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Space and Actor Formation[1]

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The profound spatial turn experienced by the humanities and social sciences over recent decades has prompted a re-examination of how space and place inform our understandings of theatre and performance. In this article we investigate the ways in which the theatrical labour that occurs within rehearsal and backstage spaces involves not only the making of theatrical performance but also the making of theatrical performers. Drawing on fieldwork-based research, and exploring the concepts of orientational metaphor, tactical inhabitation and training zones, we argue that performers' use and inhabitation of rehearsal and backstage spaces is a key means through which they are formed as professional artists.

In the film *In the Company of Actors*, a documentary charting the 2006 remounting of the Sydney Theatre Company's production of *Hedda Gabler* at the New York Brooklyn Academy of Music, actress Cate Blanchett waits offstage for her cue.[2] A moment earlier, we followed her through the narrow passages backstage as she swept silently into a tiny booth for a quick costume change, applying makeup and jewellery while her dresser worked her into a long cream dress with elaborate buttons. Now, in readiness for her entrance, she bunches her dress in her hands, simultaneously shifting the weight of her head from side to side; the glow of onstage lighting rises, the red cue light extinguishes, and she rushes forward onto the stage.

Small, everyday activities such as those shown in the documentary are often overlooked, perhaps regarded by scholars as being of only minor importance in the larger operations of theatre. Certainly few have documented or analysed backstage practices, despite the large amount of time actors and performers spend there. The study of rehearsal processes has fared better, by comparison, with Gay McAuley noting the emergence of a 'growing field of rehearsal studies', although even then only a handful of researchers have demonstrated a sustained interest in developing ways to critically investigate performance-making practices.[3] In this article we suggest that the theatrical labour that occurs within these offstage spaces involves not only the making of theatrical performance but also the making of theatrical performers. We argue that performers' inhabitation and use of rehearsal and backstage spaces is not of minor importance, but is a key means through which they are formed as professional artists.

The profound spatial turn experienced by the humanities and social sciences over recent decades requires a reappraisal of rehearsal and backstage spaces. In work spanning a variety of disciplines the connections between self, space and place have been emphasized,

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with the concepts of space and place proving increasingly useful in understandings of subjectivity, politics, history, sexuality and gender. The philosopher Edward Casey has been a central figure in discussions of place, with his advocacy of place in the face of what he sees as the dominance of space and time in post-Enlightenment Western thought. Others, including Jeffrey Malpas and Doreen Massey, have engaged with Casey, critiquing his perhaps overly oppositional characterization of the relationship between space and place, whilst also acknowledging the importance of these concepts.[4] For the purposes of our discussion, we start from Casey's understanding that place is 'the bedrock of our being-in-the-world',[5] an 'abiding framework for all that we experience in space and time'.[6] This is akin to what Tim Ingold has dubbed the 'dwelling perspective'. From this essentially phenomenological perspective, humans are viewed as 'immersed from the start, like other creatures, in an active, practical and perceptual engagement with constituents of the dwelt-in world'.[7] Place, bodies and identity are intertwined, with people and places sharing 'a fateful complicity'.[8] Where we are, argues Casey, 'has everything to do with what and who we are'.[9]

Theatre scholars have acknowledged that the location of a theatre, and its style and design, inform spectators' experiences and the 'meanings' they make of a performance; they have also acknowledged that theatres and places of rehearsal carry their own framings for practitioners.[10] In this article we focus more intently on the active engagement of performers with rehearsal and backstage spaces, as this offers an opportunity to further understanding the dynamic processes through which place 'insinuate[s] itself into the very heart of personal identity'.[11] By way of explaining how place and self come together, Casey has drawn on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus'[12] which, he says, 'is something we continually *put into action*'.[13] Casey extends Bourdieu's discussion of it to explicitly include place, suggesting that habitus is 'the middle term between place and self – and, in particular, between lived place and the geographical self'.[14] He describes 'habitation' as being the primary way we realize our active commitment to place, in terms of both 'having' and 'holding':

> When I inhabit a place . . . I *have* it in my actional purview. I also *hold* it by virtue of being in its ambiance: first in my body as it holds onto the place by various sensory and kinesthetic means, then in my memory as I 'hold it in mind'.

He continues, 'If habitus represents a movement from the externality of established customs and norms to the internality of durable dispositions, habitation is a matter of re-externalization – of taking the habitus that has been acquired and continually re-enacting it in the place-world'.[15] Casey therefore understands habitation as part of a performative interaction between self and place. Understood performatively, the continual re-enaction of habitus through practices of habitation involves both a rearticulation of identity and a re-membering of space.[16] We have found that performers 'have' and 'hold' rehearsal and backstage spaces in at least three ways: first, through the use of orientational metaphors, where there is a literal and figurative mapping of rehearsal space and embodied self; second, through tactical inhabitation, where performers appropriate the scheduling and allocation of space by stage management regimes; and third, through repetition

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and dressage, when backstage space acts as a training zone for the configuration of performers.

This article is grounded in many months of participant-observation fieldwork we have undertaken in rehearsal processes and backstage spaces in Sydney, Australia, and it is this theatre 'field' we invoke here.[17] Sydney's theatre field is not as large as those of other global cities, but it has a diversity of practice that has made it a suitable location for such an enquiry. Following an ethnographic approach our emphasis has been on researching practitioners' practices as they were lived day-to-day, making sense of the ways in which practitioners made sense of what it was that they did. We therefore invite readers to understand our work as a response to Mike Pearson's call to study 'all that constitutes the *life-world of the insiders of performance*'.[18]

Orientational metaphors

The ways in which practitioners practically manage rehearsal rooms and their surrounds often bear a close relationship to the ways in which they speak about and experience themselves. In other words, there is a figurative and literal mapping of rehearsal space and embodied self. This connection presented itself to us through the particular 'orientational metaphors' enlisted by performers as they were immersed in their performance-making practices.[19] In rehearsals we observed, practitioners organized the rehearsal spaces in terms of layers, where participants passed checkpoints to access the rehearsal room, and where that room featured the private inner sphere of rehearsal work. At the same time, practitioners spoke about themselves in just this way: as constituting a series of layers that must be penetrated to access the intimate depths of the actor's self required to develop character. Here, the orientational metaphors used to describe self, and their direct correlation to the rehearsal environment, are not mere talk but instead reveal a complex intertwining of rehearsal space and performer identity.

Entry to rehearsal spaces is frequently controlled and policed, with access to non-practitioners restricted, creating what rehearsal observer Susan Letzler Cole has aptly called 'the hidden world' of theatre-making.[20] In Newtown, an inner-city suburb of Sydney, we observed the rehearsal processes of two different theatre companies, both of which literally took place behind locked doors.[21] Practitioners physically articulated this demarcation as they went through a series of checkpoints to access the rehearsal room proper. Access to one room was down the dark, narrow side of the New Theatre building to the stage door, an alleyway so tight that bystanders could be fooled into imagining that figures disappeared altogether. Once we reached the stage door, we knocked to be allowed in, and waited until someone heard us and came downstairs to open the door. On cold nights, in a dark passageway, facing an unmarked locked door, the experience reminded us of an early twentieth-century speakeasy: only a privileged few knew the location, and only the further privileged were able to gain access. The second rehearsal process six months later for a different production by another company also took place behind a locked door; however, the context was not at all similar. Rehearsing on hot days in a third-floor classroom of the Newtown Performing Arts High School – the only rehearsal space the company could secure – with the windows wide open and the street

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traffic as an acoustic backdrop, there was no point knocking on the school building door downstairs. Instead, whenever anyone wanted to be let into the building, they stood in the playground and yelled up to the open windows so that someone could go downstairs and unlock the door. Each day, hearing shouts from below, individuals would go to the window and hang their upper bodies out to converse with people in the playground.

The details of this interface between the public space and the inner sphere serve not only as a reminder of the less-than-ideal working conditions many practitioners face, but, more strongly, they foreground rehearsals as a private, secret domain. We came to recognize that the actors involved in these rehearsal processes often figured their characters and themselves and one another like this also: as layered sites that could only be accessed by penetrating a series of checkpoints, and whose core was the most intimate place. During rehearsals, some acting practices involved the performers' exploring their own psychologies, thereby firmly designating 'the actor's self as logos'.[22] Practitioners spoke of 'discovering' themselves, of allowing inspiration to 'come from deep within', of allowing their true selves to be exposed. Emotion, for example, was both something that needed to be contained and something that had to be coaxed out.[23] That this talk operated as a 'discourse *within* a practice' rather than a 'discourse *about* a practice' indicates how deeply embodied the attendant experience was.[24] This talk occurred amongst practitioners as they were caught up in the flow of their work – rather than, say, when describing their work to an outside party – suggesting the extent to which such metaphors are intimately connected to the actual experience, the embodied affect, of rehearsing.

These orientational metaphors invoked by practitioners – 'discovery', 'depth', 'containment', 'coaxing out' – involve spatiality: the actor is figured as a layered site with the most real, true stuff of the self at the centre. Such discourse (and its attendant experience) is, of course, rooted in a history of psychological realism in theatre; it is common to many mainstream rehearsal processes, and it is present in theatre rehearsal literature. Susan Letzler Cole describes rehearsal as a series of concentric circles: the outermost circle is the director's vision while the innermost is 'the more intimate space of the actor's imagination';[25] Herbert Blau writes of actors' actions that come 'unpredictably (and absurdly) from the lower depths';[26] and Peter Brook writes of the dangers of clogging original impulses[27] – that is, obstructing the flow of energy that comes from deep within. If we accept that 'the study of acting is among the most revealing indices of the obsessions, prejudices, and preoccupations of any age',[28] then it is unsurprising that this idea of the actor's self correlates to what Arjun Appadurai calls the Western 'topography of the self', a topography that is 'anchored in a spatial image of layers, of which the affective bedrock is seen as the simplest, the most general, and the most directly tied to the somatic side of personality'.[29] What Appadurai implicitly points to, and what we found in our rehearsal observation, is that the spatial images used by people to describe themselves and their work are not the property of discourse alone.

In the two rehearsal processes we observed, this spatial metaphor involving layers, privileged access and intimacy was also articulated in the ways in which the rehearsal spaces were practically managed. Not only were the rehearsal rooms difficult to access but, when inside, careful attention was given to who was present at any moment. During the

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process for *My Night with Reg*, rehearsals for a scene involving intimacy between two men were 'closed' and anyone considered extraneous to the shaping of this scene was asked to stay away; during a rehearsal for *The Season at Sarsaparilla*, the director approached the actors on set and began whispering to them, ensuring that neither the stage manager, assistant stage manager, dramaturge nor we could hear her. In these instances, an already circumscribed space was further bounded. As Cole writes, 'To observe directors and actors in rehearsal is clearly a delicate undertaking; it can be perceived as an intrusion upon, and even a repression of, the conditions necessary to rehearsal (risk-taking, spontaneity, intimacy)'.[30] In both rehearsal processes we documented, there was a distinct correlation between the safety of the rehearsal room and the risky work of discovering self.

Stage management regimes and tactical inhabitation

In addition to the delineation of rehearsal and backstage space from wider public space, both are also further divided and categorized. Such segmentation intimately connects with performers' particular ways of being, most especially in what we refer to as 'tactical inhabitation'.[31] Here the figure of the stage manager is central, a figure described by Ric Knowles as the creation of 'the theatre as industry', responsible for the imposition of 'established and time-proven organizational procedures'.[32] Stage managers order production resources through the creation of schedules and call sheets and the allocation of spaces to different functions. This establishes different spatio-temporal regimes within which performers encounter, make use of and themselves produce theatre space. Observing backstage accommodation, Marvin Carlson, for example, has suggested that actors clearly understand the 'semiotic importance' of dressing-room size and location in terms of status and hierarchies within the field.[33] However, our observation of performers' habitational practices in rehearsal and backstage suggests to us that their cognitive understandings are grounded in, and formed through, their experience of the uses that these spaces afford.

Instead of merely 'making do' with the uncomfortable conditions of rehearsal places and the stage management and scheduling of such spaces, the practitioners we observed engaged in a tactical inhabitation of rehearsal rooms, doorways, kitchens and corridors. Their use of rehearsal place fed into their understandings of themselves, and the theatre companies with which they worked, within the broader field of theatre in Sydney. The rehearsal process for *My Night with Reg* took place in a public high-school building in cramped classrooms on hot January days and the company had just under three weeks to rehearse. Practitioners worked at a fast pace with little time taken for sit-down discussion. From the start we heard director Tony Knight say, 'Let's run that scene again', and when a lunch break was due, he was keen to keep working, saying, 'I just want to push through'. As metaphors, not only were 'running' and 'pushing' articulated verbally by the practitioners, but the dynamics of the space and the movement within that space created an adrenalin-like pulse. Knight spent rehearsals barefoot, often with a cigarette in his hand, which he might use as a bookmark or he would shove it behind his ear or play with it in his hands. When actors rehearsed a scene on the confined, taped-out set of the rehearsal room, he would watch, perched on a corner of a chair, his body

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weight somehow suspended between a full sit and a stand, ready to leap up at any moment. On return from lunch one day, we encountered the designer fitting actors in one classroom and the director chatting to the administrator in the school corridor, while the voice coach worked with actors in the classroom that operated as the rehearsal room proper.

It was the use of the school building, and not the building itself *per se*, that is of importance here. The pace at which the practitioners worked, and the ways in which the rooms were divided and inhabited, was understood and experienced by the performers as producing proper professional work. For the practitioners of *My Night with Reg*, professional artists are able to operate at breakneck speed when it comes to script analysis and blocking. They are able to interpret shorthand directions – 'sharpen that line', 'tweak that moment' – and modify their performance accordingly. For these actors, professional performers rush from fittings to voice coaching, embodying characters with efficiency and precision. In inhabiting the classrooms and corridors in this way, they were understanding themselves within the broader field of Sydney: not as artists confined to work in a school building, but as artists who use the cramped-ness of the classrooms to dart within and between spaces, producing streamlined work.

Such tactical inhabitation continues once a production moves from rehearsals to backstage. Observing the first morning of the 'load-in' for a commercial musical production at Sydney's Lyric Theatre,[34] we followed the production's two stage managers as they walked through the building, allocating different production functions to the available spaces. Allocating the theatre's dressing rooms to the production's twenty-two performers – a mixture of actors, puppeteers, dancers and acrobats – the stage managers translated their knowledge of contractual agreements, performers' relative levels of experience and personal preferences into the arrangement of rooms available in the three-storey structure. For the performers allocated a place in the single- and double-occupancy dressing rooms located on the same level as the stage, the privacy and the proximity to the stage afforded by these rooms allowed for a more settled inhabitation, supporting a greater focus on the performance, and providing for the possibility of moments of rest. Interestingly, in the case of this production, the fact that couches were provided in only some of these dressing rooms became a talking point amongst both the stage managers and the cast during the initial stage of the load-in; couches, it turned out – more than dressing-room size or location – were regarded as status symbols because they provided somewhere comfortable to sleep and rest between performances.

For the performers allocated a place in the larger communal dressing rooms on the upper floors of the theatre, a more peripatetic, tactical inhabitation was established. Unlike their colleagues with rooms at stage level, most of those housed on the upper floor had neither the time, energy nor inclination to climb the steps to their dressing rooms during performances. Instead, they created small, strategic deposits of costume, water bottles and props in the side and rear stage areas, where they could be easily accessed, and made use of items of set – a flight of stairs, a faux rock platform, an old armchair – on which to rest. Between performances they created makeshift pillows out of clothing so as to sleep on the linoleum floors of their rooms, or slept on the couches or under the pool tables in the green room.

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While these differing modes of inhabitation would be familiar to anyone who has worked in the often hierarchical social environments of musical theatre, what is interesting is the ways in which performers tactically appropriated aspects of the spatio-temporal regime imposed by the production, doing so in ways that were cognizant of their positioning in a wider field of endeavour and employment. During each performance, one of the physical performers, Amelia, developed a routine of using a metal bar attached to a tall piece of the set – a 'rock tower' – to execute a number of chin-ups as it stood in the wings. A few minutes later she would gather with a number of others in the prompt wings, including the two riggers employed on the production, to perform handstands, taking turns to 'spot' each other. Far from being an ad hoc occurrence, exercises such as these became cued into performers' individual 'plots' during this production,[35] emerging due to the joint availability of time, skills, inclination and equipment. Referring to the tower as her 'training zone', Amelia told us that 'because the rock tower is there I do chin-ups, if the rock tower wasn't there, I wouldn't have anything to do chin-ups on'. Furthermore, doing these exercises 'could end up changing what sort of jobs I get next, depending on how I look for whatever audition came up. I'm going to look upper-body strong after this job'. Amelia consciously linked her use of backstage space to a larger pragmatic sense of the field of theatre and performance and her own position within it, based, in this instance, on the appearance and capabilities of her physique.

Repetition, dressage and training zones

Mainstream commercial theatre production frequently involves extensive repetition, with productions running over periods of months and years, and performers reproducing their performances night after night over the course of a season. This, along with the example of Amelia's repeated use of the 'rock tower', suggests to us that perhaps backstage spaces might be productively viewed as a kind of training zone. Henri Lefebvre has cited repetition as the basis of 'dressage', the training that allows one to adopt the 'accepted models' of a social or cultural grouping.[36] For Lefebvre, to accept values or to learn a trade is 'to bend oneself (to be bent) to its ways'.[37] While Lefebvre compares the socialization of humans with the training of animals, the key difference is the dual articulation: *bending oneself* as well as *being bent*. As he states, 'Humans break themselves in [*se dressent*] like animals. They learn to hold themselves'.[38] This 'holding' of self is not simply a matter of comportment but, more profoundly, of configuration. Performers' backstage labours involve the production of bodies, and of selves, that enable the efficient and accurate re-production of rehearsed performances.

Through a schedule of eight performances a week over a period of two months, the performers we witnessed working on the musical executed the same actions over and over again, developing strong individual routines. Together with a highly segmented temporality enforced by stage management calls prior to performances, and the presence of an almost constant musical accompaniment providing cues during performances, these individual routines combined to form highly regularized backstage choreographies or 'place-ballets', consisting of sets of actions carried out within strict temporal frames.[39]

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Within this, performers' interactions with each other became quickly routinized. Principal performer Joseph explained that after ten months of touring,

> I've got a total pattern. It's a total routine. And I don't really change that at all. It's funny, like I . . . by the time I get into my room and by the time I finish shaving I know within a minute, without looking at my watch, that I'll be hearing the fifteen-minute call and then I go and I'm totally on cue. And at the same time I rock up to warm up and at the same time it finishes. And then I get to the pit at the same time – and usually the four kids [the actors playing the four Pevensie children] get there in the same order every day – it's almost exactly the same. You know who you are going to pass and I think everyone – you have your same positions offstage in scenes that you're not in and you chat to the same person.[40]

Within the strictly executed routines there was still room for ad hoc play, including practical jokes and games, but these were only possible because they existed in close relation to what David Hare, drawing on his experience of performing solo in *Via Dolorosa*, has described as 'a drilled sense-memory, a kind of deep groove from which I can depart, but which is always there underneath for me to return to'.[41] For Hare, the establishment of a distinct rhythm in his nightly solo performances informed his perception of a 'deep groove', a guiding track, that he could follow. In the intensely social environment of the musical the company intersubjectively developed their own shared rhythmical repetition of actions and routines, and it was in and through this that they created the conditions for a successful performance.

This, then, was an essential 'sensory and kinesthetic means' by which the performers were able to 'hold' onto the backstage of the Lyric and successfully and efficiently execute each performance. But what sort of performer is required to achieve this? One performer, Brian, stressed that adaptability was important: 'you just adapt. You're flexible and you just adapt'.[42] For Brian, and others, what was perceived as important was the ability to register and respond to any shifts or changes which might impact on the quality of the performance at hand. Alternatively, principal performer Dennis emphasized his employment of 'discipline': faced with his own increasing tiredness as the season wore on, he stated that his 'discipline is still there not to let them [the audience] know'. This was because 'they've paid their money and that's what being a professional is'.[43]

While the importance placed by these performers on adaptability and discipline might appear contradictory – adaptability suggesting flexibility and discipline indicating fixedness – we suggest that they in fact highlight the existence of different improvisational strategies adopted by performers to ensure that the performance at hand can be reproduced as rehearsed. Elizabeth Hallam and Tim Ingold argue that even the act of copying or imitating is more than mechanical because it involves the alignment of a model with action in the world. 'In this alignment', they write, 'lies the work of improvisation'.[44] The maintenance of an established cultural tradition or a highly rehearsed theatrical production therefore involves a certain kind of creativity, and 'the more strictly standards are observed, the greater are the improvisational demands placed on performers to "get it right"'.[45] These improvisational demands fall most heavily on performers' holding of self, requiring the development of a disciplined malleability.

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In the repetitive backstage environments of mainstream commercial theatre practice, performers train themselves/are trained to cede their individual creative agency to the development and maintenance of a particular intersubjective rhythm or groove.

Conclusion

The relationship between actors and the spaces and places in which they work is profound and far-reaching, influencing their understanding of themselves as creative artists and informing their very capacities as performers. If identity is played out relationally with other subjects and in spatial contexts, with embodied habitation being both 'a *generative* and *expressive* medium',[46] then the ways in which performers inhabit rehearsal and backstage spaces are not simply expressive of their existence as subjects, but also formative of their identity.

While it is commonly understood that rehearsal spaces – and, by extension, backstage spaces also – can 'weigh heavily' on the 'physical framing' of practitioners' experience,[47] our close analysis of such 'framings' and just in what ways placial features 'weigh heavily' reveals aspects of the powerfully visceral relationship between performance-makers and the rehearsal places and backstage spaces those practitioners make use of and, to some extent, come to embody. We have suggested that such a relationship can be explored by understanding practitioners' use of rehearsal and backstage spaces in terms of the concepts of orientational metaphors, tactical inhabitation, and training zones. The implication here is that professional performers are a coproduction of the spaces they inhabit and the working practices they adopt. Embracing this spatial imagination to view the workings of even the most traditional of theatrical forms suggests that the physical and social environments of rehearsal and backstage are places of theatre-making in more complex and subtle ways than has previously been acknowledged, and suggests the necessity of further investigations of the interconnections between the spaces, places, practices and aesthetics of theatre. In this way, a performer like Cate Blanchett, waiting offstage for her cue, with her dress bunched in her hands, could perhaps be viewed as not only clutching the fabric of her gown, but also holding, in her muscles and memory, traces of all the rehearsal rooms and doorways, the backstage corridors and wings, and the stages and foyers she has ever worked in.

NOTES

1 The authors wish to thank Carl Lavery and Glen McGillivray for their comments on early versions of this article.

2 *In the Company of Actors*, dir. Ian Darling, DVD, Shark Island Films, 2007.

3 Gay McAuley, 'The Emerging Field of Rehearsal Studies', *About Performance*, 6 (2006), pp. 7–13, here p. 7.

4 See Jeffrey Malpas, *Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); and Casey and Malpas's dialogue in *Philosophy & Geography*, 4, 2 (2001), pp. 225–38. See also Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005).

5 Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), p. xvii.

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6 Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p. 337.
7 Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 5.
8 Casey, *The Fate of Place*, p. 242.
9 Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, p. xiii.
10 See, for instance, Marvin Carlson, *Places of Performance: The Semiotics of Theatre Architecture* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1989); Joanne Tompkins, 'Space and the Geographies of Theatre: Introduction', *Modern Drama*, 46, 4 (Winter 2003), pp. 537–41; and Ric Knowles, *Reading the Material Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Gay McAuley, *Space in Performance: Making Meaning in the Theatre* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1999), p. 71.
11 Edward S. Casey, 'Between Geography and Philosophy: What Does It Mean to Be in the Place-World?', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 91, 4 (2001), pp. 683–93, here p. 684.
12 For Bourdieu, a 'habitus' is a set of corporealized dispositions that, over time, lodges itself into people, 'a system of lasting and transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks'. Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant, *An Invitation to a Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 18.
13 Casey, 'Between Geography and Philosophy', p. 687. Italics in original.
14 Ibid., p. 686.
15 Ibid., p. 687.
16 See Neil Leach, 'Belonging: Towards a Theory of Identification with Place', *Perspectiva* (2002), pp. 126–33, here p. 130.
17 Following Casey, we use Bourdieu's 'habitus' to understand 'habitation', but we simultaneously draw on Bourdieu's notion of 'field' in order to reflect on the ways in which actors are positioned – and position themselves – within a larger context of theatrical labour. See Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation to a Reflexive Sociology*.
18 Mike Pearson, *In Comes I: Performance, Memory and Landscape* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2006), p. 221. Italics in original.
19 In 1980, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson showed how metaphor is not a characteristic of language alone, and that it is pervasive in thought and action. They wrote of 'orientational metaphors' that 'give a concept a spatial orientation'. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live by* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 14.
20 Susan Letzler Cole, *Directors in Rehearsal: A Hidden World* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 3.
21 The two productions we specifically draw on here were documented by Kate Rossmanith: *The Season at Sarsaparilla* by Patrick White, directed by Mary-Anne Gifford at New Theatre (July–August 1997), and *My Night with Reg* by Kevin Elyot, directed by Tony Knight at Newtown Theatre (January–February 1998). The theorizing of rehearsal in this article is also based more generally on further rehearsal processes documented by Kate Rossmanith in Sydney over the decade, including *The Rameau Project*, devised by Nigel Kellaway as part of the Opera Project, rehearsed and developed in July 2006, and performed at CarriageWorks (August–September 2009); and *Deeply Offensive and Utterly Untrue*, devised by version 1.0 and performed at CarriageWorks (August–September 2007).
22 Philip Auslander, 'Just Be Your Self: Logocentrism and Difference in Performance Theory', in Phillip Zarrilli, ed., *Acting (Re)Considered: Theories and Practice* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 57–68, here p. 60.
23 For discussion about such discourse in rehearsal, see Kate Rossmanith, '"When the Grinding Starts": Negotiating Touch in Rehearsal', *SCAN: Journal of Media Arts Culture*, 5, 3 (2008), available at http://scan.net.au/scan/journal/display.php?journal_id=123.

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24 For a discussion on the distinction between practitioners' use of a 'discourse within a practice' versus a 'discourse about a practice' see Kate Rossmanith, 'Traditions and Training in Rehearsal Practice', *Australasian Drama Studies*, 53 (2008), pp. 141–52. See also Kate Rossmanith, 'Spending Two Weeks Mucking around: The Messy Relationship between Discourse, Practice and Experience in version 1.0's *Deeply Offensive* Devising Process', *About Performance*, special issue, 10, 1 (2011) (forthcoming).
25 Cole, *Directors in Rehearsal*, p. 20.
26 Herbert Blau, 'A Subtext Based on Nothing', *Tulane Drama Review*, 8, 2 (1963), pp. 122–32, here p. 126.
27 Peter Brook, *The Shifting Point: Forty Years of Theatrical Exploration* (London: Methuen, 1988), p. 82.
28 James Peck, 'Book Reviews', *Drama Review*, 40, 2 (1997), pp. 171–76, here p. 171.
29 Arjun Appadurai, 'Topographies of the Self: Praise and Emotion in Hindu India', in Lila Abu-Lughod and Catherine A. Lutz, eds., *Language and the Politics of Emotion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 92–112, here p. 93.
30 Cole, *Directors in Rehearsal*, p. 3.
31 By using 'tactical inhabitation', we build on Michel De Certeau's famous figure of the 'tactician' who moves in ways that are never completely determined by organizing bodies, and we combine it with Casey's concept, via Bourdieu, of 'inhabitation' in order to foreground the tactical, embodied holding of place. See Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).
32 Knowles, *Reading the Material Theatre*, pp. 61–2.
33 Carlson, *Places of Performance*, p. 135.
34 The musical we refer to here was documented by Andrew Filmer: C. S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, adapted and dramatized by David Parker, directed by Nadia Tass and produced by Malcolm C. Cooke and Associates. The production premiered at the Victorian Arts Centre, Melbourne, in 2002, with the final Sydney season at the Lyric Theatre, Pyrmont, running from December 2003 until February 2004.
35 The term 'plot' was used by cast and crew to refer to the sequence of actions and duties each individual was required to execute before, during and after each performance.
36 Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*, trans. Stuart Elden and Gerald Moore (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), p. 39.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
39 For a discussion of the term 'place-ballet' see David Seamon, *A Geography of the Lifeworld: Movement, Rest and Encounter* (London: Croom Helm, 1979).
40 Joseph Connell, interview with Andrew Filmer, Sydney, 23 January 2004.
41 David Hare, *Acting Up* (London: Faber and Faber, 1999), p. 119.
42 Brian Parker, interview with Andrew Filmer, Sydney, 14 January 2004.
43 Dennis Olsen, interview with Andrew Filmer, Sydney, 16 January 2004.
44 Tim Ingold and Elizabeth Hallam, 'Creativity and Cultural Improvisation', in E. Hallam and T. Ingold, eds., *Creativity and Cultural Improvisation* (Oxford: Berg, 2007), pp. 1–24, here p. 5.
45 Ibid.
46 Paul Harrison, 'Making Sense: Embodiment and the Sensibilities of the Everyday', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 18, 4 (2000), pp. 497–517, here pp. 503–4. Italics in original.
47 See McAuley, *Space in Performance*, p. 71.

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