Intersubjective methodology for the interaction between traditional and contemporary practices

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Abstract

This presentation concerns a research methodology utilising 'intersubjectivity' as a principle of practice-as-research where traditional and contemporary artistic practices interact for knowledge generation or innovation. Focusing on the discipline of performing arts, this presentation refers to practitioners-scholars Joanne 'Bob' Whalley and Lee Miller who argue that a research project must be embedded with some form of 'intersubjective exchange'—a bodily and cognitive encounter between performer and watcher—in order to test new knowledge and innovation. This cognitive/bodily approach can bring the collaborators' attention to the actual process of the encounter. This presentation will examine an intersubjective methodology in my PhD practice-led research project *Improvising Time* in collaboration with Butoh-trained solo dancer Janette Hoe, culminating in a dance film *Solo Dialogue* (2021). In a series of shared practice sessions, Janette and I took turns to be performer and watcher. My practice of the repertoires from Noh theatre and improvisation witnessed by Janette catalysed a crucial somatic shift in my perception of temporality while performing. In this presentation, I will argue that, despite the complexity associated with artistic/cultural/philosophical differences, the intersubjective encounter can lead to a process of 'inching' towards the shared objectives of the participants. While this encounter might not yield a concrete knowledge generation or new innovative art form, the framework of intersubjectivity provides a research condition that brings about cognitive, somatic and paradigmatic shifts in the collaborators' experience. In addition, the methodology enhances peer-to-peer interpersonal relationships and enables further intersubjective experience for subsequent creative encounters.

Keywords: artistic encounter, cognitive exchange, inching, intercultural practices, somatic shift

Introduction

This presentation examines the notion of intersubjectivity as a methodology for the interaction between traditional and contemporary dance practices which are often seen in opposition to each other. This interaction or collaboration is conventionally implemented through frameworks of production for performance events. On the one hand, traditional dances transmit and foster long-standing customs and practices while upholding the values of the people and their communities who practice them. On the other hand, contemporary dances—often presented as "concert dance"—are seen as experimental and "capable only in 'modern' societies, challenging the boundaries of and expectations about concert dance itself" (Foster, 2011, p. 196). Inevitably, the context of colonialism and modernisation surfaces through such intercultural dialogue. Work such as critically acclaimed *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* by Thai classical dancer Pichet Klunchun and French choreographer Jérôme Bel exemplifies a juxtaposition of traditional and contemporary practices while exposing the underpinning context of "the histories of privilege, wealth, and access to the

global circulation of products and ideas" (Foster, 2011, p. 197). Through the short period of their encounters, in essence, *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* is presented as a task for the two artists to find out about each other, a work of dialogue-as-performance. During the performance, Klunchun demonstrated his Khon practice in response to Bel's questions while Bel took the role as a watcher. In turn, Bel performed excerpts from his choreography witnessed by Klunchun. In my view, the work has shown the process of two artists sharing their practices with each other in spite of their differences. They were the witness of each other's practice, exemplified by the ways in which they respected each other's practice; they listened, observed, empathised and immersed themselves in the experience of perceiving each other.

While this work of dialogue-as-performance did not produce a new form of dance where the traditional and contemporary combine, in my view it presented an "intersubjective exchange" at the very heart of this intercultural dialogue (Whalley & Miller, 2019, p. 2). In the article *Somatic / Intersubjectivitiy: 'Moving Thoughts on Intersubjectivity',* practitioner-scholars Joanne 'Bob' Whalley and Lee Miller (2019) investigate "the bodily experience of intersubjectivity" in the context of performance and argue that bodily encounters—between performer and audience and/or between collaborators—generate cognitive shifts while sharing "space between bodies, as [they] craft / tell / show / make / perform / interrogate / reflect, then do it all over again" (p. 2). Admittedly, this notion of intersubjective exchange is predicated upon phenomenology, a branch of Western philosophy, and somatically-informed practices. Importantly, from this perspective, intercultural practice is understood as 'research' – a way of finding out about things and processes. Whalley and Miller note that the processes of intersubjective exchange, like artistic research, cannot be viewed as stable or steady. On the contrary, they argue that:

> *"[these processes do] not, and cannot, aim for equilibrium, being contracted and imbedded in the commitment to seek out new knowledges and/or substantial insights. And yet, these are messy practices, and ones which have the capacity to mess you up, and mess you around" (p. 3).*

To me, this acceptance of a messy and complex nature of artistic practice liberates practitioners from feeling the need to innovate or produce groundbreaking work. Instead, it allows them to immerse themselves in the process of encountering one another. According to Whalley and Miller, the encounters between bodies can generate cognitive, somatic and paradigmatic shifts which are invaluable as a process of "inching" towards new understandings, new perspective, and potential for further encounters (p. 4). Importantly, the notion of intersubjectivity as an approach for artistic research enables a new understanding and acceptance that the body, its action, perception and experience, constitutes a site of knowledge generation and yields research 'data' without objective analysis (pp. 4–5).

To understand the intersubjective methodology, I will begin with a background of my artistic practice, which leads to the context of my PhD research project and followed by a brief clarification of the characteristic of intersubjectivity according to French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty. I would argue that even when one is not familiar with French phenomenology, there are practices and ideas that align with Merleau-Ponty's intersubjectivity, including the practice of 'seeing detached perception', or *riken no ken* 離見の見, in Japanese Noh theatre, which is underpinned by Buddhist philosophy. I will discuss the practice of *riken no ken* in the studio research of my PhD project and key insights arising from the practice.

Background of my artistic practice

Born in Bangkok, Thailand, I am a dance artist based in Melbourne, Australia. After graduating with a Bachelor of Dance in 1997 from the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA), University of Melbourne, I have been practicing as an independent artist while collaborating

with fellow dancers as well as practitioners across various disciplines, including visual arts, theatre, dramaturgy, fashion, and animation. I briefly studied Butoh with Yukio Wakuri in 1997 and later worked with a prominent dance artist and BodyMind Centering (BMC) practitioner Alice Cummins. From 2007 – 2017, I practiced BMC and performed movement improvisation with a performance group 'Footfall Ensemble', founded by Alice. In 2009, I travelled to Kyoto to study with the late Master-actor Udaka Michishige, a leading Noh performer of the Kongō Noh School with the support from a Skills Development grant from the Australia Council Dance Board and Arts Network Asia (Singapore). Michishige-sensei established International Noh Institute (INI) where dance and theatre practitioners from all over the world can study and practice Noh according to the traditional pedagogy. From 2019 onwards, I have continued studying Noh with Michishige-sensei's son Tatsushige, also a Noh performer of the Kongō School who specialises in the roles of lead actor/protagonist (*shite* 仕手).

With the influence of Noh, BMC and post-modern dance improvisation, my PhD practice-led research project *Improvising Time* (2023) brought age-old Noh performance concepts, such as *jo-ha-kyū* 序破急, *ma* 間 and *riken no ken,* into a dynamic interaction with contemporary dance improvisation.Despite being a traditional art form for aristocrats, the performance theory and practice of Noh is underpinned by Confucianism and Zen Buddhism. In *The Noh Theatre: Principles and Perspectives* (1983), Noh practitioner Kunio Komparu states that the interrelationship between performer and audience is understood as mutual, defined by an egalitarian view of an "encounter", or *de-a-i* 出会い (p.19). Komparu *denotes de-a-i* as "respect for those you meet", not only applicable as mutual relationship between performer and aristocratic audience in the front row, but also "the bystander" further away from the stage.As Noh concepts for performing and composing are predicated upon "how best to engage audience" (Quinn, 2005, p. 202), my investigation of how these concepts could be embodied in my improvisation would inevitably involve an approach that provided insights from the perspectives of both performer and audience. That is, my embodiment of the Noh concepts must involve a relationality to an audience. The further I investigated Noh concepts and practiced the Noh repertoire, the more I uncovered the intersubjective aspects of Noh, even though they are not necessarily articulated in terms of subjectivity or intersubjectivity. In my view, using phenomenological terminology can account for the actions and functions of the body along with its perceptual experience, which in turn, leads to the articulation of the embodiment of Noh concepts as substantial data in my research practice.

What is 'intersubjectivity'?

In this presentation, intersubjectivity refers to a phenomenological concept based on the work of French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty who furthered the work of German philosopher Edmund Husserl. Husserl's phenomenology focuses on the consciousness of subjectivity, defined as the state of being a subject in the world, where he emphasises the subjective awareness of the other to account for intersubjectivity (Sanders, 2014, p. 144). Differently, Merleau-Ponty approaches phenomenology through the notion of "the lived body", that is, phenomenology is the study of anything perceivable by the body (Rothfield, 2021, p. 19). By shifting the focus of one's awareness and thought to one's body, Merleau-Ponty gives subjectivity an embodied turn with the emphasis on the first-person perspective of the lived body. Philipa Rothfield, a dance philosopher, sees the lived body as blurring the subject-object and writes that the lived body "is subjectively felt and objectively discernible". Merleau-Ponty's account of intersubjectivity pertains to "an internal relation" between one's embodied subjectivity and that of another as arising from "the reciprocity of a shared corporeal existence" (Sanders, 2014, pp. 144–5).

While it is understood that the capacity to empathise makes intersubjectivity possible, this does not mean that intersubjectivity is merely about feeling for and identifying with other embodied subjects. There is a Thai saying 'เข้าเมืองตาหลิ่ว ให้หลิ่วตาตาม', translated as 'when entering a city where everyone squints, one must do the same.' This seems to signify that the identity of self and that of the other is no longer distinct as one identifies with the other through the same activity and, thus, the boundary between self and other is dissolved. In contrast, Merleau-Ponty rejects this notion and maintains that the boundaries between self and other are distinct but permeable (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 368). While self and other is viable through "internal relation" of shared bodily existence, the reciprocity between self and other is situated in the background of "the perceptible, historical and cultural world" (Sanders, 2014, p. 174). That is, much like oneself, the other is presented in shared experience with their own unique cultural world, historicity, perception and corporeality.

This is precisely what Klunchun and Bel did in *Pichet Klunchun and Myself.* They recognised and respected each other's cultural worlds, historicity and corporeality, but refrained from blending into each other's cultural world. If one were to blend into the other's cultural world, one would have to dissolve aspects of one's own cultural world, habits, customs, and/or belief system. However, by recognising and respecting each other's cultural worlds, Klunchun and Bel shifted the mode of collaboration from merging their practices towards the actual process of their encounter – listening, observing, learning from, and questioning each other's practice. In this way, their encounter is an intersubjective one where the audience can experience the process in which they became increasingly empathetic to each other's practice and artistic visions. In so doing, they inched towards successive collaboration while "determined to keep listening to one another", emphasising the process of encountering rather than forging new forms of dance or staging political and cultural arguments between East and West (Foster, 2011, p. 207).

The intersubjective methodology in the research project *Improvising Time*

Whalley and Miller argue that, for an artistic practice to claim a status as research, it "must have the capacity for some form of intersubjective exchange built in" to test how insights or knowledge the research may generate (2019, p. 3). This is because the presence of an audience critically impacts upon how artist-researchers perform a task and thus is an active part of performance outcomes (pp. 3–4). In my research project, as mentioned in the previous section, intersubjective exchange was so crucial for the investigation that it needed to be built into the methodology. To do this, I devised a series of studio research involving "praxis", the interweaving of theory and practice where the creative processes pertain to the cycles of doing, reflecting, articulating, reading and doing again (Nelson, 2013, p. 29). As mentioned earlier that artistic research could be messy, the studio research might not give decisive answers to our investigation through the cycles of praxis. As Henk Borgdorff's doctoral dissertation (Leiden University) argues, artistic research can never be completely empirically transparent and often lacks structural completeness (2012, p. 194). Yet this structural lack of completeness is at the heart of artistic practice where palettes of ideas are assembled through praxis, and the incompleteness of each cycle invites practitioner-researchers to fill the gap of what is unclear or unknown – leads to further enquiry – the processes of "unfinished thinking" (p. 187).

For the studio research, I invited solo dance artist Janette Hoe to join me in the series of studio research from September 2018 – February 2021, culminating in the filming of the performance *Solo Dialogue* (2021). At the early stage of the research, the principal research question was how *jo-ha-kyū* and *ma* could be utilised as a framework for temporal organisation when improvising. To explore this research question, the studio research was designed for me to examine the improvisational, temporal and intersubjective experience as

both improviser and audience. Janette and I took turns to be improviser and watcher as well as reflecting on and discussing our experience in light of the research question. As improviser, I explored how *jo-ha-kyū* and *ma* could be embodied as apparatuses of temporal organisation in front of an audience (Janette); as watcher, I observed Janette's temporal organisation, allowing me to gain first-hand experience of her improvisation. Our shared objective, biased towards my research question, was to investigate temporality generated by the dancing body when witnessed by an audience.

Trained in Butoh and completed her MFA at the VCA in 2016, Janette is familiar with the genealogy of somatic practices such as ideokinesis and BMC, but not with Noh theatre. While the lineage of my improvisation practice follows somatic practices and post-modern dance improvisation, Janette's improvisation practice follows the lineage of Butoh and Body-Weather. She does not identify with the discourse of post-modern dance and prefers to situate her practice in the Asian diaspora as she has explored aspects of Asian philosophy in her improvisation. Interestingly, in terms of improvisation, I am on the hegemonic Western contemporary side and Janette identifies with the Eastern lineage of 'improvisation'. However, in terms of Asian performance traditions, I am on the traditional side through Noh, and Janette contemporary through Butoh. Understanding the cultural backgrounds of our practices, we began the studio research with the discussions on the history of colonialism and its impact on our practices; our own historicities embedded in our dancing bodies; our habits, bias and preferences of what constitutes a great performance. At first, Janette expressed her apprehension about the intellectualisation of dance practice through the inclusion of philosophical references as she said she prefers to access her intuition to generate performance. We agreed to meet half-way by minimising theoretical discussion and focusing on the process of intersubjective exchange—the experiential aspect of our corporeal encounter—and its implications. In addition, we discussed how we articulated our experience of each other's improvisation. Instead of merely giving feedback to each other, we agreed to focus on the experiential level of our encounter, the first-person experience—following Merleau-Ponty's idea of experience prioritising a first-person perspective—and the reading of each other's improvisation. To discuss each other's improvisation, we tried to avoid words with positive or negative connotations.

My improvisation a priori

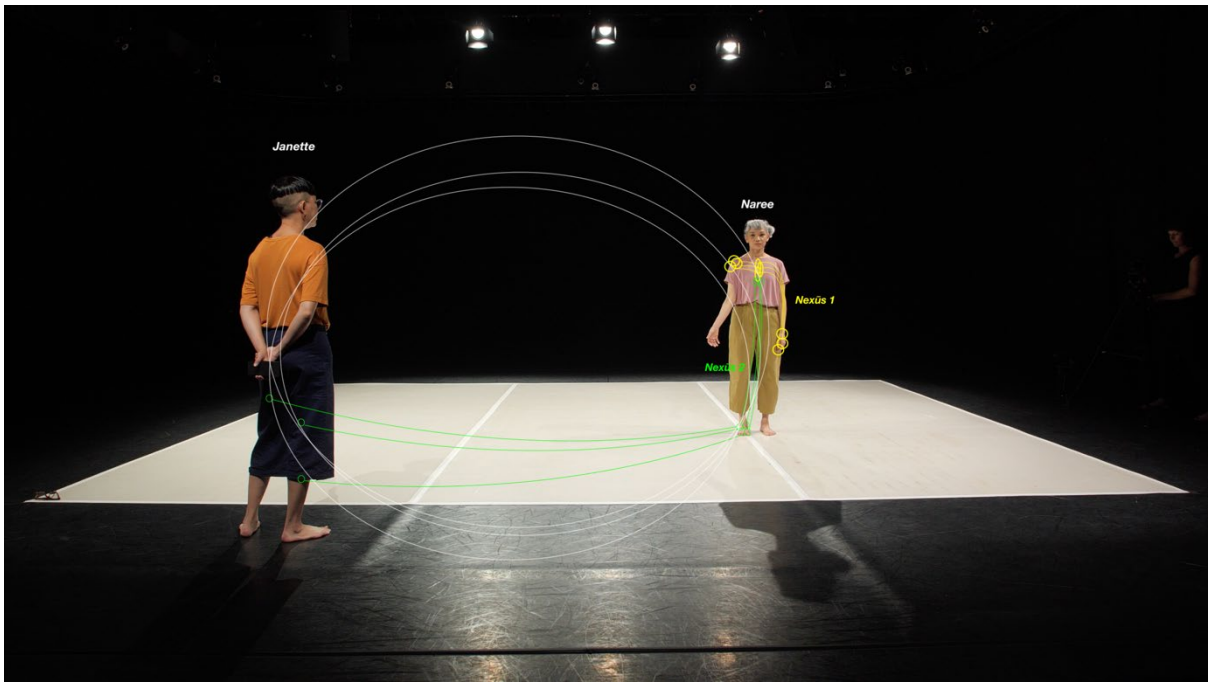
As I mentioned to Janette that one of my favourite choreographers is William Forsythe, we decided to attend the performance of *A Quiet Evening of Dance* by The Forsythe Company at the Victorian Arts Centre, in October 2018. In a subsequent studio research session, I reflected on the influence of ballet and contemporary dance on my embodied temporality and how I organised the flow and sequencing of my improvisation. At this point, I embodied *jo-ha-kyū* in my improvisation as a wave-like flow, influenced by Forsythe's idea of sequencing: before one movement ended, another movement was already underway (Manning & Massumi, 2014, p. 40). Janette reflected that she did not see the difference between when I embodied *jo-ha-kyū* and when I did not. Inherent in my Western dance training, the wave-like flow was my habitual mode of temporal organisation based on my action of catching weight due to gravity. To Janette, this flow of my improvisation was experienced as one long continuous sequence of movement – there was *jo* and *ha,* but where was *kyū*? Further, the wave-like flow rendered my improvised movement as temporal texture with a dissipated quality. She was uncertain if our connection could be maintained during such flow.

The wave-like flow was a clear contrast to the articulation of *jo-ha-kyū* when I practiced Noh as Janette watching. Due to Janette's queries, I returned to the writing of the Noh treatises written by Zeami Motokiyo 世阿弥元清 (c.1363 – c.1443) to deepen my

understanding of *jo-ha-kyū*. According to Zeami, one of the most important features of *jo-ha-kyū* is its fulfilment or *jōju* 成就 (Zeami, 1984, p. 137). It is the finishing—*kyū*—that makes *jo-ha-kyū* an arc. Once an arc of *jo-ha-kyū* is fulfilled, there is an interval between two *jo-ha-kyū* modulations, which can be understood as *ma,* an interval of space and time

Fig. 1: A screenshot from the performance of *Solo Dialogue* (2021), showing Naree commencing her improvisation while Janette watched. The image illustrates Naree's fields of attention to Janette's body as she drew specific parts of her body to that of Janette. Performer: Naree Vachananda and Janette Hoe; Videographer: Cobie Orger.

between performance elements. As I realised this, I practiced fulfilling *jo-ha-kyū* in the Noh repertoire through my study with Tatsushige-sensei in Kyoto, during the northern Summer of 2019. I brought my kinaesthetic sensibility of fulfilling *jo-ha-kyū* when I returned to the studio reserch with Janette in Melbourne.



Somatic and paradigmatic shifts: the disruption of the flow

To embody *jo-ha-kyū* in my improvisation with the emphasis of *kyū*, the habitual flow of my movement was disrupted in favour of fulfilling each arc of *jo-ha-kyū.* As a result of small pauses between *jo-ha-kyū* modulations, the wave-like flow seemed to subside from my improvisation. During the pause, or *ma*, the intensity of Janette's gaze was intensified in my perception and this instance was where I experienced time more vividly. The presence of Janette witnessing my improvisation activated a somatic shift in my felt sense of temporality. That is, each *jo-ha-kyū* modulation pertained not only to my impulses or capacity of weight bearing, but also to the time it took for me to field my attention and include Janette in my perceptual uptakes. While my previous habitual flow diluted the relational field with Janette over time, embodying *jo-ha-kyū* and *ma* as movement process, with the emphasis of its fulfillment, enabled this relational field to gradually thicken; the tensility of the space between Janette and I seemed more palpable.

Implementing the fulfillment of *jo-ha-kyū* marked a paradigmatic shift in my research. Previously, my temporal experience was influenced by the kinaesthetic sensibility of Western dance where time was believed to flow smoothly, according to the temporal

paradigm arising from scientific discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton in the 17th century through to Albert Einstein in the 20th century. Practicing the fulfillment of each *jo-ha-kyū* arc meant that my temporal experience as an improviser could be described as discrete or 'lumpy' but also ongoing – time no longer flowed smoothly in my experience. Further, my acknowledgement of Janette's presence was not merely an idea that she was there, rather, her corporeal presence activated a cognitive exchange perceptually and speculatively between us. The approach from the perspective of bodily encounter turned my awareness of Janette's presence into tangible sensorial and perceptual experience which impacted my embodied temporality and my bodily organisation towards her. For Janette, this paradigmatic shift also occurred in her embodied temporality. In one improvisation, she reported a staccato rhythm in her improvisation as she practiced the fulfillment of each movement arc, as if it was deviated from her 'regular pattern'. While initially uncomfortable, she felt that she was more attentive to her movement processes and able to allow me (the watcher) to attend to such processes. As I watched this improvisation, I felt the shift of Janette's temporality and the way in which her body was organised. Through attention to movement and other embodied processes, perception became more palpable for and between us.

In *Action in Perception,* philosopher Alva Noë posits that perception is action as he writes, "It [perception] is something we do…the world makes itself available to the perceiver through physical movement and interaction" (2004, p. 1). He illuminates Merleau-Ponty's bodily approach to perception by arguing that perception is not only what we think about but it is also something we *enact* to gain experiential access to the world. The presence of Janette became more available to me, and mine to her, because we mobilised our sensory motor skills to enable the thickening of the space between us. Through thickening space and perceptual uptakes, I felt that, not only my movement, but also my attention was made available for her to perceive – an imposition of my perception onto Janette's positionality. Could this be possible as a kind of intersubjective exchange between us?

Intersubjectivity according to Noh

My felt perception as though my attention was made available to Janette prompted an examination of a Noh practice of "the seeing of detached perception" or *riken no ken* 離見の見, a practice of perceiving oneself as if from a distance (Yusa, 1987, p. 331). Noh scholar Yusa Michiko writes that, as Zeami deepened his Zen practice during his exile in Sendai later in his life, he conceptualised *riken no ken* through the Buddhist precept of "no-mind" (*mushin* 無心) where the mind is clear of attachment and conceptualisation (p. 333). Zeami's idea of *riken no ken* is a selfless detached perception, in opposition to "ego-perception" (*gaken* 我見), a "self-centred and attached mode of seeing" (p. 335). He likened the high calibre of Noh performers who practiced *riken no ken* to the highest attainment of Zen practice (pp. 333–41).

While I am not a Zen practitioner, my practice of *riken no ken* went some ways to decentralise my sense of self. To elaborate on my experience of practicing *riken no ken* while Janette watched, I drew upon aspects of Merleau-Ponty's notion of phenomenological reflection. For Merleau-Ponty, philosophical reflection prioritises "the pre-reflective" to account for "the character and content of actual experience" – the immediate experience prior to analysis or evaluation (Rothfield, 2021, pp. 17–18). Similarly, *riken no ken* is practiced in the realm of pre-reflection, that is, by attending to experience as it emerges. It was poignant in my practice as Noh repertoire requires practicing repeatedly, yet it should be performed as if the performer experiences it for the first time. To me, *riken no ken* is one of the practices that enables the freshness of experience in practicing the repertoire because it requires the performer to attend to the immediate experience of performing.

In the studio research, I practiced *riken no ken* in my improvisation when Janette was watching. *Riken no ken* shifted the perception of my dancing body towards a perception all around my body. As my somatic attention thickened, practicing *riken no ken* enabled a sense of porousness of my body, as though Janette's gaze could penetrate right through my body. This perceived porousness destabilised my sense of self—a kinaesthetic felt sense of indeterminacy—as if I was letting go of the certainty and fixity of my subjectivity. However, I did not completely overcome my sense of self. The practice of perceiving myself as if from a distance can only be employed—in the words of Rothfield—as "an asymptote", or "a movement towards", rather than actually being outside of myself (2021, p. 182). Since practicing *riken no ken* in the studio research, I often gave Janette time to accommodate her observation of my embodied processes. This suggests a shift of my perspective towards a possible point of view of Janette which, in turn, impacted my embodied temporality.

As the improvisation proceeded, my porous dancing body turned into a "body-as-thickness" as my perceptual experience intensified (Vachananda, 2023, p. 119). This gradual bodily/perceptual intensification signified a noticeable somatic shift in my improvisation in the presence of Janette. Thus, the practice of *riken no ken* activates a specific rendering of my improvising body—dispersed then thickened—and broadens the field of my attention to Janette's body. By drawing together *riken no ken* and Merleau-Ponty's intersubjectivity, there was a key insight emerging from the studio research: As Janette is an embodied other, she is not merely an abstract 'audience'. As the embodied other, her historicity, habits, bias and perceptual experience are uniquely hers. As the boundary between her lived body and mine is clearly distinct, her perceptual world is of course not converted to mine, or mine to hers. Yet, there is a collaborative reciprocity contributing to our perceptual experiences in our own unique ways. When practicing *riken no ken,* as a result of our uniqueness but with mutual reciprocity, as soon as I felt that I had taken Janette's perspective, it became mine and no longer hers. As Fred Evans writes about Merleau-Ponty's uniqueness of self and other, "we can only be outside of each other's inside, not the inside of each other" (2014, p. 192). Thus, our intersubjective exchange occurred at a cognitive and embodied level substantial enough for somatic and paradigmatic shifts in our bodily and temporal organisations and contributions to our improvisational outcomes.

The studio research culminated in the filming of the improvisational performance, *Solo Dialogue* (2021). The structure of this work mirrors the structure of the studio research: Janette and I took turns to perform short improvisations 'in dialogue' with each other. In *Solo Dialogue*, like in the studio research, Janette and I co-created a generative milieu for each other, contributing to our performance. Each of us made our dancing more available to the watcher. This reciprocity contributed to the way we watched each other dancing, and in turn, informed our subsequent improvisations. In this way, while not conforming to each other's cultural worlds or dance lineages, we were 'inching' or "centimetring" towards each other through our corporeal encounter as we both played a role in shaping each other's improvisation (Whalley & Miller, 2019, p. 4).

Concluding thoughts

In intercultural practices and collaborations, the intersubjective methodology offers an approach where collaborating artists respect one another's boundaries and do not take for granted one another's cultural worlds and historicities. This methodology activates a sense of



Fig. 2: Janette and I in one of our subsequent creative encounters. Image from NOW PIECES #6, curated by Gretel Taylor. Dancehouse, Melbourne. September 2023. Photo: Laki Sideris.

relationality or matrix in which cognitive, somatic, or even paradigmatic shifts can take place. In the words of Whalley and Miller, it allows the collaborating artist to 'inch' or 'centimeter' *towards* potential significance, meaning, or even artistic form, co-created by one another. As discussed in the case of my PhD project *Improvising Time,* the methodology enabled cognitive, somatic and paradigmatic shifts in Janette's and my practices through our corporeal encounters while activating the sense of relationality and generative milieu where we allowed each other to shape our improvisational outcomes.

One of the paradigmatic shifts through this methodology means that the creative outcomes do not belong to one sole author who stakes the claim for originality (Foster 2011, p. 207), as in the model of Western concert dance, but a co-creation of the work. Another paradigmatic shift is that through the framework of *jo-ha-kyū* in relational to the witness (Janette), my temporal perception in improvisation became lumpy rather than flowing smoothly. As I embody *jo-ha-kyū,* I attend to the process of movement from beginning, developing and ending. To emphasise the ending, there is a small interval between movement, or *ma.* This radically shifts the paradigm of temporality away from the hegemonic temporality manifested as continuous flow of movement in Western dance.

The intersubjective methodology brings the attentions of the intercultural collaborators to the process of the encounter at an experiential level. With the analogy that if a performance practice is an iceberg, the style or design of staged production is the tip of the iceberg whereas the experiential part of the practice represents the large volume of the iceberg below the water surface. While the collaborators acknowledge one another's cultural background, performance lineages and historicities, the methodology allows the collaborators to attend to much of what comprises their practices, often hidden 'behind the scenes.' These hidden experiential aspects of performance practice may not be uncovered in a straightforward manner and may emerge intermittently. The intersubjective methodology

allows the collaborators to keep track of this aspect as it surfaces and enables time and space for inviting transparency in encountering one another's different perspectives. Despite the messy process of artistic practices, particularly intercultural ones, being transparent to one another as much as possible can enhance peer-to-peer relationships and enable potentially favourable experience in subsequent encounters. It is conceded that the focus on the intersubjective exchange between the collaborators may not yield finished or polished productions, or solve every problem arising from the encounters, exemplified by *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* and *Solo Dialogue.* This methodology calls for valuing the unfinished, work-in-progress or the potentiality of collaborative efforts, without which true collaborations or deepening understandings between cultures cannot occur.

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