Chapter 1: INTRODUCING MONIKA PAGNEUX, A MASTER TEACHER

MONIKA PAGNEUX (FRANCE) - Her aim is 'to make the body want to sing with pleasure'. Her long and distinguished career includes work with world-renowned artists Jacques Lecoq, Etienne Decroux, Moshe Feldenkrais and Peter Brook. For 10 years she ran a hugely influential movement studio in Paris. Drawing on Alexander, Feldenkrais and massage techniques, she leads workshops around the world giving performers a new appreciation of the dynamics of their bodies, freeing them of tension and allowing the unfettered release of their energy, emotion and creativity.


This thesis is a portrait of the work of Monika Pagneux, who teaches movement for actors. She is an internationally renowned teacher who teaches outside established educational institutions. It appears that she has not published or documented her work.

This study will explore the views of Monika’s students and my interpretation of her work. It will demonstrate that she is a master teacher, teaching in her own innovative and original way. This work has enabled Monika Pagneux, for much of her life, to carve out a career as a successful, internationally known movement teacher, working as a freelance teacher in such a notoriously difficult area as independent teaching in the performing arts.

As a note of explanation, Monika Pagneux will be referred to during this study as ‘Monika’, for that is how she refers to herself and the way her students refer to her. As this study will show, Monika has a strong presence and voice in the studio, so Monika seems the most appropriate way of addressing her.
This chapter is an introduction to the work of Monika; it introduces a very brief history of her life. It examines theoretically the qualities of the master teacher. It will include a brief discussion of the nature of virtuosity in teaching, which involves the aesthetics of learning, and teaching.

It appears that there has been almost no publishing or documenting of Monika’s work. Apart from the four references to her work by others, (see end of chapter), her work is not recorded, although there may be other references to her in French, her main language of communication. This thesis will contribute to knowledge about movement training for actors by documenting some of Monika’s main concepts, ideas and methods of working. It also will provide insight into what makes a master teacher.

This thesis does not attempt to review other actor movement training methods. Nor is it interested in comparing Monika’s work with other movement educators or trainers. A comparison and analysis has already been undertaken in Eden & Pippen’s book Resonating Bodies (1997, p.22). Judith Pippen includes a section on Monika’s teaching in Resonating Bodies (1997) and includes detailed notes of one month’s classes in the appendix of her thesis, Inscribing Bodies. 1999. Pippen’s work appears to be limited to her own experience of Monika’s teaching, whereas this study takes a broader perspective by including a variety of experiences of Monika’s students over a period of time.

One of the main sources of data is my own experience of six weeks of classes of Monika’s teaching. In the light of this experience this study will examine Monika’s teaching method, the way she taught and what she taught. It will sketch a portrait of Monika’s character as a teacher and show how she creates
the appropriate conditions for teaching and learning. The main themes that emerge from her teaching will also be discussed. The last part of this analysis of her teaching will record what her students have learnt and how they have applied this knowledge and experience. Three sources of data, including a number of responses by other former students, contribute to this analysis of her teaching.

The aim of Monika’s teaching is to be more ‘lifeful’, not to impose a style but to open the way for students to find a neutrality and to modify personal habits which interfere with clarity of expression. By heightening awareness on many levels she brings the actor to life. By challenging old habits, so the actor can find an alive, open, responsive self through giving the body new pathways for movement, the aim is a greater sense of freedom. Her work is based in Feldenkrais, a training method and approach to free the body developed by Moshe Feldenkrais (see Feldenkrais 1972).

I will now explain how I came to study with Monika Pagneux. This study has arisen as the result of my interest for many years in movement for actors. It is part of my search for greater knowledge and skills of how to develop a more expressive body for the actor.

My search led me to hearing of Monika Pagneux through another mime/physical theatre teacher, Lisa Sheldon, who had been a student of Etienne Decroux in Paris. She said Monika was “the hottest movement teacher in Paris”. I imagined a petit, elegant, French woman and when given the opportunity to study with Monika at the International Workshop Festival I could not resist.
When I arrived at the studio space in Adelaide to work with Monika I was initially surprised to see an older woman, with very little language, getting the class to put away their bags. I guessed this was Monika after a little while. She was shortish, with straight greying hair, somewhat severe, dressed in simple workshop clothes, long pants and long vest. But her eyes were alive and somewhat piercing. Her ordinary appearance was instantly transformed, becoming totally alive as soon as she started teaching.

After those two inspiring weeks in Adelaide, in which I felt I had learnt so much, I felt a deep connection with this work. Subsequently, Monika invited me to her ‘Pedagogical ‘class in July, Paris, 1995. Since those classes, I have been incorporating what I learnt either directly or indirectly into my teaching and directing. This study has given me the opportunity to review, rediscover and try to understand more deeply what she taught and how she taught it.

One of the purposes of this thesis is to examine the qualities of a master teacher. A number of writers have explored the concept of the master teacher. V. A. Howard in his article Virtuosity in Teaching (1998) describes the qualities of a great teacher, including aspects of artistry and performance. He defines virtuosity in teaching as involving both excellence in command of subject and communicability of that subject, similarly to the virtuosity of a musician. In addition, the master teacher is able to arouse a love of the subject in students (Howard 1998, pp.2, 3).

Other distinguishing features of a master teacher according to Howard, are style and versatility which is defined as being able to move freely within that subject area. He believes that a master teacher is sensitive to student needs which enables the students to improve, develop, and to achieve the next level.
of competence; students are connected in a personal way to the highest standards of performance in the domain to which they aspire (Howard 1998, pp.4, 5, 6).

Linked to this notion of master teacher is the premise that teaching is an art in itself, which in turn is expressed through the performance of the teaching (Woods 1996, p.23). I would like to argue that effective teaching has much in common with theatrical performance as it occurs in the moment; there is an act of a communication between teacher and student similar to an actor and audience, occurring through an aesthetic medium. How the moment of communication occurs depends on the artistry of the teacher. This artistry involves the aesthetics of teaching and learning. This study argues that Monika is doubly involved with artistry, as she teaches through the means of an art form (communicating through an aesthetic medium), to teach an art form (movement for actors).

Peter Woods discusses the artistry in teaching in *Researching the Art of Teaching* (1996). He quotes Stenhouse who describes teaching as an art, “an exercise of skill expressive of meaning ... It expresses in a form accessible to learners an understanding of the nature of that which is to be learned” (Woods 1996, p. 23). In order to communicate the meaning, the appropriate form needs to be created. Michael Fleming explains this further:

Drama teaching is also an art in that it demands the appropriate selection and employment of artistic form to create meaning... teaching drama is also about enabling pupils to do likewise. (Fleming 1997, p. 3)

Woods explains that ‘teaching requires ends to be created in the process’. It is about the instantaneous interaction between teacher and student who is both involved in that process (Woods 1998, p.24).
Eisner supports this notion that excellence in teaching requires artistry (1979). He proposes that there are at least four senses in which teaching can be considered an art. These include teaching as aesthetic experience, making judgments based largely on qualities that unfold during the course of action, functioning in an innovative way in order to cope with unpredictable contingencies, and achieving ends that are often created in process (1979, pp.153-155).

Eisner’s definition of “art as the process in which skills are employed to discover ends through action” is very similar to the concepts of Woods and Fleming (1979, p.154). This definition is a useful way of understanding Monika’s work as a teacher and an artist. This study will show that Monika’s artistry is about how she shapes each moment of her teaching, so that her students are able to learn and discover through action.

Eisner extends the concept of artistry to include the way the creativity of the teacher “involves freedom to try out new ways, new activities, different solutions, some of which will inevitably fail” (1979, p.161). From my understanding of Monika’s teaching, one of the hallmarks of her teaching is her constant adapting of her extensive reservoir of knowledge to suit the needs of particular students.

It is interesting that Eisner places importance on ‘play’ in teaching, for he writes: “Play stimulates the educational imagination and increases the ability to see and to take advantage of new opportunities” (1979, p.160). This is very similar to the way ‘play’ is seen as an essential component in actor training and performance. ‘Play’ for an actor involves imagining, creating in the
moment and developing relationships with other performers and material with which to play.

Where Eisner (1979) understands “teaching as aesthetic experience”, there have been other writers such as Peter Abbs (1994) who have recognised that aesthetic learning is a powerful learning medium. He argues that if the act of teaching and learning occurs through an aesthetic experience, the learning has the potential to be transforming and significant. Abbs describes aesthetic experience as having these qualities: being overwhelming, engaging powerful sensations, involving feeling and bringing a heightened sense of significance, that cannot be adequately communicated in words. This feeling leaves one with a desire for others to share the experience (Abbs 1994, p.54). This study will show how Monika’s students learned through aesthetic experience. In writing about their experiences with Monika, these former students describe transforming moments.

Another perspective on aesthetic learning is contributed by Hargreaves, whose “traumatic theory of aesthetic learning” appears to explain these moments of heightened awareness, which Monika’s students record very clearly and in great detail. (see Chapter 4) Hargreaves (1983) contends that this aesthetic learning is what helps propel a person deeper into the art form, for experience leads to commitment, to exploration, to discrimination and knowledge (Hargreaves 1983, pp.142, 3). He contends that people who become very involved in an art form, have experienced “conversive trauma” that are moments of enlightenment or heightened significance.

Hargreaves proposes that there are four elements in a critical moment in aesthetic learning: a powerful concentration of attention, a sense of
revelation, 'inarticulatedness' (feelings drown the words) and an arousal of appetite (one simply wants the experience to continue or to be repeated) (Hargreaves 1983, p.141). An important aspect of Monika's teaching is that she requires intense concentration at every moment, in order to participate in her teaching. Unconsciously, she has realised that a heightened level of attention provides the 'right' condition for aesthetic learning.

Apart from the theories of virtuosity and the aesthetics of teaching, which inform the notion of the master teacher, this study also puts Monika's work in the context of European and especially French physical theatre training techniques.

The background context (see Chapter 2) includes a brief discussion of three of her teachers, Mary Wigman, Moshe Feldenkrais and Jacques Lecoq. This background context will also include a short history of French physical theatre and a discussion of Peter Brook's ideas and approaches that seem to resonate in Monika's work. Peter Brook is an international director, whose company is centred in Paris. All of these people have influenced directly or indirectly Monika's work.

This qualitative study is an examination of the teaching of Monika Pagneux. It draws on three main sources of data; my own field notes which are the recording of six weeks of classes I attended, two in Adelaide in 1993 and four in Paris in 1994 and another student's class notes recorded over one month in Adelaide in 1995. The third source of data are the replies of ten former students who have answered an open ended questionnaire about their experience of Monika's classes, in respect of what they remember of her work and what they have used in their own practice. These sources provide
the material from which to build a portrait of the work of a master teacher. (see Chapter 4).

As Monika does not like to talk about herself, only “the work”, I am only able of provide the briefest outline of her life. This information was gleaned from what she said in class and what the other participants have provided in their written responses. Monika was most likely born in Germany in the 1930’s; I understand she was a dancer with Mary Wigman; she talked of being a circus member in Switzerland; she was a student and teacher at Ecole de Lecoq, probably during the 1960’s and 1970’s; shared a studio with Philippe Gaulier in the 1980’s; worked with Peter Brook and his company for The Ikel, 1981 and Don Giovanni, 1997. She has been working as a freelance teacher since the 1990’s and continues to work with friends and their companies.

The following is a diagram of her connections to the major people she has worked with and who have influential in her work.

Diagram 1. Showing Monika’s relationship to her colleagues and her teachers.


Ephemeral nature of this work

The challenge of reflecting my unique progress through the workshop, knowing that I could only write that which I experienced and understood...

The challenge of honouring the awesome capacity of Monika Pagneux to read people and to trigger the longed-for changes that free a person for the pleasure of the play ...

(Pippen 1999, p.20)

Judith Pippen and I were active participants in our classes. Movement work is very difficult to record. Although these notes were not written from the point of view of a passive observer, these two sets of class notes seem to provide sufficient, accurate note taking to build a complex picture of Monika’s teaching. Each of the respondents to the questionnaire was able to give vivid accounts or analyses of Monika’s teaching. These accounts were memories, all of them at least six years old, and some much older.

There is a doubt over whether this ‘work’ should be recorded, as I believe Monika would say that the ‘work’ should be experienced first hand in the body. One reason why she has not formally recorded her work may be that she sees it as essentially about intuitive body intelligence that does not lend itself to analysis or documentation. She may also be afraid that if her work is written down that the exercises may be copied and taught badly, without understanding the spirit and knowledge behind them and the context in which they were occurred. I have documented the exercises I have experienced, knowing that they should not be taken as recipes. Monika creates for each class a unique encounter in the moment, just as no performance is exactly the same as any other. In spite of this, I believe that it is important that there is some record of this extraordinary teacher. This study is an introduction to the teaching of a ‘un grand professor’, Monika Pagneux whose motto could be said to be ‘Start with the body’.
The next section reviews the four published references to her work.

Published References to Monika Pagneux

There are four published references to Monika’s work. Two of the references are in connection with her training of Peter Brook’s actors and opera singers. These two references, Oida (1992) and Marshall & Williams in Hodge (2000), refer to Monika as a master teacher. Peter Brook asked Monika to work with him because of her particular expertise in movement for actors, which included her Feldenkrais training.

Two other references are provided by Judith Pippen (1997), who gives the first most detailed description of Monika’s work in print. She includes Monika’s work in her survey of movement trainers for actors over the last fifty years. See below for greater detail.

Yoshi Oida

In Yoshi Oida’s account of his work with Peter Brook, he makes reference to Monika when she joined Peter Brook’s company in about 1980-1 to contribute to the rehearsal process of The Ik. Oida describes Monika’s work in the following way:

The preparation for The Ik had three aspects. Firstly, we worked with Monika Pagneux from the Lecoq school in order to understand the human body, and to become more aware of it as actors. Usually, in theatre, movement is either purely naturalistic or completely stylised (like Noh or Kathakali). However, there is another possibility, which lies between two extremes: a physicality based on normal human movement, but more controlled and clear. This requires training. You can’t copy any existing classical theatre form, nor can you just move naturalistically. Monika helped us discover how the body functions; the bones, the muscles and the joints, and did a lot of work on the spine. This was the first time that we had worked in this way ... Our work with Monika helped us to achieve this style of movement. (The light, relaxed and very controlled walking style of the Ik.) (Oida 1992, p.139)

It is important to note that Yoshi Oida’s observation of this kind of physicality and physical awareness can only be developed through training.
This is Monika's 'territory', "physicality based on normal human movement which is more controlled and clear." The theme of 'spine line' and how the body moves in relation to one part with another will be further discussed in Chapter 4.

Yoshi Oida shares his insight into the actor's processes. He identifies with Monika's emphasis on stripping away unnecessary habits and developing a heightened body awareness to help the actor be more responsive in every way. Yoshi Oida describes the purpose of training of an actor is to develop a "neutral body" which is the foundation for building a character. Part of Monika's work was to enable her students to develop their awareness to understand how to achieve this neutrality.

And so the actor 'hones' his or her art. By 'honning' I mean 'to clarify', or 'refine'. To clean away, not embellish. Once you have achieved this level of control, then you can add details and habits to your body as part of the character you are portraying. But these are the character's personal habits, not the actor's (Oida 1992, p.15).

Peter Brook

The second reference to Monika is in the chapter titled Peter Brook; Transparency and the Invisible Network, written by Lorna Marshall and David Williams (Hodge, 2000). In this comprehensive and analytical description of Peter Brook's work, there is a short reference to Monika's assistance to Peter Brook to help his company of opera singers to challenge their habits and to find new and more responsive ways of performing.

It is with such a goal [breaking open a series of habits] in mind that, for example, Brook invited the internationally renowned Feldenkrais teacher Monika Pagneux to prepare the young cast of his Don Giovanni in Aix-en-Provence (1998) - to unsettle received bel canto habits, to stimulate individual and collective dexterity and economy and to encourage a fluid openness and integration (Hodge 2000, p.179).
Both writers allude to Monika's reputation as an internationally recognised teacher. They focus on a feature of her work which is 'to unsettle' or challenge the habitual use of one's bodies' (Hodge 2000, p.179). This description also implies that the work is not only for the individual but also to extend the capabilities of the group. These aspects of her work will be further discussed in the analysis of the work. (See Chapter 4, including the section on The Individual and the Group.)

Judith Pippen

Judith Pippen is a former lecturer, drama/theatre teacher and director and Feldenkrais practitioner. She included the work of Monika in her survey of the movement training for actors over the last fifty years in Resonating Bodies (Pippen & Eden, 1997). She is familiar with Monika's practice, as she herself studied twice with her. She includes a description of one month of Monika's classes in her PhD. thesis, Inscribing Actor's Bodies, 1999. These class notes will be referred to in Chapter 3 in the analysis of Monika's teaching.

Pippen in Resonating Bodies introduces Monika's method of teaching. She sees its purpose being to empower actors to engage in life-long learning instead of training through a prescriptive system, such as those developed by Delsarte Pisk, Laban and Sabantine (Pippen & Eden 1997, p.6).

She includes Monika as part of a group of master-teachers of movement renowned for their workshops or training schools, but less inclined to systematise and publish their training processes. Pippen explains why she believes there are so few references to Monika. She writes "movement training has been peopled by master teachers, only some of who have

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recorded their practice...To share in their wisdom, one must surrender one’s body to their workshop process” (Pippen & Eden 1997, p.40).

This may be an explanation why there are so few written references to Monika’s work and Lecoq’s, even though there has been a strong pedagogical strand in Lecoq’s teaching since the 1950s. For their teaching is passed on orally, by those who have personally experienced the work. This transfer of knowledge occurs through the teaching encounter, not through written documentation.

The core of Monika’s work is about refining the quality of attention for the actor and developing a capacity for personal transformation (Pippen & Eden 1997, p.32). Pippen draws on her own first hand experience for this summary of her work.

She (Monika) senses in her own body the ‘pain’ of actions that are ‘inauthentic’; she sees at once any habitual patterns and artifice. It is a passion for life and ‘lifefulness’ in the play that makes her constantly vigilant. Belief in the deep resourcefulness of everyone fuels her labour to bring out their best. All the same, her style is not naturalistic but demands an intensity of encounter that heightens its everyday foundations (Pippen 1999, pp.42, 43).

Pippen describes Monika’s remarkable to ability to read body language and patterns and ‘see the inauthentic’ in her students. Oida (1992, p.139) describes her movement style in a similar way, in its heightening of everyday movement.

For Pippen, Monika’s teaching is about developing in her students a greater sense of life in their performance. This what drives her teaching. This interpretation fits with Howard’s qualities of a master teacher (1998) as one who has a great command of their subject, but also has a deep concern for their students.
This is a brief synopsis of the following chapters.

Chapter 2, The Background Context to Monika’s Teaching examines her work in relationship to her own teachers and mentors, such as Mary Wigman, Moshe Feldenkrais and Jacques Lecoq. It situates her work in a broader context of emphasising the body as a central means of expression in avant garde performance of the twentieth century. Her work also connects with traditions and influences of French physical theatre. Her colleagues, Philippe Gaulier and Peter Brook are discussed, especially Peter Brook as there appears to be many similarities in their work.

Chapter 3, The Search for Monika’s Students; Gathering of the Data: This chapter outlines the qualitative design and methodology of the study of the teaching of Monika Pagneux. It deals with how the data was collected, collated and analysed.

Chapter 4 A Portrait of Monika Pagneux and her Teaching
Part 1. Her character, the setting, the mood and the themes.
This study drawing on the data previously described, paints a portrait of the teaching character of Monika, sets the scene for her teaching in the ‘empty space’, examines the conditions which promote this teaching, and then describes major themes of her teaching. This section examines key learning moments and Monika’s lesson design and teaching method.

Part 2. The Value of Monika’s teaching
This section is an evaluation of Monika’s teaching by her students. The data from the respondents is used to show how they have used this teaching in
their own practice, what they have valued and appreciated from Monika’s teaching and what they saw as her legacy.

**Conclusion.** This is a summary of the qualities of Monika’s teaching. It includes the similarities between Monika’s teaching and two other internationally well known women drama teachers, Dorothy Heathcote and Cecily O’Neill. The recommendations arising from this study are discussed.
Chapter 2: BACKGROUND CONTEXT FOR MONIKA’S WORK

This section will give a background context in order to understand Monika’s work better. It will place her in the context of European physical theatre training. There will be a discussion of Monika’s major teachers who have had influence on her teaching, Mary Wigman, Moshe Feldenkrais and Jacques Lecoq. I have included Peter Brook, as he and Monika are colleagues and her work has very strong resonances with Brook’s ideas and concerns. Another long time collaborator and colleague is Philippe Gaulier, whose work will be briefly discussed.

Overview of Twentieth Century Physical Theatre

“A primary theme of twentieth-century theatre has been the actor’s body”. (Young 1999, p.89) There has been a developing awareness of the need for physical training of the actors during the twentieth century. Directors who shaped a particular acting style by controlling the training of the actor’s body developed much of this training.

Early this century, Stanislavsky, the ‘father of realism’ introduced the first serious physical training even though much of this century’s body training has been connected with ‘non-realism’. In the 1920s, there were many experiments, such as Meyerhold’s ‘bio-mechanics’ and Jacques Copeau’s experiments in mask training and physical theatre. Experimental theatre almost disappeared during the enormous dislocations of the Great Depression, World War 11 and totalitarian communism.
The next period of experiment began in the 1960s. From this time onwards, there has been an intense theatrical search for how to use the body more expressively (Hodge 2000 and Zarilli 1995).

During the 1970s, people were experimenting in many directions, particularly that of non-verbal communication. Artaud was fashionable and many groups were exploring physical means of expression which were not dependent on intellectual understanding (1992 Oida, pp.153-154).

The following descriptions provide a context with which to understand Monika’s work more fully. The work of Master teachers, Mary Wigman, Moshe Feldenkrais, Jacques Copeau, Jacques Lecoq, Philippe Gaulier and Peter Brook will be outlined.

**Mary Wigman (1886 - 1973)**

...the meaning of dance. Its secret? *That lies hidden in the living breath which is the secret of life.*

(Wigman 1966, p.9)

Mary Wigman was amongst Laban's first pupils and one of his famous dancers; she is regarded as one of the founders of modern European dance. Her dance career extended from 1914 to 1961. It seems that when Monika was young, she was one of Wigman's dancers at the end of Wigman's career. Wigman discovered new ways of moving, becoming famous for her discoveries in the areas of the ebb and flow of motion, the expansion of energy and its release (Martin 1963, pp.145, 146).

Mary Wigman, very conscious of her own artistry and the process of creativity wrote, “The striving for perfection is innate with every artistically creative person and accompanies him through all phases of his life and work” (Wigman 1966, p.14). Monika in her teaching appears very conscious
of her artistry and her 'striving for perfection' seems to be the way Wigman has influenced Monika’s approach to her work.

In *Dance Pedagogy; Letter to a Young Dancer*, Wigman writes:

> ... the dance is not only an art of time and space, it also is the art of the consciously lived and fulfilled moment, not different in the studio from onstage ... For yourself and your students keep your senses open for the experience of the creative moment in which the well of life bubbles (Wigman 1966, pp.110-111).

If this describes Wigman’s advice for her students, then it is possible to see how the ‘consciously lived and fulfilled moment’ became the heart of Monika’s teaching which is essentially about how to be more alive in the moment. (See chapter 4 for more detail.)

Mary Wigman writes about the pedagogy of dance. She sees that to teach well, to inspire students, is a gift.

> You had better ask for the secret of a pedagogic talent. It is, like every other talent, a gift which you can neither earn nor achieve through work, of course, a gift which obliges its owner to a far-reaching extent because it imposes a responsibility upon him which goes beyond himself and involves other human beings (Wigman 1966, p.108).

Monika, too, acknowledges that she has this “pedagogic talent”, for she said of herself that she is a “un grand professeur”. From my experience of her teaching, I am sure she takes the responsibility that comes with this talent very seriously and it is ‘her work’ to develop and share her expertise. Wigman’s advice about working hard is her equivalent of Monika’s ‘work’, “Teach your students to work, concentrated and indefatigable. Strengthen them in the struggle to be hard on themselves “(Wigman 1966, p.109).
Wigman’s love of life and the way she writes of “opening roads” for her students, seems to have an echo in Monika’s teaching. Mary Wigman sums up her relationship with her students and with dance:

In the same way as I have tried during my entire life to fuse personality and work, I have attempted to open roads for my pupils leading deep within themselves and to bring them to the point where knowledge and divination become oneness, where experience and creativity penetrate each other. (Wigman 1966, p.9)

If these references give a genuine indication of the style of this master teacher, Monika would have learnt much from Mary Wigman.

**Moshe Feldenkrais (1905 – 1985)**

*If you know what you are doing, you can do what you want.*

(A famous Feldenkrais saying.)

One of the most important influences on Monika’s teaching has been her training with Moshe Feldenkrais. All her teaching directly relates to this approach to training the body. Almost all classes begin with Feldenkrais exercises as an introduction and warm-up. Many of her movement exercises are about the ‘spine line’ and the relationship of one part of the body to another, which comes from her understanding of the body from Feldenkrais.

This is an introduction to Feldenkrais’s approach to training the body and how his philosophy relates to my understanding of Monika’s work. This section can only be a brief description, as a more profound understanding of his work would require at least a three year training course.

Moshe Feldenkrais, a physicist and a black belt judo expert, began his research into how to improve the body’s ability to function, due to his own
injuries. He was interested in learning and, how through learning, we could develop more of our potential (St.Cyr 1995, p.1).

The main aspects of Feldenkrais theory is that he believed that at any one time four things were always going on – thinking, feeling (on the emotional level), sensing (taking in and processing information), and moving. His contention was that any shift in any of these aspects had the potential to produce a shift in the whole self, thereby bringing about change. Feldenkrais chose movement as the medium of this process [of change] because it is the most immediate and concrete (St.Cyr 1995, p.1).

The Feldenkrais Method is founded on the premise that through movement and the use of attention, dramatic shifts in our perception of ourselves and how we are perceived appear to be possible. This is achieved through Awareness Through Movement (ATM). ATMs are a series of movement sequences that people are led through verbally. They claim to effect changes in breathing, posture, flexibility, range of motion, shifts in self-image, reduction of pain and increased vitality (St.Cyr. 1995, p.1).

Awareness Through Movement(ATM) were the movement sequences that Monika taught at the beginning of each class. The instructions were given verbally. Sometimes the exercises were organised so that a partner would assist in emphasising the desired movement pattern or sensation. Peter Brook discovered Moshe Feldenkrais and invited him to work with his company in Paris for several years. Here Peter Brook describes the value of this work of strengthening the connections between body, movement, words and feelings for actors. Brook said about Moshe Feldenkrais,
"The very base of the work of every actor is his own body – and nothing is more concrete ... In him (Feldenkrais) at long last I have met someone with a scientific formation who possesses a global mastery of his subject. He has studied the body in movement with a precision that I found nowhere else" (St. Cyr 1995, June, Pt. 2, p.4).

One of the perceived benefits of Feldenkrais work is that one is able to take more risks. Risk taking is one of the qualities of Monika’s teaching. (See Chapter 4, the section on Risk and Comfort.) Alan Questrel, a Feldenkrais Practitioner explains the benefits:

By slowly and gently learning to engage in an area that provokes both physical and emotional risk, we can learn to more effectively take risks, move ourselves forward towards new challenges and recover more quickly from the one that didn’t work out so well (St. Cyr 1995, June, Pt. 2, p.5).

Kirsten Linklater, a famous voice teacher, describes how Feldenkrais developed his Method (that has several thousand exercises for the body) as he did not believe in repetition of exercises to develop muscle. Feldenkrais worked to establish or re-establish connections between the motor cortex and the musculature that have been short-circuited or re-routed by bad habits, tensions, and psychological or environmental influences, etc. The aim is a body that is organised to move with minimum effort and maximum efficiency, not through increased muscular strength, but increased consciousness of how it works (Linklater 1972, p.24).

Linklater recorded her experience of working with Moshe Feldenkrais in October, 1971. She sees the value of this work for actors in the release of limiting, habitual tensions and the opening up of the body to receive new messages and respond to new impressions without new tensions. Linklater further explains that this operates through the shifting physical controls from the forebrain (or ‘new’ brain) so that the reflex actions of the ‘old’ brain can organise the body on a level far deeper than we can legislate intellectually.
This means that animal connections can be re-established between instinctive access to emotional sources and to allow emotional energy to flow unblocked through a free body demands some re-ordering of the brain’s priorities. Feldenkrais offers a detailed road-map with which to explore one’s territory and make conscious decisions about its use (Linklater 1972, p.27).

Knaster sums up the “Feldenkrais Method as a learning process that brings about new, more efficient, more confident, more comfortable and healthier ways of movement through tapping into vast potential of the central nervous system” (Knaster 1996, p.232).

I understand Monika undertook the training to become a Feldenkrais Practitioner with Moshe Feldenkrais himself. I believe this training had a huge impact on Monika’s teaching, for this approach informs all of her work. (See Chapter 4, section on Monika’s Approach to Feldenkrais.) Several of the respondents also recorded their experience of Feldenkrais’ work and how this method contributed to changes in their lives for the better.
The French Mime and Physical Theatre of 20th Century

In order to understand Monika’s work culturally, this section will give a short history of French physical theatre, including descriptions of the work of Jacques Copeau, Jacques Lecoq and Philippe Gaulier.

One of the recurrent themes of the twentieth century is how ‘naturalistic or realistic’ acting style is seen as devaluing or downgrading the movement vocabulary and physical expressiveness of actors as the emphasis shifted to psychological depth and the emphasis on natural movement and gesture. This is linked to the old debate between those struggling to make acting ‘realistic’ so that the audience perceives the actor is ‘real’ and a consciousness of the artifice of performance, with no pretence that it is ‘realistic’.

A mime of the 1920s and 1930s, Jean Dorcy, (a student and a teacher in the school of Jacques Copeau) described the skill of the actors of the melodramas of the nineteenth century:

For my pleasure and his own, he often interpreted an episode where the hero goes off in search of his beloved lost in the snow-covered mountains. The illusion was startling. Scanning the distant horizon, shoulders hunched, arms outstretched, chest struggling against the wind, constantly fighting to keep his balance, this actor carried out his perilous ascent before my very eyes. He seemed to be working his way upward, with grim determination.

For that generation of actors, whom we now call romantics, such a performance was taken for granted. They knew how to use their bodies (My highlighting.) (Dorcy 1961, p.1).

Dorcy writes scathingly of the ‘naturalistic’ actor,

Let us return to the art of the actor. It had taken centuries to evolve a professional of the stage with a ritual discipline and a tradition which could be handed down, capable of inventing exercises, endowed with magic. In two generations, brushing aside all this heritage, the naturalist theatre left us an actor of limited technique to put it mildly (Dorcy 1961, p.5).
The void in the actor’s training especially in movement, is what concerns many contemporary teacher/directors. This perceived ‘deadness’ is what teachers like Monika strive to change. The history of new life in theatre begins with Jacques Copeau, who is considered to be the father of modern French theatre. What he achieved, was further developed by teacher/directors such as Jacques Lecoq.

Jacques Copeau (1878 -1949)

Are we the representatives of a lost past? Are we, on the contrary, the precursors of a future which can hardly be discerned at the extreme limit of an ending era?
Jacques Copeau (Leabhart 1989, p.17).

The first famous modern director/teacher in France, was Jacques Copeau (1879-1949). After being a theatre critic, Copeau decided he needed to set up his own theatre (1913 - 1924) and his own school, the Ecole du Vieux-Colombier (1920-1924), in Paris to combat the ‘evils’ he saw in the theatre.

He dedicated his school and performances to the search for a way to resuscitate the ‘deadly’ theatre. Copeau reacted to the decadence of French theatre, with its star system, ham acting and insensitive treatment of texts. The actors of the early decades of the 1900’s in Paris (except for the melodrama actors who played on the fringes of Paris) expressed themselves almost entirely through the voice and by facial expressions, while the body remained relatively inexpressive. Copeau proposed a new theatre with actors who had ‘unlearned’ the artificiality they had acquired (Leabhart 1989, pp.11, 19, 20).
Copeau's search for a new method of training actors has many parallels with Stanislavsky and Meyerhold. Copeau felt that its revitalisation lay in a new theatre based on craft. After meeting the revolutionary stage designer Gordon Craig in 1915, his ideas on staging crystallised into 'reteau nu', the bare stage, where the drama and the poetry created by the mere presence of the actor in space could be emphasised. Copeau believed this 'nakedness' provided the proper background for displaying acting technique (Felner 1985, pp.37, 38). He physically changed his theatre, by taking away the proscenium arch and eliminating the footlights, lit the actors from above and added a forestage over the orchestra pit. His theatre was inspired by the Elizabethan, ancient Greek and the Noh stages. These ideas seem so contemporary and very close to Peter Brook's 'empty stage' (Brook 1968, p.11).

Copeau designed a program at his school that involved physical agility, mask work, ensemble acting and ability in mime. These were at the heart of the theatre's golden ages, the periods of, Noh plays, Greek drama, the Medieval mystery plays, the commedia dell'arte, and the plays of Moliere and Shakespeare. The physical training at the Ecole du Vieux Colombier involved acrobatics, classical ballet, gymnastics, sports and mask work, then known as corporeal mime (Leabhart 1989, pp.11, 12).

Felner describes another facet of his innovative training that is part of Lecoq's method. This is "the way students were asked to mime wind, rain, trees, clouds, and other natural phenomena" (Felner 1985, p.41). This freed the performer, expanded his range of physical expression, stimulated the imagination, and provided a strong sense of environment that could be brought to scene work. The work progressed from abstract elements to
imitation of animals where the student sought to discover "shape, movement, rhythm and sound" through "observation and imitation" (Felner 1985, pp.41, 42). A core part of Lecoq's training is about the observation of the natural world, which is then interpreted through the body.

Copeau discovered many of the keys to contemporary actor training. He was one of the first to incorporate improvisation which became an important part of the training and the rehearsal process. Felner describes Copeau's rehearsal process,

when directing, he [Copeau] spent lengthy rehearsal periods giving the actors freedom to improvise around the text. From their spontaneous creations he culled the central concept for his mis-en-scenes (Felner 1985, p.41).

He was one of the first to experiment with mask as a method of acting training. The mask represented, for Copeau, the quintessence of theatrical transformation and provided the key to the actor's approach to the role. He was the first person in this century to recognize its psychological force (Felner 1985, p.43). Jacques Lecoq beginning in the 1950s developed this method of training further.

Felner describes how Copeau was the first to discover the importance of stillness or immobility. Before beginning mask work, the student was expected to obtain a state of inner peace, of openness that readied him to take on the character of the mask. This state of immobility was seen as a preparation time for the action that was to follow. It facilitates neutralising the self and opens the actor to new emotions. Copeau acknowledges that there are different tones of immobility and calm that reflect what is to follow. Even in calm and stillness there is never emptiness. This is the lesson he
wished his actors to learn (Felner 1985, p.44). For Monika a state of stillness and openness is part of what she teaches (see Chapter 4).

Physical training was only the preparation for revitalising the traditional spoken theatre. Copeau’s pioneering work became the springboard for all later mime and physical theatre traditions.

![Genealogy of Modern French Mime](image.png)

(Felner 1985, p.49)

Diagram 2: Showing the Genealogy of Modern French Mime.

It also shows Lecoq’s relationship to Copeau.
Jacques Lecoq (1921 - 1999)

Jacques Lecoq is one of most significant people with regard to Monika’s own training. She was a student at the Ecole Internationale de Theatre Jacques Lecoq for at least two years training and then, apparently, she said to Lecoq that he needed her as his movement teacher. I believe she was a teacher there for about ten years. Having worked so intensely as a student and a teacher I imagine that Monika would have absorbed the main approaches and tenets of the Lecoq school.

Jacques Lecoq was a rare person of theatre as he was a devoted teacher all his life, rather than a performer or director, although occasionally he performed these roles. He devoted his life to researching the training of the body. His successful and influential school which opened in Paris in 1956 was outside the formal educational or arts institutions, yet he had students come from all over the world. They did not come for formal qualifications, but for his specific training. (see Lecoq 2000 for more detail.)

Lecoq began his theatrical training with Jean Daste, Copeau’s son-in-law in 1945 who still kept spirit of Ecole du Vieux Colombier alive. This where he had his first training in mask. As Daste once wrote:

The mask demands both simplification of gesture and amplification: something pushes us to the extreme limit of the feeling to be expressed. If you are supple, if you have studied acrobatics or dance, the gesture has a dimension that is much larger (Leabhart 1989, p.89).

This is the essence of Copeau’s work; simplification and amplification. This training was the beginning for Lecoq’s lifelong work in masks.

Curiously, although he has been one of great teachers of mime, he is not a mime, never studied mime, and does not like mime. What Lecoq
understands by the term mime is a much broader understanding, not limited to *Pantomime Blanche*, such as Marcel Marceau made famous, but from its Greek meaning to imitate (Leabhart 1989, p.90).

*Tout bouge* (everything moves) became Lecoq’s motto. Lecoq was always a great observer of nature and people. Lecoq explains, “We gain knowledge of things that move through the ability that man has ‘to mime’ that is, his ability to identity with the world through its reenactment” (1985 Felner, p.147). For Lecoq, theatre is an ‘acte essentiellement physique’, and it must thus deploy its range of meanings through the movements of bodies in space (Foster & Yarrow 1990, p.64).

The neutral mask improvisations became one of key learning mediums at his school in the first year of his course, as Lecoq once described the neutral mask:

The minute you put on a mask that covers your whole head, you are transformed. Your own person ceases in that instant and you are what happens ... With the mask, you have no past, no race - except what the mask portrays ... It forces you to act with your body, to think with your body - and the body doesn’t lie (Leabhart 1989, p.97).

This is at the heart of Lecoq’s work, finding an approach to acting that reveals honesty and authenticity.

Apart from studies in neutral mask, expressive mask and the Commedia masks, Lecoq also focused on the clown in various forms, from the inner clown with a red nose to bouffon, a grotesque comic.

In one of his course descriptions is “Le style est un esprit de jeu” (style is a way of playing/a sense of play/a kind of playfulness): the body of the actor has to be ‘disponible’ (open, available, ready) - to engage in different styles
which demand that he or she be capable of ‘changer l’espace, la vitesse et la matiere de son jeu’ - that is, to transform the space and the life of performance whose ‘content’ (matiere) then becomes something quite different (Frost & Yarrow 1990, p.65). For me, this description is equally applicable to Monika’s work; all these aspects of play, being open and having the flexibility and energy to change the quality and the ‘content’ of the play.

According to his students the mantra of the Lecoq’s school is ‘be available’ (Gelman 1994, p.56). This, too, is central to Monika’s teaching. Being open and available enables students to develop their full potential. For further description of this in Monika’s work see Chapter 4.

One of the reasons that Lecoq’s school has been so successful over the years is because Jacques Lecoq has developed a sound pedagogy for developing the curriculum of his school. He is very conscious of his role as teacher and he ensures that his work is passed on through experienced teachers. There is a third year of his course for those who wish to teach.

He bases his work on sound educational principles, such as (Lecoq 2000, p.15):

- the developmental method going from the simplest to the most complex;
- the transfer method, moving from physical technique to dramatic expression (dramatic justification for physical actions, transfer of natural dynamics to characters and situation);
- scales and levels of acting;
- linking gesture and voice;
- passage from real to the imaginary;
- discovery of play and its rules (the rules arising out of play itself).

Another distinctive aspect of his teaching method is what is called ‘via negativa’, which can be defined as the process of stripping away any ‘inauthentic’ actions. Students propose or perform an improvisation, and
then the teacher comments and feeds back the moments that work or did not work. The students are constantly learning by their mistakes and the mistakes of their fellow students. Jacques Lecoq wrote about this process, taking very seriously this role of the teacher.

Response to any performer’s improvisation or exercise is to make observations, which are not to be confused with opinions... While I am observing, I sense the students anticipating what I shall say. My job is to articulate the observation, but it must be shared by all... But for an observation to be made one must pay close attention to the living process, while trying to be objective as possible (Lecoq 2000, p.19).

However, this learning is not without pain for his students. One student quoted by Lawrence Wylie described her work with Lecoq in this way; "Jacques Lecoq strips you completely and gives you your true identity; for the first months I was on the verge of tears...you go through a long process of discovery during which he reveals you to yourself". Another student shared her view that Lecoq’s school is “like sandpapering yourself all over. When you’re sanded down, you hurt, but you feel more” (Leabhart 1989, p.95).

Lecoq asks the question why do all these students come to his school. He answers, “and the reply is simple, they are in search of truth, authenticity, a foundation which will outlive fashion” (Lecoq 2000, p.163). Lecoq’s advice to graduating classes was, “Now your job is to get over me. Now your job is to get away” (Gelman 1994, p.56).

Jacques Lecoq was another master teacher who equipped his students with such well grounded performing skills that they were capable of developing their own creative work. Some famous students, Dario Fo, Ariane Mnouchkine, Julie Taymor, Theatre de Complicite and Geoffrey Rush, can attest to this training.
Monika’s teaching has much in common with Lecoq’s approaches in its concern with how to be open, how to play and the ‘via negativa’. These will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Philippe Gaulier

Another important colleague of many years of Monika’s is Philippe Gaulier. They taught at the Lecoq School together and then shared a studio in Paris for about ten years in the 1980s. Monika gave her movement classes in the morning which were a preparation for Philippe’s classes in the afternoon. Gaulier teaches similar content to Lecoq, ‘Le Jeu’ (The play), clowning of various kinds and now at his school in London, he includes the study of Shakespeare and Chekov, melodrama, tragedy and playwriting. He is another example of a master teacher with an internationally renowned school that is outside the formal education system. He too, publishes little about his teaching.

Philippe has a reputation for being a master of the ‘via negativa’ teaching style. Most of his students experience the pain of his abrupt dismissal in their performing of improvisations, with no chance of redemption. In my short experience of his classes, the risk taking was enormous with very little support. It was a very harsh way of learning. But the content of his teaching is enormously useful.
Peter Brook

Theatre leads us to truth through surprise, through excitement, through games, through joy... It is the truth of the present moment that can only appear when a unity binds performer and audience. This appears when the temporary forms have served their purpose and have brought us into this single, unrepeatable instant when a door opens and our vision is transformed (Brook 1993, p.95).

My understanding of Monika’s history with Peter Brook is that she worked with him for at least two productions, The Iik in 1981 and Don Giovanni in 1997. Her brief as I understand it was to help to prepare the company for the physical demands of the production, whether finding the walk of the Iik or freeing opera singers of their more rigid physical habits.

But I feel Monika’s connection with Peter Brook is much deeper than these fairly brief working relationships. I felt I understood her work in a much deeper way after reading Peter Brook’s writings. It appears that their collaboration was a joining of two ‘like minds’.

Brook’s work with the Centre at its base at the Bouffes du Nord theatre in Paris seems to be driven by the desire to discover what makes theatre ‘immediate’ (or ‘un-deadly’). His diverse training exercises and rehearsal methods have been developed and endlessly reinvented to support and realise this desire. When examining Brook’s work it is essential to understand its open-endedness; he has no single form or style in mind, no pre-conceived vision of a desirable end product (Marshall & Williams in Hodge 2000, p.177).

Marshall & Williams (2000) describe how Brook, throughout his life, has centred his work in the actor. Although he occasionally describes precise
exercises in his writings, he does not have a ‘system’ like Meyerhold. His kind of theatre demands that the actors are highly responsive in terms of their instrument, body and voice and with other actors, that they are open to all the sources of the creative process (Marshall & Williams in Hodge 2000, p.178). However, the main trust of Brook’s ‘training’ lies in another direction. Through the preparatory work the actors are rigorously trained to be responsive, open, and to operate as team-players within the group. Brook’s process resembles the via negativa of Grotowski, which necessitates an un-learning, a peeling away of habit and the known in favour of the potential and ‘essential’. This way of conceiving of how to act seems very close to Copeau’s vision and Lecoq’s training (Marshall & Williams in Hodge 2000, p.178).

Brook also clearly articulates why actors need to be highly trained and skilled.

Why train actors if they are doing everyday actions? To execute this apparently simple action so that it will appear as natural as just walking demands all the skills of a highly professional artist - an idea has to be given flesh and blood and emotional reality: it must go beyond imitation, so that an invented life is also a parallel life, which at no level can be distinguished from the real thing (Brook 1993, p.9).

Peter Brook’s description of his work seems very close to how his actors have recorded their experience. Several of the actors in the marathon work of the Matahbarata described what they learned. Sotigui Kouyate said this:

Preparation consists of primarily of liberating an actor from his blocks. Everything must flow, free of obstacles. Simultaneously, and at every moment, one must find a tranquillity, serenity and balance in oneself, and a strength, an energy (Williams 1991, p.107).

And Vittorio Mezzogiorno who played Arjuna in Matahbarata echoes his fellow actor:
The work we do with Brook is very detailed. Brook worked on my becoming conscious of my body and on the fact that I express myself with my whole body. Performing means being right with your mind, body and words in the same instant. I'm saying something that seems to be quite natural, but it isn't. These three things have to be united (Williams 1991, p.96).

This work with opera singers seems to parallel similar work with an earlier opera production of *Carmen*, where the opera singers were given movement training for ten weeks. Peter Brook's aim in this opera training was described in the following way:

Not only did he (Peter Brook) did he want to free the singers from gestural and vocal clichés by establishing an organic relationship between voice and movement...In addition, he insisted on the need for their bodies to be shocked back into a state of alertness, in which voices, thought and gesture could assume a fresh integration (Williams 1991, p.18).

Peter Brook has always been concerned about how make theatre a meaningful experience. But that experience only takes place in the moment and that is why he is so passionate about making each moment as rich as possible. As he writes, "Theatre is not to do with buildings, nor with texts, actors, styles or forms. The essence of theatre is within a mystery called 'the present moment'" (Brook 1993, p.81). This quote could equally apply to Monika's work.
Chapter 3: THE SEARCH FOR MONIKA'S STUDENTS

Gathering of the Data

This is a qualitative study of the teaching of a master teacher, Monika Pagneux. This study involves the collation and analysis of personal responses to Monika's teaching. The purpose of this study is to discover not only what Monika taught, how she taught it, and what her students learnt from this experience but also how they have used this learning. This study also considers the reasons why Monika is regarded as a master teacher.

There are three primary sources of data: my own class notes, the class notes of Judith Pippen and ten replies to an open-ended questionnaire. Two of the sources were class notes of classes written as they were occurring. The following explains the source of the three kinds of data.

My own detailed notes were written daily after class for six weeks. The classes lasted for three hours per day, for two weeks in Adelaide, April, 1993, and for four hours per day, for one month in Paris, July, 1994.

The Paris classes were designed from a pedagogical standpoint, so at the end of each class we were assigned a group with the same language in order to write down what had occurred. As the classes progressed, this time became more important. We all realised that in order to have a fairly accurate record of what had been experienced, collaborative note taking helped us to remember what had happened as the classes were very intense on many
levels. This analysis will include both the Adelaide and the Paris classes notes.

I met Judith Pippen in Adelaide while she was attending Monika’s classes at the International Festival Workshops in 1995. Through this chance meeting, she gave me her detailed class notes which she wrote for the other members of her class in Adelaide, 1995. These notes have also been included in her Ph.D thesis *Inscribing Actor’s Bodies* (1999). She gave me these notes in final draft form, including the comments of other class members, who endorsed the accuracy of her note taking.

Ten former students of Monika’s wrote responses to an open-ended questionnaire; their only qualification was that they had been students of Monika, no matter the length of time they had studied with her, in Australia or elsewhere. (See Appendix A for the Questionnaire form and accompanying letter.)

I was hoping that I would find a cross section of former students, so I would be able to track how her teaching evolved over the years, since the 1970s. Although this was not possible in the way I had wished, I have an indication of changes in Monika’s teaching through two comments from Judith Pippen and Sian Newey.

Judith Pippen experienced two different classes about ten years apart and wrote: “Between two sessions with her, [I] noticed more integration of Feldenkrais work and even stronger connection with performance.”
Sian Newey observed the changes she knew about in her teaching:

I only worked with Monika for those two years but from talking to people who have worked with more recently, I would say that while she was with Philippe she designed her work to compliment his. When she was on her own, she explored the full possibilities of each student through the body and their creativity as performers. She used all the things she had learnt with Lecoq and Decroux and Mary Wigman together with her long creative career to offer performers a chance to develop skill in body and text combined.

Most of the ten respondents wrote generous answers about their experiences, often corroborating each other. The responses extend over a time span of ten years, from the early 1980s to 1995 and refer to Monika’s teaching in different contexts.

My process of finding these former students involved contacting the few of my class members for whom I still had current addresses (not all replied). I tried Judith Pippen’s list of her Adelaide class of twenty or so (a few replied). As I met people during 1999 and 2000, if I found out they too had trained with Monika, they would be requested to reply to my questionnaire. (Not all replied.) I also contacted a couple of organisations for movement teachers overseas, via the Internet. I had one unexpected reply from Canada. After directly contacting over fifty people, I had ten replies to the questionnaire, which was sent out both in English and French.

I wrote to her colleagues with whom she had worked closely over many years. Only one replied very briefly. Mme Lecoq representing Jacques Lecoq
wrote, "Monika Pagneux was an excellent movement teacher in body expression."

Analysis of the Background of the Participants
There were ten respondents to the questionnaire. All of these respondents have given permission for their replies to be used in this research and are willing to be named. They are all have experience in their own field and many of them are well known. It is important to this study that these respondents are named, as their status and experience as performers and teachers in theatre and drama add a greater validity to what is said about Monika’s work.

There are four men and six women, their ages ranging from twenties to sixties. Most perform, direct and teach in drama/theatre. Amongst this group there were also a mask maker and two puppeteers, two circus performers, three Feldenkrais practitioners and a very well known festival and outdoor event director, Nigel Jamieson, director of part of the opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympics 2000.

Respondents came from Canada and Japan as well as Australia. They studied with Monika in Japan, Paris, London and Adelaide, from as little as two weeks to two years. At least four respondents worked with Monika more than once, which shows that these people were attracted to her teaching, and sought out more classes. All of this teaching occurred outside formal educational institutions, with the participants paying for these classes.

Appendix B provides short biographies of participants, how they heard about Monika’s classes, a list of the participants’ initials and names and a list
of how they were contacted. Appendix C lists the place and time when they studied with Monika. These show the variety of experiences of her work that these participants have had.

The main sources of data for the analysis of Monika’s teaching were these respondents’ replies. They make enlightening comments about Monika’s work. (See Appendix D for a full transcript of categorised respondents’ replies.)

The Formulation of the Questionnaire and the Themes for Analysis
Before the questionnaire was compiled I carefully analysed my class notes. I analysed all the exercises into categories, including, how the class was organised, the use of space and rhythm, the development of body awareness use of Feldenkrais based exercises, movement motifs, how tubes and sticks were incorporated and the use of games.

These categories became the background information, from which I created the twenty questions for the questionnaire. Running parallel with these questions are the broad categories drawn from my own experience of Monika’s work, which have provided the framework for analysis of her teaching. These conceptual categories have arisen intuitively from the experience of these classes and my own teaching of some of this work.

Although the questions emerge from my own experience of Monika’s teaching, most of my respondents were able to relate to the questions often writing detailed answers. Several of them commented that my interests and
concerns were also theirs. My understanding of Monika’s teaching and that of my respondents seem to have many similarities.

Chapter 4, is an analytic account of Monika’s teaching, I have created a portrait of Monika and her work by collating the three sources of data: my own class notes, the questionnaire replies and Judith Pippen’s notes according to my categories. The second part of the analysis of Monika’s teaching deals with how her students have remembered her work, have applied it and how they have value it. The analysis is achieved by weaving the different stories and comments together, endeavouring to preserve all the contributors’ individual voices, including Monika’s.

Several of the respondents relate anecdotes about their experience, which bring another dimension to the discussion of Monika’s teaching. They help to create a picture of what it was like in Monika’s classes.

Ely et al.(1997) wrote about the purpose of including anecdotes in research, ...they help us to think more deeply: to move from one scene to a larger drama, and then perhaps back again to the scene, that because we have reflected on it, it holds far greater meaning. This power to help shift gears is a beautiful thing about anecdotes (Ely et al. 1997, pp. 69, 70).

My intention in this analysis and description of Monika is to draw upon a range of perspectives. The text includes quotes from the respondents, preserving their style of writing, even if it is not grammatically correct. Their writing is often more expressive than if it was written edited. This also applies to the reporting of Monika’s words. It is significant that most of the respondents are able to quote exactly what Monika said to them personally or to the class. These succinct, memorable comments are part of Monika’s teaching style. Even though English is probably Monika’s third or fourth
language her English is very expressive. As Monika's own words have been important to all her former students, her direct speech is delineated by using Helvetica bold font and the respondents' text is shown by Comic Sans MS font.
Chapter 4: A PORTRAIT OF MONIKA PAGNEUX AND HER TEACHING

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to record and analyse Monika’s teaching, both its form and content. This study is a portrait of a master teacher, ‘un grand professor’, who has developed a particular body of knowledge and skills over many years, who is able to be both simple and extremely complex simultaneously, who engenders much love and respect from her students. This portrait endeavours to describe her artistry as a teacher who shapes the aesthetics of the moment. It explores the unique qualities she brings to her teaching practice and the reasons why students from around the world seek out her classes.

This chapter has been divided into two sections: the first creates a portrait of Monika and her teaching. It includes an interpretation of her teaching qualities, the main themes of her teaching and the conditions in which the teaching has occurred. The second part is an evaluation of her work, what her students have learned and how they have applied this work. This chapter draws upon data from my own analysis of her teaching, corroborated by the other students, including Judith Pippen.

This study confirms my belief that the real test of teacher effectiveness is what students remember long after the event. In this study, the former students of Monika’s remember very clearly her teaching, in spite of the contact with the teaching being at least six years ago. These students acknowledge Monika’s influence on their work.
Epstein believes that those encountering a great teacher are able to recall their influence long after the event:

...after the spell of a powerful teacher has worn off, in the former student's maturity, when in tranquillity he can recollect influence. Influence - being a subtle and elusive, often delayed effect - is not readily measurable on a computer form during the last ten minutes of the last class (Epstein in Howard 1998, p.1).

This portrait is based on memories of Monika's work, as the data is drawn from the respondents' experience in the past and my own memories.
PART 1: Her Character, the Setting, the Mood and the Themes

*Her work represents an original application of the Feldenkrais approach to learning through movement to the performance moment. Her focus is on enlivening the spine, lengthening the lumbar, lightening the step and increasing the spontaneity of action, all within a carefully designed developmental process. She aims to 'make the body want to sing with pleasure'.*


Although Monika very strongly gave the impression that the 'work' was not about her personally, I think it is important to begin with a 'thumb nail' sketch of what she was like as a teacher, for it is impossible to disassociate the teacher from the teaching. This introduces to Monika, the 'grand professor' as described by some of her students.

Two of the respondents describe her appearance in this way:

**She is tiny and very vibrant. KC**

*I remember how light and spritely she always was, despite her age and weight...I remember her eyes, bright and direct, and her hands, touching you gently, yet having a huge effect on opening the spine, the closed chest, the tightly led neck. CC*

Very occasionally in class Monika talked about her life. One small incident she recalled was her short time in the circus, which was obviously very important to her as several students have recorded her mentioning it. For example:

*I remember her telling me why she became a clown ... that when she auditioned for the circus, the only role for girls was as dancers, and the audition consisted of approaching the directors*
seated at a table, and lifting your skirts. When she did so, they said, "Augh! No!". So she became a clown so she could still tour with the circus. CC

Other students in their observations emphasise her ability to ‘read’ the needs of her students and her caring attitude towards her students in her teaching. It seemed that she modelled what she wanted her students to embody and express.

How attentive to each student. CC
Her capacity to identify where students were at. RF
How the work was mainly internal, yet was expressed through the body externally. CC
She was always researching and changing, CR
Her focus & passion, the need to be centred, light energy. NJ

One of her teaching qualities that emerged from the data emphasised her care and insight. An example of this comes from Kate Clarkson who tells how Monika really understood her feelings when she was late for a class one morning.

One day I was about 10-15mins late, and I was rushing ruefully there, it really mattered to me not to miss any of this precious experience. I thought she might be very annoyed by people being late. When another student and I walked in though, she whispered immediately to us, “Don’t worry, just start the work, I know you wanted to be here on time”. This was a revelation to me as I had graduated from a Drama School where if you were 5 minutes late to the morning movement class, you were sent home for the day! KC
Another feature of Monika’s qualities which distinguishes her teaching, is her strong presence as she gave the impression of being the leader, being totally in charge, the ‘chef d’orchestra’. Anna Yen appreciated this aspect of her work.

This last time I worked with her, in Adelaide, she did the ‘chef d’orchestra’ exercise. After I taught my interpretation of her work for the first time, I realised that she, as the workshop leader is always being the ‘chef d’orchestra’, and that’s one of the key jobs of teacher/director, to bring the different individuals in the group together as an orchestra, to play its unique ‘music’. AY

Another student interpreted her work from another angle, reflecting that her approach has broader social implications. For him, Monika created a model for the betterment of all, by beginning with developing the group, in order to raise or improve the individual.

Monika was always interested in lifting the individual through lifting the group...Monika’s approach seems more rooted in an understanding of how society spawns individual creativity. The belief in genius as an expression of a society wide consciousness rather than just an individual freak. CR

Several respondents were able to describe aspects of her teaching in action. There were quite a few similarities in the comments. They noted her strong focus of being present in the moment and the care in which she crafted each class. Anna Yen gives an expressive description of her teaching.

I observed that while she was teaching, Monika was constantly awake to the moment, often making lessons out of things that happened spontaneously eg., someone sweeping the floor, or a
photographer coming in, or in using the particular spaces we were in for particular learning; her ability to focus the roomful of students, her responsiveness to a group's mood; her insistence on focus and professional practice; the lessons seemed to have core structure, but would depend on the make up of the particular group; her use of Feldenkrais lessons were a central part of the work to assist the actors to be completely present and aware; her use of rhythm, work on the diagonal; structuring group improvisation scenes, or making movement sequences; emphasis on playfulness; the various ways she interacted with students, how ready she perceived people were to be pushed. AY

From the data, there were some less positive comments. Some students noted that Monika “treated some students somewhat unfairly, especially, girls who had some dance experience and had tendency to point their toes at inappropriate times”. CR

Others felt she had favourites or students were ‘pigeon holed’ unjustly.

The most humorous comment was:

Watch out for wedgies! Monika had a habit of grabbing the elastic of your underpants when you were not moving appropriately - in theory to help the movement. The result was often a serious wedgie! CR

On the basis of my experience of her classes one of the striking aspects of Monika’s teaching character is her honesty and the total belief in her work. She was able to demand much of her students, because she demanded the
same for herself. This gave her teaching its integrity, and this was expressed through her memorable forthright style. She seems to exemplify Howard’s qualities of ‘virtuosity’ (1998), in her versatility within her area of expertise and her capacity to ‘play’ in the construction of the classes.

**Setting the Scene – The Empty Space**

In order to understand Monika’s work it is important to understand the physical environment of the classes. In every aspect of her teaching there was the possibility for learning. For example, I realised that even the way the space was organised was important to the way the class worked. Monika’s emphasis on creating ‘the empty space’ had a big impact on my own approach to teaching. The following are short descriptions of how the space was organised in order for the classes to take place.

Literally, both courses that I attended in Adelaide and Paris took place in an ‘empty space’. The idea of the ‘empty space’ and the physically empty studio were essential to her work, just as ‘the empty space’ is an underlying foundation to Peter Brook’s work:

> In order for something of quality to take place, an empty space needs to be created. An empty space makes it possible for a new phenomenon to come to life, for anything that touches on content, meaning, expression, language and music can exist only if the experience is fresh and new. However, no fresh and new experience is possible if there isn’t a pure, virgin space ready to receive it (Brook 1993, p.4).

On the first morning of the classes in Adelaide (1993), Monika began to clear the studio of personal belongings, using gesture and the minimum of language. The space was emptied until it was just a pale grey room, with few chairs, a black curtain concealing all the personal possessions and the
doors closed shutting out the rest of the world. This was the perfect learning situation just the teacher and the students with no external interruptions.

In Paris (1994) it was a slightly different situation. At least twenty-five students had all worked with Monika before, so everyone knew the etiquette. All our bags were in a corner of the room, not interfering or impinging on the large studio space. The empty space was waiting to be filled.

For Monika, the empty space is the starting point for being alive in the space, exploring one's relationship to others in the space. The emptiness was needed for new beginnings. Judith Pippen described the beginning of her class in Adelaide, 1995, in similar terms.

At the Lion Centre there is an empty space. Onto it will spill 'le travail' (the work): the work of each of us to find the way to play the whole body in sensitive relationship with one another (Pippen 1999, p.22).

Monika often said, "Out of nothing, we'll make something". From my experience I understand that the essence of her work was to be completely open, so the empty state was necessary, in order for the creative act to occur. All her exercises demanded this emptiness, so that one could enter fully without preconceptions and without predetermining the outcome. Through this training, one was able to push one's limits and try to overcome one's inner blocks. This emptiness demanded a great deal of courage and self-confidence, so the actor could play each moment for what it was, without hindrance.
Monika offers work that is built from the simplest of means, including simple movements of the body, one’s voice, speaking or singing. The simplest of props, a cardboard tube or a bamboo stick, become the materials for rich performance work. Nothing else is required. This gives enormous freedom and power to the performer, as elaborate sets and costumes are not necessarily needed for the creative process. The creativity resides in the performer. The human body and voice have endless possibilities.

Judith Pippin also corroborates on this aspect of Monika’s work, (Pippen 1999, p.23)

Honouring her own principles Monika works dangerously, ‘toujours disponible’, living in the moment, using what presents itself.

Anything could develop from nothing.

This is why Peter Brook also values this state, where the imagination can run free and anything is possible (Brook 1993, p.28). The ‘dark side’ of the empty space is the ‘fear’ of ‘not knowing’. Peter Brook aptly describes the ‘fear’ that comes with the empty space. For him, this ‘fear’ can be brought under control with total awareness, focus and presence. Brook, in similar terms captures some of the challenges in Monika’s work, of how to be ‘empty’.

When he acts well, it comes not from having previously built a mental construction, but from having made a panic-free emptiness within (Brook 1993, p.21).

In my understanding of Monika’s work, the empty space is an example of both a physical and metaphorical state.
Risk and Comfort (as Conditions for Learning)

Central to Monika’s practice is enabling participants to take risks with a sense of comfort, and to create the right conditions for risk taking. In my experience and in my readings, there has been little recognition of the delicate balance between risk and comfort that is needed for successful learning.

In Monika’s classes, I felt at times quite inadequate in my abilities. Especially in Paris, the class consisted of very experienced actors from companies such as Theatre de Complicite and the National Theatre (England) and other European companies. I am not an experienced performer. Performing as a teacher is not the same as performing in professional theatre for many years.

Even though many class members were experienced performers, there was a sense of common purpose, as everyone had been asked to be there and everyone wanted to learn from this unique experience. There was a working atmosphere that was friendly and supportive and supported the enormous risk taking required.

Monika’s classes were designed to extend one’s comfort zone and to facilitate risk taking. The more risks taken, the more the actor experiences freedom from fear. Monika would say, ‘Work to be free!’ ‘Don’t be afraid of offering’. ‘Taking risks can’t be fabricated’.

Russell Fewster relates one of the challenging exercises for him, where he personally had to take a huge risk.
The exercise that had the most meaning for me was conducting the group as an orchestra - potentially terrifying in having to communicate and unite the group silently but exhilarating when one succeeds at it. RF

This exercise involved someone being nominated to be the conductor; the rest of class has found improvised percussion instruments, and are divided into rough sound groups, and then the conductor conducts the orchestra, finding a rhythm and texture with all the sounds. I witnessed this event, being one of the orchestra players. It was an exercise which demanded great courage from the main player.

Grotowski similarly recognised the importance of creating a secure environment, so that the actor can feel free to take huge risks. He wrote:

The essential problem is to give the actor the possibility of working 'in security.' The work of the actor is in danger; it is necessary to create under continuous control and observation. An atmosphere must be created, a working system in which the actor feels that he can do absolutely anything, will be understood and accepted. It is often at the moment when the actor understands this that he reveals himself (1969 Grotowski, p.211).

Another student Anna Yen was also very much aware of the relationship between risk and comfort but from a Feldenkrais perspective. She wrote:

I think Monika was very influenced by the broader aspect of Moshe Feldenkrais's work, which was not really about movement, but included becoming more aware of what one's habits are and creating more options for oneself beyond the habitual, creating more flexibility in one's thinking and response to the world, being able to meet each new situation freshly, awarely. Hence the dichotomy between risk and comfort. Challenging long held habits often seems risky, uncomfortable, and sometimes liberating.
Moving more comfortable, effortlessly, in a supportive environment can often bring about the possibility of taking risks and making discoveries. 

In my understanding of Monika’s work, risk taking is an essential element of this work. The learning occurs in how one tackles the risks, because it reveals one’s strengths and weaknesses. 

(See Appendix E for description of the Tambour exercise that is about risk taking.)

Themes Emerging from Monika’s Teaching

The following is an analysis of themes that have emerged as important to her work. They indicate the unique qualities of the complexity or multi-layers of the teaching.

These themes will be discussed by drawing upon data mostly from my experience of her classes and with support from Judith Pippen’s class notes and the questionnaire responses.

Freedom and Discipline

I think the discipline (e.g. her insistence on everyone giving complete focus to the work and to where ever the ‘play’ was) helped create the possibility of freedom to create. 

I believe that Monika’s work poses several themes that seem to be in opposition. These dichotomies add greater dimensions and complexity to her teaching. One of these dichotomies is the relationship between freedom and
discipline. I see her classes as a structured interplay of disciplined and very free exercises.

From Monika's training as a dancer and in mime/physical theatre at the Lecoq School, her way of working has much in common with these training traditions. Although each lesson had a different structure, there would always be some exercises where the participants had the freedom to play and find their own structure. But much of the work involved very structured exercises which built in complexity.

Her whole approach is disciplined. She demands individual discipline including punctuality; this one class you would never be late for and during the class talking is strictly limited. Monika creates through the discipline a working environment where participants can fully focus, learn and take risks without distraction or interruption.

Judith Pippen (1999, p.23) describes her experience of the discipline in the classes in a very similar way,

The high level of concentration with which she works is demanded of everyone. 'Wake up', she cries. She remains in the room during the only brief toilet stop allowed, the three hour process to maintain the energy of the work. She calls forth engagement, commitment, active listening, seriousness of purpose and above all attention ...We are admonished to wear plain clothing as our performance energy may yet be too small to compete with a strong design. She wears the same combination of black trousers and vest with loose blue or black cotton overshirts, never drawing
attention to herself in a way that might take focus from the work at hand...

A clear example of the operation of freedom and discipline occurred in my Paris class when we improvised freely with cardboard tubes, creating extraordinary images. The preparation for this exercise was a very strict, rhythmical series of movements with the tubes. I do not think that these images would have been so creative or exciting if there had not been a very disciplined beginning to the class. I have applied this approach to my own teaching, and have found similar results. The discipline provides the right groundwork for creative work.

Peter Brook, Yoshi Oida and Jerzy Grotowski recognise the importance of the relationship between freedom and discipline in artistic work. Their writings parallel very closely Monika's approach. For example, Oida acknowledges that some of the very structured work of Brook is liberating:

In some ways, the more restrictions you have, the easier it is to work creatively. Because you know that certain 'well-dug' areas are off-limits in our 'digging for gems', you must find new territory to explore (Oida 1992, p. 60).

A similar description by Peter Brook can be found in Brook (1968, p.137).

For Grotowski, this relationship is a necessity in his work.

One of the greatest dangers that threatens the actor is, obviously, lack of discipline, chaos. One cannot express oneself through anarchy. I believe there can be no true creative process within the actor if he lacks discipline or spontaneity (Grotowski 1969, p.209).

Monika's work demonstrates that successful creative work can only be produced within a framework of disciplined practice.
The Individual and the Group

Another seeming contradiction in her work is encapsulated in the dichotomy between the individual and the group. On one side is the individual taking responsibility for oneself, taking risks and at the same time being in harmony with the group, so that the individual’s energy matches the others in the group; the aim is to work with “complice”. (This French word suggests a particular quality in the process of working together, of aiding and abetting, a sense of conspiracy, being able to play together.)

On an individual level it takes courage to be true to oneself within a group. An example from my experience of Monika’s classes was maintaining one’s own rhythm regardless of what others have chosen and at the same time being aware of the whole group. This seemed to be the underlying basis for a number of the exercises. This principle of Monika’s work on broader scale relates to what performance making is about; the need to develop one’s own rhythm or character and maintain it in relationship to all the others in the group.

Yoshi Oida offers similar advice on the dilemma of forcing on oneself and the group simultaneously:

However, reacting to other actors is only half of the process. You must also maintain your own purpose ... As an actor your concentration is not focused on simply reacting to outside events, or on sustaining your own role. Your attention should be focused on both areas simultaneously (1992 Oida, p.40).

However, it seems that Monika proposes that ultimately the responsibility always reside with the individual. Monika’s advice after one of the tube exercises was, “Be bold enough to make decisions, don’t be afraid.”

From my experience, this was always the challenge, of being aware of the
group and yet having the readiness to maintain one’s individual sense of play or rhythm.

(See Appendix F for an exercise exploring the relationship between the individual and the group.)

A Sense of Play or Le Jeu

This study examines how the sense of play is an essential element of Monika’s work. It involves not only a highly developed sense of play within an individual but also within the group. It is interesting to note that ‘le jeu’ in French has the dual meaning of play and to act. This sense of play is very important to the work of Monika and her immediate colleagues Lecoq and Philippe Gaulier.

My understanding of ‘le jeu’ is that an actor offers or proposes (this is a very French way of describing this) and the other actor(s) take up these offers or proposals and the play is established. In this approach to performance the sense of play and the play connecting the actors provides the ground work before any character consideration. ‘Le jeu’ is also about actors being able to freely improvise in any context. Judith Pippen develops this theme of how the sense of play underpins Monika’s teaching:

At the same time as being as being a disciplinarian, Pagneux constantly challenges the individual ‘playdevil’ to come out.’ This desired situation - a kind of physical action and interactive playfulness - is best demonstrated by the work of ‘Theatre de Complicite’. (Two of the co-directors have been students of Monika’s for many years). There is no division for her between the demand for precision in the technical exercises and the possibility of spontaneity from within the tight physical and rhythmic score (Pippen & Eden 1997, pp.43, 44).

A sense of play is required in many of the exercises, whether developing improvisations or in travelling exercises across the room. There is always a point where the individual is required to develop his/her creativity, even
within a very strict exercise. As Monika said, "Allow improvisations to develop - propose things. Don’t cross over each other’s space once some business has begun" (Pippen 1990, p. 53 Day 12 Adelaide).

Judith Pippen records Monika reminding her class of Lecoq’s words, that all play should have a sense of urgency and a moment of shared recognition. As Monika said, "Look for the moment of shared recognition. Children can teach us this". (Pippen 1999, p.36 Day 5 Adelaide).

My own understanding of play has been deepened through the realisation that in order for the play to develop, a heightened sense of attention is required; this ‘play’ does demand a high level of energy and focus. Monika is able to insist on this from the first moment of teaching. There is no gradual introduction. Monika exhorted Judith’s class on the first day to, “Stay fresh and playful, never drop out and return to everyday relaxed inattention”. Monika’s work demonstrates that this element of ‘playfulness’ is essential to all performing, for it is the creative spark that brings life to any piece, ‘The deadliness of the habitual does not allow the emergence of all possibilities’. (Pippen 1999, p.26 Day 1 Adelaide).

(See Appendix G for description of the stick exercise, which embodies a way of working through ‘le jeu’.)

Body Awareness

Central to Monika’s work is body awareness. This awareness began with her use of the Feldenkrais exercises, but every moment of the class demanded a
full attention to what the body was doing. She reinforced in her practice Feldenkrais’s dictum that we use so little of the body’s potential.

Apart from the specific Feldenkrais exercises, Monika incorporated exercises for alignment. Her aim was for a more integrated body with a greater awareness of the spine line and an awareness of the connection and relationship between sternum, back, chin, shoulder and pelvis. She used the images of the thread or the pulley with strings attached to change one’s habitual stance.

In many different ways, Monika challenged habitual posture and movements which often blocked the freedom of movement. As Kate Clarkson recalls Monika is uncompromising in reminding students of the work they need to do.

She would say, when people were struggling with an exercise that needed flexibility, “You created the knots in your body, only you do the work to untie them”. You became aware that ‘the work’ was an ongoing lifetime commitment. KC

Throughout the classes, each part of the body was given emphasis at different times, so greater body awareness was developed. What I appreciated was the attention to fine details, such as Monika’s advice in travelling in a circle, “Feel the little finger, as the arm spirals around”. This kind of advice really changed my perception of how to use my body within an exercise.

Monika’s way of developing body awareness was not just through physical exercises. One of her effective techniques was to have the class mould their
bodies in plasticine while blindfolded for about ten minutes. The other respondents and I experienced this exercise; it showed us how we felt about our own spine line and our body awareness in general.

Monika did not provide for relaxation exercises that are common in actor’s training; her work was about creating more possibilities through movement. Although she varied the tempo of the work the class was always moving. Another aspect of body awareness that Monika introduced was the capacity to move with the alertness of animals, but without unnecessary tension. Peter Brook acknowledges the relationship of being alert but without tension as the ideal state for actors. This work could be applied directly to Monika’s work. Brooks was recorded as saying:

> Animals move beautifully because they have no tension in their bodies. But they are not totally relaxed either. They are always ready to move at any moment, in order to escape attack, or to pounce on their prey. Animals maintain two physical states at the same time ... This must be the fundamental state of the actor on stage. (1992 Oida, p.39)

Animal movement provides the inspiration for a number of Monika’s exercises. This adds to the richness and variety of the sources for her work. Monika’s advice, “Don’t become mechanical, each movement should have a fresh quality. Keep the spine lifeful.” (Pippen 1999, p.49 Adelaide Day10) could apply to all the body work. Her teaching was directed at helping students focus on challenging one’s habitual thinking and movements.

(See Appendix H, I and J for descriptions of a body awareness exercises.)
Rhythm

One of the most important aspects I observed in Monika’s work was the way, she incorporated rhythm into all the exercises. She seemed very interested in the relationship between the voice, singing and movement.

In her teaching Monika focused on rhythm as the life of any piece, whether it was the heartbeat, the breath or a syncopated rhythm. She stressed rhythm as one of the aspects that keeps an actor alive in performance. Monika was able to use her sense of rhythm to cross-cultural and language barriers. For example, this following account is of Monika teaching in Japan.

During a lesson, Monika was always trying to keep things vivid. For example, she found rhythm in every point of exercises, [she] clapped her hands and sang a song instead of counting. The selection of song was not others’ idea but her unique idea - for instance, she used a Japanese children’s song, ‘Kagome Kagome’. In her lesson in Tokyo. Same thing regarding words. She spoke English and we couldn’t understand each other’s languages, but she suggested to enjoy its sound and rhythm. KK

Rhythm and Voice

Monika added more layers to the class work, by developing complex vocal and movement patterns. She was able to use rhythms and songs from other cultures, such as the example from above from Japan. She herself enjoyed using abstract vocal patterns, which had an African flavour. But she was able to seize upon any opportunity, using any language to develop it into a rhythmical exercise. For her, the voice is never separate from the body or from movement.
An example of using vocal rhythms arising from everyday words, was ‘Good Morning’. One of the Adelaide classes began with this simple greeting. After saying it “to be really alive”, the class was divided into three groups, each with a different rhythm for saying “Good Morning”. Then the groups were conducted, adding further dimensions of loud and soft. Movement was added to this vocal rhythm.

**Rhythmical Movement Patterns**

A substantial part of each class was devoted to rhythmical movement patterns. The classes explored the possibilities of natural body rhythms which arise from breath and heart beat, complex travelling and stationary rhythmical patterns, and to free movement sequences developed through group work. For me, this emphasis on rhythm as the life force in any performance work is part of her unique teaching style. Monika’s advice to students was, “**Always be ready – have the rhythm inside.**”

Monika often started the rhythm work by asking each student to find one’s own inner rhythms, such as the pulse. Kate Clarkson records this exercise of finding one’s pulse beat and her first moment of personal triumph.

> Yes, rhythm was so important, I wish I could have done more to understand and take it on more. I was the first person in the group to find my own rhythm on that first day, Monika said, “Yes, that’s it, that’s a rhythm for you!” which was exciting, although I felt I couldn’t develop the work very far at that time. **KC**

Judith Pippen reflected on her learning of one of the rhythmical patterns that had been developed in groups:

> There was a great deal to learn from this process. [Monika said:]
“Don’t play the moments ‘dramatically’, just do it precisely and let the story emerge from the true rhythms. Each group has a character of its own without pushing it. The musician Horowitz says, ‘Just play the note’. Don’t overlay it with your own emotion, your personality.”

Rhythm is also part of the ‘play’. Monika was able to give exactly the appropriate advice that would enrich the moment and guide her students to accomplishing more. For example she gave this advice regarding rhythm:

“Keep the rhythm, then engage - take notice of the next person - bring it to life - always the possibility of one 'lifeful' moment until the next -
Don't be so afraid of being wrong - just work with the rhythm.”

(For examples of rhythm exercises see Appendix K.)

Relationships

Relationships of many different kinds are another broad theme that runs through Monika’s teaching. As performance making is rarely an individual activity, so performance work is about being aware of the relationships being created and the possibilities for developing these or creating new ones. Monika consciously keeps changing those dynamics within an exercise, within the classes I experienced.

I learnt that being ready to perform demands the group be in the ‘right relationship’. This is an awareness of the whole group, having the right complicity, being in the present, being ready to perform. Another way Monika develops this strong awareness was commented on by Russell Fewster, who wrote, “Similarly with games/exercises involving two people,
she would insist they that establish rapport, eye contact for example before beginning."

During one of the Adelaide classes the group I was in, was not ready, so we were not allowed to perform. The task of the class was to develop in groups an improvisation based on a given rhythmical stepping pattern for performance. When the time came for each group to show their piece each group needed to be ready, with a sense of togetherness before they got up from the floor to perform. My group simply was not ready. It was a great lesson to me.

Russell Fewster also commented on the same event, when the groups did not perform. He noted:

In regards to Monika, there are a number of lessons I learnt when working with her. She was very strong on encouraging a sense of ensemble - she would stop a group going up to show the results of an improvisation if she felt they had not got up together, i.e. they weren't together physically or mentally (a via negative approach).

One of the qualities of Monika's teaching I observed was her ability to sense exactly what was needed in any situation.

When polished improvisations were performed, Monika had a heightened sense of how each group should begin to perform their piece, what energy was needed, and how the group should relate to each other. Her advice always seemed to work and added a depth to the performance. For me, this was a master teacher at work.

(For an example of fast changing group relationships, see Appendix L.)
Theme and Variations

I have realised, as I analysed my class notes, that Monika’s creativity as a teacher was expressed through what she called the ‘theme and variation’ approach to developing material for teaching. She incorporated a technique of working from simple movement patterns to develop their complexity, and in variety, just as a jazz piece can begin with a simple jazz rift, then many variations on a theme can be developed. Judith Pippin comments on this aspect of Monika’s work,

_She is constantly developing new processes to achieve her aims, expanding existing ones. Those who have worked with her many times marvel at her constant generation of new material_ (Pippen 1999, p.23).

Monika seemed very conscious of this way of working. By understanding this principle of theme and variation, there are always more possibilities for the generation of material for class exploration.

This way of working adds another perspective to Monika’s unique approach to teaching. I am not aware of other teachers consciously teaching this way. (See Appendix M for two exercises demonstrating Theme and Variation.)

Monika’s Approach to Feldenkrais

*Benefits from Feldenkrais - Always. JP*

Monika uses a Feldenkrais approach, including specific Feldenkrais exercises as an integral part of her training. (See Chapter 2, p.29 – 33) on Moshe Feldenkrais and his work.) Judith Pippen, who is a trained Feldenkrais practitioner, explains the way Monika has integrated Feldenkrais approach with the needs of actors.
Monika acknowledges the Awareness Through Movement process of Moshe Feldenkrais. She has adapted some of his key lessons to serve her purpose of organising the spine and recovering an energised presence in the actor and an organic flow in performance. Following the neurological foundation of Feldenkrais, Monika takes time to notice change at each stage of movement learning and utilises the body's capacity to transfer learning from one side to the other. She reinforces exploring functional movement, such as opening the lumbar spine, from many different orientations (Pippen 1999, p.22).

As I understand it, Monika's unique teaching of Feldenkrais, which she has adapted to the needs of actors, keeps it alive and relevant. It is not just the exercises that a master teacher knows, it is the manner of communication.

Each of her classes began with specific Feldenkrias exercises to open and awaken different parts of the body. It was expected that the class would practise individually what was taught in class. Especially in the Paris class, it was expected that each person would begin his or her own warm-up before the class began. Most people started with Feldenkrais exercises they had learnt earlier or practised ones they had just learnt.

Judith Pippen corroborates on this way of working:

Each session begins on the floor reviewing spinal work and exploring the learned movement fragments. Monika thus encourages the deep physical memory of the foundational movements as well as preparing the body for the work of the day (Pippen 1999, p.45 Day 9 Adelaide).
These exercises were often challenging, but seemed very appropriate way of opening up the body and mind in preparation for what was to come in each class. Any physical work like this also helps build good relationships in the class, as everyone has a common experience. In my Paris class the more experienced in the class, some of whom had worked with Monika over a number of years, became assistants and were often turned to, especially in the warm-ups. I was not the only one affected by this work. My other respondents also commented on the Feldenkrais work, including simple statements, such as 'Increased flexibility'. RF For some this work had quite profound effects, including inspiring them to go onto study to be Feldenkrais practitioners.

Anna Yen most eloquently describes the changes in herself and her understanding after contact with this work. She, too, went on to study the techniques and is now a qualified Feldenkrais practitioner.

I felt changed by Monika’s work. Her way of teaching the Feldenkrais lessons, her emphasis on ‘waking up the spine line’; her focus on the connections between the pelvis, head and sternum; introducing me to the concept of sensing the connections between one movement and another is the kinematic linkage were a revelation to me. AV

This is one of the aspects of Monika’s work that makes her teaching unique. (See Appendix N for an example of a Feldenkrais exercise.)

Key Learning Moments and other Learnings

I would like to propose that a ‘litmus test’ of a good teacher maybe what the students remember as key learning moments. With Monika’s students,
many record very precise learning moments where their perceptions have been changed. It appears that transformation is at the centre of any art form.

What drew me to Monika’s teaching was the way she was able to raise my level of awareness from the level of everyday complacency. These key learning moments have transformed the way I teach and perceive.

One important moment for me was when we first began to use cardboard tubes creatively. Monika asked us to pick up and put down the cardboard tubes. The class took little care in this simple activity. It made me realise that every moment; everything we touch needs care and attention.

Another moment occurred after skipping when we were asked to keep the rhythm continuing inside even though the movement had stopped on the outside. It keeps one alive more intensely. So often I have experienced, both in dance and drama, that when you stop moving you stop thinking about the movement. There is a ‘deadness’. This idea also extended to the travelling exercises. While waiting for my turn, I kept the rhythm alive inside before it was my turn. Then it was not so difficult to immediately start the exercise.

One of the skills I learned for the first time from Monika was point fixe or fixed point. In drama teaching the term ‘freeze’ is used to as a command to be still. But as the word says, ‘freeze’ does not encourage a sense of being alive. What I learnt was that fixed point is a moment of stillness in action, with the feeling of the action still continuing. Fixed point also allows for a pause, so that a new direction may be found. It is a dynamic moment in stillness and gives emphasis to a particular movement. In English we have no equivalent.
It is very useful technique in developing body awareness, as any movement can be broken up by any number of fixed points, applied regularly or irregularly. Fixed points were incorporated into many of the exercises in Monika’s classes.

Copeau understood the value of fixed points or what he called ‘motionlessness’.

Motionlessness, if it is made up of a correct attitude and a proper meaning, it is expressive to the extent that it paves the way for the gesture that will follow...Expressive motionlessness, meaning that which already contains the seed of the action that is to follow, gets across to the audience, without requiring any external manifestation ...(Copeau Diary, 1919 in Cole & Chinoy 1970, p.222).

(See Appendix O for two exercises showing the use of fixed point.)

Another important skill that I learnt was playing major/minor to develop subtle performing. Whichever participant has the attention plays major and the supporting person plays minor. But at any moment this may change. Monika has developed several travelling exercises that facilitate this concept. Although these are presented as abstract movement exercises the concept could be applied to any dramatic situation.

(See Appendix P for exercise for Major/Minor.)

Two other accounts of vividly recalled moments of revelation show how Monika was able to ‘read’ the needs of her students, knowing when to push them and when to give useful advice. In the first one, Anna Yen recounted a somewhat painful learning moment.
One particular moment of revelation was in my first 3 weeks with her in London, when Monika was shouting at me to be awake to the play, to develop complicity with the partner I was doing a 'bamboo stick' exercise with. I'd just come from 4 years working in a contemporary circus company and was in the mind set of getting skills 'right'. So when Monika gave the instruction to keep the stick between your partner and your index fingers, I took it as another circus trick with the aim to not drop the stick.

When she shouted at me that I was missing the play with my partner that "Look how lifeful your partner is" - the penny dropped; this exercise is about complicity, pleasure, building up the relationship with your partner, not just about keeping the stick up. I also spoke to Monika about this moment of revelation, and she told me that she shouted at me then, because she thought I could take it. AY

And from Kate Clarkson:

Probably, the moment that has had the longest impact, was when after a class, I think, I approached her, uncertain how to explain the difficulties I was having with the floor work. I might have stumbled over a few words to do with my lower back, which is quite arched, but she replied immediately -- "Bend your knees a little, now, let your pelvic bone drop, so your lower back flattens at the back. 'OK', she said, 'You need to walk around like that as often as possible -- Be a little monkey" -- she said! I still do it -- when I think about it, as she pinpointed how my body 'naturally' throws me off centre or alignment unless I remember to be a 'little monkey'. It was extraordinary, to me, how she could just see that in me after such a short time.
As these stories reveal, Monika’s students carry the impact of her work, for they have been transformed in some way. Learning through the body provides a powerful learning medium. (See Appendix Q for Judith Pippen’s very painful lesson.)

**Lesson Design and Teaching Style**

What strongly attracted me to Monika’s teaching was not just what I was learning, but the way she aesthetically crafted and shaped each class. Even though it appeared that the classes were carefully planned, she was able to change according to what was needed in the moment.

These classes were totally teacher led. The students (who are adults) chose to come of their volition and to learn her unique approach and skills. This kind of teaching is not directly about sharing the student’s knowledge or sharing the teaching power. Of course, indirectly each individual’s background comes literally into play in the doing of her work.

Each class was different. Monika gradually built on skills acquired, so there was sequential learning. Just as her exercises involved theme and variation, this too summed up her approach to her overall planning. She had many exercises and movements that would be returned to in different guises over the courses.

It seemed to me that each class embodied her principles. They had an aesthetic flow and were very dense in experience. There was no room for
drifting off, one had to be totally in the present to keep and to accomplish what was asked of one. One activity often seamlessly flowed into the next. An example of this was the second class in Adelaide. This also is an example of her sense of 'play'. She started the class by throwing in two shoes to the class to be played with. Then two cardboard tubes were thrown about. Then we called out our names, then the names were 'thrown' into the circle.

Although this is a small example this shows how she could start in an unconventional way, challenging any preconceptions about how class should begin. Even at the beginning she is creating a sense of play that is an essential part of the work. Then by changing from physical objects to our voices, she changed the demands of the exercise. Most people are shy about using their voices in a self-conscious way. She then introduced ways of using the voice and at the same time raising the risk taking, all this occurred in less than ten minutes.

Her teaching style was authoritative and yet she was very attentive and seemed to see through us all, as she was such an experienced reader of body language. Each morning in Paris, particularly, she would gradually move around the class as everyone was warming up, connect with each one, with a "Good morning" or "Ca va?". I am sure she was feeling the mood or energy level, so the class could begin with the right energy for what was to come. She always seemed to know how to build energy and have the group working well.

No aspect of her teaching was neglected. The end of each class was also shaped. The classes would often end in a group rhythmical exercise that
would bring the whole class together. Another example from Paris was, after working with bamboo sticks, that the whole class was connected holding the sticks in a circle. Then we began weaving in and out of each other not breaking the connection. Then, if I remember correctly, the class added a harmonious vocal sound to go with the movements and the class ended in this music making.

Like her colleagues, Lecoq and Gaulier, Monika incorporates in her teaching style the approach known as ‘via negativa’ which is defined as “those training styles which strip back actors habits of action” (Pippen 1999, p.19). It is inseparable to this kind of teaching, as the aim of this work is to ‘strip back’ the ‘unauthentic’, so that students can develop a ‘true freedom’ in their work. I saw this approach manifested in the way Monika commented on student work. She was very direct. From her point of view the criticisms are to help the student be more ‘truthful’. It is only about the ‘work’ and not personal. Students learn from other’s mistakes, as well as their own. At times it can be personally confronting, as one encounters one’s own fears and limitations that at times are hard to face.

As Judith Pippen corroborates this experience, for she wrote:

*Monika knows exactly what she wants. Her critique is very strong, intuitive and immediate; marked always by clarity of purpose. There is a ready “Yes”, “No”, ”It runs”’, “It does not run”. While incisive enough to shake you to the core, her interventions are never personally destructive, but relate directly to the enlivening of the performer and the 'empty space'* (Pippen 1999, p.23).
From my experience every aspect of Monika’s lesson design and teaching style bears the stamp of her artistry, whether it is the aesthetic experience of the class, from the first moment to the last, her unique way of teaching, with her direct comments to heighten the learning, and the great variety of exercises with which to excite and challenge the students.
PART 2: The Value of Monika’s Teaching

In this section, Monika’s work will be evaluated from different points of view. To begin there will be a discussion of the experience for the individual, how the respondents and I have used our experience of Monika’s teaching in our own work and what we see as her legacy.

The Value to the Individual

Many of the respondents gave very personal responses to the question about how they valued their experiences with Monika. They revealed that they felt personal transformation and change for the better, renewed confidence in themselves, and that the encounter profoundly affected them; this in turn led to changes in career and life. Here is a sample of the most moving accounts:

Profound change in my sense of body & self as expressed through body. It’s no coincidence that I met and fell in love with my future wife through Monika’s work - it opened us up to each other in a deep and delightfully playful way. CR

For myself I healed or got full use of a shoulder which had been smashed when I was hit by a car. I learnt to stand in a different way which was better for my spine and general energy flow and I had to stop wearing high heeled shoes! My feet also grew a size! And that was at the age of 50. SN

When I attended her class, I had given up on performing, and had elected to become only a mask maker. And yet I took her course,
and though it did not address performance directly, I feel it did
give me the confidence back to begin performing again. CC
On the third day of the workshop in Tokyo, we were repeating the
exercise of sitting and standing up using a spiral motion. We
found that the motion was getting easier and easier and at the end
of the class, all of us could stand up on the floor very beautifully
and straightly. And Monika said, "How beautiful you are!" The
work greatly impressed me, I had hated myself and never thought
I was beautiful. Tears came into my eyes. I loved myself at this
moment, and after this I can live easily than before. KK

For myself, the value of this work is on multi levels. Many of the exercises
and approaches have enriched my teaching enormously. At a deeper level I
realise I have absorbed the principles and concepts, such as the 'empty
space', the relationship between freedom and discipline, risk and comfort
that I have discussed earlier.

In a similar way to other respondents, my perception of the teacher's 'eye'
has been changed.

Sian Newey also commented on this aspect, "As a teacher or through
Monika's work, I learned better how to 'read' my students and actors."
That has been very noticeable for myself. I look for the 'life' in any
performance, for the 'right' relationships and for 'le jeu'. In the Paris class, I
encountered my own fears and limitations, which although were very
painful at the time, gave me a much greater self-awareness. There is value,
too, in the experience of encountering a master teacher, to experience such a
role model.
How Respondents Have Used Monika’s Teaching In Their Own Work

I believe that one of the most important aspects of evaluating a teacher’s work is how the ‘work’ has been passed on. From the respondents’ replies, some continue to use exercises they learnt, such as the bamboo sticks, while others feel they are keeping the spirit of Monika’s work alive in other ways in their work. The following is a sample of what Monika’s students use in their own practice.

A range of Feldenkrais exercises in warm-ups, etc. NJ

I use Monika’s work as a warm up for every class ... And I reckon that the performances are better for it, the actors are more focussed and freer yet in control of their bodies. SN

I teach and direct. I often use Monika’s teaching methods to teach performers that I’m directing about: presence, fixed point, major/minor, complicity between performers, awareness of self and others on stage, rhythm, use of space, elements of group movements scenes eg the presence of up/down, push/pull, movement/fixed point to create tension. I also use her methods of movement. AY

One of the exercises of hers I do with my mask making students, is she gives them a lump of clay, and blindfolds them, and has them sculpt their own bodies. The results are incredible! So few people are sculptors, and fewer still have a concept of what they actually look like. CC
Her Legacy

The following comments show that the participants in this study are conscious that Monika’s work will live on through the work of her students. As their horizons have opened and their understanding deepened, her students pass on her unique contribution. In answer to the question, “What do you think will be her legacy? respondents wrote the following:

Her students, NJ

She is an amalgam of her unique experience, because her style has influenced several generations particularly in Paris. JP

I remember a sense of a pursuit of a fine aesthetic that was continually changing and in the moment. A belief in the value of working - that you could study for awhile but that it was important to work afterwards to make the study material your own. CR

I'm sure that there are many other parts of her legacy that will be like the effects of throwing a pebble in a pond - ongoing ripple.

Her teaching is a cornerstone of the physical theatre movement. CC

Not only are her students aware of the legacy she will leave, they also expressed their appreciation of her in unsolicited comments. These types of comment show how much she is valued by her students and the impact that can result from working with a master teacher.
It was amazing to find a woman with such charisma and dedication...

Now, from what I have heard later, Monika is not necessarily particularly supportive of women, or even easy to work under - but she is inspiring as a role model in the theatre - to have found ‘her work’ and to know it, and to have gone such a long way with it. KC

What is Monika’s Work?

Monika used to refer to ‘the work’ many times in her classes. To bring this examination of Monika’s teaching to a conclusion I asked my respondents what they thought ‘the work’ was. It is very clear from the answers that ‘being alive in the moment’ is at the heart of the work. This is what many of them said:

Focused presence of life in every moment. JP

Simplicity, energy, complicity, economy, play. NJ

Creativity, being 100% present, awake to the moment to generate theatre that is alive, fresh, ‘truthful’, ‘lifeful’; becoming more and more aware of one’s own self and relation/interplay/complicity with other person stage; and to serve the intention of the particular work, through these qualities. AY

The work is the art of artifice. Of creating a moment onstage, or discovering a moment in such a way that the audience cannot tell if it is re-created, or re-discovered. To be playful, aware, disciplined, and yet joyful with abandon. It is like the work of a clown, to be in the moment, but also in awareness of the moment. CC
To conclude this evaluation of Monika’s work the last words should be Monika’s. This study endeavoured to reveal that as a master teacher, Monika was able to inspire and encourage her students through her short ‘bon mots’ which all her students seem to remember. I believe that the benefits of this learning go much further than learning subject content or a method, as it transforms the inner person, so that he/she can become a better performer. This is why students came from around the world to learn from Monika. I believe that this is one of Monika’s most empowering ‘bon mots’:

Do not let fear or distance come in the way of the work. Keep open – to notice.
CONCLUSION

This qualitative study draws a portrait of Monika Pagneux's teaching through description and analysis of her unique work as experienced by eleven students. There are difficulties in documenting Monika's teaching. Anna Yen wrote, 'I think that Monika's work can only really be experienced in person. Also that each person will have a different experience of the work.' However, these former students are able to capture some of the essential qualities and aspects of her work.

Although Monika's work has been sparsely recorded, this does not mean her work should go unacknowledged. Even from this small sample, almost all the former students indicated their own personal transformation, as a result of Monika's teaching.

They explain how their professional lives have been enriched, so that they are better performers, teachers, directors and Feldenkrais Trainers. The profound learning from Monika's classes has been incorporated into their own practice.

Monika belongs to a European tradition of physical theatre training, which has been informed by her own training with Mary Wigman, Jacques Lecoq, Moshe Feldenkrais and others. The work she taught at Lecoq's School, was further developed in conjunction with Philippe Gaulier. During her career she has worked with such notable directors as Peter Brook. Brook and she have many similarities in their ways of working. In the last ten years, her
own freelance work has allowed her to take new directions, especially relating voice and music to movement work.

This study demonstrates that what makes Monika a master teacher is that she has developed a unique area of knowledge, developed individually over many years and blending Feldenkrais work for actors and performers with physical theatre principles from Lecoq. This work is communicated in her own style, which reveals her artistry, not only in the planning of her courses, but also in the shaping of the lesson and the teaching of each moment. The demands she makes of her students are the same she makes of herself; she asks that all participants are to be totally present ‘in the moment’, and that they are ready and available for any possibility which may arise. Monika is the creative, dominant force in the classroom, orchestrating the action of the class. Like other master teachers, she is very responsible to the needs of her students, for the work is to enable each one to find a greater freedom in their bodies and their approach to performing.

Apart from theories of virtuosity (Howard, 1998) and the aesthetics of teaching (Hargeaves 1983, Abbs 1994 and Eisner 1979) which inform the notion of the master teacher, descriptions of other master teachers provide some insight into the qualities of Monika’s teaching. Her work can be compared to two other women master teachers, Dorothy Heathcote and Cecily O’Neill in the drama/theatre field, whose teaching has been documented by colleagues and students (Wagner 1976), (Taylor 1995) and (Schreurer in Saxon & Miller 1998).

Dorothy Heathcote, a leading drama educator has many similarities with Monika as she, too, rarely writes about her own work, and yet her work has
influenced a whole generation of drama educators. Her work has been extensively documented and she gave numerous workshops and classes all over the world (Wagner 1976).

The following description of Heathcote at work shows parallels with Monika’s teaching. Both women are uncompromising in their practice. They both aim to develop the ‘authentic’ in their students and their art form:

   Behind what we see – Dorothy Heathcote’s large, sturdy build, ruddy cheeks, and mesmerising eyes – lie a keen sensitivity to the nuance of language, a profound awareness of the complexity of human interactions, and an artist’s dedication to perfection in meeting the demands of her craft; drama. She works from the inside out, from a solid conviction that what she does has to feel right, and asks children to do nothing less (Wagner 1976, p.13).

Another influential teacher regarded as a master teacher is Cecily O’Neill who, like Dorothy Heathcote, is a drama educator who shares her knowledge and skills internationally. She writes and publishes her own work, (Drama Structures, 1982 and Drama Worlds, 1995) but others also document her work. O’Neill appears to be very conscious of developing the aesthetic quality of her teaching as ‘this ephemeral and unpredictable process, which is intrinsically dramatic, truly educational, and profoundly worthwhile.’ (Taylor 1995, p.4) Cecily O’Neill, like Monika and Dorothy Heathcote, is a responsive and dynamic teacher, structuring the work and negotiating and re-negotiating the substance and directions of the drama towards an aesthetic experience for the participants (Taylor 1995, p.1).

Pam Schreurer describes and analyses (1998) one complete cycle of Cecily O’Neill’s drama teaching. This is a detailed description of how a “master teacher “plans and teaches a workshop unit. Schreurer records how Cecily O’Neill’s creative planning and artistic structuring of drama is at the heart of her practice and is driven by her philosophy of dramatic art, to create a
"perpetual present moment" and then "fill it with its own future" (Schreurer in Saxon & Miller 1998, pp.45, 46).

The qualities which these three women teachers (Monika, Dorothy and Cecily) share include: being the dominant creative force in the classroom, being able to structure their material in a dynamic, responsive way in the present moment, and providing significant aesthetic experiences for their students.

Recommendations

This study provides a starting point for further studies that would extend our knowledge of Monika Pagneux's work and her influence in the training of movement for actors.

The work of master teachers in general needs more attention to set an example for their profession, and to influence the field to which they contribute. An example of another master teacher largely unrecorded, is Joanna Exiner, who was largely responsible for introducing modern dance, modern educational dance and dance therapy to Melbourne in the 1970's to the 1990's. Apart from her own few publications, such 'Teaching Creative Movement' (1973), she too has been mostly unacknowledged.

Another recommended area for further study is the application of many of Monika's principles and themes of her work to the drama and theatre fields, both in the training of actors, in the rehearsal process and within the drama education field which is increasingly being influenced by contemporary theatre practice.
This study tries to show that her training methods can be a blueprint for empowering and transforming the student. I believe there is no greater gift a teacher can give to students and the field both personally and professionally.

This study is about teaching how ‘to be more lifeful’, in the moment. This is Monika’s work.
APPENDICES

Appendix A  Questionnaire for date collection and accompanying letter.

_Helen Sandercoe_
_Drama Teacher & Workshop Co-ordinator_
_6 Oxford Street, South Yarra, Vic. 3141, Australia_
_Tel: +61.3.9826 9839 E-mail: dramaatwork@hotmail.com_


Dear Student of Monika Pagneux,

At present I am studying for my Masters in Drama Education at the University of Melbourne, Australia. For my thesis, I am researching the work of Monika Pagneux. I feel it is important that at least some of her unique work is recorded. Monika knows about this project and has given her blessing to this research.

I had the privilege of being her student at the Adelaide International workshop in 1993 and the 'Pedagogical class' in Paris, July, 1994. I realise that this is a very short time to study with a master teacher. I hope by contacting as many students of Monika as possible, I can research her work in much greater detail and present a greater complexity of her work beyond my own experience.

For this part of my research, I have prepared mostly an open-ended questionnaire for any of Monika's students. I would very much appreciate your reply to any or all of the following questions. If you wish to remain anonymous, then I will certainly respect your wishes, otherwise if your comments are quoted in the thesis, then you will be acknowledged as the source.

If you know of anyone else who studied with Monika, please pass on these questions or ask them to contact me.

I hope you are able to help with my research and I really appreciate you taking the time to reply by the end of May. I feel it's so important that some of her work is recorded formally. Please let me know if you would like a copy of the analysis of the questionnaire (hopefully finished at the end of 2000).

Thank you so much for your help and please feel free to phone, e-mail me about Monika's work,

Yours Sincerely,

Helen V. Sandercoe
QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE WORK OF MONIKA PAGNEUX

Part of a Minor Thesis for a M. Ed., University of Melbourne, Australia, by Helen Sandercoe Ph (61 - 3 - 98269839.)

The following is the list of the questions. Please answer separately, on paper or e-mail.

1. Your name and contact address and ph/FAX/ E-mail.

2. To put your reply in a little context, please outline briefly your professional career.

3. When and how did you hear about Monika's classes? Why did you go to her classes?

4. At what point/s in your professional career did you study with Monika?

5. In what context did you study with Monika? For example, in Paris with Philippe Gaulier or other workshop/class situation?

6. How long did you study with Monika?

7. What do you most remember about her work?

Please comment if you can, about what you observed about her teaching; what was taught, how it was taught, how the lessons were constructed, her interactions with her students. (This does not have to be formal lesson notes but impressions, memories would be very acceptable.)

8. If you studied with her over a number of years, how did her work change over the years?

9. What part of her teaching had the greatest impact on you personally?

Were there any particular moments that were a revelation?

10. With what parts of her teaching did you feel the most comfortable and what areas made you feel the most challenged or uncomfortable?

11. I believe that one of the powerful aspects of being involved in drama/theatre, whether during training, or as a performer or audience
member, is the way that it transforms us. After attending Monika's classes, did you feel changed in any way? I would appreciate it, if you can describe these changes.

12. If you teach or direct or both, do you use any of Monika's teaching methods or exercises in your own work? What do you use and in what context do you use them? What has been the result?

13. Have you developed any of exercises beyond how you learnt them? Please describe how the exercises have evolved?

14. On reflecting upon my experience of Monika's classes, these are areas/issues that I have become interested in exploring further in the way we learn and perform:

* the balance between discipline and freedom/play,
* the balance between risk and comfort,
* the differing responsibilities of maintaining one's individuality within a group and being sensitive to the needs of the group.

I would welcome any comments on these dichotomies which seemed very much part of my experience of her classes.

15. I am also interested in how Monika stimulated the creativity of her students and how she worked from the principle of making 'nothing into something', and of how to be more 'lifeful', and the use of rhythm. I would also welcome any of your comments on these areas of Monika's work.

16. The Feldenkrais work is important to Monika, did you feel any benefits from these exercises? Was there a relationship for you between the Feldenkrais exercises and the rest of the class?

17. Monika talks about 'the work' in her classes. What you understand is the nature of 'the work'?
18. How do you think this kind of movement training is useful for actors/performers? For me, Monika is a master teacher, 'un grand professor'.

19. I admire not only how she teaches, but what she teaches. How would you sum up the importance of her teaching? What do you think will be her legacy?

20. If you did not enjoy or get much out of the classes, what in your opinion was missing or did not work very well? Please describe your experience.

Any other comments?

I realise answering any all or some of these questions is a tall order. I appreciate very much your contribution to this work. Thank-you very much. Please send your response by the end of July, 2000.
Appendix B  Short Biographies Of Respondents

Kate Clarkson
Wollongong
Professional Experience: Performer, Director and Teacher

How did you hear about Monika’s classes? Summer of 1985 in London saw advertised a 2 week workshop offered by Monika Pagneux and Philippe Gaulier. I think I was just attracted by the Lecoq Paris association – from the publicity one could tell I believe that they were influential but it seemed still accessible.

Christine Cook
Calgary, Canada

How did you hear about Monika’s classes? I was studying leather mask making in Padova, Italy with Donato Sartori (Lecoq’s maskmaker), summer 1989. Other students recommended Monika as a teacher.

Russell Fewster
Adelaide
Professional Experience: Theatre Director, University Tutor and an Artist - in - Residence in schools.
How did you hear about Monika’s classes? Through the International Festival. And became aware of her through Lecoq.

Alan Holy
Adelaide
Professional Experience: Professional actor/entertainer
Graduated VCA 1983.
How did you hear about Monika’s classes?
International Workshop Programme and reputation.

Nigel Jameson
Sydney
Professional Experience: Teacher and performer: Director of Theatrical Large Scale Events, Festivals and other Performances.
How did you hear about Monika’s classes? From the Lecoq school in the early 1985’s.

Kumi Katagiri
Osaka, Japan
Professional Experience: Teacher and performer
1997 Instructor of drama at children’s Drama Club
1996 Instructor of drama at drama company ‘A & T’ Actors Theatre
1995 Instructor of drama at puppet show company “La Carte”
1994 Drama class part-time instructor at Kinki- University
How did you hear about Monika’s classes? In the autumn of 1993, I found an application of the workshop at my drama school. The graduates of Lecoq Drama School invited Monika to Tokyo to hold a workshop. I met Monika first when I had no professional career.
Sian Newey
Sydney
Professional Experience: Actor, Teacher, Director

I started in the theatre in England in 1950 in Pantomime. I was then a student in the Arts Educational Schools. I worked in weekly rep. And touring plays and with Donald Wolfit until I had my first child. We immigrated to Australia and I did three plays a year with amateur groups while the children were growing up. I went to Newcastle Uni to get a degree in 1970 something, taught there opened a small theatre in Newcastle and in 1984 went to Paris to retrain with Monika and Philippe. Since then I have acted, taught and directed in Australia.

Judith Pippen
Brisbane
Professional Experience: Movement Educator, actor trainer, Director, Lecturer and Arts Bureaucrat

How did you hear about Monika’s classes? Heard about her from Lecoq students in Paris in the 1980’s, while she was in partnership with Gaulier.

Charles Robinson
Melbourne

How did you hear about Monika’s classes? Through friends and recommendations.
Anna Yen

Brisbane

Professional Experience: Performer, movement and circus trainer, Feldenkrais Practitioner and Director.

Co-founded the Tasmanian Women’s Circus and trained with Nanjing Acrobatic Troupe in Albury. Co-ordinated the Tasmanian Youth Circus and performed with Hobart’s Horizon Circus. 4yrs with Rock ‘n’ Roll Circus, Brisbane. Wrote, Performed one-woman show, Chinese Take Away.

Directed other notable shows.

How did you hear about Monika’s classes? From a colleague from South Australia, Ollie Black first told me about Monika in 1993. In the same year, I also was told about her by Kate Cantor, a former Monika student. I also read about Monika in the flier for the International Workshop Festival.

List of Respondents, Initials and Names:

KC – Kate Clarkson
CC – Christine Cook
RF – Russell Fewster
AH – Alan Holy
NJ – Nigel Jameson
KK – Kumi Katagiri
SN – Sian Newey
JP – Judith Pippen
CR – Charles Robinson
AY – Anna Yen
The following is a breakdown of my ten participants of how they were contacted:

My fellow class members - KK, RF, AY  
Judy Pippin’s Class - JP, CR, AH  
Other Contacts – KC, SN, NJ  
Internet Contacts - CC

Appendix C  Place and Time When Respondents Studied with Monika

1985 - KC - 2 weeks workshop, London
1993 - KK - Monika, Japan.
1993 - RF, HS Adelaide, 2 weeks.
1994 - AY, KK, HS Paris, Pedagogique , 4 weeks.
Appendix D  Selection of The Respondents’ Replies

Her legacy

She is an amalgam of her unique experience – each of her students, will be such of theirs, because her style has influence several generations particularly in Paris – can be seen in the film & theatre product. JP

I remember a sense of a pursuit of a fine aesthetic that was continually changing and in the moment. A belief in the value of working – that you could study for awhile but that is was important to work afterwards to make the study material your own. CR

Her students. NJ

For me (Anna Yen), Monika’s teaching has been one of my greatest learnings and inspirations in theatre. Years later, I am still inspired by her work. I am grateful too that she inspired me to embark on a Feldenkrais Professional training, which has led to continued learning. Monika has inspired many people around the world to embark on Feldenkrais Trainings. This is part of her legacy. Other parts include inspiring many people to pursue an embodied and integrated approach to devising for theatre.

I also under understand she’s inspired, with Gaulier, such groups as Theatre de Complicite.

Monika’s notion that everything must begin in from the body (knowing that the body, mind, emotions, sensing are completely interconnected), and that performances will be much better if everyone involved eg including the designer/musicians, do some of the basic floor work and games together,
was a key inspiration in the process of the Creative Development for my show “Chinese Take Away”.
I'm sure that there are many other parts of her legacy that will be like the effects of throwing a pebble in a pond – ongoing ripples. Monika encouraged her students to make the work their own and there are many teachers of movement and directors who have experienced Monika’s work and continue to be inspired by it, and take it into in ways that suits that particular situation, group of people. An important legacy of Monika’s is that she developed a way to present the Feldenkrais work to actors/performers, blended with physical theatre principles from the Jacques Lecoq School, in a way which captured the interest of actors/performers, directors. AY

Her teaching is a cornerstone of the physical theatre movement. It precedes studies of style or gesture, as it is a study of the core of actor. The body, the body in space, the body in motion, and the body in relation to others, the simple physics and psychology of movement. A performer learns who he or she is, and what he or she is, then after this pure slate is clean, can project all manner of characterisation, style, mannerism, etc onto it. CC

Inspired and spread the notion of the spirit and effort required of ‘the work’ – evident in Brooks, but also many other traditions. Also the paradox of playfulness as central – is this an Asian concept too – god playing with us, god as trickster ...(le jeu)
The fact there was a tiny woman ex-circus performer from Paris, who ut of her woundedness, found a sacred, wilful, effortful, playfulness that played right into the hands of Peter Brook and his company –wow. KC
I think that Monika’s work can only really be experienced in person. Also that each person will have a different experience of the work. AY (This is why her work cannot be really recorded).

**Negative criticism**

Monika I found was quick to judge & did pigeon hole people – it was easy if you fitted in the right hole! JP

Monika definitely had favourites – especially among the boys – and scapegoats especially among the women who had dance experience and a tendency to point their toes at inappropriate times. She was really hard on them. CR

Watch out for wedgies! Monika had a habit of grabbing the elastic of your underpants when you were not moving appropriately – in theory to help the movement. The result was often a serious wedgie! CR

I think in her later years Monika became a little impatient – sometimes introducing fear into her classes. NJ

**Changes noted in her teaching**

JP experienced two different times with Monika, with about ten years between. This what she noted – Between two sessions with her, noticed more integration of Feldenkrais work & even stronger connection with performance.

**Comfortable / Uncomfortable with Monika’s teaching**

Pace of instruction, excellent.
Way she could focus on you & push until you shifted! JP

I felt in Paris affirmed & amplified.

In Adelaide, she targeted as an ‘academic’ and left me feeling somewhat defeated. JP

The areas to do with play. (comfortable) The more physically demanding work. (uncomfortable) NJ

The Feldenkrais lessons, rhythmic games, games with the tambour, bamboo sticks – I felt comfortable with, though often times challenged. The group devising work I sometimes found the most uncomfortable. All of it useful learning. Monika ‘s demand that we be ‘present’, alive to the moment, alert to our impulses, and to each other in the space, all the time was constantly challenging – which I appreciated, and on eof the reasons I love her work.

AY

It was relatively comfortable in the floor and standing work, even if I was hopeless at some things – which I was. She made you feel that it was just the beginning of a long process. Mind you, I positioned myself at the back of the room most days –played it low key. Once I realised how much this work meant to many people in the room. I think she was ‘sharper’ about people at the front.

The work as a whole group was fun and exhilarating.

The work in pairs, and individual work moving around the room had more performance pressure on it, and sometimes I felt I got stressed and uncomfortable. KC

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Value of the experience to the individual.  

Profound change in my sense of body & self as expressed through body. It’s no coincidence that I met and fell in love with my future wife through Monika’s work – it opened us up to each other in a deep and delightfully playful way. CR

I felt empowered by her confidence in me and also by the way she believed in me. RF

Some of the simplest empirical results of the Feldenkrais based exercises. NJ

Habitual postures and gestures AH (I presume he means they were challenged or changed.)

One particular moment of revelation was in my first 3 weeks with her in London, when Monika was shouting at me to be awake to the play, to develop complicity with the partner I was doing a ‘bamboo stick’ exercise with. I’d just come from 4 years working in a contemporary circus company and was in the mind set of getting skills ‘right’, so when Monika gave the instruction to keep the stick between you partner and your index fingers, I took it as another circus trick with the aim to not drop the stick. When she shouted at me that I was missing the play with my partner that ‘Look how lifeful you partner is’ - the penny dropped; this exercise is about complicity, pleasure, building up the relationship with your partner, not just about keeping the stick up. I also spoke to Monika about this moment of revelation, and she told me that she shouted at me then, because she though I could take it. AY
I often remember Monika saying to me: learn from everyone and then make the work your own. AY

Becoming aware of my own posture, and the impression that it gives to the outside world, and becoming aware that I could change it. Then having to cope with change. CC

When I attend her class, I had given up on performing, and had elected to become only a mask maker. And yet I took her course, and though it did not address performance directly, I feel it did give me the confidence back to begin performing again. CC

Probably, the moment that has had the longest impact, was when after a class, I think, I approached her, uncertain how to explain the difficulties I was having with the floor work.

I might have stumbled over a few words to do with my lower back, which is quite arched, but she replied immediately—“Bend your knees a little, now, let your pelvic bone so your lower back flattens at the back. OK, she said, you need to walk around like that as often as possible—Be a little monkey”—she said! I still do it—when I think about it, as she pinpointed how my body ‘naturally’ throws me off centre or alignment unless I remember to be a ‘little monkey’. It was extraordinary, to me, how she could just see that in me after such a short time. KC

It was amazing to find a woman with such charisma and dedication.

Yet and Christopher had plenty of that, but they were not very equitable, or even interested often in women’s journeys. Now, from what I have hear later, Monika is not necessarily particularly supportive of women, or even
easy to work under—but she is inspiring as a role model in the theatre—to have found ‘her work’ and to know it, and to have gone such a long way with it. One could see a little of the closeness of her working relationship with Philippe, and it made you think about what it takes to branch out on your own to create a new theatre training school, which they did I believe and the struggles perhaps she would have had to hold her own with such a ‘character’ as Philippe.

I felt I had ‘lived through’ some of the Peter Brook magic, by having had the chance to work with her. Years later, I have met people who have worked with her, much more than I have, an of course that feels like a great bond with those people to have had the honour to share her experience. KC

Yes, rhythm was so important, I wish I could have done more to understand and take it on more. I was the first person in the group to find my own rhythm on that first day, Monika said, “Yes, that’s it, that’s a rhythm for you!” which was exciting, although I felt I couldn’t develop the work very far at that time. KC

I remember on the first day, after the introduction, moving in a circle as a group, then individually finding a rhythm and a way to say our name. I remember crossing the room at pace diagonally in pairs, using side to side momentum/tension as we went. This rhythm/movement developed into 1/2 group work and then whole group work. I remember an ensemble singing exercise that built to a great climax just using Yes and No— that she said she had used with the Brook company. So simple-yet charged with energy.
Another whole group exercise was the jumping in lines, in unison, to a changing timing, and the importance of passing the energy with emphasis and focus from one line to the next. I distinctly remember learning the 'corkscrew' turn from standing to sitting and in reverse, the 'knotting' of legs through arms and the Feldenkrais baby roll – and being amazed and delighted when she explained how these movements, natural play movements for children, were the base and impetus for all acrobatics. A lovely thought, that acrobatics is an organic outgrowth from spontaneous play with our bodies. KC

This work probably had the deepest impact on me, given the crises I was in with my career, and not focusing on things which would make me a better performer, but rather, a better human being. I believe the work made me more aware of myself, and others, and helped me to open up. CC

How respondents have used Monika's work in their own work
There's a lots of great stuff there that if taught well allows access to the wellspring of our shared humanity. CR

Not using at present – but the 'eye' is still there when I observe other in performance /rehearsal. JP

I use some of the movement exercises; walking with the bamboo on the head, group bamboo exercises/games. I also use games that emphasise play. RF
A range of Feldenkrais exercises in warm-ups, etc. NJ

I teach and direct. I often use Monika's teaching methods to teach performers that I'm directing about: presence, fixed point, major/minor,
complicity between performers, awareness of self and others on stage, rhythm, use of space, elements of group movements scenes eg the presence of up/down, push/pull, movement/fixed point to create tension. I also use her methods of movement. When teaching not in a directing context, I’ll teach the above, and also more of Feldenkrais movement work for the purpose of inviting awareness in the students and readiness to improvise/create. AY

I have also eg, instead of asking groups to create a piece of work by using saying 5 of your favourite type movements, linked in a smooth way, I will ask eg circus groups to devise something using 5 or their favourite acrobalances in a smooth way. AY

These days I modify the exercise depending on the situation and blend of other exercises I’ve learnt elsewhere (vs when I first started teaching Monika’s work, I stuck much more closely to what I thought she did – although that has also ways included being spontaneous, and planning a class according to who I was teaching with and who the participants are, and how long one has to work with them – and the teacher being the ‘chef d’orchestra’, (like in one of her games). Since I’ve been immersed in a Feldenkrais Professional Training, I’ve also changed how I teach the Feldenkrais lesson (I sometimes teach them slower than Monika did, sometimes not), and stopped teaching some of the other movement exercises such as walking around the roo lifting someone’s head to a class of beginners. (I would do it myself, but now ask the students to do it with each other, as I’ve heard of this exercise being passed 2nd or third hand to other people who are using the exercise unawarely). I sometimes add some work I
learnt from Lindy Davies about 'impulse' which I think is very compatible with Monika's work. AY

One of the exercises of hers I do with my mask making students, is she gives them a lump of clay, and Blindfolds them, and has them sculpt their own bodies. The results are incredible! So few people are sculptors, and fewer still have a concept of what they actually look like. Then she had the group go around and write one word to describe each piece on its own paper. At the end of the course, she had us again sculpt ourselves blindfolded, only this time, only our torsos, no arms, legs, or heads. The difference in people's awareness was quite astounding. From flat cartoon shapes to full forms. CC

As above, I use the sculpting in mask making, just to get students ware of space, and themselves. The students have really liked those exercises. CC

I have used the Feldenkrais exercises I can remember and do! – which means the knitting (although I have kind of forgotten now!) and the baby circle roll in acting classes.
I have also used the jumping in lines/passing the energy on – often in acting classes. KC

Usefulness of the training.
It purifies. NJ

All training that touches you has significance. AH
Some of the things this kind of movement training is useful for movement

- developing awareness of themselves and others in the performance space
  ie spatial relations
- as a method of learning alertness, ‘aliveness’, presence, openness,
  playfulness, complicity with other performers
- as a method for learning about being ‘in the moment’
- developing one’s kinaesthetic awareness;
- having metaphors for the interchange of focus, energy, ‘the play’ on
  stage eg though the stick game, tambour game
- for connecting rhythm, voice, movement
- learning major/minor
- freeing the physical in order to be present to ‘play’ on stage with self and
  others
- to learn to develop mastery of one’s movements and therefore to be able
  to carry out your intent without being impeded by unaware habits.
  (Moshe Feldenkrais; paraphrased, ‘If you know what you are doing, you
  can do what you want’.
  
- To enliven the mind through enlivening the physical. AY

I believe that it is very useful. That all performers need awareness of self, in
order to portray anything, in order to be a vessel for the audience to project
their desires and emotions onto. To be open, and playful, to be a joy to be
watched. CC

The Dichotomies

I think the discipline (eg her insistence on everyone giving complete focus to
the work and to where ever the ‘play’ was) helped create the possibility of
freedom to create. I think Monika was very influenced by the broader aspect
of Moshe Feldenkrais’s work, which was not really about movement, but included becoming more aware of what one’s habits are and creating more options for oneself beyond the habitual, creating more flexibility in one’s thinking and response to the world, being able to meet each new situation freshly, aware. Hence the dichotomy between risk and comfort. Challenging long held habits often seems risky, uncomfortable, and sometimes liberating. Moving more comfortable, effortlessly, in a supportive environment can often bring about the possibility of taking risks and making discoveries. AY

‘the balance between discipline and freedom/play & the differing responsibilities of maintaining ones’ individuality within a group and being sensitive to the needs of the group’ – These are most important for me. RF

What is Monika’s ‘work’?
Strictness; openness RF

Focused presence of life in every moment. JP

Simplicity, energy, complicity, economy, play. NJ

The work is to engage unconditionally in the offers and let whatever happens. I don’ attach any other significance. AH

Creativity, being 100% present, awake to the moment to generate theatre that is alive, fresh, ‘truthful’, lifeful’; becoming more and more aware of one’s own self and relation/interplay/complicity with other person stage; and to serve the intention of the particular work, through these qualities. AY
The work is the art of artifice. Of creating a moment onstage, or discovering a moment in such a way that the audience cannot tell if it is re-created, or re-discovered. To be playful, aware, disciplined, and yet joyful with abandon. It is like the work of a clown, to be in the moment, but also in awareness of the moment. CC

‘the work’ – its psychological, spiritual individuation that can be achieved only through extreme effort, willpower, surrender, aloneness and togetherness. This painful, beautiful creative process is what is also created in Art! KC
Exercises from Monika’s Classes

Appendix E  The Tambour Exercise demonstrating risk taking

An exercise which exemplifies risk taking, is the tambour exercise, where two people, a bit like gladiators, take their place in the space within the circle, each holding a tambour or tambourine. The aim of the game is to try to touch the other person’s tambour, but at the same time protect one’s own tambour. The game is about making offers, taking risks, a sense of play, total awareness. In the playing of it, it reveals the player’s own state.

Appendix F  Interplay between the individual and the group

(Pippen 1999,p. 28, Day 2 Adelaide) - CHORUS WORK

(Each of the group had modelled their bodies in plasticine and had written words or phrases which describe the quality of the sculpture.)
Taking the text written on your sculpture, form groups of 5. Arrange the texts spontaneously into poetic forms, staying with the group impulses. Turn to the space, take a position in relation to each other and for the audience. Sense the moment to begin and play with the text in snippets of sounds and changing physical relations. Do not ‘represent’ the text, it destroys the impulse, dig deeper, do not look to anyone else, but tell the audience, allow for natural pauses to emerge; take your space, physically and vocally with courage. Concentrate, attend, listen and the same time exercise your individual freedom. Take risks.

Appendix G  Stick Exercise for ‘Le Jeu’.

An example of this play, is in one of the stick exercises. In this exercise, two people pick up a bamboo stick from the floor, connecting the stick from the
third finger of one hand, then the pair ‘play’ with what is possible through movement, before the stick is accidentally dropped. Monika adds another level by saying to ‘play to win’. But if you play too hard the stick is dropped and game is over. So the exercise is about being playful, totally connecting with your partner, being in the present, and yet taking risks.

Appendix H  Sculpture for Body Awareness

In threes, one takes a bizarre position, one copies the sculpture, with their eyes closed and one is the observer.

The aim is for the copier with eyes closed to feel the position of the one posed, and copied as closely as possible in their own body. The observer can give feed back after the process is completed.

An extension of this, is for two to be sculptures and two to copy and one observer.

Appendix I  Bird Exercise – Body Awareness

(Pippen 1999, p.39 Day 7 Adelaide)

BIRD

a) Sense air under your arm pits. Let the breath create a space there.

b) Look like a bird, moving only the head.

c) Smell under the armpits and sense the feathers now, the spine line is changing, the upper spine beginning to spiral.

21. Begin to lift the feet lightly, like a bird, the spine line changes again.

Really look with the eyes of a bird, do not be anecdotal, birds do not look with rage, passion, be simple, find the rhythm.
Appendix J  Running with Suspension - Body awareness

(Pippen 1999, p.49 Day 2 Adelaide)

Run on impulse one after another until the whole room runs, find fixed point until all is still. Sense the rhythm, work to a crescendo, then find fixed point in clusters. Hear the sound of autumn leaves, of wind in the trees. Begin to run with an impulse from your centre, not by falling forward out of your balance.

The exercise subtly changes, with the impulse beginning with the centre and not starting the falling forward off balance. With this starting point the movement has a centre, will be much stronger and more connected.

Appendix K  Rhythm Exercise - Clapping Rhythms

(Pippen 1999, p.42 Day 8 Adelaide)

After working on the spine with rollers, we take up linear formations. A volunteer in the first row begins a 4/4 clapping rhythm. When they have it in their bodies and the rhythm rings true the rest of the line joins them. Monika always waits for things to ‘cook’, and she never lets a half-hearted event waste a moment. The clapping must be crisp and clean and for that it helps to offer something simple. Each row explores this process with its own rhythm. The rhythm of the fourth line is taken up by the whole group and moved into the space, vocal play is initiated with it and over it. Monika conducts us into male and female choruses, playfully opposing the sound, adding dance steps for the women and anchoring the men in stamping and clapping. She singles out players for an improvisation, hoping they will form couples an move to the centre and extend the process into something
after the style of a peasant dance, but we are not quite ready yet to follow our impulses this far.

**Appendix L  Complicity Of Running – Fast changing group relationships**

This was a long exercise and here is a part of it.

Run in a straight diagonal (across a large studio) the whole class.

Find the rhythm for the whole group to pick up (Monika).

Run in pairs together.

Run in threes (people).

Run in eight counts, next group after four counts.

Run in threes, running 3x4 counts + 1 (step, fixed point).

Then add a vocal sound with the fixed point.

Then starting on the right foot, the class continuously run with these groupings:-

3’s, 4’s, 5’s, 6’s, 7’s, 8’s

This stops people being fixed.

This exercise is also about complicity, as it was about changing relationships. One had to quickly adapt to the different relationships in order for the exercise to work.

**Appendix M  Travelling Exercise – Theme And Variation**

Walking in four counts.

Walking singly (as though having a goal, it is drawing you there).

Four steps forward, turn, four steps backward, but travelling forward.

Walk in pairs, together in the rhythm.

Add a gesture in the forward steps, no gesture, for the backward steps.
Add an aggressive gesture in the forward steps, and a fearful gesture to the backward ones, reacting to the person in front.

And **The Basic Spiral Exercise**

The basic spiral exercise which is used in 'theme and variation' is as follows:-
The right hand leads the head and the body down to the floor to a squatting position with the right hand placed on the floor (creating a triangle between the hand and the feet).

Then put one's weight onto the floor with tailor cross legs.
Place right leg over left knee.
Impulse up, continue the movement to standing.
Repeat the movement with the left side leading.
Follow the eyes, the impulse should come from the head.

**Variations**

After the spiral to the floor, then lie on the floor and roll to the left, then change legs, to spiral up.

Spiral down with the eyes closed, change legs. Open eyes, and crawl like a cat, then come up to walking, running, a little jump, fixed point.

In partners, each in turn hold the other one's head while going through the spiral sequence, especially holding the head up on the return to standing.
This builds awareness of what the body is doing.

**Appendix N – Feldenkrais Exercise – An example**

Lying on one's back, Left leg bent at the knee and foot resting on the floor by one's pelvis, Right leg lying straight along the floor.
Slide the outer edge of the Right foot along the floor towards the hips, then turn the knee to vertical.

Press through the big toes, feel the ripple up the pelvis, then the sternum, then the back of the neck with the chin up.

Then send the ripple back down the spine, to the toes, and reverse the slide, until the leg is back to the beginning position.

This done a number of times, then both legs rest on the floor, allowing time to feel the differences the movement has made, to notice what are the changes that have occurred.

Then the sequence is repeated on the Left side.

Then there is rest time, again checking the body for any changes that may have occurred.

Appendix O  Movement Improvisation Including Fixed Points

This exercise follows a typical pattern of starting very simply, often with just then individual reacting to a given situation, the exercise developing in complexity and gradually the individual working within a group.

From the spiral up, the group run and individually include fixed points, and continue running.

Add with the fixed point, a look and the run.

Make a longer fixed point.

Then one person travels around another fixed point.

Then gradually the participants work in groups, some making fixed points and others running around the fixed points. Gradually there will be four groups: then with each pair of groups, one reacting to the other group, e.g., Group 1 makes a movement, group two reacts, then visa versa.
Appendix P  Travelling Exercise With Major/Minor

The basic movement pattern travelling across the room is four steps travelling forward and the four steps in a circle, still travelling forward. Then the exercise is done in pairs, with whoever leads into the circle plays major, then the other partner takes over the lead coming out of the circle. This exercise could be done with right or left foot leading. Another complexity is to add dialogue to the movements. It is also another example of theme and variations, as were many variations to the basic travelling exercise.

APPENDIX Q  JP thesis p.75 Day 19 Adelaide  Key Learning Moments

We cluster in groups of five. Again there is the question of finding your place at each moment. In my vulnerability I hide in the back of my cluster. This is ‘false modesty’ Monika says. I find my rightful place to one side. We go again, this time the leader’s place is left open - I presume it is for someone else - one of her experienced students who models the work well for the group. But no - her voice rings out: “Take your power, Judith, no-one will give it to you!” I am transfixed. Tears stream in recognition of the truth of the moment, of the realisation of the agenda which was set early on. I take my place. I focus on the work, and through my shaking core do all that is required. She is pleased.

We are instructed to repeat the exercise once more as ‘cats’, finding moments to playfully break the established pattern without losing contact with each other or the rhythmic pattern without losing contact with each other or the rhythmic structure. “It has taken 19 days but you have found it”, she says. “You see it is simple, you just have to be yourself - now you can have the pleasure.”
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Author/s:
Sandercoe, Helen Vivien

Title:
The work of Monika Pagneux

Date:
2001

Citation:

Publication Status:
Unpublished

Persistent Link:
http://hdl.handle.net/11343/39469

File Description:
Main

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