

Appendix: Project Viola Ten, Subtext Exploration

The Pearce-Pratt Precedent



Hubert Pearce being tested with Zener cards by Dr. J.B. Rhine

The hit rates which I obtained during the *Project Viola Ten Experiments* shatter the record set by Hubert Pearce in the 1930s at Duke University in the Pearce-Pratt experiments conducted by Joseph Pratt and overseen by Dr. Joseph Banks Rhine. Pearce's score with Zener cards at a distance (100 and 250 yards) was 558 out of 1850, yielding a hit rate of 30% versus the MCE of 20% (10% over MCE)¹. My own score of 194 out of 400 yielded a hit rate of 48.5% (28.5% over MCE) which nearly trebled Pearce's benchmark. The greater number of trials, however, in the Pearce-Pratt experiments yielded odds against chance of approximately 22 billion-to-one, which were considerably higher than my own million-to-one outcome.

Rhine and Pratt in their paper, 'A Review of The Pearce-Pratt Distance Series of Esp Tests' write that 'the test procedure and conditions provided special safeguards against any undetected errors, and subsequent critical scrutiny has revealed no flaw in the series as evidence for the occurrence of ESP.'² It is worth noting that after Pearce's abilities became clear, Rhine introduced protocols

¹ Rhine, J. G., & Pratt, J. G. 'A review of the Pearce-Pratt distance series of ESP tests.' *Journal of Parapsychology*. 1954. pp. 165-177.

² Rhine, J. G., & Pratt, J. G. 'A review of the Pearce-Pratt distance series of ESP tests.' *Journal of Parapsychology*. 1954. pp. 165-177.

to screen for collusion between Pearce and Pratt. Pratt's hit rates were not affected by these protocols.³

Background

I have had a lifelong interest in the subject of telepathy. The telepathic abilities of my great-great-great grandmother, Jane Dean, were documented by the noted Irish physicist Sir William Barrett in his seminal 1831 book *Psychical Research*. Jane Dean was the Irish maid of the well documented Creery family from Buxton, England. While the telepathic abilities of the Creery sisters are well known, Jane Dean also obtained significantly anomalous results in Barrett's telepathy tests. Descendants of Jane Dean, such as my great-grandmother and grandmother, were strong believers in the phenomena of *the second sight*. Accordingly, I grew up in a culture which frequently discussed such topics, both in terms of conjuring tricks and of genuine phenomena. I began conducting tests into genuine telepathy (for lack of a better term) at the *Accademia dell'Arte*, a theatre conservatory in Tuscany, in 2013 as part of an independent project for my MFA in physical theatre. I pursued my doctoral research in Ireland, and – in order to connect with and reflect my heritage – adopted the surname Dean, first for the stage, and ultimately, legally.

I decided to pursue the topic of genuine telepathy – rather than the simulation of telepathy – after being struck by the way in which a highly-trained ensemble *seems*, at times, to possess a collective mind. I participated in many performances and exercises in which the ensemble – without any apparent means of communication – was consistently able to start or stop various movements collectively, simultaneously, and *as if* of a single mind. This well-known hive-like ability of well-trained ensembles has been long appreciated in theatre. For instance, Jacques Lecoq has referred to a chorus as 'a body which moves organically like a living creature.'⁴ Simon McBurney, similarly, has written, in reference to the cast of *Crocodiles*, that 'through innumerable improvisations the actors physically learned to shift together like a flock of starlings.'⁵

³ Rhine, J. G., & Pratt, J. G. 'A review of the Pearce-Pratt distance series of ESP tests.' *Journal of Parapsychology*. 1954. pp. 165-177.

⁴ Callery, Dymphna. *The Active Text: Unlocking Plays Through Physical Theatre*. p. 29.

⁵ Murray, Simon David. *Physical Theatres: A Critical Introduction*. 2007. p. 73.

These directors, however, are using similes. The chorus moves *like* a living creature. The ensemble shifts *like* a flock of starlings. An ensemble is not *actually* a living creature, nor does it possess the ability to think or move *as one*. I was keen to investigate what it is that *actually* takes place – physically/sensorially and psychologically – in such moments. It was on the basis of these investigations that I created my first methods for psychophysical replications of telepathy (Flamingo Six Method).

I began with a thorough practical investigation of the concepts of “radiation” and “irradiation” (*izlucheniye* and *oblucheniye*) proposed by theatre director Konstantin Stanislavski and furthered by his successor Michael Chekhov. I also engaged with what Eugenio Barba has called the *recurring principles*, particularly the notions of *extra-daily body technique*, *the dilated body*, *pre-expressive tension*, and *enhanced scenic bios*, or, *presence*.⁶ It is worth noting that Chekhov also paid considerable attention to a related notion of *pre-acting* proposed by Vsevolod Meyerhold, in which actors attempt to communicate their characters’ intentions to spectators *during pauses*.⁷

Performance studies theorist Richard Schechner, has written that each performance genre ‘deforms and reforms the body by introducing disequilibrium, a problem to be solved by a new balancing specific to the genre: ballet’s way of unbalancing-rebalancing is not football’s... But each form *needs to play dangerously with the body*, to deconstruct and reconstruct it according to its own plan of action.’⁸ Also important to this research was the observation of Jaques LeCoq that ‘the body knows things about which the mind is ignorant.’⁹

My primary objective was to (de)re-construct my body-mind to the point in which I was able to (metaphorically, perhaps) think with my body rather than my intellect; to react on instinct *through* the body; to step outside of my head (so to speak) and to listen to the hairs on the back of my neck (so to speak). In order to achieve this, I began with the commitment of a method actor; to act *as if* I was psychic, both on stage and off. During this process, I deeply engaged with method acting techniques under the guidance of fellow doctor researcher and colleague Tom Kibbe, an NYU

⁶ Barba, Eugenio. *The Paper Canoe: A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*. 1995.

⁷ Meyerhold, Vsevolod. *Meyerhold on Theatre*. 1969.

⁸ Schechner, Richard. *The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance*. 1993. p. 40.

⁹ Lecoq, Jacques. *The Moving Body: Teaching Creative Theatre. Revised Ed.* p. 8.

graduate who studied personally with the Masters of the American Method of Actor Training, Strasberg, Adler, and Meisner.

Growing up, I was constantly described by family members as having the second sight. In consequence, I did not find it an insurmountable task to, first, come to believe *that I believed* in such abilities. And second, to believe *that I possessed (or might possess)* above-average sensitivities in this regard. All which followed, grew from that seed. In both testing myself, and in being formally tested by others, I discovered a number of physical variables which, phenomenologically at least, seemed to lead to increased hit rates over time. These factors will be examined in depth in a subsequent section of this document.



The James Randi Educational Foundation *Million Dollar Challenge*

In May 2015, I was awarded first prize in the creative mind category at the UCC Doctoral Showcase for my presentation, *Do We Think Like We Think We Do?* In this presentation, I scratched the surface of what would soon evolve into *Project Viola Ten*. In August 2015, during my earliest experiments with the Flamingo Six Method, I elected to use a pack of vintage Duke University Zener cards designed for testing for Extrasensory Perception (ESP). These early experiments took place in conjunction with my residency at the *School of Acrobatics and New*

Circus Arts, and were conducted alongside Margot Fox, a colleague from the *Accademia dell'Arte*, a physical theatre conservatory in Tuscany.

On the first series of experiments of the Flamingo Six Method, Ms. Fox and I were seated back to back (not touching). We alternated roles as sender and receiver. The sender thoroughly slop shuffled the pack of 25 Zener cards. (This shuffle procedure importantly mixes the cards end for end whilst also randomizing the order of the cards.) The pack was cut at random and the cut completed. In apparent silence, and using only a rudimentary version of the Flamingo Six Method, we attempted to transfer an impression of each card *as if* by telepathy. The following process was adhered to:

- 1) The sender says “now” and *then* looks at a card.
- 2) The receiver records a call and then says “next.”
- 3) The sender records the card, says “now” and *then* looks at the next card.
- 4) This process is repeated until the pack is exhausted.

Statistically, one would expect to be correct, on average, 5 times out of 25; a 20% hit rate. Alternating roles on each round, we averaged 40% over 20 runs of 25 cards (500 trials). In the 250 trials in which I was sender, Ms. Fox averaged a 38% hit rate (115/250), while I averaged a 42% hit rate as receiver (121/250). At this point, we decided to apply for the *James Randi Educational Foundation* ‘Million Dollar Challenge’¹⁰ for proof of the paranormal. I was informed that we would need to surpass odds of a million to one against chance in order to win the prize.

I consulted my friend, math teacher and ghost hunter, Philemon Vanderbeck, regarding these odds. He responded:

Sometimes it's easier to figure out the odds of getting it wrong and then using the reciprocal. Anyways, you use a combinatorics formula.

$$P(X=10) = (25 C 10) * (1/5)^{10} * (4/5)^{(25-10)}$$

25 is the number of cards in the deck

10 is the number that you get right

1/5 is the odds of getting a card right

4/5 are the odds of getting a card wrong

¹⁰ James Randi Educational Foundation. <http://web.randi.org/the-million-dollar-challenge.html>

The (25 C 10) is "25 choose 10" which involves factorials. $25!/(10!15!)$.

You can also write that as the Combination function $C(25,10)$.

The odds of getting 10 out of 25 correct is about 1.18% per trial. So, it's just a little more than 1 out of a 100.

If you got these results in three trials, that would get you your 1 in a 1,000,000 odds.

In other words, using the Flamingo Six Method we could easily beat the one in a million odds under strictly controlled conditions, including blindfolds, ear plugs, and distance, **without the use of any concealed electronics, accomplices, covert artifice, or conjuring gimmickry, apparatus, or technique.** I forwarded these calculations and attempted to officially apply for the JREF challenge. I was eventually informed that the JREF was no longer accepting applications from private parties. The following month (September, 2015) the JREF publicly terminated the million dollar challenge. According to the JREF website (emphasis added):

We plan on continuing the Million Dollar Challenge as a means for educating the public about paranormal claims, but the process for consideration of claims has been changed effective September 1, 2015. *No application submitted under the previous procedures or relying in whole or in part on the previously published terms of the Challenge will be considered...*

Effective immediately, JREF will no longer accept applications directly from people claiming to have a paranormal power. *Previously available Application Forms shall not be used and will be rejected without any review of the contents. We anticipate providing minimum required protocols for the preliminary test early next year.* No one should make any effort to pursue the Challenge until those minimum required protocols are issued.¹¹

Nearly two years later, the JREF has not come forward with a revised protocol for the million-dollar challenge. [See: Appendix C for documentation of this email correspondence.]

¹¹ James Randi Educational Foundation. <http://web.randi.org/home/jref-status>



Telepathy

Etymologically, telepathy comes from the Greek words *tele* and *pathos*, meaning literally, *feeling at a distance*. Telepathy was defined by early parapsychological researchers in the late 1800s, such as Johns Hopkins University's Simon Newcomb, as 'a feeling at a distance without the intervention of any physical agent.'¹² At that time, the known senses basically consisted of the classical five: sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. Telepathy was considered an example of *extra-sensory perception*. Today, however, it has been widely demonstrated that humans possess as many as 21 senses, including notably, proprioception, time, interoception, and balance.¹³

My demonstrations, to the best of my knowledge – although many of my fans would have me believe otherwise – are accomplished primarily through sensory means. However, much of these sensory means lie beyond the sensory input of the classical five senses. These less common sensory channels include auditory-tactile synesthesia (for which I have tested positively, specifically, Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response), and a phenomenon which I first described as *external proprioception*, before seeing it described in 2017 in the international philosophy review journal *TOPOI*, as '*intersubjective proprioception (interkinesthesia)*.'¹⁴ Regarding this, the authors, discussing plural pre-reflective self-awareness amongst expert string quartets write:

...interkinesthetic affectivity is unique in generating a feeling of we-agency, a "hive-mind" in which one's own perception–action loops are coupled to other

¹² Wiley, Barry. *The Thought Reader Craze: Victorian Science at the Enchanted Boundary*. 2012. p. 4.

¹³ Durie, Bruce. 'Doors of Perception.' *NewScientist*. No. 2484. Jan 29, 2005.

¹⁴ Salice, Alessandro, et al. 'Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.' *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 7.

bodies (in an intercorporeity that is also describable in terms of in joint body schemas or the experience of extended peripersonal space), and thus loop intersubjectively.¹⁵

In a similar vein, performance studies theorist Richard Schechner has noted the need for ‘further explorations of our complicated neuronc networks connecting people to each other. Our bodies do not end with our skin’ he writes, ‘but extend beyond into the brains of others.’¹⁶

The unique, but nevertheless sensory, nature of my techniques has perplexed me as to whether my methods should be classified as sensory, enhanced-sensory, extended-sensory, or extra-sensory. When I say that my demonstrations are accomplished *primarily* through sensory means, it is because in many instances – both on and offstage – I have had experiences that would seem to suggest, phenomenologically, explanatory mechanisms entirely independent of sensory perception. These experiences, and potential explanations for such apparent intercorporeity, joint-body schemas, hive-mind, or entanglement, are discussed in a later section of this paper.

Stanislavski

Stanislavski describes, in *An Actor Prepares*, the actor’s transmission and reception of energy, using the words “radiation” and “irradiation” respectively.¹⁷ The term radiation, in this context was pioneered by the French psychologist Théodule Ribot in 1890 in *The Psychology of Attention*.¹⁸ Stanislavski’s successor at the First Studio, Michael Chekhov, would later adopt these same terms.

According to R. Andrew White, in his paper, ‘Radiation and the Transmission of Energy: From Stanislavski to Michael Chekhov’ that ‘Stanislavski understood radiation to be primarily the transference of inner thought and feeling by the actor.’¹⁹ In Stanislavski’s own words: ‘The irresistibility, the contagion of the force of direct communication through the invisible radiation of

¹⁵ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 10.

¹⁶ Schechner, Richard. *Performance Theory*. 1988. p. 176

¹⁷ Stanislavsky, Konstantin. *An Actor Prepares*. 1946.

¹⁸ Ribot, Théodule. *The Psychology of Attention*. Chicago: Open Court Publishing. 1890. p. 62.

¹⁹ White, R Andrew. ‘Radiation and the Transmission of Energy: From Stanislavsky to Michael Chekhov.’ 2009. p. 36

human will and feeling is very great.... actors fill the entire building of the auditorium with invisible rays and currents of their feeling and captivate the crowd.’²⁰

According to Professor Franc Chamberlain in *Michael Chekhov*, Leopold Sulerzhitsky, Stanislavski’s collaborator at the First Studio in Moscow, led exercises in which students ‘would attempt to channel the prana through their fingertips or their eyes and make contact with their partners, who had their backs to them, through the energy.’²¹ R. Andrew White writes that the students, ‘were taught that radiated energy is palpable, and in order to receive an energy current, to “irradiate,” one need not maintain visual contact with the acting partner. The sharing of vital energy, alone, is enough to establish contact with one another.’²²

Prana is the yogic term proposed by Sulerzhitsky to explain vital energy. Later in his career, however, Stanislavski described the use of the term as “naïve”²³ favouring instead, the terms radiation and irradiation of energy. Obviously, these approaches to energy would be challenged on a technical level by contemporary cognitive science. Nevertheless, I can state, as a doctoral researcher, and as a practitioner and lecturer of physical theatre at University College Cork, that the *practical* merit of these ideas should not be dismissed lightly. Not surprisingly, therefore, Stanislavski’s research into the radiation of energy by actors, was adopted and furthered by Michael Chekhov.

In *My Life in Art*, Stanislavski affirms Chekhov’s approach, writing that the charm of the plays directed by Chekhov ‘is not transmitted through the words, but is hidden beneath them or in the pauses, in the actors’ glances, in the radiation of their inner feelings.’²⁴ While this approach may seem *psychic* on the surface, R. Andrew White notes that for both Chekhov and Stanislavski, ‘the communication of the on-stage atmosphere to the audience is dependent on the actor’s body.’

Michael Chekhov

²⁰ Stanislavsky, Konstantin. *Creating a Role*. 1961.

²¹ Chamberlain, Franc. *Michael Chekhov*. London: Routledge. 2004. p. 67.

²² White, R Andrew. ‘Radiation and the Transmission of Energy: From Stanislavsky to Michael Chekhov.’ 2009. p. 29

²³ White, R Andrew. ‘Radiation and the Transmission of Energy: From Stanislavsky to Michael Chekhov.’ 2009. p. 38

²⁴ Stanislavsky, Konstantin. *My Life in Art*. 1948.

In 'Radiation and the Transmission of Energy: From Stanislavski to Michael Chekhov', R. Andrew White writes that Chekhov considered radiation to be 'one of the strongest means of expression'²⁵ and that like Stanislavski, Chekhov, 'regards radiation as a method to extend or send an action impulse beyond the body to one's partner and the audience.'²⁶

White further notes that Chekhov was 'particularly interested in the way actors could radiate during a pause'²⁷ White cites Andrei Bely, a collaborator of Chekhov, who claimed that 'Chekhov's acting is derived from pause, not from word. [For Chekhov] the body is like lightening; the word is born from the tip of the lightning, like from a burst of energy—the word is the aftermath of everything.'²⁸

In Chekhov's own words: 'While radiating strive, in a sense, to go out and beyond the boundary of your body. Send your rays in different directions from the whole body at once and afterward through its various parts....'²⁹ Chekhov's approach to the radiation of energy is virtually identical to Stanislavski's. Both, for instance, connect this transmission of energy with the actors' level of concentration. Chekhov writes that an actor who becomes fully aware of his or her ability to radiate energy may then 'support and increase it by means of his conscious effort. His habit of concentration will also strengthen this ability.'³⁰ Chekhov argued that radiated energy, in the words of White, 'both leads and follows the movement once it is made. In that regard, an actor can radiate the impulse for an action, perform the action, and fill the playing space by letting the action's energy radiate beyond the confines of the body.'³¹

White also cites Mala Powers, a student and close friend of Chekhov. According to Powers, the will of the actor to radiate energy may be strong enough that the actor may 'even consciously "radiate" [his or her] character's presence onto the stage or set before [making] an entrance.'³² Chekhov wrote often of Vsevolod Meyerhold's notion of *pre-acting* which may be described of

²⁵ White, R Andrew. 'Radiation and the Transmission of Energy: From Stanislavsky to Michael Chekhov.' 2009. p. 37

²⁶ White, R Andrew. 'Radiation and the Transmission of Energy: From Stanislavsky to Michael Chekhov.' 2009. p. 34

²⁷ White, R Andrew. 'Radiation and the Transmission of Energy: From Stanislavsky to Michael Chekhov.' 2009. p. 38

²⁸ White, R Andrew. 'Radiation and the Transmission of Energy: From Stanislavsky to Michael Chekhov.' 2009. p. 34

²⁹ Chekhov, Michael. *On the Technique of Acting*. 1953.

³⁰ Chekhov, Michael. *On the Technique of Acting*. 1953.

³¹ White, R Andrew. 'Radiation and the Transmission of Energy: From Stanislavsky to Michael Chekhov.' 2009. p. 38

³² White, R Andrew. 'Radiation and the Transmission of Energy: From Stanislavsky to Michael Chekhov.' 2009. p. 38

the process of radiating during pauses.³³ Such ideas have also been interrogated and advanced by Eugenio Barba in his examination of *pre-expressive tension*.³⁴

While the science of such ideas is clearly debatable – as a doctoral researcher and as a practitioner and lecturer of physical theatre – I can confidently state, based on my experience that such ideas – whatever their basis in reality may be – serve, at the very least, as effective metaphors in actor training and in live performance.

Eugenio Barba

Just as Stanislavski distanced himself, in some regards, from the spiritual notion of Prana, Eugenio Barba felt that even the term *energy* was loaded down with baggage and should be avoided. Yet, as no adequate substitutes were available, he was unable even to avoid frequent use of the word. In Barba's words:

Certain words are treacherous because they stick in one's mouth. The word 'energy' can deceive us because, when we apply it to our actions, it can inflate and stiffen them.

A friend of mine, a director in Germany, wrote to me reminding me ironically of a tinker's promise I had once made: 'I will never again use the word energy with respect to the performer.' In the ten years which followed I never stopped talking and writing about it. It cannot be avoided. But I remember that promise and how justified it was.³⁵

Barba was deeply interested in the heightened levels of stage presence, or *enhanced scenic bios* achieved in Eastern theatre. Barba, like Stanislavski and Chekhov, believed that this energy or presence was ultimately reducible to corporeal, rather than spiritual or psychic terms – although that was not to deny the mental aspects of the process. Barba writes that the process is, 'fascinating and sometimes deceptive; one is tempted to believe that it has to do only with 'bodies', with physical and not mental actions. But a way of moving in space manifests a way of thinking. It is a way of thinking laid bare. Or a way of moving which guides the thought.'³⁶ Nonetheless the process was decidedly physical. For instance, Barba noted that 'even if you make a microscopic

³³ Chekhov, Michael. *On the Technique of Acting*. 1953.

³⁴ Barba, Eugenio. *The Paper Canoe: A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*. 1995.

³⁵ Barba, Eugenio. *The Paper Canoe: A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*. 1995. p. 49.

³⁶ Barba, Eugenio. *The Paper Canoe: A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*. 1995. p. 97.

movement (the tiniest displacement of the hand, for example) the entire *tonicity of the body changes*.³⁷

Barba writes at length, and fascinatingly, on multiple *recurring principles* of theatre including *extra-daily body techniques*, *pre-expressive tension*, *the dilated body*, and *enhanced scenic bios* or *presence*. Examining *presence*, Barba notes that ‘the observation of a particular quality of scenic presence leads us to a differentiation between daily, virtuosic techniques, and extra-daily body techniques.’³⁸ Extra-daily body techniques, Barba felt, ‘literally put the body into form, rendering it artificial/artistic but believable.’³⁹ According to Barba:

Daily body techniques generally follow the principle of minimum effort, that is, obtaining a maximum result with a minimum expenditure of energy. Extra-daily techniques are based, on the contrary, on the wasting of energy. At times they even seem to suggest a principle opposite to that which characterizes daily techniques: the principle of maximum commitment of energy for a minimal result.⁴⁰

Barba argued that extra-daily body technique ‘dilates the body’s dynamics. The body is re-formed, re-built for the theatrical fiction.’⁴¹ Regarding the inherently compelling notion of a dilated body, Barba writes:

...the performer’s dilated body is a hot body, but not in the sentimental or emotional sense. Feeling and emotion are reactions, consequences. It is a red hot body, in the scientific sense of the word. The particles which make up daily behaviour have been excited and produce more energy. They have undergone an increment of motion, they move apart, they attract each other, they oppose each other with more force, more speed, within a larger space.⁴²

While there is no scientific consensus on *how* this process functions, his meaning is certainly clear. Extra-daily body technique, properly employed, literally *dilates* – that is to say, *physiologically alters* – the body, and thus, how it is perceived sensorially by onlookers. Barba further explores the ability of such techniques to manifest pre-expressive tension. Barba suggests that pre-

³⁷ Barba, Eugenio. ‘An Amulet Made of Memory. The Significance of Exercises in the Actor’s Dramaturgy.’ *TDR*. 1997. p. 128.

³⁸ Barba, Eugenio. *The Paper Canoe: A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*. 1995. p. 16.

³⁹ Barba, Eugenio. *The Paper Canoe: A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*. 1995. p. 16.

⁴⁰ Barba, Eugenio. *The Paper Canoe: A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*. 1995. p. 15.

⁴¹ Barba, Eugenio. *The Paper Canoe: A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*. 1995. p. 61.

⁴² Barba, Eugenio. *The Paper Canoe: A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*. 1995. p. 97.

expressivity manifests as ‘the life of the performer, characterizing it even before this life attempts to express something.’⁴³ On this, Barba further writes:

These principles, when applied to certain physiological factors—weight, balance, the use of the spinal column and the eyes —produce physical, pre-expressive tensions. These new tensions generate an extra-daily energy quality which renders the body theatrically ‘decided’, ‘alive’, ‘believable’, thereby enabling the performer’s ‘presence’ or scenic bios to attract the spectator’s attention before any message is transmitted. This is a logical, and not a chronological ‘before’.⁴⁴

This is similar to Meyerhold’s notion of pre-acting, supported by Chekhov, and reminiscent as well, of the statement of Powers that an actor could even make his or her presence felt by the audience *before stepping onto the stage*. Thus, Barba argues, and his body of work would seem to evidence, that an actor may expend vast amounts of energy in order to dilate his or her body, and in so doing, this energy may be perceived sensorially by onlookers. And further, the increased energy output may be perceived by onlookers *before any perceptible physical action occurs*.

I hold a very sceptical view of the approaches described above and was naturally inclined to regard such ideas as “woo”. Yet, I was also greatly intrigued by the fact that such ideas *seem* to work, both effectively and consistently, in the theatrical context. Both in performing with, and directing, an ensemble, I have found it impossible to generate work of a high standard without taking on board these, or similar, ideas. And while some of these ideas have clearly not been validated by contemporary cognitive or neuroscientific research, they are widely regarded as having great practical value within the cannon of academic literature on acting and theatre. Although such ideas are often explained or understood in immaterial or spiritual terms, such as Prana, Chakras, etc., I strongly suspect that such phenomena might be explainable in physical and sensorial, and possibly even psychological, terms.

I have often been observed by my colleagues in theatre as possessing a particular sensitivity for such work. For instance, I have been uncannily successful in group attempts of the Sulerzhitsky exercise in which I attempt to sense “Prana” or *extra-daily dilated body technique* via what Phillip

⁴³ Barba, Eugenio. *The Paper Canoe: A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*. 1995. p. 16.

⁴⁴ Barba, Eugenio. *The Paper Canoe: A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*. 1995. p. 9.

Zarrilli has described as an ‘open the back awareness.’⁴⁵ In *Psychophysical Acting: An Intercultural Approach after Stanislavski*, Zarrilli writes:

Coaching participants to “*open the back awareness*” or “open awareness through the feet” (or palms) invites an opening of one's secondary awareness to the *to the negative or absent space* furthest away from the point of external focus. The *space* behind or on the periphery or above can and should be as fully inhabited as the place of the gaze ahead. Optimally one looks from behind, one sees from and through one's feet, keeping an awareness of the feet as the foot moves along the surface of the floor. As the gestalt of the bodymind-as-a-whole expands beyond the surface and recessive bodies to include the feeling of the form such as the lion pose, it is possible for the actor to voluntarily thematise both the body and space around and behind the body which usually disappears from our awareness.⁴⁶

I regularly use such approaches in my training and informal testing. Thus, I set out to test these approaches in the laboratory and to determine if they could produce consistent results. And if so, under what conditions? And what were the physical and psychological mechanisms responsible?

Methodology

Jacques LeCoq has observed that ‘the body knows things about which the mind is ignorant.’⁴⁷ And Richard Schechner, has written of playing ‘dangerously with the body.’⁴⁸ I began this practice-based research with an intention to use my own body as a laboratory. After coming to believe (or at least to believe that I believed) in both telepathic phenomena and in my possession of it, I became determined to (de)re-construct my body/mind – both psychologically and physically – to the point in which I was able to think with my body rather than my intellect. To react on instinct *through* the body. To step outside of my head and to listen to the hairs on the back of my neck.

During the years of this training and experimentation, I found a number of variables which seemed to both positively and negatively impact hit rates. While not conclusive evidence (since these variables cannot be perfectly isolated) the correlation is sufficient phenomenologically, that I hold the factors to be critical.

⁴⁵ Zarrilli, Phillip. *Psychophysical Acting: An Intercultural Approach after Stanislavski*. 2009. p. 91.

⁴⁶ Zarrilli, Phillip. *Psychophysical Acting: An Intercultural Approach after Stanislavski*. 2009. p. 91.

⁴⁷ Lecoq, Jacques. *The Moving Body: Teaching Creative Theatre. Revised Ed.* p. 8.

⁴⁸ Schechner, Richard. *The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance*. 1993. p. 40.

I became determined to (de)re-construct my body/mind – both psychologically and physically – to the point in which I was able to think with my body rather than my intellect. To react on instinct *through* the body. To step outside of my head and to listen to the hairs on the back of my neck.

I keep my body fat levels at < 5%. I found that my hit rates were inverse to my body fat levels. Of course, this is not strictly controlled, as my experience and training increased, during the same period that my body fat levels decreased. Between 2015 and 2017, I lost 35 pounds, dropping from 18% to <5% body fat. This weight loss was also for aesthetic purposes, as I perform many of these experiments while semi-nude, and choose to consent to strip searches and display my body and during my public performances. Consequently, I am unwilling to gain weight at this time in order to test this hypothesis. My hypothesis, however, is that bodyfat provides an intermediary barrier between stimulus and impulse. Not only a physical barrier, but a physiological one as well, as the body draws from stores of energy, rather than surviving *in the moment* by drawing from energy sources as they are consumed. Accordingly, I find that my hit rates increase when **I am hungry. I also monitor my glucose levels before and during testing periods and consume energy drinks with sugar and electrolytes such as Gator-Ade, during testing periods.**

My health was monitored regularly between 2015 and 2017, via regular checkups and blood tests. However, at this point (with semi-nude television appearances looming) my eating habits have become borderline compulsive. In 2017, I began demonstrating symptoms of the eating disorder anorexia nervosa, and on two occasions I experimented with self-induced vomiting. My extreme eating habits also resulted in social isolation and damaged relationships and friendships. I find it very stressful to eat with other people, to be around other people while they eat, or to attend functions where free food is provided. I was divorced in 2016 and my intense eating habits both contributed to, and worsened in the wake of, this experience. Of course, I am taking all necessary steps to insure health and safety during this period. But I do wish to document the intensity with

which I have pursued this subject and the sacrifices which I have made during the course of this research.

I strictly abstain from alcohol before and during testing periods, and I abstain from alcohol for the most part, in general. Parapsychologists have noted that instances of telepathy seem to occur more frequently when a subject is extremely relaxed, such as under Ganzfeld conditions or whilst dreaming.⁴⁹ Similarly, it has been noted that these instances seem to be lower amongst those with neurotic or high-strung personalities.⁵⁰ This led me to imagine that telepathic-like abilities (hereafter described as *psychophysical thought transference* or PTT) might be correlated with intoxication, given the relaxant properties of alcohol. The *Tuscan Experiments* at the *Accademia dell'Arte* seemed to prove otherwise, however, and I performed near chance levels whilst intoxicated and in the days following even moderate drinking. This would seem to confirm the *physical* nature of this work, and suggest that the physical and proprioceptive disruption triggered by alcohol is a major impediment to psychophysical thought transference. Rhine's experiments at Duke University found, similarly, but counter-intuitively, that barbiturate drugs such as sodium amytal, resulted in decreased hit rates, while stimulants such as caffeine, resulted in increased hit rates among star subjects.⁵¹

Accordingly, **I take the prescription drug Modifinil before, and during, extended testing runs.** Modifinil is a dopamine re-uptake inhibitor and is used by the Canadian Air Force (for example) as a *go-pill*. Modifinil is also used onboard the international space station and is often prescribed as part of the treatment of narcolepsy. This amphetamine alternative is safe when used properly. And I find that my hit rates rise (on average, 16% over MCE) when using sufficient dosages of Modifinil.

Finally, **I genuinely attempt to use telepathy during testing periods.** Although, I have stated this last, this is a significant statement and the point from which my practice-based research began. It was from this seed that the Flamingo Six Method grew and *Project Viola Ten* became a possibility. In short, I began with the method actor's commitment to live life *as if* I were genuinely psychic; to genuinely believe *that I believed* that I possessed above average telepathic sensitivities.

⁴⁹ Irwin, Harvey J. and Caroline Watt. *An Introduction to Parapsychology*, 5th Ed. 2007. p. 76.

⁵⁰ Irwin, Harvey J. and Caroline Watt. *An Introduction to Parapsychology*, 5th Ed. 2007. p. 75.

⁵¹ Rhine, J. B. *Extra-Sensory Perception*. 1934. pp.45, 78, 127.

This led to a natural desire to test my abilities and, later, to submit to formal testing. Issues of dark method acting, dark play, and the performativity of the paranormal, are examined in depth in my dissertation.

Taken together, the above approaches to psychophysical thought transference (ie., non-visual/non-auditory communication) have, from my phenomenological perspective, enabled me to (metaphorically, perhaps) deconstruct my body and reconstruct it for the specific purpose of creating and performing psychophysical replications of telepathic communication.

The Phenomenology of Telepathy

I have described the above physical processes as technically as I am able, and I have attempted to frame the above methodologies as rather straightforward physical and neural processes. Nevertheless, during performance, I do not simply employ technical or unemotional systems, strategies, or methods to achieve covert and systematic communication. Rather, I *actually attempt* – I *always* actually attempt – to communicate the object in question through non-physical or telepathic means. I believe that engaging simultaneously on two levels (the physical and the psychological) contributes to the success of my demonstrations.

I further believe that there are two primary reasons for this. First, and most obviously, it provides compelling subtext for my demonstrations. If I were to simply present my demonstrations as a systematic display of covert physical communication, I believe that the demonstrations would be far less enthusiastically received. The best way to appear *as if* I am using genuine telepathy, as far as I know, is to actually try to use it.

The second reason is less obvious. I genuinely attempt to use telepathy in my demonstrations because, at times, telepathy seems to work. In many ways, I believe that I began with the method actor's intention to *pretend to be telepathic*, and over many, many, tests, discovered (came to believe?) that I really was telepathic (statistically speaking, at least). But, to what degree do beliefs impact abilities in these regards? This question has been long examined within the field of parapsychology, and the performativity of psychic phenomena is discussed in depth within my dissertation.

It is difficult to control for possible coincidences and cognitive biases, such as confirmation bias – and undoubtedly, coincidence and confirmation bias play a role – but, nevertheless, I have experienced numerous spontaneous anomalous occurrences, both inside the lab and out, which far exceed chance expectations and which would seem to defy all psychological and scientific explanations. [See: Appendix D for a detailed description of one such experience.]

Mathematician John Littlewood of Cambridge University has proposed *Littlewood's Law*, which is based on the *law of truly large numbers*, and which states that if people are, on average, awake and alert for 8 hours a day, and experience one thing per second during that time (1,008,000 things), then they should expect a one in a million outcome (a seeming miracle) at a rate of approximately once per month (every 35 days).⁵² Although, I am not sure if I agree with the premise that people experience new things at a rate of one per second for eight hours a day, Littlewood's point is clear. Still, I find my experiences to be, phenomenologically speaking, beyond statistical or cognitive explanations. I am not asserting that telepathy (as it is currently understood) is the causal mechanism responsible for these experiences, but it does appear to me that something beyond basic sensory input must be at play, given the statistical unlikelihood of such events.

Explanatory Hypotheses

My experiences in the laboratories during *Project Viola Ten* are largely consistent with recent joint research into plural self-awareness conducted by researchers at University College Cork (Ireland), the University of Copenhagen (Denmark), and the University of Memphis (USA). This research was published in 2017 in the international philosophy review journal *TOPOI*, in a paper entitled *Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship*.

This paper examines an expert string quartet and interrogates the non-observational and non-inferential (ie., telepathic-like) communication which frequently occurs amongst the members of the quartet. The authors seek to explain this (non) communication by examining the

⁵² Littlewood, J. E. *A Mathematicians Miscellany*. Methuen And Company Limited. 1953.

‘phenomenology of joint action’⁵³ as it relates to the ‘intercorporeal dimension of playing together,’ and the ‘joining of body schemas.’⁵⁴ These joint body schemas, the authors conclude, often arise from a sense of ‘we-agency’⁵⁵ which, in turn, arises at times, out of ‘shared intentions,’⁵⁶ ‘shared emotions,’⁵⁷ and ‘deep trust’⁵⁸ among the players. According to the authors, we-agency is:

...experiencing the performance as something that we, together, are doing. Instead of feeling the performance to flow out of my singular and individual effort, I feel it as the result of our collective and fused effort. In other words, I experience the we-action from within the we-action itself—that is, I do not experience the we-action as something that is brought about by my I-action coordinating with other actions. I rather experience bringing about the we-action.⁵⁹

The authors describe the non-observational, non-inferential communication arising from the we-agency as ‘intersubjective proprioception’ or ‘interkinaesthesia’⁶⁰ and note that communication at this level ‘makes explicit coordination unnecessary’⁶¹ and at times, counter-productive.⁶² However, they also observe that this is a ‘fragile and unstable condition.’⁶³ The authors are also quick to point out the physical and sensorial factors at play in this process, observing that while the ‘phenomenology is unique and depends on the sense of we-agency’ it nevertheless ‘must be supported and maintained by observationally based cognitive processes.’⁶⁴ The authors conclude

⁵³ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 5.

⁵⁴ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 8.

⁵⁵ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 1.

⁵⁶ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 3.

⁵⁷ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 8.

⁵⁸ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 4.

⁵⁹ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 10.

⁶⁰ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 8.

⁶¹ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 9.

⁶² Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 6.

⁶³ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 10.

⁶⁴ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 3.

that ‘even in the case of interkinaesthesia, where practical knowledge presents itself to the agents as non-inferential and non-observational, the agents’ cognitive, observational mechanisms are still online and deeply entrenched.’⁶⁵ The authors also note that the musicians are ‘fully tuned to one another and coordinate to microscopic bodily movements’⁶⁶ and that ‘entrainment, mirror-resonance and body schemas, joint or otherwise, surely become more and more refined and attuned with practice.’⁶⁷

While my work with small groups of two or three senders bears a resemblance to that of the quartet, unlike the quartet, my conditions are such that visual observation is definitively eliminated, and (in the case of laboratory testing) any overt interoception through sound is definitively eliminated, as well. The nature of my laboratory tests (with Zener cards, for example) are also very measurable in terms of results, as opposed to the subjective outcome of a musical performance. Since, interoception through sound and unconscious visual observation are the two major sensory mechanisms alluded to in the above paper, it would be very interesting to examine my demonstrations in view of the theories proposed.

Could the experiences of seemingly genuine telepathy (non-observational, non-inferential communication) be explained by the theories of interkinaesthesia, entrainment, and joint body schemas described above? I find this plausible, and the authors of the paper cited above have expressed an interest in my demonstrations, and I welcome opportunities for future collaborative research.

The anomalous experiences described previously also bear a strong resemblance to other documented experiences and laboratory findings examined by noted parapsychologist Dean Radin in *Entangled Minds*. About these occurrences, Radin writes:

For centuries, scientists assumed that everything can be explained by mechanisms analogous to clockworks. Then, to everyone’s surprise, over the course of the 20th century, we’ve learned that this commonsense assumption is wrong. When the fabric of reality is examined very closely, nothing resembling clockworks can be found. Instead, reality is woven from strange, “holistic” threads that aren’t located

⁶⁵ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 12.

⁶⁶ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 10.

⁶⁷ Salice, Alessandro, et al. ‘Putting Plural Self-Awareness into Practice: The Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship.’ *TOPOI*. 2017. p. 9.

precisely in space or time. Tug on a dangling loose end from this fabric of reality, and the whole cloth twitches, instantly, throughout all time and space.⁶⁸

Writing about the ways ‘in which the effects of microscopic entanglements “scale up” into our macroscopic world’⁶⁹ Radin notes that ‘entangled connections between carefully prepared atomic-sized objects can persist over many miles’ and that ‘theoretical descriptions [show that] tasks can be accomplished by entangled groups without the members of the group communicating with each other in any conventional way.’⁷⁰ He describes numerous scientific theories which might explain such phenomena, including that one theory which suggests that ‘the entire universe is a single, self-entangled object.’⁷¹ Whatever the nature of reality might be, Radin observes that ‘no longer are psi experiences regarded as rare human talents, divine gifts, or “powers” that magically transcend ordinary physical boundaries. Instead, psi becomes an unavoidable consequence of living in an interconnected, entangled physical reality.’⁷²

This argument is furthered by Walter von Lucadou, Hartmann Römer, and Harald Walach in a 2007 paper in the *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, entitled, ‘Synchronistic Phenomena as Entanglement Correlations in Generalized Quantum Theory.’ In this paper, the authors argue that ‘Synchronistic or psi phenomena [may be] interpreted as entanglement correlations in a generalized quantum theory.’⁷³ The authors stress that psi phenomena are best understood, ‘not as a result of any causal influence of mind on matter or other minds but as “meaningful coincidences”, correlations not produced by causal interaction of the kind physicists know and apply successfully but mediated by correspondences of sense and meaning.’⁷⁴ In other words, telepathy might be explained not by causal, or physical, transfers of energy or exchanges of information, but rather by non-causal and non-local (ie., quantum entanglement) correlations.

⁶⁸ Radin, Dean. *Entangled Minds*. 2006. pp.2-3.

⁶⁹ Radin, Dean. *Entangled Minds*. 2006. p. 2.

⁷⁰ Radin, Dean. *Entangled Minds*. 2006. p. 2.

⁷¹ Radin, Dean. *Entangled Minds*. 2006. p. 2.

⁷² Radin, Dean. *Entangled Minds*. 2006. p. 3.

⁷³ Walter von Lucadou, et al. ‘Synchronistic Phenomena as Entanglement Correlations in Generalized Quantum Theory.’ *Journal of Consciousness Studies*. No. 4. 2007. p. 50.

⁷⁴ Walter von Lucadou, et al. ‘Synchronistic Phenomena as Entanglement Correlations in Generalized Quantum Theory.’ *Journal of Consciousness Studies*. No. 4. 2007. p. 51.

Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of my knowledge to comment intelligently on such matters. But suffice it to say, it would be fascinating if such ideas are integral to the anomalous results which I consistently attain in the laboratory and in life.

Viola Ten

Irish author and playwright Oscar Wilde famously wore a green carnation. Although assertions have been made which attempt to link the green carnation to homosexuality, such assertions are speculative. In fact, there is evidence to the contrary.⁷⁵ Wilde, himself, when asked what the flower represented replied, ‘Nothing whatever, but that is just what nobody will guess.’⁷⁶ In many ways, *Project Viola Ten* and the Flamingo Six Method is similarly enigmatic. It is an empty safe, which I vigilantly guard. What is perhaps most striking about the green carnation, is that it is artificially created; it does not exist naturally.

FLAMINGO SIX, like Wilde’s green carnation, means nothing whatsoever. Like the Dada art movement named by Hugo Ball in 1916, the name was chosen randomly. VIOLA TEN, however, is an anagram of the word OVALTINE. Ovaltine is an American powdered chocolate drink popular in the US during the 1950s. Ovaltine is also famous for its high-profile sponsorship of the *Little Orphan Annie* radio program. In the memoir and cult classic film, *A Christmas Story*, written by Jean Shephard, the main character Ralphie sends away for a membership to the *Little Orphan Annie Secret Society*. At the end of each radio broadcast, the host of the *Little Orphan Annie* program reads out an urgent coded message for the members of the society. When Ralphie’s secret decoder pin arrives, he is frantic to decode the message in order to help “save” the diminutive orphan. Struggling desperately to find privacy in which to decode the secret message, Ralphie locks himself in the home’s only bathroom. Amidst protests of family members, he proceeds to decode the urgent message. After a scene of Hitchcockian suspense, the message is finally revealed: BE SURE TO DRINK YOUR OVALTINE. Ralphie’s response after reading the message: ‘A crummy commercial? Son of a bitch!’⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Ellefsen, JD. ‘Oscar Wilde and the Green Carnation.’ *Wildetimes.net*. 2013.

⁷⁶ Ellefsen, JD. ‘Oscar Wilde and the Green Carnation.’ *Wildetimes.net*. 2013.

⁷⁷ *A Christmas Story*. Dir. Bob Clark. Writ. Jean Shepherd. 2008. Warner Home Video. Film.

I felt that this scene epitomized the power of desired secrets and the disillusionment which often accompanies the attainment of those (non) secrets. The secret to Viola Ten is the same secret which Ralphie uncovered, and to which Oscar Wilde confessed: *the secret is that there is no secret*. The reality is that I have trained myself in the ways previously described, and subjected myself to intense and sustained testing periods. During those tests, I take care to react, on instinct, *through the body*, attempting to block all intellectual noise. It is an exhausting process, to be sure, but I have found that this process – regardless of conditions such as obstacles or distance – yields me hit rates of approximately twice the MCE. If I fail to make this effort to intuitively feel the answer, my hit rates quickly regress to the mean. This is an extraordinary discovery, but laboratory research has been unable to identify a theory to explain this. As both researcher and researched, I would seem to occupy the best position to reveal my techniques, however, there is really nothing more to reveal other than to repeat that during formal testing and demonstrations, *I listen to my body and act on instinct (or intuition)*, and somehow, I consistently perform better than chance would dictate in these experiments.

The secret to Viola Ten is the same secret which Ralphie uncovered, and to which Oscar Wilde confessed: *the secret is that there is no secret*.

Despite the fascinating nature of these psychophysical and extended-sensory processes – and although I am willing to teach these methods to others who wish to learn them for personal, professional, academic, or theatrical reasons – I believe that it is best (from my professional perspective) not to release these ideas for consumption by the general public. As *Cosmopolitan Magazine* might say: *it is best to keep the mystery alive*.

I can offer no reasonable explanation for my *Project Viola Ten* test results. As part of my practice-based PhD research, I began with the method actor's commitment to live life as if I were psychic. Naturally, as part of this role play, I began testing myself under increasingly rigorous conditions,

ultimately submitting myself to intensely controlled and scrutinized laboratory tests. To the surprise of everyone (including, to some extent, myself) **I consistently obtained significantly anomalous results without the use of concealed electronics, accomplices, covert artifice, or conjuring gimmicks, apparatus, and techniques.**

During my one-man stage show, *Eddie Dean Telepathy Rockstar: Smells Like Dean Spirit*, I play psychic games with audience members in which they act as both senders and receivers, partnering both with myself and each other. Dramatically anomalous results have been obtained in every live performance to date. To be clear, these demonstrations are conducted without the use of concealed electronics, accomplices, covert artifice, or conjuring gimmicks, apparatus, and techniques.

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