 2 in the schedule. You can switch between the rooms as you wish to throughout the two days.

To access the rooms, please use the following links:

Room 1:

<https://universityofmalta.zoom.us/j/95414687435>

Room 2:

<https://universityofmalta.zoom.us/j/94402014433?pwd=aJ7bTJMh0RLFUWwi3Qi8Z7zghzFTkD.1>

Abstracts: Wednesday 13th November

Room 1

<https://universityofmalta.zoom.us/j/95414687435>

The Relational Body - Embodied Simulation and its Role in Social Cognition.

Vittorio Gallese.

The body is discussed not as the vehicle of disembodied intelligence, but as the primary source of the relational potentialities that define our world and the social context in which we develop. The results of neuroscientific research help us to redefine the vital aspects that make us human. The ongoing revolution of embodied cognition leads us to reflect on its impact on intersubjective relationships. From the primacy of the subject, we discover the centrality of the relationship; in fact, the relationship, far from still being interpretable as the result of individual primacy, precedes individuation and configures an intersubjective dimension - a *we-centric* space - from which the subject emerges. Embodied simulation – a basic functional mechanism of our brain – and its neural underpinnings are discussed and connected to intersubjectivity and social cognition. Embodied simulation provides a unified account of both non-verbal and verbal aspects of interpersonal relations that likely play a role in shaping the self, its relation to others, and shared cultural practices. Embodied simulation might shed new light on human social nature and promote a potentially fruitful and mutually enriching dialogue between neuroscience, the performing arts, and the humanities.

Stanislavsky in Action. Richard J. Kemp, Joelle Ré Arp-Dunham, Inga Romantsova.

Three practitioner-researchers originating respectively from the UK, the USA, and Russia who now train actors around the world discuss how they approach Stanislavsky's concepts of action in their work. Each has decades of experience of acting and of teaching acting, and each considers action to be a core element of training and performance. Kemp describes how contemporary cognitive psychology shows that in the brain's evolution, neural pathways that support movement and perception - the sensorimotor systems - were recruited by language and conceptual thought. Physical experience shapes conceptual thought, and thought operates through many of the same neuronal pathways as physical action. Action is the link between conscious and unconscious realms. He gives examples of how he applies this principle in his teaching and directing. Inga Romantsova draws on her experience as a professional actress and pedagogue to talk about the concept of the "through line of action" as a gateway to the subconscious mind, allowing genuine emotions and responses to arise organically in the actor. Stanislavsky emphasised the importance of the physical aspects of actions as a way for actors to connect with subtext, employing the through line of action score as a means to access the actor's subconscious mind. Her talk highlights the crucial role of psychology in enabling actors to grasp, interpret, and internalise the complex layers of human behaviour on stage, describing the through line of action as a corridor for creativity and improvisation for an actor on stage. Joelle Ré Arp-Dunham will focus on how her practical and pedagogical applications of Stanislavsky's Active Analysis are informed by cognitive psychology discussions about how humans learn. Pulling from the Unified Learning Model (ULM) geared towards educational contexts and cognitive studies of action, she will focus on why and how her approaches differ between teaching acting and directing.

The Character and the Actor's Sense of Self. Steven Brown in conversation with Vladimir Mirodan.

In 2019, Steven Brown and his collaborators published a celebrated study in which, for the first time, they sought to examine the neural basis of acting. By means of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), they looked at which regions of the brain became activated when actors moved out of their daily 'first-person perspective' and into a 'fictional first-person', that is 'in character'. Their findings were startling: being 'in character' did not, as might have been thought, add or enhance the actors' sense of self but, on the contrary, involved a deactivation process, a possible 'loss of self'. In their conversation, Steven Brown and Vladimir Mirodan will revisit the findings of this seminal study in light of recent and forthcoming work, as well as exploring its implications for the understanding of acting and the training and development of actors.

Acting and Being: On the Psychology of How One Becomes Another. Yanna Popova & Joana Raszczek-Leonardi.

What makes an actor good or exceptional? How do we judge whether an on-stage reincarnation into a character has been a success? These are questions that have preoccupied theorists of drama and theatre at least since the writings of Diderot, and reached a peak with Stanislavsky's system. More recently psychology and cognitive science have also begun to pay close attention to the nature of skill required in acting as well as to consider the processes that underlie the very experience of acting for the actors involved. This presentation will take the form of a conversation between Yanna Popova, a cognitive science and theatre scholar working on Grotowski, and Joanna Raszczek-Leonardi, an ecological psychologist who works on communication. In this conversation they will first explore the nature of the 'skill' involved in acting and how this can be studied with the tools of psychology/cognitive science, such as the distinction between doing and knowing, between effortful mindful action and absorbed coping, or as a combination of both. Most existing psychological work on acting has focused on Stanislavsky's method and other schools of acting developed from it, thus examining the inner psychology of the actor in relation to the character. For some scholars, the skill involved in this type of acting is the skill of being empathetic towards one's character (Gallagher, 2021), the presupposition being that actors are a class of people more prone to empathy in general (Goldstein and Winner, 2010; McDonald et al., 2020). Grotowski's work with his actors will be used here to provide a decisive counterpoint to this claim. As a second line in the conversation, we will explore the nature of the actor's consciousness, with the two main positions of acting as a dissociated conscious state versus a unified conscious state, in line with Stanislavsky's own "inner creative state", the latter being, as we will argue, more ecologically valid.

***Guilt in the System: The Buttonmoulder's Challenge.* James Brown.**

While Stanislavsky worked, guilt was being transformed. The primacy of guilt as an emotion emerged fully in the twentieth century. As guilt became increasingly subjective, its relation to empirical reality became strained. For example, in the Oedipus complex Freud posited guilt for an act one has not committed as foundational of subjectivity: a constitutive guilt, which cannot readily be acted on or expunged. Regarding subjectivist guilt, modernist drama anticipated Freud. With that drama's commitment to realism and to diverse counter-realisms, even as realist a play as *Ghosts* could also function as psychodrama: Mrs Alving's house becomes the sensorium of a trapped mind struggling to take expiatory action. The new drama's re-complication of guilt leaves traces in Stanislavsky's system: if in modernist drama subjectivist guilt often veers away from readily actable causes or resolutions, there is also a constitutive guilt in Stanislavsky's system, which commits theatre to humanism, while depending on elements that threaten it. As Nietzsche noted, the will to system can be treacherous. In engaging with modern guilts in performance, the relation between action and expression tends to become fraught; as the distinction between normal and pathological erodes, expressions may dwindle into symptoms; and the linearity of a series of tasks – for Stanislavsky essential to the spectator's co-creation of characters as whole beings – may give way to circular patterns that do not obviously add up as actions at all. Such guilts have implications for the actor's projection of inner space and the character's ontological reality. Without the latter, actor and character risk dwindling into a reflex of stimuli and circumstance, and the submerged anti-humanism in the system returns like the repressed. Such is the verdict the Buttonmoulder passes on Peer Gynt: he has dealt in reactions and distractions, so, like a bad actor, has failed to realise his character.

***"Tenants of the Internal World": Character Work as Projective Identification.* Vladimir Mirodan.**

I have taken as my text the following passage from Jung's 'Transference':

The doctor, by voluntarily and consciously taking over the psychic sufferings of the patient, exposes himself to the overpowering contents of the unconscious and hence also to their inductive action ... The patient, by bringing an activated unconscious content to bear upon the doctor, constellates the corresponding unconscious material in him, owing to the inductive effect which always emanates from projections ... Doctor and patient thus find themselves in a relationship founded on mutual unconsciousness.

In this psychoanalytical perspective on acting, for "doctor" I will read actor and for "patient", character. Stanislavskian actors 'personalise': in this process, the character data, equivalent to the unconscious contents brought up by the patient, exercise the "inductive action" of which Jung speaks. However, in acting, the 'induction' emanates from the actor's own unconscious – the character is *of* the actor, yet of that part of the actor's psyche which is normally hidden to his or her consciousness. Like transference and counter-transference, personalisation requires a special kind of mental effort, a redirection of psychic energy. Jung likens the outcome to a "third party" flitting between analyst and patient, playing a game, "sometimes impish and teasing, sometimes really diabolical". I like the idea of the character as a playful "third party" playing games, albeit dangerous or disturbing ones. I will therefore develop this train of thought by looking at Melanie Klein's concept of 'Projective Identification', which I think sheds a subtle light on the process by which, "in the empty stillness which precedes creative work" actor and character are both transformed.

The Feeling of What Happened: Affiliating Stanislavsky to Antonio Damasio.

Tomasz Kubikowski.

In my book *An Actor Survives* (2024, original Polish version in 2015), I try to look at Stanislavsky's writings from the perspective of our contemporary neuropsychology and 'neurophilosophy'. I refer mainly to the theories formulated by Gerald Edelman and Giulio Tononi. However, there is also a fleeting glimpse of some basic concepts of Antonio Damasio, especially his distinction between 'emotions' and 'feelings', and further between 'primary' feelings and those of a higher degree. Prior to the original publishing of my book, in 2006, Rhonda Blair had made extensive use of Damasio's ideas in reference to Stanislavsky (*The Actor, Image, and Action*), and after my book, in 2019, in a more concise manner, Sharon Carnicke did the same (*Stanislavsky's Prescience*). While remaining 'Edelmanian', and in my own turn, referring to my extensive discussion of Damasio's ideas in the book on the general theory of performance which I had published in my language before the appearance of all the works cited above (*Reguła Nibelunga*, 2004), I want to respectfully position myself towards the findings of these two esteemed scholars and reflect on to what extent Damasio's ideas like the 'somatic marker', the 'autobiographical self', 'core' and 'extended' consciousness, might help elucidate Stanislavsky's intuitions and experiences in reference not only to emotions but also to the complexities of memory and the formation of the acting 'self'. Finally, it might not only be the acting self but the self that performs in the broadest sense of the word. Damasio (with his extensive use of theatrical metaphors) belongs to the scholars who provide us with the most efficient conceptual toolset to understand it.

Room 2

<https://universityofmalta.zoom.us/j/94402014433?pwd=aJ7bTJMh0RLFUWwl3Qi8Z7zghzFTkD.1>

The Psychology of Stanislavsky's Psychological Realism. Valerie van Mulukom.

This paper explores the intersection of contemporary psychological research and Stanislavskian acting theory, and aims to elucidate the psychology of embodying a character and achieving an effective performance, the state of “experiencing” that Stanislavsky advocated. In van Mulukom (2024), we discovered through three studies that actors’ interoception and exteroception, combined with immersive ability, predicts the capability of actors to attain an embodied cognitive state allowing for full immersion with awareness during acting, which we called “intuition”. We suggest that this research shows psychological evidence of Stanislavsky’s “concentration of attention” - the actor’s ability to focus intensely on the imaginary world of the play and the character’s circumstances – and the “inner creative state” – the optimal psychological condition for an actor to perform authentically, characterised by heightened awareness and emotional readiness. This research thus provides a psychological basis for Stanislavsky’s psychological realism. In van Mulukom (under review), we examined further what it is about certain imaginings that makes them feel real for some individuals. We found, through three studies, that the felt realness of plausible imagined scenarios is predicted by fluency and vividness of imagining. For less plausible, fictional scenarios however, absorption into the imagining was of crucial importance – and for acting students, the levels of emotion in the imaginings, which may suggest a pivotal role of “affective memory” (Stanislavsky, 1936). Moreover, we found that acting students (high on fantasy proneness) scored higher on fictional scenarios ratings than psychology students (low on fantasy proneness). Together, these studies suggest that actors have strong skills for affective absorption into the imagining, while maintaining an awareness of themselves and their surroundings, thus rendering a highly effective, authentic performance. This research may inform and enhance Stanislavskian approaches to actor training and performance, offering new insights into the cognitive and sensory foundations of the actor’s skills.

The Habits of Mind as Framework for the Psychology of Acting. Thalia R. Goldstein.

The psychology of acting from an empirical and experimental perspective has focused on singular psychological constructs and processes such as memory (e.g. Noice, 2013), vocal prosody (Berry et al., 2022; Berry & Brown, 2019), empathy (Goldstein & Winner, 2012), and self concept (DeBettignies & Goldstein, 2020). However, none of these previous studies, conducted by psychologists from a cognitive and social-emotional perspective, have worked within the acting classroom as a phenomenological and foundational context. Here I propose a new way of psychologically framing the experience of learning how to act and the process of rehearsal and preparation for scene study and performance. The *Acting Habits of Mind* (Goldstein, 2024) are thinking strategies that cut across psychological ability and skill to be put to use for problem solving and learning. Habits of Mind have been previously specified and discussed in various fields including visual arts (Hetland et al., 2015), law (Jaquish & Ware, 1993), science (Butler, 2020), and education (Perkins et al., 2000). As discovered in a nationally representative sample of acting classes for high school students in the United States, the eight Acting Habits of Mind include: body awareness and control, imagine and envision, be flexible, commit to choices, consider others, collaborate, think metacognitively, and release inhibitions. By moving away from singular, reductionistic psychological

skills and towards habits of mind processes, scholars, teachers, and actors will be better able to describe and ultimately measure the underlying inner workings of the actor as they learn, prepare, and perform roles. I propose that actors individually use and engage the acting habits of mind for different tasks in the breakdown of a character and script and when aiming for Stanislavskian psychological realism. Actors then cycle through the Acting Habits of Mind as they engage in scene study and later perform roles. I conclude with a discussion of how the use of these Acting Habits of Mind may be used outside of the theatre for other kinds of psychological tasks.

***Stanislavsky and the Problem of Attention.* Darren Tunstall.**

A chapter of *An Actor Prepares* is devoted to the subject of the actor's 'circle of attention' (*krug vnimaniya*). The problem with evaluating Stanislavsky's idea of attention is that for around a hundred years no one could agree on what attention really is. Stanislavsky's conception was influenced by the metaphor of an electric (stage) lamp; the metaphor was cross-fertilised with an idea of 'radiation' emanating from the actor, promoted at the time by Naum Kotik in his claim to have discovered a parapsychological n-ray. The spotlight model was challenged in the 1980s by a 'zoom-lens' model, which added the notion of an inverse trade-off between size and processing efficiency: attention being a limited resource, the larger the focus, the slower the processing - an observation that perhaps has ramifications for Stanislavsky's circles of attention. Advances in understanding the neurophysiology of the attention system have clarified how it functions as one of the core processes of the working brain. The second part of the paper will consider arguably the most promising current framework for explaining attention, the Predictive Processing model of Karl Friston, Jakob Hohwy and Andy Clark. A more accurate understanding of attention as a 'precision weighting' mechanism can help us to see what in Stanislavsky's conception of attention is worth preserving.

***Neurodivergence and Stanislavsky: Experience and Pedagogy.* Zoë Glen, Jessica Hartley, Ilona Roth.**

Within the Stanislavsky system and its derivations as practiced in much of conservatoire training, ideas about training actors, ways of engaging with dramatic roles, and acting itself are normative (even one size fits all?). This informs the present-day inclination to view actors as uniformly neurotypical in their approach to dramatic performance, and to reproduce 'neuronormative characters'. We ask how psychological research into neurodiverse perception, cognition and affect might highlight tensions between the Stanislavsky framework and the lived experience of neurodivergent actors, such that these actors may be ill-served by training which is rooted in Stanislavsky and may replicate potentially harmful normatives under the guise of training. We suggest that ideas from the neurodiversity paradigm may help in the formulation of actor training which is inclusive of neurodivergent actors, yet without relying purely upon 'reasonable adjustments' for supposed deficits. We question ways that Stanislavsky reproduces the 'normative gaze' and its impact on perceptions and experiences of actors and acting.

***Emotion Regulation in the Acting Process.* Alan Powell.**

With our ever-increasing awareness of the psychology of trauma in today's world, educators face the challenge of finding tools and techniques to negotiate with its presence not only in scripted stories being performed but in the student actor's life. When it comes to psychological realism in acting, Active Analysis, Stanislavsky's last contribution to his system (Knebel 2021), falls short of accommodating this need and can benefit from integrating a trauma-informed approach to Character development. I believe one of its gaps is the absence of a device to manage emotional dysregulation which can be caused by engaging empathetic imagining and physicalisation of a Character's emotional life. As a result, actors can experience vicarious trauma and/or the reactivation of their own past trauma. How do we support actors wellbeing and increase resilience to embody characters that have traumatic stories? Although resilience supports, i.e. mental health first aiders, counsellors, and therapists have been implemented in tertiary drama schools and can be accessed when mental health challenges arise, preventative measures also need to be integrated into Active Analysis and other actor training techniques. This paper will introduce Actor Care[®], Inscaping, and Emotional Fluency Training for Actors as models that all prioritise actor wellbeing before and after embodying emotionally distressing Characters and support self-regulation. They can be used in conjunction with Active Analysis or any acting technique, and all are inspired and adapted from other models and research in the field of psychology.

***Creating and Performing Memory.* Alexandru I. Berceanu.**

Stanislavsky suggests that the actor recounts the events composing the life of a character as an exercise and a means of developing role-play. Maria Knebel, one of the most influential proponents of Stanislavsky's latter approach on acting, Active Analysis, proposes that an actor could recount the character's lifeline only when the sequence of events composing the dramatic action is "embedded in his conscience". While the use of autobiographical memories for theatrical performance is often considered as risking potential damage to the actor's psychological well-being, Active Analysis – while used for producing a merger of the self with the role – is proposed as a safe strategy. "Quarantine" is seen as a process needed to discern fictional aspects from reality and Goldstein proposes that, as early as they engage in pretence play, children develop this ability. Is the intentional suspension of quarantine by the actor a necessary condition for Active Analyses to "put into operation not only the brain, but also the entire organism, the entire being of the actor immediately from the outset, and to help him feel 'himself in the role and the role in himself' more quickly", as Knebel defined its goal? The paper will discuss the intersection of Active Analysis and Autobiographical Memory strategies used in actor training for creating and performing memory on stage from the perspective of the role of the sensorimotor brain network and of the hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal axis. The paper will discuss the impact of playing with hot memories and of building new fictional memories based on a recent fMRI study and on extensive research into Narrative Exposure Therapy, an evidence-based psychotherapeutic process developed to treat PTSD.

The Application of 'Voice' & 'Volume' when performing psychological trauma.
David Edwards.

The initial part of this paper will respond to rehearsal/performance discoveries made in the creation of a theatrical piece entitled *Bizarre Love Triangle* (2019). The production focussed on an individual with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and through cognitive research, verbatim testimony and a theoretical understanding of OCD as a psycho-physical condition, the text was developed through a series of etudes and scripted developments. Through these improvisations, a navigation of the external/internal voice dichotomy was explored, with the notion of OCD being a third voice. A key rehearsal discovery was the role of 'volume' on the internal voices and how this was impacted by the specific anxieties the character was feeling at any given moment. The cognitive dissonance afforded by the irrational OCD voice allowed a vocal/volume road-map to be explored supported by Stanislavsky's later holistic psychophysical work. The second part of the paper will discuss the post-2019 practical exploration of voice and volume when considering differing psychological conditions including OCD-variants and cognitive discussions on emotionally traumatic events. This research, often explored in Studio work with training actors, has allowed the role of volume to be an extra instrument with which to either mine a text or a specific etude. Preliminary work is grounded in a thorough understanding of the condition/event before application of these theories which allow the actor to mine the depth of understanding and performance analysis required when approaching these increasingly important representative roles of mental health in contemporary society.

Abstracts: Thursday 14th November

Room 1

<https://universityofmalta.zoom.us/j/95414687435>

The ACT of Interpretation: Drama Through the Prism of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. Benjamin Askew, Joe Oliver, Ross McIntosh, Jessica Kinsey.

The “ACT for Acting” project, led by Benjamin Askew, re-examines the processes of acting and actor training from the perspective of a contemporary form of behavioural psychology called ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy/Training). In this panel discussion, Benjamin will explore the development and the future direction of this work with three practitioners, each of whom offers a unique perspective on the project: Joe Oliver, a consultant clinical psychologist and Associate Professor at UCL whose company, Contextual Consulting, is one of the UK’s leading providers of ACT training and supervision, Ross McIntosh, an organisational and coaching psychologist who specialises in bringing ACT to workplace settings, and Jessica Kinsey, an actor and founding member of Benjamin’s company, The Working Action Group, who has first-hand experience of developing ACT for Acting techniques and exploring them in the rehearsal room. With a particular focus on the interpretation of character, the panel will discuss ACT in relation to the ideas of Stanislavsky, the practical implications of “ACT for Acting” for the creative work of the actor, and whether an ACT-based approach to interpreting fictional characters might have wider applications beyond the world of acting.

Stanislavsky and Metacognition. Lisa Zunshine.

Metacognition is thinking about thinking, or critical awareness of one’s state of understanding, learning, or certainty. When, instead of hastening to kill Claudius, Hamlet wonders if the ghost that he has seen may be the devil, he engages in metacognitive reflection about the source of his new belief about his uncle’s crime, and thus its veracity. When Stanislavsky, building on Diderot, instructs actors to develop “dual consciousness” – which is to say, the ability to observe and judge their “own tears and smiles” in rehearsal and performance – he teaches them metacognitive awareness. (In fact, recent studies show that actors may indeed have “better metacognition than non-actors” [Sokol-Hessner et al, 2022; see also Goldstein, 2024].) In my talk, I discuss implications of bringing Stanislavsky’s concept of dual consciousness in dialogue with cognitive scientists studying metacognition.

Crafting Character: Cognitive Science and the Art of Creating an Actor's Identity in the Social Media Age. Lorna Nickson Brown.

In this paper, I explore how the techniques learnt from the Stanislavsky Method are commonly used by the contemporary screen actor in their day-to-day lives, creating a public persona of layered nuance through self-generated marketing or 'storytelling' through mediums such as Instagram. The biggest performances we often see today are those that play out on Instagram and other social media platforms in often false but multi-layered stories of an actor's everyday life, and in often utterly convincing and truthful performances. Today it is near impossible for an emerging actor to retain a sense of anonymity. The very basis of acting, the idea of stepping into another's shoes, has arguably been replaced by a public expectation and desire to know the inner workings of the 'celebrity actor', and see this persona play out in familiar but new environments on Film or TV. This paper analyses from a cognitive science perspective the viewers' experience of actors who are recognisably 'themselves,' in contrast with those who 'disappear' into their characters, and the actors' own differing self-perceptions within these two acting approaches. Using a cognitive science perspective, I explore how the Blending Theory of Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, and their work on mental spaces, can be applied to a modern cinema audience who relish experiencing a 'celebrity' actor in a familiar role, subconsciously evoking the ghosts of their previous roles (an accumulation of all previous roles) and thus creating a novel blended mental space in a new but recognisable performance. I further explore the role social media plays in accelerating Blending Theory in a TV/Film viewing audience and its effects on the self-perceptions of actors caught within it.

Stanislavsky in Indian Cinema: Method Acting, Character Development, and Freudian Psychological Insights. Shyam Prakash M.

Many actors working in cinema in India unknowingly use elements of Konstantin Stanislavsky's Method of Acting, emphasizing emotional truth and character development. Indeed, this has shaped performance in India and brought about a revolution in acting. This paper endeavours to illustrate the use of method acting principles – emotional memory and physical action – by actors such as Dilip Kumar, Naseeruddin Shah, and Om Puri in films such as "Mughal-E-Azam", "Masoom", and "Ardh Satya". It also investigates the psychological underpinning of the Stanislavsky Technique, aided by Freudian concepts, to explain how actors get in touch with the subliminal and recover memories to enrich the performance of the characters. Stanislavsky's pathbreaking work, based on emotional memory – a cardinal principle of his Method – is consonant with the Freudian notion of unlocking buried emotions to unleash truthful characterizations. Difficulties and criticism faced by people in implementing Stanislavsky's techniques amidst cultural nuances and psychological needs in India will also be delved into, and the paper will explore how the traditional Indian style of performance merged with modern acting methods to create coexistence and enrich Indian cinema. This study brings out the nuances in the transformation brought about by Stanislavsky's technique in Indian cinema concerning adding depth and reality to characters and taking forward the notion of acting as a craft. The institutional role of the National School of Drama and film institutes in imparting Stanislavsky's techniques is also considered in this research study. This paper thus talks of contributions made by contemporary actors and the relevance and evolution of method acting in today's cinematic scene.

Are you for real, Konstantin Sergeyevich? Jon Weinbren.

Mythologized by some, misinterpreted by many, the true Stanislavsky remains something of a

conundrum. While most contemporaneous historical, literary, and cultural figures have featured in their fair share of biopics and period dramatizations, the seminal Russian theatre director, visionary actor-trainer, and practitioner-theorist has rarely been 're-enacted' on stage or screen – at least as himself. Yet, we have an active community of scholars and specialists who have been successful in unpacking the many contradictions and complexities of Stanislavsky's life and work, helping us to understand the longevity of his discoveries and their ongoing applicability to performed storytelling more fully, whether live or mediated. My own contribution takes a somewhat unconventional approach. As part of a broader investigation into the nature of performed emotions, and whether these can be convincingly enacted through a combination of real-time computer animation and Artificial Intelligence, I have been working on (Re)Animating Stanislavsky. This is an ongoing attempt to breathe life into a digitally animated 3D model of the iconic Russian theatre-maker, reflecting Stanislavsky's own life-long existential quest for methods and means to create "life in art". Stanislavsky was a fierce critic –not only of his own inadequacies as an actor but also those of his students and company members during preparation and rehearsal. Actors young and old would quiver at the catchphrase with which he became synonymous: "He верю" (I don't believe [your performance]). So, in today's digitally saturated media, where actors are increasingly substituted by digital doubles, carefully crafted with appearance and behaviours captured and reproduced as facsimile persona, we ask whether these entities can ever become 'autonomous' performers. And in borrowing both Stanislavsky's likeness and his 'system', will we ever be successful in equipping such an imposter with the means to spontaneously and convincingly portray the depth of human emotion? As audience, as practitioners, as scholars, we must ask the autonomous avatar we will have created, "Are you for real, Konstantin Sergeevich?"

Somatic Psychology and Michael Chekhov: A Perfect Pairing. Heather L. Corwin.

When looking at both somatic psychology and Chekhov work, there are many overlapping and useful tools we can identify to help both actors and psychologists make sense of art and life. Somatic psychology is the study of how the body and mind are in relationship, and how we can use the body to help discover mental health avenues. Michael Chekhov trained actors with a physical approach so that the body led the mind in creating roles. Though Chekhov broke off from Stanislavsky due to artistic differences, Chekhov innovated original and healthy avenues to train actors. These healthy avenues are useful to apply to the public to foster awareness of emotional states, links between sensations and emotions, and expand expression.

This paper will look at Chekhov's psychological gesture (PG), atmosphere, and mood work. These tools all explore how outward expression leads to emotion. The PG can be used to foster awareness in emotional state, which can lead to discovering the essence of character. This exploration can help psychologists and acting teachers alike work with people to help identify these elements in their art and/or lives. Atmosphere can be used to help engage imagination, and to help people understand how an outside force can impact emotions. Mood work explores how different states of mind exist and flow from one to another. Exercises will be offered to explore the body and mind relationship. Movements will be suggested for artistic exploration *and* for clients to investigate in group or individual therapy sessions. This paper will offer clarification for acting teachers on the psychological value of Chekhov exercises and will offer psychologists effective ways to engage clients somatically; vital for clients who intellectualize. The psychophysical approach of Chekhov offers a clear somatic psychological avenue to foster the body and mind connection.

***Stanislavsky's Flow: Reimagining Acting as an Insight Cascade.* Dan Leberg.**

This presentation examines the relationship between modern flow theory from Csikszentmihalyi and his contemporaries, with Stanislavsky's ideas about creative insights and spontaneous-yet-authentic responses while performing. Not only does flow feel like an apt cognitive framework for thinking about the psychological experience of being "in the moment", but it could also be a useful concept for disentangling a modern reading of Stanislavsky's practices from the psychoanalytic jargon of his time. In particular, this presentation examines how modern flow theorists interpret flow through dynamic systems theory and within discourses of spontaneous thought, both of which are established concepts within modern cognitive studies of stage and screen acting: what happens to a realist actor's creative experimentation and inspiration if we frame her impulses within a "flow tunnel"?

***Transcultural behaviour: reading nonverbal codes concerning human activity not familiar to us.* Olu Taiwo.**

This paper offers a discussion on 'The Psychology of the Actor': the argument will focus on the Stanislavskian notions of imagination, creativity and dual consciousness, from the perspective of the 'Other'. How can we read codes in human behaviour that are not familiar to us? This affects the Psychology of the Acting Process and how the 'contemporary non-western', psychological perspectives inform or enhance Stanislavskian processes of training, exploration, rehearsal, and performance. As Paul Gilroy's 1993 *The Black Atlantic* denotes, he is centrally concerned with the theme of double consciousness or what Du Bois refers to as "this sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of others". In his classic book, *The Souls of Black Folk*, Gilroy argues that although Du Bois advanced this perception as a means of conveying the special difficulties arising from black internalization of an American identity, Du Bois also used it to draw attention to the experience of the post-enslaved condition of African American populations in general. Seeing yourself through the eyes of the other is what double consciousness is all about from the point of view of the subjugated. And in some cases, you have to use what Stanislavsky and Michael Chekhov called Radiation as a way to quickly assess the situation and like a chameleon blend in socially, if not physically due to the colour of our skin. This is so that we can respond appropriately. The process of Radiation refers to a unique form of interaction granting direct transference of experience, using our mirror neurons as a way to fast-track understanding. As a Yoruba British man whose identity is transcultural, the landscape of my imagination and the engine of my creativity are fuelled by this complex anatomy of dual consciousness.

Acting and the Sociogenomic Model or ‘Can the Character Transform the Actor’? Brent Roberts in conversation with Vladimir Mirodan.

A few years ago, Professor Brent Roberts and his colleagues proposed an innovative model of personality in which the relationship between formative personality traits and transitory states was considered to be more fluid than had previously been thought. Roberts’ ‘sociogenomic model’ agreed with the traditional observation that traits caused states. At the same time, it described an “elastic” mechanism by which personality traits could be temporarily “re-programmed” under the influence of an intense and sustained environmental input, but only for as long as that input lasted. In their conversation, Brent Roberts and Vladimir Mirodan discuss this mechanism as well as Professor Roberts’ recent research and ask: can psychophysical transformations, sustained across lengthy theatre runs or screen performances, alter some of the core personality traits of the actor? What are the conditions for this to happen? And does the process revert by itself or are actors to be supported in ‘being themselves again’?

The Performing Art of Therapy: Identifying objectives in the “scene work” of life. Mark O’Connell in conversation with Benjamin Askew.

In his book, *The Performing Art of Therapy*, psychotherapist Mark O’Connell, who is also a trained actor, explores the myriad ways in which acting techniques can enhance the craft of psychotherapy. By understanding therapy as a performing art, Mark argues, clinicians can supplement their theoretical approach with techniques that fine-tune the ways their bodies, voices, and imaginations engage with and influence their clients. In this one-to-one discussion with symposium co-convenor Benjamin Askew, Mark will explore the development and application of his work, the relationship between acting methodologies and therapeutic practice, and the role that Stanislavskian techniques might play in the ‘performing art of living’.

Beyond the Psyche: Stanislavsky’s System and Cognitive Ecologies. Rhonda Blair in conversation with Amy Cook.

Starting with the final phase of Stanislavsky’s work, Active Analysis, we will bridge this work with theories of embodied, embedded, extended, and/or enacted cognition (4E). Some important current approaches to and uses of Stanislavsky are at least implicitly holistic, and an approach from cognitive ecologies can enrich our understanding of the principles he began laying out. We seek to extend his system through this connection, illuminating the fluid nature of Stanislavsky’s vision and imagining a future of acting beyond the psyche and within a cognitive ecology.

Room 2

<https://universityofmalta.zoom.us/j/94402014433?pwd=aJ7bTJMh0RLFUWwl3Qi8Z7zghzFTkD.1>

Reciprocal Partners: CFT meets Acting. Korina Ioannou and Gareth Kennerley.

This one-to-one discussion brings together clinical psychologist Korina Ioannou and actor/director Gareth Kennerley to explore the links and two-sided exchange between acting techniques and psychotherapeutic practices to effect emotional resilience and self-compassion. Korina stumbled upon her fascination with the interchange between therapy and acting when she took an amateur acting course 'to get her mind off work'! From then on, she developed an interest in how less cerebral, and more body-based/'bottom-up' approaches (drawn from physical practices and the creative arts) can enrich personal growth and be employed in her role as a therapist. She and Gareth have since worked together to create and offer workshops for Psychotherapy practitioners, with a particular focus on the relationship between acting practice and Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT).

"I contain multitudes": integration and multiplicity in the actor's sense of self. Georgina Sowerby and Emma Chappelle-Hedges.

This collaborative presentation explores the notion of the actor's sense of a 'split self', or dual reality experienced whilst in the act of acting. The presentation asks whether a 'character' can form a psychological safety net for the actor, especially when using Stanislavsky's system, or whether there is a danger of confusion for the actor, where lines become blurred and the boundary between actor and character becomes confused. We ask, does the urban legend of the actor becoming 'lost' in their character's reality, hold any water (thus requiring potentially a Mental Health expert on set or in the rehearsal room)? Or has it become a badge of honour, proving the actor's dedication to their art, framing acting itself as a kind of psychological extreme sport? Georgina and Emma discuss the idea that all of us carry around a complex cast of characters running various inner monologues. And it is this phenomenon, the actor - and Stanislavsky's system - draws upon. They also discuss hallucinatory experiences, delusional beliefs and manic episodes, and how these can sit close to the actor's performance state. They ask what extra psychological safeguards are needed (if any), particularly in training, and whether these should be built into the rehearsal process. They reflect on what elements of the System itself, can act as part protective 'ballast'.

Fill the Gap – When the Stanislavsky system met the Suzuki method in China.

Gu Jingsheng.

This paper explores how the Suzuki method can be combined with the Stanislavsky System to complement the actor's psychology and physicality. Specifically, it also discusses "Ma" (in Japanese, "Ma" 間 refers to the concept of space or interval, emphasizing a pause, stillness, or emptiness, often used to create balance and tension in art) and "Dao" 道 (in Chinese, the "Dao" represents the natural, flowing order of the universe, emphasizing balance, harmony, and the principle of non-action (wu wei 無為)). Suzuki uses such traditional Eastern concepts of the body as a bridge to connect actors and help them adapt to performances in diverse cultural contexts. Stanislavsky and his students never gave up on the search for an organic unity of mind and body. The Stanislavsky System is based on psychological realism, shaping characters through psychological actions and emotional memory. Michael Chekhov developed the Psychological Gesture to help the actor quickly access the character's emotions and mental state. However, the Suzuki method emphasises the actor's presence on stage through strict discipline and high-intensity physical training which improves the actor's concentration and expressiveness. In order to develop acting approaches, teachers must help students build bridges between various methods. The paper attempts to connect the Suzuki method and its underlying influences from Eastern culture with cognitive science concepts, such as how emotional regulation, active imagination, and embodied cognition are established. By observing the psychological responses of Chinese students during their Suzuki method training, we could see how these approaches worked together to improve their acting. Furthermore, the paper discusses how the author has integrated the Suzuki method into Stanislavsky-based education in China, allowing actors to freely and spontaneously fill the gaps established by the physical training and adapt to different performance goals and cultures.

Rasa and Reconnaissance: Towards a Method of Affective Analysis. Hansel Tan.

The last years of Stanislavsky's life saw a transition from the Method of Physical Action to Active Analysis, mobilizing the "now, today, here" of the actor to enact the givens of a play via embodied reconnaissance. At the undergraduate level, however, while students generally demonstrate competence in elucidating and pursuing scenic action, many struggle to meet the emotional obligations of the text, falling back on habituated psychophysical self-patterns that prematurely inhibit the dynamic potential of etudes. From the perspective of performance pedagogy, this paper explores a preliminary synthesis explored at the University of Pittsburgh between Schechner's Rasaboxes and Stanislavsky's Active Analysis in order to address this disconnect. Drawing on findings from embodied cognition, affect studies, and neuroscience, the paper proposes that the employment of abstract gestures approximating Rasa (archetypal emotional states) productively alters the cognitive ecology of student performers, acting as creative constraints and affective modulators to discover theatrical possibilities. Through the heuristic of Rasaesthetics, "Affective Analysis" substitutes Action and Counter-Action with Affect and Counter-affect, assisting students in revealing objectives and character actions, co-orchestrating theatrical meaning, and inducing visceral bodymind activation in service of scenic exploration, facilitating the sedimentation of a kinaesthetic sub-score counterpointed with physical action. The paper discusses initial findings of this approach through oral and written student feedback as well as classroom observations, as well as its benefits and limitations, and outlines several pathways for future research.

What's Your Problem? Case Formulation as a Framework for Character Analysis. Benjamin Askew.

This paper explores parallels between Stanislavskian methods of character analysis and the psychological practice of case formulation; the process by which clinical psychologists and psychotherapists make sense of their clients' "problems". Regarded as a core competency within clinical psychology, case formulation bears a striking resemblance to the interpretative work of the Stanislavskian actor: the practitioner gathers information about a client (just as the actor gathers information from a script), uses this information to develop a working hypothesis regarding that person's "problems" and "purposes" within a given context (just as the actor develops preliminary interpretations of the character's actions and objectives within the given circumstances), and then tests and refines this hypothesis through practical experimentation (just as the actor tests and refines their ideas through the practical work of rehearsal). These structural similarities could allow Stanislavskian practitioners to incorporate elements of case formulation into their creative practice and there are, the paper suggests, compelling reasons for doing so, especially in the context of actor training. Firstly, embracing a competency model could create a more coherent and robust framework for the teaching and learning of character analysis, maintaining the space for personal creativity whilst providing a clear set of tools and a communicable set of criteria for achieving "competent" readings of character. Secondly, aligning acting pedagogy with contemporary understandings of the biopsychosocial factors that influence human behaviour could contribute to a more progressive and inclusive training culture, ensuring that the discussions taking place in classrooms and rehearsal rooms reflect present-day conceptions of personal psychology and social identity. Finally, harnessing the power of contemporary psychological techniques could refresh and revitalise one of the chief artistic aims of Stanislavskian practice, making the pursuit of psychological "truth" more credible and defensible in a twenty-first century context.

Practiced Ordinarity: Stanislavsky and the Psychology of Screen Actor Training and Performance. Aaron Taylor, Douglas MacArthur, Javid Sadr.

At the intersection of professional practice, actor training, spectatorship, and fundamental principles of embodied, cognitive, and behavioural psychology, our University of Lethbridge Screen Acting and Embodied Cognition research group is engaged in a series of studies that consider how screen actors draw on mental, physical, and environmental resources to produce *reality effects*: the degree of plausibility with which performers instantiate characters – an achievement crucial to the Stanislavskian ideal of "truthfulness" in acting. Broadly speaking, our research programme is comprised of three interrelated studies: (1) the analysis of a large corpus of structured interviews with professional actors; (2) an empirical study of lay-viewer spectatorship, using systematically produced recorded performances; and (3) an extended study of undergraduate actor-participants undertaking senior-level Acting for the Camera training. These are the first empirical studies of their kind to examine professional actor performance and training through the lens of embodied and ecological psychology, including mutually constitutive interactions between mind, body, and environment. Further, we examine the psychological balancing act actors must maintain as they attend to three interrelated demands, implied within the Stanislavskian problem of dual consciousness: (1) manifesting character, (2) negotiating production-environment constraints and affordances, and (3) incorporating input from collaborators. Here, we draw primarily from our first and third studies to articulate intriguing insights, implications, and applications spanning key psychological perspectives on the Stanislavskian tradition and their practical realization in professional screen performance and its training. Relating embodied and ecological psychology to subjective professional discourse (including recurring idiomatic and folk-psychological concepts) as

well as to the complex arc of dedicated training in these arts, we observe that successful actors must concretely demonstrate several core skills and competencies based on situation-specific, task-oriented activities – many of which stem from core Stanislavskian tenets, including the development of imagination, observation, sensitivity, responsiveness, affective memory, and creative self-awareness.

Biographies

Joelle Ré Arp-Dunham

Joelle Ré Arp-Dunham, PhD, MFA, is a director, actor, consent and intimacy professional, scholar, and educator in both theatre and film. She currently teaches Directing, Acting, Voice, Devising, and Consent and Staged Sexual Intimacy classes at Kansas State University. She served as the Producing Artistic Director of the Circle Ensemble Theatre Company in Athens, Georgia for 8 years, has directed over 50 productions and acted throughout the east coast. Arp-Dunham is an Associate Member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, and currently serves as the Focus Group Representative for the Directing Program of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE), as the Social Media Editor for *Stanislavski Studies*, and on the editorial board of *The Journal of Consent-based Performance*. Her edited collection, *Stanislavsky and Intimacy*, was released last November (Routledge).

Benjamin Askew

Dr Benjamin Askew is the co-convenor of the *Stanislavsky and Psychology* symposium and, alongside Vladimir Mirodan, will edit a book of the same title as part of the Routledge *Stanislavsky and...* series. He is an acting teacher, writer, and director, and the SRC (Stanislavsky Research Centre) Research Fellow 24-25. With a background as an actor and playwright, he is currently lecturing at Leeds Conservatoire and Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, having previously taught and directed at drama schools including Manchester School of Theatre and Drama Centre London, where he led the teaching of Theatre Analysis for over six years. He received his PhD from UAL in 2017 for a thesis exploring psychophysical approaches to dramatic verse and has since published articles on psychology and acting. He is the review editor for the *Stanislavski Studies* journal and has contributed a chapter to the forthcoming *Stanislavsky and Mindfulness*. He is the originator of the ACT for Acting project and the founder and director of The Working Action Group, a theatre company and creative research community dedicated to exploring the relationship between psychophysical theatre practice and contemporary psychology.

Alexandru I. Berceanu

Alexandru I. Berceanu is conducting interdisciplinary research at the intersection of theatre and neuroscience. Starting with his doctoral studies, his research is centred around aggressive and prosocial behaviours, using theatre as an investigative tool along with neuroscience methods with the purpose of developing emotional regulation through theatrical representations and the understanding of its biological substrate. His results are published in international journals such as *Brain Topography*, *eNeuro*, *Frontiers in Psychology* and *NeuroImage*. Alexandru is a director and an Associate Professor in the Animation and Interaction Department of UNATC IL Caragiale, Bucharest, Romania, where he also teaches on the Theatre for Community and Therapy MA. He initiated the Research Centre CINETic at UNATC and the MA program for Interactive Technologies at the same university.

Rhonda Blair

Rhonda Blair is Professor Emerita of Theatre, Southern Methodist University. She convenes the reading group for the International Network for Cognition, Theatre, and Performance. Publications include *The Actor, Image, and Action: Acting and Cognitive Neuroscience* (Routledge 2008) and, co-edited with Amy Cook, *Theatre, Performance and Cognition: Languages, Bodies and Ecologies* (Methuen 2016), and many articles. She was an actor, director, creator of solo and devised pieces, and has translated Chekhov's plays.

James Brown

At Birkbeck, University of London, from 2014 to 2024 James Brown jointly ran the Guilt Working Group in the Birkbeck Institute for Social Research, curated a long-running series of guilt-themed films for the Birkbeck Institute of the Moving Image, and performed *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and (with the author's blessing) a version of Terry Eagleton's play *Saint Oscar*. He teaches film, theatre and literature for IES London, and releases music as Not That James Brown: <https://notthatjamesbrown.bandcamp.com/>. Recent publications include 'Dynamic Impasse: Divorce and British film in the Mid Twentieth Century', in Joanna Miles, Daniel Monks and Rebecca Probert, Eds., *Fifty Years of the Divorce Reform Act 1969* (London: Hart, 2022); 'Betraying Emotion: Guilt in the Emotional Economy of Whistleblowing', in Agnes Arnold-Foster and Alison Moulds, Eds., *Feelings and Work in Modern History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2022); 'Nineteen Eighty-Four and "The Possibility of Tragedy"', *Society*, 59 (2022): 537-547; and James Brown, Anna Jamieson and Naomi Segal, Eds., *The Cultural Construction of Hidden Spaces: Essays on Pockets, Pouches and Secret Drawers* (Leiden: Brill, 2024).

Steven Brown

Steven Brown is the director of the NeuroArts Lab and an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. He got his Ph.D. in the Department of Genetics and Development at Columbia University in New York, and did postdoctoral research at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, the University of Texas Health Science Centre in San Antonio, and Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. His research deals with the neural basis of the arts, including music, dance, acting, storytelling, cinema, drawing, aesthetics, and creativity. He is author of *The Unification of the Arts* (Oxford University Press) and co-editor of *The Origins of Music* (MIT Press) and *Music and Manipulation* (Berghahn Books).

Emma Chappelle-Hedges

Emma Chappelle Hedges BSC, RMN, PGDip - Advanced psychological practitioner / EDMR Therapist, Research Intern NIHR ARC North West Coast. Emma is an experienced practitioner within the mental health sector. She has been working for NHS England for over 10 years. She is primarily experienced in Forensic Psychology, Psychology, Psychiatric Liaison, Care Co-ordination with a special interest in Trauma and Chronic illness. She was previously an assistant forensic psychologist at Holloway Prison, then a recovery worker, and mental health nurse at HMP Wandsworth. Emma started her working life as an actress, before retraining in Forensic Psychology.

Amy Cook

Amy Cook is the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs at Stony Brook University and Professor of English. She has published *Shakespearean Futures: casting the bodies of tomorrow on Shakespeare's stages*

today (Cambridge Elements 2020), *Building Character: The Art and Science of Casting* (Michigan 2018), *Shakespearean Neuroplay: Reinvigorating the Study of Dramatic Texts and Performance Through Cognitive Science* (Palgrave 2010), and co-edited, with Rhonda Blair, *Theatre, Performance and Cognition: Languages, Bodies and Ecologies* (Methuen 2016).

Heather L Corwin

Dr. Heather L. Corwin is an actor, teacher, and researcher of acting using a psychology lens, and is a licensed clinical psychologist. She works at Roosevelt University instructing movement for graduate students who are elementary and high school teachers in the MA Fast Track program, owns and runs a private clinical psychology practice, and travels to universities across the country to teach workshops on mental health for actors. As a Master Movement Educator and Therapist with the International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association (ISMETA), and a member of the Performing Arts Medicine Association (PAMA), Heather's research explores how actor training impacts emotional intelligence. She has presented and led workshops and master classes on actor training often combined with mental health at the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE), Illinois High School Theatre Festival (IHSTF), Michigan Thespian Festival, Voice and Speech Trainers Association (VASTA), University of Tennessee Knoxville, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company in Boston, Variant Actors Lab LA, Modern Sex Therapy Institutes in West Palm Beach FL, Hood college in Maryland, and Stephens College in Missouri, and more. Pedagogical and psychological research has been published in *Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health*, *Structural Integration: The Journal of the Rolf Institute*, and *The International Journal of Transformative Emotional Intelligence: Research, Theory, and Practice*. She served as the Editor of *The Players' Journal* (NIU) 2017-2018. As a member of the on-screen union SAG/AFTRA and stage union AEA, Heather can be seen on *Grey's Anatomy*, *Love in the Time of Monsters*; Toyota, ANA Airlines, and Eckerd Photo Lab commercials, and has played on regional stages including International City Theatre (CA), Asolo Repertory Theatre (FL), American Stage (FL), The Cleveland Playhouse (OH), The Falcon Theatre (LA, working directly with Garry Marshall), Nashville Children's Theatre (TN), Tennessee Repertory Theatre, Chicago Opera Theatre (IL), Nashville Shakespeare Festival (TN), and more. At places like Ruth Eckerd Hall (FL), Mockingbird Public Theatre (TN), and many universities, she has worked behind the scenes as a director, producer, choreographer, movement coach, acting coach, stage manager, ASM, wardrobe mistress, props mistress, and more.

David Edwards

After reading English at King's College London, David trained as an actor at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama before working professionally as an actor/director. In 2006 he established Vivid Theatre Company which has since gone on to produce over 25 plays including classical drama, contemporary works and new writing. Most of these were fully funded and several received support from Arts England. He is also Lecturer for both the Acting for Stage & Screen BA (Hons) and the MA in Directing and Theatre Making at The Northern School of Art, UK. Key research areas include the representation of mental health on stage, psychophysical performance techniques, and mental health in the horror genre. He regularly presents at both theatre and film conferences worldwide and published writing largely focus on mental health representation in various horror sub-genres for Bloomsbury, Vernon Press and Palgrave.

Vittorio Gallese

Vittorio Gallese, MD and trained neurologist is Professor of Psychobiology at the University of Parma, Italy where he is Director of the Lab of Social Cognitive Neuroscience. His research focuses on the relation between the sensorimotor system and social cognition by investigating the neurobiological grounding of intersubjectivity, psychopathology, language and aesthetics. He is the author of more than 300 scientific publications and three books.

Zoë Glen

Zoë Glen (she/they) is a neurodivergent theatre practitioner, actor-trainer and researcher. Her research interests include inclusive practice, neurodiversity and access in actor training, and how phenomenology can be used in acting. She is currently undertaking a PhD at the University of Kent, investigating the needs and experiences of autistic student-actors on BA acting programmes.

Thalia R. Goldstein

Dr Thalia R. Goldstein is an Associate Professor and the Director of Applied Developmental Psychology at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA. Her work focuses on children's engagement in pretend play, theatre, drama, and other imaginative activities, and how such activities intersect with children's developing social and emotional skills, particularly theory of mind, empathy, and emotional control and regulation. She directs the Play, Learning, Arts, and Youth (PLAY) lab, which conducts research that looks at the effects of engaging in pretend play and theatre on children's social-emotional skills, and at how children understand and learn social information in fictional worlds. She is also the co-director of the National Endowment for the Arts Research Lab, the Mason Arts Research Center (MasonARC). Dr Goldstein received a PhD in Developmental Psychology in 2010 from Boston College and completed post-doctoral training at Yale University from 2010-2012. Her research has been funded by grants from the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, The John Templeton Foundation, the Caplan Foundation, Arts Connection, and the Department of Homeland Security. Her papers have appeared in *Child Development*, *Trends in Cognitive Science*, *Journal of Cognition and Development* and *Developmental Science*, among others. Dr Goldstein serves on the editorial boards of the journals *Empirical Studies in the Arts* and *Imagination Cognition and Personality*, and she is the current co-editor of the APA Division 10 Journal, *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*. Her book "Why Theatre Education Matters: Understanding its Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Benefits" is available from Teacher's College Press.

Gu Jingsheng

Gu Jingsheng graduated from Shanghai Theatre Academy, and works in the Shanghai Film School of Shanghai University as a lecturer in the acting department. Since 2010, he has been an actor in SCOT (Suzuki Company of Toga) and has taught the Suzuki method in China, Singapore, Japan and elsewhere. Jingsheng is currently a doctoral student at the University of Kent in the United Kingdom, researching Suzuki's actor training methods and their cross-cultural applications.

Jessica Hartley

Jess Hartley (she/they) is programme leader of the MA/MFA in Actor Training and Coaching at the (Royal) Central School of Speech and Drama. Her work is dialogical and non-confrontational. Jess is currently interested in identity, trauma informed practice and neurodiversity. Primarily, they are focussed on pedagogy - the why and how of teaching – and circulate around questions of equity, dialogue and compassion.

Korina Ioannou

Korina Ioannou is a Clinical Psychologist who, for many years, has used Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT) with clients experiencing a variety of mental health difficulties, to promote wellbeing and psychological growth. She previously worked in the NHS, and later became a co-director of Balanced Minds, a private organisation providing CFT, clinical supervision and training to the general public.

Richard J. Kemp

Richard J. Kemp MA (Oxon), MFA, PhD, is Professor of Theatre and Head of Acting and Directing at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, USA. A Fellow of the Salzburg Global Seminar on Neuroscience and Art, he has received the Institut Français award for theatre, the British Telecom Innovations Award and the Heinz Endowments Creative Heights Award. He has over thirty-five years of experience of acting and directing in the UK, Europe, the USA, Canada, and North Africa. Publications include *Embodied Acting: What Neuroscience Tells Us About Performance* (Routledge 2012), *The Routledge Companion to Jacques Lecoq* (Routledge, 2016) and *The Routledge Companion to Theatre, Performance and Cognitive Science* (Routledge 2019).

Gareth Kennerley

Gareth Kennerley is an acclaimed actor in theatre, screen and radio. He trained at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and has worked in the industry for 20 years, including, in theatre, for companies such as the National Theatre, The Donmar Warehouse, The Almeida Theatre and in London's West End. He has taught, facilitated, written and directed alongside his acting career, in particular for 7 years leading his own performance and training company. His work with students always centres around trust, challenge and collaboration - leading those he works with to the acquisition of new skills and viewpoints whilst having a memorable and enjoyable experience.

Jessica Kinsey

Jessica Kinsey is an English actress, based in London. She leads in the films 'To Womb It May Concern' (2024), and in 'Re-Birth' (2023) which won multiple awards in American film festivals such as Best Short and Best Cast. She stars in 'Spare Room' (2023) which was selected for festivals in London, Cannes, Amsterdam and LA. She co-wrote and stars in 'Exposed' (2023), a comedy short about a PR disaster. She also performs on stage, recently as Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth* and Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*. She is a graduate of Drama Centre, Bristol University and Tring Park School for the Performing Arts. Jessica is a founding member of The Working Action Group and is currently working alongside Benjamin Askew to develop *Lady M*, a 'psychological study' of Shakespeare's famous character.

Tomasz Kubikowski

Tomasz Kubikowski is a theatre and performance studies scholar, Professor at the Theatre Academy in Warsaw, and Literary Director of the National Theatre in Warsaw. He graduated from the Faculty of Theatre Studies at the State Higher School of Theatre in Warsaw (1985) and from the Institute of Philosophy at the University of Warsaw (1990). In 1992, he obtained a PhD in Humanities (Institute of Philosophy at the Jagiellonian University), in 2007 – habilitation (Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences), in 2018 – the title of Professor of Humanities. Author of the books: *Seven Theatre Entities* (1994), *The Rule of the Nibelung* (2004), *The Theatrical Experience of Wilhelm Meister* (2014), *Surviving on Stage* (2015), *Eating Dogs* (2019), *An Actor Survives* (2024); the play *The Science of Colours* (TVP Theatre, 1999). He has also published numerous articles in journals and collective books, as well as translations of books by Richard Schechner (*The Future of Ritual*, 2000; *Performance. Introduction*, 2006), Jon McKenzie (*Perform or...* , 2011) and Maria Shevtsova (with Edyta Kubikowska - *Stanisławski Reinvented*, 2023), poems by Robert Browning (*Caliban of Setebos*, *Death in the Desert*, "Znak" - 1990) and Samuel Coleridge (*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, 2024), and Tom Murphy's drama *Bailegangaire* ("Dialogue" 2007).

Dan Leberg

Dan Leberg is a Lecturer in Media Studies and Journalism at the University of Groningen, and in Film Studies at Amsterdam University College. Prior to his graduate studies, Leberg worked as a professional classical theatre and film actor for almost 25 years. Alongside his studies, he worked as the Programming Coordinator of the Cinema Politica Network, the world's largest exhibitor of political documentary cinema. His research focuses on cognition in screen media, motion capture performance, and Shakespeare on film and television.

Douglas MacArthur

Doug MacArthur is Associate Professor of voice and acting in the Drama Department and is Associate Dean of Fine Arts at the University of Lethbridge. He has participated in numerous stage productions as an actor, voice coach and director, and has been featured in several independent short and feature length films. Recently, he has been engaged in creative research pertaining to the Roy Hart approach to voice training.

Ross McIntosh

Ross McIntosh is a freelance organisational and coaching psychologist, and the creator and host of the popular psychology podcast, *People Soup*. After a career of over 20 years in central government in senior HR roles, he left the Civil Service and returned to study, pursuing an MSc in Organisational Psychology at City, University of London. On the course he discovered a branch of behavioural science that resonated with him in such a profound way that he decided to find ways to share the skills with people in organisations in every sector, from the NHS and Teachers to Hedge Fund Managers, Global Tech and Professional Ballet Dancers. He is now a researcher and honorary visiting lecturer in organisational psychology at City.

Vladimir Mirodan

Vladimir Mirodan, PhD, FRSA is Emeritus Professor of Theatre, University of the Arts London. Trained on the Directors Course at Drama Centre London, he has directed over 50 productions in the UK as well as internationally. He holds an MA and a PhD from Royal Holloway, University of London - his PhD thesis was concerned with 'The Laban-Malmgren System of Character Analysis', an influential actor training approach which incorporates key Jungian concepts. He was Director of the School of Performance at Rose Bruford College, Vice-Principal and Director of Drama at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Principal of Drama Centre London and Director of Development and Research Leader, Drama and Performance, Central Saint Martins. Vladimir Mirodan served for many years as Vice Chair of the Directors Guild of Great Britain, and is a former Chairman of the Conference of Drama Schools and Deputy Chair of the National Council for Drama Training. His research interests revolve around issues of acting psychology: while most of his published work is concerned with cognitive approaches, he returns occasionally to his first interest – psychodynamic views of the acting process. *The Actor and the Character*, his book on the psychology of transformation in acting, was published by Routledge in 2019. In 2025-6 he will edit together with Dr Benjamin Askew a book on *Stanislavsky and Psychology*, part of the *Stanislavsky And...* series published by Routledge.

Valerie van Mulukom

Dr Valerie van Mulukom is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Oxford Brookes University, United Kingdom. Her research focuses on the cognitive science of imagination, memory, and belief. After having achieved a BA in Language and Culture Studies and an MPhil in Linguistics from Utrecht University in the Netherlands, she completed PhD in Psychology from the University of Auckland in New Zealand for her research on the cognitive neuroscience of imagination. Since then, she has held posts at the University of Oxford, Aarhus University, and Coventry University, before joining Oxford Brookes University. Here, she explores the intersection of the cognitive science of imagination, memory, and belief using methodology from social and experimental psychology. One of Dr van Mulukom's key interests is to examine how people become absorbed in extraordinary experiences, such as awe, psychedelic experiences, religious or mystical experiences, and the creation or appreciation of art. Moreover, she is greatly interested in the various forms of 'self' which humans maintain (e.g., the reflective and experiential self), and how that plays out in an acting context, where imagination and belief interact in interesting ways.

Lorna Nickson Brown

Lorna Nickson Brown is a director, screenwriter and actress from Birmingham, UK. Lorna trained at Drama Centre London. Her recent acting credits include, *The Jetty* (BBC One), directed by Marialy Rivas and *The Boys in the Boat* (MGM), directed by George Clooney.

She was selected by Creative England as one of ten emerging female filmmakers in the British creative industries. Lorna's short films have screened at BAFTA- and OSCAR-qualifying festivals, including Clermont-Ferrand International Film Festival. Her recent short film, *Dog Run*, won the Breaking Boundaries Grand Prize Award at the OSCAR-qualifying Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival and was released on AppleTV in August 2024. She has been selected for the Directors UK Inspire Programme 2024-25 and will be mentored by director Saul Dibb. Lorna is a member of BAFTA Connect and is represented by United Agents.

Mark O'Connell

Mark O'Connell is an NYC-based psychotherapist in private practice. He was originally trained as an actor and is the author of books and articles on a wide range of subjects related to what it means for each of us to embody our full humanity. His creative experience informs his clinical work, especially in terms of how he listens to each unique client (or scene partner) with whom he works. He is the author of the books *The Performing Art of Therapy* (Routledge) and *Modern Brides & Modern Grooms* (Skyhorse Publishing), and he writes for *Psychology Today* and *The Huffington Post*, among other popular sources, about self-care, gender, sexuality, and the performing art of living. His clinical writing has been published by the *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, among others, and he presents his work across the USA.

Joe Oliver

Dr Joe Oliver is a consultant clinical psychologist and founder of Contextual Consulting, an organisation providing training, supervision and therapy in acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT). He is also an associate professor and overall programme director for the University College London CBT for Severe Mental Health Problems post graduate programme.

Joe is an active member of the Association of Contextual Behavioural Science (ACBS), previously holding the position of secretary on the ACBS UK & Ireland Chapter Board. He is also a peer reviewed ACBS ACT trainer and an ACBS fellow. Joe regularly provides ACT and contextual-cognitive behavioural therapy training, both nationally and internationally.

He has written 6 ACT books, including: *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy & Mindfulness for Psychosis*, and the self-help book, *ACTivate Your Life 2nd ed* and several text books, including *Acceptance and Commitment Coaching*, *ACT: 100 Key Points and Techniques* and most recently, the *Mindfulness and Acceptance Workbook for Self Esteem*.

Yanna Popova

Dr Yanna Popova is Director, Centre for Research on Culture, Language, and Mind at the University of Warsaw, has a doctorate from the University of Oxford and MAs from the Universities of Sheffield (UK) and Sofia. She has taught at the Universities of Oxford and Birmingham. She was also a founding member of the Department of Cognitive Science at Case Western Reserve University, where she worked between 2006 and 2014. Her education has been in linguistics, literary studies, and philosophy.

Alan Powell

After nearly 20 years directing actors in trauma-based educational narratives for the Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children (Canada) and six years training in various therapeutic modalities, Alan created Actor Care® to accommodate our new understanding of trauma and how it can and should be informing the acting process and the development of characters. He now supports actors' resilience and vulnerability in the creative process as an Actor Care Specialist. He works internationally with groups and 1-1 in education and production. Alan holds certificates in Humanistic Integrative Counselling, Psychodynamic Integrative Counselling, Psychodrama Theory & Practice, Therapeutic Spiral Model Experiential Trauma Therapy (level 2). He is a member of the Association of Acting Coaches & Educators (AACE) and Equity UK.

Joanna Raszczek-Leonardi

Joanna Raszczek-Leonardi is a member of the Department of Psycholinguistics and the Department of Cognitive Psychology at the Faculty of Psychology at the University of Warsaw, and also holds the position of Vice-Dean for Research. She is also a member of the scientific council of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the director of the Human Interactivity and Language Lab.

Brent Roberts

Brent W. Roberts is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He holds the Gutsell Endowed Professorship at the University of Illinois, is designated as a Health Innovation Professor in the Carle-Illinois College of Medicine, and is a Distinguished Guest Professor at the Hector Research Institute of Education Sciences and Psychology at the University of Tübingen, Germany. Dr Roberts received his PhD from Berkeley in 1994 in Personality Psychology and worked at the University of Tulsa until 1999 when he joined the faculty at the University of Illinois. Dr Roberts's research focuses on continuity and change in personality traits across adulthood, the life experiences associated with changes in personality traits over time, and whether personality traits can be changed through intervention. Dr Roberts also conducts research on measurement issues, in particular how to measure the traits of conscientiousness and narcissism, and more recently, how to best assess social, emotional, and behavioural skills. He has received multiple awards for his work, including the Carol and Ed Diener Mid-Career Award in Personality Psychology, the Theodore Millon Mid-Career Award in Personality Psychology, the Henry Murray Award, the Jack Block Award for Distinguished Research in Personality, and an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Basel. He served as the Director of the Centre for Social and Behavioural Science, Associate Editor for the *Journal of Research in Personality* and *Psychological Science* and is the Past President for the Association for Research in Personality.

Inga Romantsova

Inga Romantsova holds a BA (Hons) in Acting from St. Petersburg National Academy of Theatrical Arts, an MA and an MPhil in Theatre and Film from University of NSW, Australia. She is a professional actress and academic, specialising in teaching the Russian school acting methods from Stanislavsky, Vakhtangov, Michael Chekhov to Nicolai Evreinov. She currently serves as a sessional academic at the Actors Centre Australia and holds an Artist in Residency position at the University of Sydney. She is a member of ADSA and *the Stanislavsky Research Centre* and has presented at various conferences in Australia and internationally. She has been published in the *Stanislavsky Studies* journal and has forthcoming book chapters with Routledge on *Stanislavsky and Emotions* as well as *Stanislavsky and Mindfulness*.

Ilona Roth

Ilona Roth is Honorary Associate in the School of Life, Health and Chemical Sciences, The Open University (UK). Autism has been a key focus of her academic work including film, teaching texts and online materials such as the free OpenLearn course 'Understanding Autism' with 107,000 enrolments to date. The interplay of science and arts has imbued her research into autistic imagination, notably in poetry and visual art. Ilona received the Herald Higher Education Lifetime Achievement Award in 2019.

Javid Sadr

Dr Javid Sadr is Assistant Professor of Psychology and Associate Member of Neuroscience at the University of Lethbridge. His research primarily focuses on human behavioural studies of high-level visual perception, in particular social perception - i.e., perception of faces and human movement - with noteworthy publications on the role of eyebrows in face processing, advanced techniques in visual stimulus control and manipulation, and robust methods of image coding and retrieval.

Shyam Prakash M

Shyam Prakash M. is from Kerala, India. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Theatre Arts from the School of Drama, Thrissur, Kerala, and a Master's degree in Performing Arts from Pondicherry Central University. Currently, he is pursuing his PhD in Theatre Arts at the Central University of Jharkhand. He has extensive experience working in both the practical and academic aspects of theatre. His work reflects a commitment to integrating traditional and contemporary theatre practices, emphasizing Kerala's cultural heritage while exploring global theatrical methodologies. His scholarly interests include the application of Stanislavsky's method of acting in Indian cinema, the intersection of traditional Indian performance styles with modern acting techniques, and the role of theatre in addressing social and cultural issues. He has contributed to various academic forums and continues to engage in both teaching and practice, aiming to advance the craft of theatre through innovative and culturally resonant approaches.

Georgina Sowerby

Georgina Sowerby trained as an actor at the Drama Centre London and went on to work at the *National Theatre*, *Royal Court*, *Almeida*, *National Theatre of Scotland* and *BBC Scotland*, amongst other places. Georgina co-founded and co-directs *Dirty Market Theatre* <http://www.dirtymarket.co.uk>. *Dirty Market* uses 'bricolage technique' to make new work, where plays are often starting-points for pieces, and elements (both material and psychological) are incorporated that tradition might discard. *Dirty Market's* process is documented in Robert Daniel's *D.I.Y.* and *D.I.Y Too* series, as well as in the contributory chapter *Alchemical Adaptations* that Georgina co-wrote with Jon Lee for *Leonora Carrington: Living Legacies*, pub. Vernon Press, Series in Art. Georgina has been teaching acting in various settings for the last 25 years including as Head of Acting at Oxford School of Drama, Course Leader MA Acting at Drama Centre London, and Head of Year at *Fourth Monkey Actor Training*. She is currently Head of MFA Professional Acting at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. Her contributory chapter, 'Communion, Mindfulness and the Imaginative Actor', for the forthcoming book *Stanislavsky and Mindfulness*, is due to be published by Routledge in 2025.

Olu Taiwo

Dr Olu Taiwo is Reader/Associate Professor at the University of Winchester. Olu teaches in Acting, Street Arts, Visual Development and Contemporary Performance in a combination of real and virtual formats. He has a background in Fine Art, Street Dance, African percussion, physical theatre and the martial arts. He has performed in national and international contexts pioneering concepts surrounding practice as research. This includes how practice as a research strategy can explore the nature of performance and the relationships between 'effort', 'performance' and 'performative actions' as they occur in different arenas. Consequently, his aim is through the use of practice, to propagate 21st Century issues concerning the interaction between the body, identity, audience, street and technology in an age of Globalisation. His interests include: Practice as Research, Visual design, Movement, Theatre, Street Arts, New technology, Trans-cultural studies, Geometry, Philosophy and Religious studies.

Hansel Tan

Hansel Tan is an actor, researcher, and Assistant Professor of Performance at Villanova University where he teaches undergraduate courses in performance disciplines. A recent graduate of the University of Pittsburgh's MFA program in Performance Pedagogy, his research sits at the intersection of Embodied Cognition, Neuroscience, and Kinesthetic Techniques, seeking to understand how an intimate braiding of science and art can reinvigorate performance practices. As an educator, he has also taught at Pitt, CMU, Julliard Summer Arts, Yale-NUS, the Haque Center for Creativity and Acting (Singapore), and Sightlines Actors Space (Philippines), and is a proud member of AEA and SAG. He is currently researching issues in 2nd language embodiment and migrant languaging as method and artistic praxis.

Aaron Taylor

Dr Aaron Taylor is Professor of Cinema Studies in the Drama Department at the University of Lethbridge. He is the editor of *Theorizing Film Acting* (2012), co-editor of *Screening Characters* (2019), and is the Associate Editor of *Projections: The Journal for Movies and Mind*. His essays on performance, and on comics and cinema have been published in numerous journals and anthologies, and his video essays appear in *Tecmerin* and *[in]Transition*.

Darren Tunstall

Darren Tunstall read English at Cambridge and trained at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. He was a professional actor, director and writer for twenty years, including for the Royal Shakespeare Company, National Theatre, Film Four, BBC, ITV and numerous prestigious theatres. In the 1990s he became a part of the 'physical theatre' movement, creating shows with *The Right Size*, *Told by an Idiot*, *Peepolykus* and many other companies. He has performed in the USA, China, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea and across Europe, and his shows have been seen at Edinburgh Festival, Sydney Opera House, Adelaide Festival, Tokyo Festival, Madrid Festival and Venezuela. He became a teacher of acting at the University of Central Lancashire in 2007, and in 2015 he joined Guildford School of Acting at the University of Surrey, where he is now Associate Professor and Programme Leader for MA Acting. He has presented at conferences in Chicago, Los Angeles, Verona, Gdansk, Warsaw, Dublin and across the UK. His publications include a monograph, *Shakespeare and Gesture in Practice* (Palgrave Macmillan) and chapters in *The Routledge Companion to Actors' Shakespeare*, *The Routledge Companion to Jacques Lecoq*, *The Routledge Companion to Theatre, Performance and Cognitive Science*, *The Routledge Companion to Vsevolod Meyerhold* and *Time and Performer Training* (Routledge).

Jon Weinbren

Jon Weinbren leads on Film, Animation and Digital Arts at the University of Surrey and is Director of the Centre for Creative Arts and Technologies (C-CATS). These multi-disciplinary initiatives develop creative practice and research in the swathe of contemporary and emerging moving image media forms, including film, television, visual effects, animation, performance capture, videogames, digital theatre, motion graphics, and computational arts. Previously, Jon set up and ran the Games Development Department at the UK's National Film and Television School. His professional journey has involved extended stints in both academia and industry, often simultaneously. Having spent many years running his own independent studio, Jon's experience covers film, television, animation, interactives, videogames, commercials, installation, and performing arts, with professional credits including screenwriter, story editor, director/producer, animation/vfx producer, games designer/developer, and performance director. Jon's aim has always been to facilitate the crafting of emotionally impactful stories for screen, stage and page; and, using the most innovative techniques and technologies, to ultimately help make the imaginary feel real to creators and audiences alike.

Lisa Zunshine

Lisa Zunshine is Professor of English at the University of Kentucky (USA), a Guggenheim Fellow, and the author or editor of thirteen books, including, recently, *The Secret Life of Literature* (MIT Press; available in open access at <https://direct.mit.edu/books/oa-monograph/5288/The-Secret-Life-of-Literature>).