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## APPENDIX 2: CREATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT 2 DEVISING SESSION EXCERPT

### CREATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT 2

23 May 2016

Day 10

#### 1. Opening and Welcome

How is everybody doing?

Contextualise the session

Session Aim: Look at the performance materials that we have created thus far so as to see the possibilities of structuring them.

#### 2. Exercises/tasks

**2.1 Performers' group physical warm-ups led by Bongani [...]. [Predetermined; done]**

**2.2 I need to inform the performers about where we are in our process. [Predetermined; done]**

**2.3 View the performance material that we have created thus far. [Predetermined; done]**

#### 3. Notes

##### 3.1 Pre-Session Notes

a) I feel like it would be best for us to spend today's session on viewing the performance material that we have gathered so far. I feel like it might be better for me not to predetermine a sought-for performance structure and to leave it to emerge intuitively.

##### 3.2 During-Session Notes

a) While viewing the performers undertake their 'group walk' from one end of the room to the other, I realised that some of them are not focused and I decided to ask them to stop their undertaking and start with undertaking the exercise of counting from 1-20 as we had done in previous sessions as a way of facilitating and achieving a state of focus that our work needs. The performers undertook this focus exercise and task, which proved to be productive.

b) **[Intuitive Emergence/Imaginative Response]** While viewing the performers undertake their 'group walk' for the second time, I imaginatively saw an image of them undertaking the very same 'group walk', but this time the difference is that they individually start to break away from their 'group walk'. This emergent image seems to be about a performative act that could start the disintegration process of the potentially established opening group performance segment and overarching theme/

concept/ subject matter of Human Connection. I think that it would be effective if the performers keep repeating their walk until all of the performers have broken away from the 'group walk' line by each delivering a repeated physical expression/ signature that they feel like captures the essence of their experiences of attempting to establish Human Connection within the context of their respective 'duets'.

**c) [Intuitive Emergence]** While watching the performers undertake their 'group walk', I intuitively decided upon the order of the performance materials presentations that I need to view as follows:

1. Rinnet and La Portia's 'duet';
2. Anathi and Bongani's 'duet';
3. Nicholas and Delight's 'duet';
4. Sibusiso's solo presentation that ends up including the other performers;
5. Nelly's solo presentation that includes Rinnet's solo; La Portia's delivery of Nelly's written text; Bongani and Delight's physical interaction; and Nicholas and Anathi's vocal gibberish interaction.

**d)** The session then proceeded with me viewing the performance material that we have gathered thus far, excluding Nelly's material due to her absentia, according to the above-stated order. As stated in one of my previous during session notes and/or post-session reflections, I have decided not to predetermine or impose a performance structure for our unforeseen and prospective performance, because I think that such a decision is appropriate for reaching in an [un]knowing way i.e. intuitively. Therefore, I watched the gathered performance material and just took notes regarding how the material can be strengthened and what structural sequence could I intuitively discover.

**e) [Intuitive Emergence]** While I was watching Sibusiso's solo presentation that ends up involving the other performers' participation and presence, particularly the point when Nicholas started making whistling sounds, I got a strong feeling that his segment/performance can be appropriate and structurally effective if it either precedes or follows Nelly's solo presentation that ends up including the other performers. This is mainly because its content clearly articulates the possible effects of an individual's repeated failed attempts of establishing Human Connection. I am affectively stimulated by his material because it reaches the psycho-physical expressive intensity that most of the other performers' materials does not reach. However, I am deciding not to finalise this possible performance structural choice until I view Nelly's solo material that gradually ends up involving the other performers' participation and presence.

**f)** After viewing Sibusiso's above-mentioned presentation, Anathi and Rinnet made suggestions about how his presentation could be strengthened. My listening to their suggestions made me realise that their suggestions emerged intuitively to them as they were participating in Sibusiso's presentation. Due to their immediate request for my response about their suggestions, I intuitively decided that we should put Anathi's suggestion to the test because of my immediate identification of its potential effectiveness on an emotive/ affectionate level and asked Rinnet to suspend our testing of her proposal based on my immediate identification of how essentially similar it is

to Bongani and Delight's eventual physical interaction during Nelly's solo presentation that ends up involving the other performers' participation.

**g) [Intuitive Emergence]** After our discussion of Sibusiso's performance material presentation and the break that we took, the session proceeded with me viewing his presentation and its incorporated aspect of Anathi's suggestion. While viewing the presentation, I got a strong feeling that it could possibly work as the last segment of our unforeseen and prospective performance. I imaginatively saw an image of Sibusiso's segment, and possibly our prospective performance, ending with him lying on the floor after the other performers gradually stop encircling him by individually taking their positions on the periphery of our devising/ performance space in a box-like shape that they would create. Coincidentally, this intuitive and imaginative emergence was similar to the suggestion that Rinnet made after Sibusiso's performance material was presented the second time around regarding how it can conclude.

**h)** It is worth noting that Sibusiso also suggested how his presented performance material should end. His suggestion was that it should end with him moving from the position of lying on the floor while the other performers continue to encircle him and end up with him joining the other performers as a way of articulating his state of giving up on attempting to achieve Human Connection with the other 'characters'. My immediate response to his suggestion was welcoming and affirming. However, I eventually asked of him that we should wait until I view Nelly's material for me discovering or having knowledge of a performance structure that should at least be informed by my viewing of all our currently fragmented performance materials.

**i)** The session ended after I viewed Sibusiso's performance material for the second time. I decided for us to end today's session at that point because I still feel and think that it is necessary for me to view Nelly's material, which I currently feel like is probably more appropriate to be structurally placed somewhere towards the end of our unforeseen and prospective performance due to its content and current staging, which I find visually and affectively interesting.

### **3.3 Post-Session Notes/Reflection**

a) The major point of reflection that I would like to elaborate upon in today's post-session reflection, based on my retrospective identification of what became clear to me, is about what influences my artistic decision-making about what to take and discard with reference to the performance material that emerge from my collaborating performers' undertakings of the molecular, micro and possibly macro levels of activity. Given the fact that today's session is evidently located at the macro level of artistic activity, which is unfolding moment-to-moment, I am realising that my decision-making emanates primarily in relation to or based on my affective/ emotional responses to what I see my collaborators do through their spontaneous and embodied undertakings. My affective/ emotional responses seem to mostly be the first thing that gets triggered inside of me that inform me or illuminate the possibility of whether or not my collaborating performers' spontaneous and embodied undertakings have the emotional and creative-artistic

weight to be included as the appropriate performance material of an/ our unforeseen and prospective performance. I have realised that my trust in my intuitive-affectively derived responses seems to be the primary determining factor of the decisions that I make as an [un]knowing director. I have learned, over time, that trusting my intuitive-affective responses tends to work well with reference to my directorial undertakings as the [un]knowing director, because of my training as a director which informs me that the director is the first audience of a performance or performer-derived performance material. This lesson and comprehension thereof have further led to my belief that there is a chance, however slight, that an audience can have a similar emotional/ affective response to what they see a performer, or the performers go through during moments of a performance. In addition to my intuitive-affective responses as contributory factors to my artistic decision-making comes my rational thinking, which also occurs simultaneous to my intuitive responses. I have realised that my rational thinking seems to be more operative when it comes to my artistic decision-making with reference to the directorial aspect of staging i.e. composition, picturisation, rhythm, tempo, how the theatrical medium's visual, auditory and kinaesthetic elements become integrated and how an overarching performance concept/content can be generated in consideration of my collaborating performers' proposed performance materials. It must be noted that I have realised that there is a continuous interplay of my intuitive and rational faculties of varying degrees throughout my undertaking of a devising process. This interplay leads me to a further realisation of the existence of skilled intuition (as coined in Atkinson and Claxton's (2000) book on intuition).