

## PLAYING INTER-CULTURAL ARTS



### CHARACTERS

There are five characters in this script, each one representing an important concept used in the structuring of Forums 1, 2 and 3. These are:

**Possibility/ies** - possibly Radical Possibility thinking about critical pedagogy.

**Entanglement** - the questions, challenges and tensions which pervade our work in interculturality.

**Multiciplity/ies** - to capture the in-betweenness of what we do.

**Dialogue** - the centrality of relationship and conversation.

**R-** a character called "r" to evoke response-ability, reflexivity, respectful irreverence - the ethical necessity of being in an inter-cultural space.

The characters meet at "The Globe: A Pedagogical Playhouse" ready to summarise the knowing, doing and being that has taken place in the previous forums. They are milling around outside - nourishing themselves with food for thought - to enter in the space of Forum 4.

The scene aims to describe these concepts and provide an overview of the discussions from previous forums - to lay the ground for what is to come.

As the scene progresses, the characters realise that one important person is missing - it's pedagogy. And that's what Forum 4 seeks to do - to look for pedagogy in intercultural arts and education.

.....

One by one each character enters the space in a disruptive way. Sam begins in the role of "Prologue narrator" to introduce the Forum in a formal way and one by one each of us stand up and make our way to the front of the room in character.

Each character has a programme with the script inside. On the outside of each programme, is the name of the character.

NARRATOR

Ahem! Excuse me, if you are quite finished? It is time for some

(MORE)

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NARRATOR (cont'd)

serious play, and it is my task to introduce Scene 1!

Many words have been spoken during the last three Wednesdays CIAN fora.

Many ideas and perceptions have been shared.

Thoughts, business cards, pens, flip charts, and even a few fractured fairy tales have filled the room.

An artist has lettered the minutes, the fellows condensed key messages.

The convenor hasn't slept much....

Was it a research process, the peers would need to give the academic feed back.

Was it an art exhibition the audience would need to give stars.

Was it inter-cultural, indeed, and so a bit of both.

Ahead of you the last and fourth CIAN forum, re-imagining inter-cultural approaches to pedagogy.

Before you here "The Globe: A pedagogical play house", where minutes of the last three fora are to be performed in the shape of five characters, each one representing an important concept used in the structuring of Forums 1, 2 and 3.

These are:

Possibility/ies - an open-minded optimistic character who always wants to think beyond to what may be.

(CONTINUED)

Entanglement - always asking the uncomfortable questions, challenging us to go further, and laying bare the tensions which pervade our work in interculturality.

Multiciplity/ies - s/he captures the in-betweenness of what we do - s/he is the inter- of intercultural and interdisciplinary.

There's Dialogue - the one who always has something to say. Conversation is key to her work in intercultural arts practice, it's the dialogue that keeps her praxis alive.

And finally we have 'R' - an elusive character you will come to see who embodies the ethical necessity of being in an inter-cultural space.

The hope is

not just to entertain,

not just to remind you of the fora that were,

not just to to create a platform for the forum of today,

but also to encourage you to reflect and give feed back on how you found this way of performing the minutes, and if it had another impact on you, than the written minutes give you....

It is all being filmed and will appear on our Facebook site, so you can give your feed back now or later in our virtual meeting room.

With no time to delay, let the play begin.

THE NARRATOR stands up or changes outfir or something to show the play has started..

(MORE)

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## NARRATOR (cont'd)

Four researchers and practitioners,  
alike in heart they have for art  
but of different minds; gather  
together in fair Cambridge.

Entanglement, Dialogue,  
Possibilities, Multiplicities and R  
are their names, a quintet whose  
passion for inter-cultural arts  
cannot be denied.

The Globe, a pedagogical playhouse  
is the place of their meeting and  
the purpose is to set up an  
inter-cultural, interdisciplinary  
project including art and  
creativity.

The four sometimes friends,  
sometime foes, are reporting on  
three previous fora; their talk is  
not frivolous, but a  
second-by-minute-by-hour record of  
all that has gone before. One, two,  
three, and here we are at number  
four....

## AROUND THE TYPEWRITER ON A DESK

All sitting with a project proposal (large) labelled as the  
individual character. There is an empty chair when all four  
have entered.

## DIALOGUE

We are missing one - did anyone  
hear from her?

## ENTANGLEMENT

Perhaps she is caught up in another  
kind of performance somewhere  
(looks over the programme and  
directed to the audience says:  
That's Eisner and Barone)

## DIALOGUE

But I guess we could start having a  
look at the Programme

## POSSIBILITY

Pointing to her programme she "reads" aloud

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

POSSIBILITY (cont'd)

Ok, so we want to re-frame and rethink research in, through and with the arts!

ENTANGLEMENT

Just imagine! What would happen do you think if our academic colleagues (the other tribes) could acknowledge arts-based research as an authentic form of knowledge production?

DIALOGUE

Why might we want them to?

MULTIPLICITY

What traditional research needs to understand is that there are many forms of understanding, the different aspects of the lived experience, and that arts-based inter-disciplinary and inter-cultural practices can open up new understandings of life

POSSIBILITY

Yes, yes - those open vistas we have not yet seen that our dear friend Maxine Greene speaks of.

ENTANGLEMENT

ENTANGLEMENT reading aloud from POSSIBILITY's programme

"There are always vacancies: there are always roads not taken, vistas not acknowledged. The search must be ongoing; the end can never be quite known" (Maxine Greene, 2005, p. 15).

Vacancies?

Roads?

Vistas?

Intersections?

POSSIBILITY

Well, think of all the possibilities we have ...

(CONTINUED)

## MULTIPLICITY

Absolutely! We've heard from diverse voices in locations around the globe across all three fora - people have shared their intercultural arts work in places of war, conflict and trauma where music speaks songs of healing and peace; poetry and visual art which speaks to medical education; the coming together of diverse Indigenous and non-Indigenous voices in political and performative contexts.

## ENTANGLEMENT

We've heard about arts-based documentation of Latin American flute playing; electric sonic-art and improvisation to give a new reading of theory into practice; intercultural arts in theatre spaces as sustained acts of creativity; and alternative and creative forms of dissemination as culturally appropriate research outcomes ...

## DIALOGUE

And then there's the fusion and con-fusion in bringing East and West, us and them, self and other together in all kinds of creative settings; not to mention the potential of technology to privilege the marginalised through creativities and intercultural arts.

## NARRATOR

And so the list continued....

## MULTIPLICITY

So I guess that the arts in inter-cultural and interdisciplinary spaces in practice keeps asking new kinds of questions.

## POSSIBILITIES

Exactly, how do we best tell our stories? How and when do the purposes of our stories change? And why?

(CONTINUED)

Inter-cultural arts practice is a unique kind of story - a story that holds truths that just won't stand still

ENTANGLEMENT

Imagine if we could translate and perhaps even transgress across the academic borders!

MULTIPLICITY

We would need to critique the epistemology, ontology, methodology and disciplinary practices, all at once ...!

ENTANGLEMENT

Shift the dominance, you mean...

MULTIPLICITY

It doesn't have to be EITHER-OR, this tends to be our fall-back position I know, but we want transformation to happen. As researchers we need what transforms our understanding, rather than a million descriptions of the differences in a million cultures or professions.

POSSIBILITY

We need to negotiate our way through, and across these binaries and boundaries

ENTANGLEMENT

instead of EITHER/OR, make it BOTH -AND...AND...

POSSIBILITIES

new ways of documenting and imagining identities

MULTIPLICITY

opening up a sense of reflexive response-ability. Speaking of which, you've been very quiet 'R' haven't you?

ENTANGLEMENT

By the way 'R', why are you called 'R' and not ethics instead? Wouldn't it be much easier just to name you for what you are?

## NARRATOR

"R" - Reflexivity, responsive and responsibility, roles and relationships, respect and rites/rights, representation and re-search; all of these make her what she is ... She has been quiet up until now, not saying anything but always, in the end, calling the shots. She is a little bit like 'M' from James Bond!

'R'

Well, you know me, I'm a dialogic and dialectic work in progress, and to define me is perhaps not the point. I have been sitting quietly, stepping back to better focus, wondering about who I am, who I have been, who I think I am, who I am becoming and how I feel in relation to intercultural arts practice ...

## DIALOGUE

Come on - don't leave us in suspense or hopelessness! Share please! All of us here ...

She turns to the audience and asks - "I think I can speak for ALL of us?"

All of us here... share an abiding love for the arts, and are yet intrigued and captured by the sciences of all kinds, the interdisciplinary knowledge producing project! What conclusions have you come to? Your silence has to be overcome by our search across the globe - like here - in interconnected communities and with intersubjective voices!

'R'

I'm afraid I don't have any answers - our RE-search would be over if I did. All I have are more questions, and they hit us where it hurts the most in terms of thinking about power, domination, oppression and the very reason many of us engage in inter-cultural arts - for SOCIAL justice.

(CONTINUED)



She pauses for dramatic effect.

For social JUSTICE. If that is the reason, then we have to ask difficult questions, and keep asking them - just as you said earlier. Amidst the noise of colonial complicity, post-colonial piracy, and decolonising dreams, CAN we ever truly represent another? Should this even be a goal of research? If inter-cultural arts tell stories - WHO'S story is it - neither the researcher's or the researched! It will always be the voice of the third person in the room as anthropologist Kirsten Haastrup described it, it will never be the researcher's voice, never the researched's voice, but the interpretation that arises from the process of negotiated truths happening in the space.

#### ENTANGLEMENT

Yes [nods seriously], and then the next question is, how will asking these questions produce insightful intercultural arts practice and research?

#### POSSIBILITY

I guess we don't know, ultimately we are forever on the way.

Everyone seems content a few seconds until ENTANGLEMENT stands up showing distress waving her papers and pointing to the type writer...

#### ENTANGLEMENT

And this is ALL we have? Paper, words.... does this thing even work?

#### MULTIPLICITY

What do you mean "all", we have lots of ideas, and ways of knowing, being and doing as significant elements in carrying out groundbreaking work

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## ENTANGLEMENT

But HOW are you going to integrate, develop, expand these ideas as a group? What do we need for sharing and developing a project that embraces all this? How will we ever be able to share it beyond this group?

## POSSIBILITY

Twitter? Uhm... Facebook, I have a camera, and I could take snapshots of us and the process and post it on Facebook! We could the CIAN Network!

## 'R'

YES! You are right, we can't just keep it around this table, and I don't think it is a matter of just disseminating it on Facebook either. Learning doesn't happen through simple diffusion of knowledge.

## ENTANGLEMENT

It isn't just about us delivering a polished project, a defined knowledge base, a performance we can "give", we need to create the learning environment for this project, exactly as if we were in the classroom, only this will be changing, moving, developing as we speak... How can we ever achieve that?

Someone comes in labelled PEDAGOGY aiming at the empty chair, carrying paper of all colours, hand puppets, pens, scissors,

## ALL

PEDAGOGY!

## PEDAGOGY

Sorry I'm late, Is this the fourth CIAN forum?

## NARRATOR

And now friends from near and far - it's time for you to take YOUR performative turn and come to know pedagogy in this intercultural arts

(MORE)

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NARRATOR (cont'd)

scene. We have three more scenes to act out and you will all play the starring roles.

Scene 2 asks you to conciser the kinds of stages intercultural-arts/pedagogies played upon and how they might be re-named and re-imagined?

Scene 3 becomes passionate and powerfully asks the ways we embody, and perform the personal-is-political politics of inter-cultural-arts/pedagogies?

Scene 4 brings our Forum to a close - it is the final scene in our playhouse today and makes space for all of us to play as/in/with/out/through intercultural-arts/pedagogies to ask what are we becoming and why?

But before the convenor calls "1, 2, 3 action" we ask you to reflect on the playful minutes and presentation we have performed for you. You will also have the possibility with multiplicity, dialogue, R and entanglement to comment on the video when it is posted on Face Book very soon...