

(toward) a phenomenology of acting

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should ideally come to possess specific types of embodied knowledge which simultaneously engage their sensory, perceptual, and cognitive faculties as necessary in the moment of performance. Performers must also learn "to be affected" (Larour 2004:205–206), i.e., they optimally learn how to appropriately open both affective and sensory awareness within/to the tasks/actions at hand. The lack of a single specific technique or skill-set focus for training contemporary actors is both a dilemma and an opportunity.⁷ It raises several important questions regarding the training of contemporary actors:

- 1 What type(s) of foundational training(s) explore embodied consciousness, 'open' and attune an actor's energy, attention, and sensory awareness in ways appropriate to the actor's work, i.e., fine-tuned listening, seeing, touching, moving or (inwardly) being moved, balancing, imagining, etc.?
- 2 How can acting/movement/voice teachers guide students toward an embodied understanding and ability to awaken and attune their energy, direct their attention, open their sensory awareness, and engage processes of imagining in ways appropriate to acting/performance?
- 3 What is the relationship between directing attention, opening up sensory awareness and affect, engaging in imaginative acts, and the 'awakening' or 'enlivening' of one's 'energy'?
- 4 In the process of 'forming' actors, are they learning how to flexibly deploy their attention, sensory awareness, affect, energy, and imagination as appropriate to the dramaturgies they are likely to encounter or create? Might we consider the bodymind of the actor as "a flexible processual site" (Amano 2011:530)?
- 5 Is the actor also learning how to reflect upon, understand, and talk about the various elements of their 'work': attention, awareness, affect, imagining, etc.?

These questions point to the need for contemporary training programs to include processes of actor training that allow individuals to explore embodied consciousness, awaken, attune, and sensorially open the actor's bodymind and that allow the actor to reflect upon these dynamic processes in formation. Following Rachel Prentice's suggestive title, *Bodies in Formation*, throughout this book we will consider the actor/performer's bodymind as always undergoing/embodiment ongoing/active processes of 'formation' and therefore (re)formation.

