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**The [un]knowing director:
a critical examination of directing
within the context of devising performance**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a critical examination of directing within the context of devising performance practice. It emanates from my need to make sense of the particular ways in which I work as a theatre director who engages with devising performance coupled with an identified lack in the literature that speaks to directing and devising performance from a Southern African perspective. The notion of the [un]knowing director is posited as the central concept that is evidently plausible for the particular context of devising performance practice argued for in the thesis. The key argument expressed in this thesis is that [un]knowing is a way of knowing realised through intuition and collaboration as co-constitutive or symbiotic aspects applicable to the study's particular contexts of directing and devising performance practice. To be more specific, the study investigates how the [un]knowing director makes artistic discoveries and decisions/choices during the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising process.

The notion of the [un]knowing is conceptually explicated by drawing from Tim Ingold's ideas of *wayfaring* and *wayfinding* (2000 & 2011), Henri Bergson's (1907) philosophical conception of time understood as *duration*, and Leopold Senghor's Africanist philosophy that speaks of *rhythmic attitude*, *reason-eye* and *reason-embrace* (Diagne, 2019). This thesis is located within the sphere of non-representational theory and purports for knowledge, within the context of directing and devising performance, as an undertaking that is non-predetermined and emergent in character.

In terms of its methodology, this study is generally located within the methodological terrain of qualitative research and specifically employs ***practice as research***. Specifically, its methodology entailed a structured questionnaire

responded to by seven Southern African devising performance directors. The questionnaire's general research aim was to identify the plausibility of the [un]knowing director concept based on other director's experiences of devising performance. Thereafter, three creative research projects in the form of devising performance processes, were undertaken. These projects served as related case studies constituting an investigative cycle. The research method of auto-ethnographical devising session note-taking and reflective accounts was used in generating the necessary data through the creative research projects.

Essentially, this thesis concludes that the [un]knowing director knows through intuition and collaboration in ways that are particular to its critical examination of directing and devising performance. These two ways of knowing are complex in their nature and characterised by the elements of *initiation*, *facilitation* and *decision-making* during the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising session. Relatedly, this thesis refers to the [un]knowing director's momentary undertakings as the *molecular*, *micro* and *macro* levels of artistic activity. Ultimately, this thesis concludes that the [un]knowing director has a complex genealogy emanating from the Southern African oral performance tradition. Thus, the [un]knowing director's practice is *story-like* and significantly affected by *time*.

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This thesis is dedicated to: the spirit of my late father, Dr Kenosi Tihanole Matthews Thulo. I've shed tears while writing this dedication because the completion of this thesis happened eight years after your transcendence. This thesis is a fruit of your life's work as a freedom fighter, sangoma and father. My daughter, Kgabisang Refiloe Thulo, my life has positively never been the same since the universe blessed me and your mother with you. I am deeply sorry for having missed seeing you learn how to crawl, taking your first step in walking and going through the pains of teething as I was physically away from you. I promise to be more present since my PhD is now FINALLY done. I am dedicating this work to you as your heritage and possible inspiration. You are the air that I breathe and I love you until the end of time and trust that you will grow up to be a liberated young black woman who is spiritually and physically aligned while being materially abundant.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION	2
ABSTRACT	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	5
TABLE OF CONTENTS	8
PROLOGUE	9
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	22
1.1 BACKGROUND & RATIONALE	22
1.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	27
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	82
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	110
3.1 PRACTICE AS RESEARCH	111
3.2 AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHY	118
3.3 MOHAHLAUDI-BAHAHLAUDI.....	132
3.4 TRAVELLER-TRAVELLERS	135
CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION OF QUESTIONNAIRES AND CREATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS	138
4.1 QUESTIONNAIRES	138
4.2 CREATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS	174
<i>Creative Research Project 1: Setting forth [un]knowingly</i>	175
<i>Creative Research Project 2: Knowing [un]knowingly</i>	205
<i>Creative Research Project 3: Knowing [un]knowingly sustained</i>	237
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION	248
REFERENCE LIST	257

PROLOGUE

As the person who is obviously endowed with the responsibility of articulating this academic research and its thesis in a literary form, I would like to ask you, the reader, to bear with me as I start by briefly sketching this study's locale in a particular way. The referred-to way is one that is consciously aimed at contextualising this study by constructing its identity intentionally, ensuring that it does not occupy a universalist position, which would be problematic. This is because academic research that occupies a universalist position essentially perpetuates the epistemological posture of Western imperialism, as evidenced by its project of colonialism, with reference to knowledge production.

Fundamentally, this thesis is a conversation about directing practice within the context of devising performance. As this study's primary researcher, I am a subjective human being, socialised in a particular way and therefore embedded within (a) particular culture(s), having a particular identity (which is not homogenous), consciously subscribing to a particular ideology and body of politics, and having a particular wealth of knowledge that continues to shape itself as I continue to come into being in the world(s). At the very least, the cover page of this thesis indicates what my name is as it also appears on my birth certificate and identity documents. Nonetheless, I need to take such an introduction further by stating that due to my particular cultural identity—which does not exclude the ideological aspect of being—the provision of a speaker's name within the context of a conversation is usually followed by the verbal articulation of their clan's totemic description. Now in consideration of my stated name, I continue by stating that:

Ke Motaung wa haMoletsane

Ke letotoi la Makhuto

Ke sebata se maru

Motho wa haMaphungwe – Thulo Mphethe namane e tshehla.

A very rudimentary Sesotho to English translation of the above basically indicates that I am a South African citizen of Sotho origin, from the Bataung clan. The Bataung clan, like many others, was an independent nation before its eventual decision to become part of the Basotho nation that arose from the political efforts and ambitions of King Moletsane (the Bataung nation's king) and King Moshoeshe (the 'founding father' of the Basotho), once upon a time. Knowledge about or a study of the Bataung people's history, like the history of other Southern African nations during the pre-colonial and colonial periods in Africa, demystifies the perception of cultural homogeneity with reference to the history of Africa and its peoples. I am making mention of this point to assert that in my lived experiences of being a black South African man who is a living entity within the ethno-cultural sphere of South Africa's Basotho societal domain, heterogeneity—which does not necessarily eliminate space for particularity—is arguably the key character that defines my ancestry and certainly articulates one of the key tenets of my being both at physical (material) and metaphysical (immaterial) levels of existence. The additional key tenet of my being is found in the word *fluid*.

Based on my introduction of self thus far, it should come as no surprise that my identity is multi-faceted based on the various roles that I play as a social being. Within the context of this study, I play the challenging and complex role of being an artist-researcher, which I will discuss at a later stage and in an appropriate section of this thesis. Furthermore, I also play the roles of being a lecturer within the drama department of a South African university, while also being a *sangoma* (South African traditional healer), which indicate my professions. At a glance, all these roles could

be viewed as being positioned at opposite ends on the continuum of my life as a human being. However, what is quite interesting, which I choose to leave to your imagination, is to consider how I manage to continuously navigate the landscape of my multi-faceted identity. However, the least that I can do, due to my investment in this conversation, is to offer a suggestion that your imagination can benefit from by referring to the lyrics of one of the songs that are located within the sphere of my role and practice as a Mosotho *sangoma* of *mndau* (a water spiritual orientation and practice) denomination. The song is of the Sesotho language and its lyrics are as follows:

Oa ntaela moya

Oa ntaela moya

Oa ntaela moya

Oa ntaela moya

O re ke tsamaye moya

O re ke tsamaye moya

O re ke tsamaye moya

O re ke tsamaye moya

A Sesotho to English translation of the above lyrics, as would also be applicable or relatable to the translation of my clan's totemic description, is a very politically incorrect and unproductive, disruptive-intrusive act. That act can never satisfactorily articulate the linguistic nuances, express the poetic potency and philosophical gravity contained in the meaning of the Sesotho words. My problematic and difficult attempt to translate the lyrics from Sesotho to English is acutely indicative of the current political phenomenon within the terrain of South African Higher Education, and illuminates the limitations of the country's stubborn, white, neo-liberal educational

system that continues to sustain the legacies of Anglo-Saxon colonialism in academic institutions. One of these extremely unsavoury legacies is the hegemony of the English language, at least at the level of it being a medium of instruction and the *lingua franca* of academic writing. Therefore, I will only attempt to bring you as close as I can to the meaning and cosmos of the above-mentioned Sesotho song, an endeavour which should be appreciated for and with its gross and painful problematics, considering that I am a South African Sotho-speaking citizen and a *sangoma*. The song expresses an experience of how somebody, in my case a *sangoma*, conducts their healing practice and lives their life, both physically and spiritually, through being guided to walk the journey of life by one's *Spirit* that is constituted both by their specific ancestral spirits (gods) and 'God' entity, for lack of a better word.

I am consciously choosing to share with and refer you to this *sangoma* spiritual song, as a way of guiding your imagination about how I function within the landscape of my multi-faceted identity. This is relevant to this study because it essentially indicates the intrinsic foundations of my fundamental inclination to this study's notion of the [un]knowing director as it is defined and developed in the next chapter. It follows then, that my identity is not characterised by a stark, fixed, rigid or complete separation of its constitutive roles. Rather, my identity is constituted and characterised by a constant interplay of its various roles. Furthermore, a proficiency of South Africa's Sesotho language indicates that the *sangoma* song entitled *Oa ntaela moya* also speaks of knowledge, particularly how knowledge is acquired by a human being, in my case a *sangoma*. *Oa ntaela moya*, at the least, suggests that knowledge is acquired through a person's literal undertaking of physical movement to a place or within space. With specific reference to a *sangoma*, they can never

really predict such a movement because its undertaking follows the instructive guide from their *Spirit*. Instruction can take various forms that could be of conscious and/or physical, subconscious (tacit) and/or metaphysical, literal and/or non-literal formations. Therefore, *Oa ntaela moya* is well suited to serve as a black South African oral text that assists my efforts of building on my introduction of self to you and providing this study with a broad, yet particular identity, coupled with a provision of some basic and key signals about this study's foundations that I cannot elaborately discuss at this stage, but that will emerge in greater detail as the thesis progresses. Nevertheless, I am attempting to frame this study by laying myself bare as a responsible political and ethical stance through my act of conversing with you in this way and tone, so as to avoid the potential of me 'hiding' behind the research, which would be enormously problematic considering this study's key thesis that will unfold moment by moment beyond the introductory section.

In the spirit of continuing with the necessary task and act of contextualising this study, I proceed by borrowing the following words from South Africa's former president, Thabo Mbeki, during his address to the country's Constitutional Assembly on 8 May 1996 when South Africa's post-apartheid Constitution was adopted:

[...] I am an African.

I am born of the peoples of the continent of Africa.

The pain of the violent conflict that the peoples of Liberia, Somalia, the Sudan, Burundi and Algeria suffer is a pain I also bear. The dismal shame of poverty, suffering and human degradation of my continent is a blight that we share.

The blight on our happiness that derives from this and from our drift to the periphery of the ordering of human affairs leaves us in a persistent shadow of despair. This is a savage road to which nobody should be condemned.

This thing that we have done today, in this small corner of a great continent that has contributed so decisively to the evolution of humanity says that Africa reaffirms that she is continuing her rise from the ashes. Whatever the setbacks of the moment, nothing can stop us now! Whatever the difficulties, Africa shall be at peace! However improbable it may sound to the sceptics, Africa will prosper!

Whoever we may be, whatever our immediate interest, however much we carry

baggage from our past, however much we have been caught by the fashion of cynicism and loss of faith in the capacity of the people, let us err today and say - nothing can stop us now!

Thank you very much. (2005:17)

Other than satisfying the afore-mentioned purpose and intention of developing my introduction of self, the above-mentioned quotation was deliberately chosen to share a sense of the humanistic impulse driving this study and perhaps my subjectivities in terms of a 'core' aspect of my ideology and politics. Former president Mbeki's words are also chosen to indirectly indicate that as an artist-researcher, a *sangoma* and a South African university lecturer, I am engaging with this study while being inspired by and inclined towards a tenet of African philosophy that is articulated by a scholarly contribution (Coetzee & Roux, 2003) and offers useful insights for this study.

Specifically, I am referring to the following account of African philosophy that addresses the subject of epistemology:

The starting-point of African epistemology, traditionally speaking should be the premise, 'We are, therefore I am'. The African philosophy is a collective mind and for the African, [I] pre-supposes a 'We', in fact 'I' is contingent upon 'We'. The starting-point of African epistemology is rooted in the ontology. The link between epistemology and ontology in the African heritage is not unique. Such a link is not only essential to the subject but also necessary[.] (Coetzee & Roux, 2003:306)

This assertion is important to bear in mind in your continued reading of this thesis. Its importance is constituted by the reality that, firstly, it articulates the position that I hold that the knowledge expressed by this thesis is not an individual and objectivist enterprise. On the contrary, as will be made clear and explicit, the knowledge that is this study is a collaborative endeavour if one considers all its stakeholders, contributors, co-participants, role players or co-authors. Furthermore, the above assertion assists my introduction of self to you by aiding my attempt to contextualise this study while in turn locating myself in/to this study. Secondly, this study's now evidently pivotal ontology and related epistemology, also subtly articulate how you need to appreciate the notion of the [un]knowing director and the task of dealing with

a subject matter in a way that can easily be misinterpreted and perceived as being global. Therefore, I am suggesting that the notion of the [un]knowing director is fundamentally rooted in and particularised by its (Southern) Africanness, or what Léopold Senghor calls Africanity (Diagne, 2011:4). This is because “African arts [practices], he demonstrated, constitute the language of this ontology” (Diagne, 2011:10). Essentially, my understanding of Senghor’s general philosophy, at least as articulated by Souleymane Bashir Diagne (2011 & 2019) and Cheik Thiam (2014), is that it generally seeks to carve a location for African philosophy by providing its particular characteristics, especially in relation to the rationalist Western philosophy. It does this by a) critiquing the Platonic-Cartesian discourse of Western philosophy through the theoretical lens of Henri Bergson’s anti-rationalist, anti-positivist and anti-mechanistic philosophy of time (duration) and, b) positing Negritude as the kind of epistemology that is specifically derived from an African way of being in the world, which Senghor considers as being very different to that of the West¹.

Considering the scope and purpose of my introduction of self to you, I can only expand on the details of Senghor’s philosophy at a later stage. Based on relevance, however, I consider his philosophy to be useful in terms of contextualising this study as I am currently doing. This is because Negritude essentially makes the point that African artistic practices, a category which this study falls under, are fundamentally informed by and reflective of African culture(s) and knowledge(s). From a non-essentialist appreciation of Senghor’s general philosophy, these African culture(s) and knowledge(s) are not necessarily static and homogenous, but yet remain particular to Africa, and the Diaspora, in relation to the West. These African

¹ It is worth mentioning that I am aware of the critique of the ideas on Negritude by various African and non-African scholars since Senghor published them. However, I am also aware of the reclamation of these ideas by contemporary scholars such as Diagne and Thiam particularly. The introduction to Thiam’s (2014) book outlines this adequately.

culture(s) and knowledge(s), which is/are arguably similar to the cultures and knowledges of other continents, are reflective of their people's sense of reality and related ways of being in the world (Thiam, 2014:46). As such, my introduction of self to you thus far and henceforth hopefully provides a sense of my particular way of being in the world as an African. Relatedly, it portrays a sketch of the world(s) within which this study emanates, which resonates with the epistemology (and cosmology) of Negritude in one way or another. This will be evidenced as this thesis unfolds. For now, however, I am putting it forward that this study resonates with Senghor's philosophy of Negritude because the notion of the [un]knowing director is arguably an African-centred way of knowing through context-specific engagements with and manifestations of intuition, and with collaboration as its argued-for constitutive way of knowing. Essentially, this implies that my reading of Senghor informs me that Negritude is an African epistemology but it is also clearly inspired by Henri Bergson's philosophy (Kebede, 2003; Diagne, 2011 & 2019; and Thiam, 2014) and arguably speaks of intuition and collaboration in one way or another with reference to the symbiotic subject-object interplay as pertaining to the pursuit of knowledge(s). It is necessary to mention that while the above-mentioned scholarly sources are indeed revealing of the relation between Senghor and Bergson's philosophies, which generally have to do with intuition and duration as coined by Bergson, the two philosophers' 'concert' of thought is 'limited' based on a note that for Bergson:

[...] the purpose of intuition is to complement intelligence; it is not to become an independent source of knowledge. Such is not the position of Senghor: emotion is explicitly categori[s]ed as a sufficient form of knowledge and ranked above discursive reason [...]. In thus rejecting dualism and pushing Bergson's idea of complementary faculties toward the autonomy and self-sufficiency of one faculty, Senghor was but violating essential components of Bergson's philosophy. Bergson regretted the neglect of intuitive faculty, but he never suggested that it could provide a self-sufficient knowledge. (Kebede, 2003:17)

Based on the above-mentioned observation and this study's sense of intuition—to be discussed later— it should be clear why the study strongly resonates with Senghor's

epistemology of Negritude, which in turn provides this study with its Africanity (Diagne, 2011:4). Concerning intuition, this study grapples with the particular subject-object relationship and experience of time (duration) through intuition in a way that debunks the Western subject-object dichotomy that Senghor also challenges. As an appropriate example of what I am trying to articulate with reference to the fundamental relevance of Senghor's Negritude for this study's contextualisation, I follow Thiam's reading of Senghor's African epistemology that:

[...] Negro-African societies' conception of being in time, explains their radically different relation to the world. Since, for the [African], time is constantly changing and the subject participates in its unfolding, the subject/object dichotomy is erased and knowledge functions as an experience in which the subject and the object lose themselves in each other. It is unspeakable that the subject can only experience or know in a relation of identity with the object of knowledge, a relation of emotion that urges the subject of knowledge to go beyond ratio in order to reach further towards the object-in-movement. This relation of knowledge is the experience of being the other, a relation of identification with the other when the subject becomes the object of knowledge, goes beyond "discursive reason," and adopts the *raison-oeil* (reason-eye), *raison-toucher* (reason-touch), to seize the object in its totality, that is in its fluidity. (2014:53, italics in original)

Furthermore, concerning collaboration, this study's essential philosophical premise and foundation is that of botho/ubuntu². *Botho/ubuntu* lies at the core of my understanding of what collaboration means, how it could be generally realised and how it is actually undertaken by this study. Moreover, *botho/ubuntu* are also reflective of this study's identity and related philosophical orientation. A brief discussion of the Basotho people's philosophy of *botho* is necessitated by two reasons. Firstly, it serves to validate the position held by Coetzee & Roux (2003:306) and other scholars such as Mertz & Gaie (2010), Letseka (2013), Murove (2014), Mokuku (2017), Kauka (2018), about African philosophy with reference to the continent's Bantu people, which the Basotho also form part of. Essentially, the

² Briefly, it needs to be noted that the Basotho philosophy of *botho* is synonymous with the Nguni people's (Xhosa and Zulu at least) philosophy of *ubuntu*. Therefore, *botho* and *ubuntu* mainly differ in terms of language.

referred-to validation is that the philosophy of *botho/ubuntu*, has its core foundation(s) in the general African philosophical axiom of “I am because we are and, since we are, therefore I am” (Mbiti, 1970:141). Secondly, it serves as a base for this study’s coinage of its ‘I-We’ epistemological and ontological perspective, which I will explicate in a moment. To demonstrate the synonymous nature of the *botho* and/or *ubuntu* philosophy, part of Letseka’s (2013) literature review that refers to Ramose (2006) needs to be considered³. Furthermore, Letseka also notes Broodryk (2002)⁴.

In consideration of Letseka (2013), and based on my cultural ‘capital’ or lived experiences of *botho*, I am asserting that this Basotho philosophy essentially offers a specific view and understanding of the idea of personhood. Simply put and in this regard, personhood refers to an individual human being’s sense of self. However, this sense of ‘individual’ self also translates into a particular conception of reality in general. Based on what I have established earlier in my introduction of self to you, I have attempted to provide a sense that such a conception of reality firstly translates into this study’s I-We perspective. This perspective speaks of the contingent relationship between the individual and the collective. Secondly, this conception of reality is both physical and non-physical. Relatedly, I have suggested that the *We* that the *I* is arguably also contingent upon does, or could, include one’s *Spirit* as I have described it.

I hope that I am not guilty of regurgitation, but my aim here is geared towards

³ “... *ubuntu/botho* represents the epistemological paradigm that informs the cultural practices, including the law, of Bantu-speaking peoples” (2013:337).

⁴ According to Letseka, Broodryk “... conceives of *ubuntu/botho* as a comprehensive ancient African worldview based on the values of humanness, caring, sharing, respect, compassion and associated values, ensuring a happy and qualitative human community life in a spirit of family” (2013:337).

particularising this study in terms of the specific tenet of African philosophy that it resonates with. I am doing this in order to emphasise a point, which I have also hinted upon earlier, about what I consider to be the heterogeneous nature of African people. This is why I am continuously positioning this study primarily within the cultural sphere of the Basotho people of South(ern) Africa as a point of departure. This does not in any way mean that the continent's Basotho people have no fundamental philosophical synergies with the broader continent. In fact, it is quite difficult, if not impossible, for me to suggest or even make a claim about the 'exclusive' nature of the Basotho people's philosophy of *botho* due to the fact that it arguably speaks of a particular, yet widespread, African socio-cultural orientation and manner of engaging with the knowledge constituting this study's core. *Botho/ubuntu's* key characteristics of communality, humanness, caring, sharing, respect and compassion (Letseka, 2013:337), are supplemented by Murove's view that is useful in further establishing this study's general identity, ethos, ethics and knowledge enterprise:

[...] the Cartesian rationality premised the individual's identity on rationality as the main feature that accords uniqueness to the individual. This Cartesian rationality has been seen as representative of modern western individualism which emphasise[s] the individual's incommunicability and singularity as something indispensable to what it means to be a person[.] However, the adage *Umntu ngomuntu ngabantu* [*Motho ke motho ka batho*] ('persons depend on other persons to be persons') radically alters the terrain of the doctrine of individualism because the assumption of this adage is that personhood is derivative from relationship with other persons, hence it is not an incorrigible property of the individual but something that is shared with others and finds nourishment and flourishing in relationship with others. (2014:42, italics in original)

Considering the above brief discussion of *botho*, which applies to this study, now follows what I refer to as one of the philosophy's tangible cultural sprouts. In this case, the word *tangible* is used to suggest that the philosophy of *botho* is an overarching yet fundamental ethics that is realised through specific cultural practices. As such, one of these cultural practices is known to the Basotho as *letsema*. Succinctly, Lebeloane and Quan-Baffour define it as a socio-cultural practice that "...

has been and still is one of the important practices of some of the indigenous people of Southern Africa” (2008:43). Their article further aids the discussion at hand by clarifying that:

In practice *Letsema* depicts a situation where people of the same community voluntarily offer their services and work together to achieve individual and community development ... Under *letsema* community members would, for example, voluntarily come together to assist a member of the community to sow, harvest, build a house, a barn or a kraal. They would render similar assistance to other members until all the people who need help have been assisted. It is important to note that the practice of *letsema* enabled community members to increase food production at no financial cost. (2008:45)

A few points need to be mentioned about *letsema* as applicable to this study’s epistemology and ontology, which is specifically coined as ‘I-We’. Firstly, which is also supported by Lebeloane and Quan-Baffour (2008:46), is the validation that this socio-cultural practice is born of the philosophy of *botho*. Secondly, *letsema* is strongly pivoted upon a voluntarist orientation that is mainly realised through and characterised by a communal engagement that is mutual in nature. Thus, from this study’s perspective, this kind of mutualism should not exist outside the ethical code or framework of *botho*. Therefore, this ethical code facilitates a particular kind of interplay between the *I* and *We* in such a way that the former cannot exist without the latter and vice versa. Thirdly, *letsema*, at least as defined above, is seemingly focused on the socio-economic and/or material aspects of an individual vis-à-vis their community. However, this study’s appreciation thereof is premised on expanding such a focus or perspective to be inclusive of the domain of knowledge production. I am of the view that such an expansion of perspective is quite valid because the activities of sowing, harvesting, building and food production (Lebeloane & Quan-Baffour, 2008:45) are inseparable from the inferred individual-communal or communal-individual knowledge(s). This study therefore considers its particular knowledge to be a result of its I-We epistemological and ontological perspective, which is reflective of its inherently crucial nature that stems from the Basotho

philosophy of *botho* and its cultural practice of *letsema*.

At this point, I conclude my introduction of self to you by asking for your understanding regarding my choice not to proceed by taking the generally 'usual' route of the provision of summarised details of proceeding sections, chapters or ensuing constituents of a conversation that is research or a written thesis. I take such an unconventional route mainly because of Bert Hamminga's assertion in *Knowledge Cultures: Comparative Western and African Epistemology* that:

The chance of the future being what we expect is considered low. Why lose energy on such hypothetical considerations! Instead of hours and numerical dates, Africans traditionally rely on *personal* emotional marks of time, like when you were born, when you married, when you had your first child, when there was a war. A typical westerner's question is: "when was Museveni born?". The answer: 1944. The traditional African may ask: "1944? When was that?", and, if one is in or close to Museveni's family, one of the helpful answers may be: "That was when Museveni was born" ... Memory and memorizing is anchored in ... emotionally appealing events in the past. *The time past ... is personal, living*. But as far as the future is concerned, these personal living marks are still to be made, and the African typically considers his or her influence on that as small. *The future is hypothetical, unreal and uninteresting to consider now*. (2005:70, italics in original)

In relation to Hamminga's assertion, I need to briefly state that the choice of not providing the summarised details of this thesis is really motivated by my means of foregrounding this study's 'theme' of non-predetermination because the theme is reflective of this study's key perspective about its particular knowledge as derived from its (Southern) Africanity. It follows, then, that my introduction of self to you has thus far satisfied the necessary task of contextualising this study by fashioning it with an identity while being explicit about my positionality. As stated before, such an approach is intended to pave the way for the kind of conversation that this research is to unfold, appropriately considering its non-universalist i.e. South(ern) African yet, hopefully, broadly engaging or relevant contribution.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background & Rationale

The rationale fuelling this research is basic as it is twofold. Firstly, it emanates from my personal interest, which is of a professional nature as a post-apartheid South African theatre director. I have undertaken this research with the intention of facilitating a clearer understanding of my method(s) and experiences of working as a director within the emergent process and context of devising performance. I intend to consciously develop tools or strategies aimed at developing a sharper awareness of the evolution of my devising process from moment-to-moment. I was pushed by a need to grapple with the possible ways, amongst many existing others, in which artistic choices made by a director and their⁵ co-collaborators throughout a devising process, could emerge and yield a performance.

To contextualise my rationale, let me provide some background details. I am a young theatre practitioner who started his career as a performer and eventually got involved in directing practice. The work that I have made as a director, specifically during the period dating from 2008 to 2011, has left me with a burning question drawn from my experiences of devising a performance in collaboration with performers and other theatre practitioners. Throughout the devising processes of all the performances that I've collaboratively created during this period, I have always wondered how I got to know what to do in order to realise a performance, which made me realise that I participated in each devising process seemingly unconscious of the intricate nuances of how I reached the destination that is a performance in collaboration with others. Reflecting on my experiences of devising performance

⁵ It needs to be noted that I have chosen to use the pronouns 'their'/'themselves' instead of the gendered him/her or himself/herself. Generally, the former seemed more appropriate than the latter.

illuminated that I did not always have complete knowledge about the eventual outcomes of each devising process in terms of form, structure, aesthetics etc. from the onset. All the devising processes that I have been part of as a director were initiated by an interest in a collaborative exploration of a theme or subject matter and/or a need to answer a specific question through creative practice, but without the existence of predetermined knowledge of what the eventual outcomes would be. These processes have been commonly characterised by my [un]knowing as a director working on devised performances. For the sake of clarity, which will also be articulated by the major contents of this thesis beyond this current chapter, I consciously decided on the word [un]knowing instead of other possibilities. Such possibilities may include 'unknowing,' which literally means not knowing; and (un)knowing, which refers to a state of knowing or not knowing. It follows, then, that I arrived at my choice of the word [un]knowing because it appropriately characterises the kind of knowledge enterprise that this study is pursuing. From my perspective, the referred-to characterisation carried by the square brackets indicates the crucial interplay of a director's states of knowing and unknowing throughout a devising process. As applicable to this study, a director's state of knowing generally refers to the body of professional knowledge that they bring into a devising process. However, it is worth mentioning that such knowledge is not fixed. On the other hand, unknowing generally refers to a director's unforeseeable or non-predetermined artistic discoveries and decisions/choices of a devising process. Hence, this study's notion of [un]knowing speaks of a particular way of knowing that is inclusive of a director's instances of unknowing.

Secondly, the rationale of this research is derived from my reading of the scholarly literature focusing on devising performance and directing practice in South

Africa pre- and post-apartheid. I choose to use the term *devising performance* in consideration of the fact that there are other terms such as *workshop theatre*, *theatre-making*, *playmaking* etc., which are used to refer to the practice of creating a performance, at least within a South African context. I am using the term due to my preference and not necessarily its difference in meaning when compared to other terms that refer to the same general practice. It is also worth noting that the terms *workshop theatre* and *devising performance* have particular historical backgrounds and latter-day manifestations that delineate their characteristic particularities, and arguably evident similarities, within the scope of theatre practice post World War II in South Africa, certain parts of Europe and the United States of America. My preference for using the term *devising performance* is derived from the conceptual framework and literature review sections of this thesis that partly define the term according to scholarly literature and explicate my view and concept of it. Briefly speaking and for the purposes of this study, devising performance refers to a creative arts practice in which a theatre director collaborates with actors, designers, musicians etc. in an emergent process of creating a performance without initially having complete knowledge of what the eventual performance will be like and/or about. The process of devising is the actual vehicle through which the collaborators' creative impulses are released and ideas develop over time until a performance is realised. Devising performance is also characterised by the making of artistic choices in response to unknown and/or unexpected engagements with objects, materials, people, spaces etc., that fluidly emerge through its participants' activities. It could be said that artistic practice is, arguably or generally, characterised by an unknowing of eventual outcomes. However, there are cases that relate to the artistic practice of directing performance that are characterised by a director's

predetermination and knowing in terms of a specific directorial approach, play text, starting point, shape, aesthetic preference, style, conceptual focus etc. Therefore, this study is interested in a critical engagement with directing practice within the context of devised performance in the absence of the fundamental artistic predeterminations and knowledges that constitute and/or define certain directing practice orthodoxies. Such orthodoxies, refer to directorial practices operating from an essential paradigm that privileges a theatre director as a figure of authority who employs a predeterministic approach in their practice.

Scholars such as David Kerr (1995), Robert Kavanagh (1997), Loren Kruger (1999), Frances Harding (2002), Osita Okagbue (2007) and Patrick Ebewo (2017), amongst others, have produced some literature that indicates Africa's array of performance practice. Also, there is an existing but lean body of literature that specifically deals with devising performance practice within the context of Southern Africa. Kavanagh's *Making People's Theatre* (1997) is a published book that deals with devising performance practice in Southern Africa by offering a devising methodology in a similar manner to Mark Fleishman's MA dissertation on *Workshop Theatre* (1991). Both texts are key in providing a history and theory of devising performance in an African or Southern African context in one way or another. However, these texts, i.e. Fleishman (1991) and Kavanagh (1997), do not solely and elaborately deal with *directing practice* within the context of devising performance, which is this study's focus. As such, it is worth noting that I have not come across many scholarly texts that provide detailed accounts of directing practice from a broadly African perspective, particularly within the context of performance devising practice. I have mainly identified and engaged with the following appropriate scholarly texts: Christopher Nwamuo's (1994) 'The Beginning Director's Tools'; Brian

Pearce's (1998) 'The Director and the South African Theatre'; the 2006 *South African Theatre Journal* vol. (20) that solely focused on a few South African directors and their practice with reference to some of their artistic corpus; Samuel Ravengai's (2006) 'An Investigation into the Practice of Directing and Theatre Making in Post-Independence Zimbabwe up to 1990: Some Urban Theatre Directors and/or Theatre Makers as Case Studies'; Jessica Lejowa's (2010) *Shifting understandings of performance practice in an African context through auto-ethnography*; Janine Lewis' (2012) *Devising and Montage: The Use Of Physical Actions to Create (Re)Conceptual Performance*; Solomon Ejeke's (2012) *Creating the Performance: A Manual for Theatre Directors*; Kene Igweonu and Osita Okagbue's (2013) *Performative Inter-Actions in African Theatre (3): Making Space, Rethinking Drama and Theatre in Africa*; Emma Durden and Roel Twijnstra's (2014) *Theatre Directing in South Africa: Skills and Inspirations*; and Tekena Gasper Mark's (2017) 'The Art of Directing in African Traditional Theatre'. Regarding directing practice within the context of South African theatre specifically, Gay Morris noted in 2006 that:

(t)here is a certain body of evidence on the work of Barney Simon; and Junction Avenue Theatre and Brett Bailey have published their own plays and manifestos. Perhaps a dozen other directors have a handful of articles devoted to their work, but... there is insufficient critical commentary on a range of South African [directors]. (Morris, 2006:13)

Generally, her observation serves this study as one of its seeds, which I intend to nurture by focusing on seven South African theatre directors' accounts of their directorial practice in relation to this study's specific investigation. Primarily though, the study proceeds through my examination of directing practice within a devising context from an insider position, drawing from three creative research instances, or projects, that I undertook for this study from 2012 to 2018.

From the above, I can assert that while there is a considerable body of work by various practitioners that contributes to the global discourse on theatre directing

and devising performance in (Southern) Africa, it is quite evident that more scholarly works are needed as co-constituents of the discourse, which is my study's intended contribution. Such a contribution is realised through its I-We grappling with the following research question:

What is the [un]knowing director?

In relation to this research question, it needs to be noted that one's reading of the question is dependent on an underlying implication that this study was initiated by its need to address a hypothetical statement that a director is an [un]knowing figure.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

My consideration and regard of a director as an [un]knowing figure stems from my undertaking and delving into the practice of directing within the context of devising performance; informal conversations with some South African theatre directors about their practice; professional experiences of casually observing some directors that I have worked with as a performer; and engaging with relevant literature on directing. Most of these background factors share a commonality in the form of verbal and non-verbal or literary utterances, variably displaying and referring to a director's state of [un]knowing through participating in the process of devising a performance. It needs to be noted that most of the literature reviewed for this study, particularly with reference to devising performance, offers a construct of devising performance as a specific method of developing a performance that is supposedly unique in relation to the practice of orthodox or conventional play directing. However, the aforementioned background factors inspiring this study's central concept i.e. the

[un]knowing director, demands of one to propose that devising performance—with reference to directing—is arguably inclusive of cases where a director works with a primary text or source such as a play text, poem, image, concept, theme etc. and, cases in which the director does not work with such a primary source. This view is posited as a result of an observation that directing practice, similar to most, if not all creative practices, is inherently characterised by an [un]knowing of varying degrees and/or forms.

For clarity, my sense of an [un]knowing director is that of a professional theatre practitioner whose role it is to facilitate the creative process of devising a performance in collaboration with others (performers, designers, dramaturges etc.), but whose absolute knowing of the specific and/or eventual outcomes of a devising process develops with and through the devising process. Specifically, the knowing that I am referring to is that of artistic discoveries and choices that a director and their co-collaborators make along the way i.e. through the devising process, in order to realise a performance, and how such discoveries and choices are made. This way is not a fixed path, but one that makes itself from moment-to-moment through the artistic activities of the director and their co-collaborators. This means that the momentary collaborative undertakings of a director within the context of devising performance, yield effects and material that create the way and determine how it is travelled.

Furthermore, a paradox found in the word [un]knowing partly suggests a director's state of unlearning or shedding of their acquired knowledge in the form of a devising methodology and/or strategy for example. Thus, an [un]knowing director is characterised by the appropriate adapting or letting go of their 'bag of tricks' to respond to the unfolding experience(s) of devising a performance. [Un]knowing is

indicative or suggestive of a more fluid and dynamic relationship between a director's status of knowing and unknowing, both of which have an interplay throughout the course of a performance-devising process.

This study's ensuing explication of the notion of an [un]knowing director speaks of two key points. Firstly, it offers a conception of what knowledge is. Secondly, related to the first point, it offers a conception of how knowledge can be produced or acquired, i.e. a practice or action-embedded way of knowing through a deliberation that offers a certain construct of theatre directing practice within the context of devised performance. As will be clarified henceforth, the notion of the [un]knowing director does not suggest that a professional theatre director is an entity that knows nothing at all about its professional undertakings within the context of its professional domain or environment.

Tim Ingold's *The Perception of the Environment: Essays in livelihood, dwelling and skill* (2000), is one of this study's key texts in that it provides a conceptual explication of [un]knowing. Ingold is an anthropologist whose scholarly project partly posits that a human being (an organism) actively develops in conjunction with its environment. Part two of his book deals with the concept of 'dwelling' through:

[...] explo[ring] the implications of the position that awareness and activity are rooted in the engagement between persons and environment for our understanding of perception and cognition, architecture and the built environment, local and global conceptions of environmental change, landscape and temporality, mapping and wayfinding, and the differentiation of the senses. (Ingold, 2000:5)

As indicated, Ingold is an anthropologist whose scholarly work does not address or engage with theatre directing and devising performance practices. Some of his concepts, however, are applied to this study in terms of explicating its conceptual construct of a theatre director who is engaged in the practice of devising a performance. Drawing from his notions of organism, landscape and temporality,

mapping and wayfinding, a director is a living being that embodies certain knowledge and skills acquired through their being-in-the-world.

Considering what I have established in the Introduction section of this thesis with reference to its identity, geographical location and socio-cultural context, this being-in-the-world is of a particular African orientation. By being a professional practitioner, a director's certain knowledge within the context of devising performance also indicates that they are not an empty vessel vainly engaging in haphazard activities. Rather, they skilfully, curiously and constantly engage with the landscape of the process of devising performance that comprises a field of forces: the dynamics of collaborating with performers and other co-collaborators; the identity and socio-cultural composition of a company; physical space i.e. a rehearsal and performance space; time i.e. timespan of the devising process and the lifespan of a publicly presented performance; material factors related to the devising process and its eventual artistic outcomes, and so forth. For Ingold, there is no separation between an organism and its world (landscape). Both share a close interdependence that creates their form, which is not predetermined, but a result of their constant symbiotic evolutionary or emergent relationship (Ingold, 2000:193). This means that a human being, for example, is made human by and in relation to all entities found within the domains of its existence. A director, then, engages with their landscape by means of wayfinding, which Ingold describes as:

[...] a skilled performance in which the traveller, [in my case the director,] whose powers of perception and action have been fine-tuned through previous experience, 'feels his way towards his goal, continually adjusting his movements in response to an ongoing monitoring of [the] surroundings. (Ingold, 2000:220)

Wayfinding suggests that a landscape is not completely perceivable and/or known from the onset. It evolves as the traveller uses their skill(s) to move from one point to the other in response to what emerges along their journey within and through the

landscape. It is through skill that a traveller not only gains knowledge of the unfolding landscape, but also can appropriately stop, change a course, vary the rhythm, tempo and quality of their movement(s) while traveling. As much as they have the skill(s) to travel the landscape, they find the way without necessarily knowing where they are going and what they might discover as the unfixed landscape unfolds alongside traveling. For emphatic and exemplary purposes, one considers Henri Bergson's assertion that:

The finished portrait is explained by the features of the model, by the nature of the artist, by the colours spread out on the palette; but, even with the knowledge of what explains it, no one, not even the artist, could have foreseen exactly what the portrait would be, for to predict [and predetermine] it would have been to produce it before it was produced—an absurd hypothesis which is its own refutation. (Bergson, 1907:7)

When applied to this study's focal concept and subject of the [un]knowing director, Bergson's point is pertinent. It is impossible for a director to possess complete knowledge of a performance or production before the devising process has commenced and yielded material that could shed light on its possible eventuality in the form of a 'complete' performance that is to be shared with an audience. A basic conceptual merger between Bergson's assertion and Ingold's notion of wayfinding, leads one to deduce that a great amount of forecasting and/or predetermining is potentially problematic within the context of artistic practice in general, and of devising specifically. The problematics of such forecasting and/or predetermination, I suspect, lie in how such an act or approach could diminish or extinguish the unforeseen possibilities embedded within artistic explorations such as directing within the context of devising performance, while also narrowing the scope of one's lived experiences during such exploration.

Ingold's concept of wayfinding is part of his broader argument that people acquire knowledge of a landscape by employing skills they possess through previous experiences and that they acquire such knowledge/insight/skill through movement. In

short, he asserts that ‘... we know as we go, from place to place’ (Ingold, 2000:229). This, in relation to my notion of a director, suggests that directing practice within the context of devising performance, is characterised by the paradox of [un]knowing i.e. not knowing the totality of what lies in the middle or at the end of a devising process—if it has an ending—and knowing as the process unfolds through employing, adapting and/or discarding previously acquired knowledge and skills based on how the landscape unfolds. Thus, the [un]knowing director starts the devising process without knowing its eventual results. Their essential and primary resources are the skilled co-collaborators and their own previously acquired skills, all of which eventually lead to a ‘complete’ performance geared towards public presentation in one form or another.

This performance should not be seen as the destination, but a point or place within the landscape that may not stop unfolding, depending on factors that may inspire or restrict a further exploration of that landscape. My reading of Ingold is that he also suggests that the landscape as travelled or explored through wayfinding, which would be a devising process in this study’s context, is fluid as opposed to being static or fixed. Therefore, the manner in which its travellers get to acquire their knowledge of the landscape could be non-linear in character. Christopher Bannerman clarifies my point by stating that knowledge “is constituted from ‘taking together,’ a way of knowledge based on relational positionings which are open to re-positioning, rather than proposing knowledge as a concretised edifice... which secures and fixes our understanding” (2006:17).

One needs to mention that the subject of knowledge, in terms of what constitutes knowledge, how it is or can be acquired, and how it is or can be produced, is highly contentious. Views such as Bannerman’s are not necessarily the

binary of, or more accurate than, other existing views; rather, they offer relevant support of this study's conceptual framing. Therefore, my notion of an [un]knowing director, particularly based on Ingold's ideas and in addition to what I have stated before, proposes a view of how knowledge can be perceived, acquired or produced. Borrowing from David Rubin, Ingold shows that there are two general categories of knowledge namely *classificatory knowledge* and *storied knowledge*. The latter, strongly argued for by Ingold, is characterised by a complex-process metaphor, which:

[...] lead(s) us to prioritise the practice of knowledge over the property of knowledge. Rather than supposing that people apply their knowledge in practice, we would be more inclined to say that they know *by way* of their practice [...] that is, through an ongoing engagement, in perception and action, with the constituents of their environment. Thus, far from being copied, ready-made, into the mind in advance of its encounter with the world, knowledge is perpetually 'under construction' within the field of relations established through the immersion of the actor-perceiver in a certain environmental context. Knowledge, in this view, is not transmitted as a complex structure but it is the ever-emergent product of a complex process. It is not so much *replicated* as *reproduced*. (2011:159, italics in original)

Thus, this study contests the view of a theatre director as an all-knowing practitioner who is in possession of a predetermined map detailing a destination and a route to get there. In other words, directing is not 'destination-oriented,' but more focused on what emerges along the 'way' during a devising process and how what emerges creates the 'way' and determines how it should be travelled. A director's participation in the devising process, their skilled yet unpredictable movement(s) along the 'way', is characterised by being-within (Ingold, 2007:89). This means that the [un]knowing director is not in any way separated from the landscape that is the devising process and they get to know about the landscape from an insider position in relation to it.

This kind of being-within or insider position, is one that is fundamentally reflective of Leopold Senghor's Africanist notions of the "*raison-oeil* (reason-eye) and *raison-toucher* (reason-touch)" (Thiam, 2014:53, italics in original) and is resonant with this study's subject, general methodology and epistemology. This point

will be discussed later in this chapter and methodology section below.

Before proceeding further with the explication of the [un]knowing director, it is necessary to state that Tim Ingold's ideas are drawn from his scholarly project, which is a journey punctuated by phases of focus that he accounts for as follows:

Looking back on my own efforts to restore anthropology to life, they seem to fall roughly into four phases, each of which revolves around a single key term. The first phase was about the meaning of *production*; the second was about the meaning of *history*. In the third phase I was preoccupied with the notion of *dwelling*. The last phase – the one I am in now – is an exploration of the idea that life is lived along *lines*. Though they followed one another in time, these phases were by no means discrete. Rather, each carried over into the next. (Ingold, 2011:4, italics in original)

I am compelled to note the development(s) of Ingold's scholarly project, at least as captured by the above quotation, because I need to state that this study's appreciation of his perspective (Ingold, 2000) is not a result of ignorance of the development of his ideas, but rather one of relevance and appropriateness.

Furthermore, my reading of Ingold's scholarly project does not see binaries or opposition in his thoughts over time, but rather sees scholarly progression in the form of his engagement with the philosophies of Martin Heidegger, Karl Marx, Henri Bergson, Alfred North Whitehead, Gilles Deleuze, James Gibson, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and others (Ingold, 2011:3-14). In the prologue of *Being Alive: Essays on movement, knowledge and description*, Ingold articulates his initial investment in developing his idea of *dwelling* and his dissatisfaction with it, which led to his favouring of the notion of *wayfaring* and not *wayfinding* due to his focus on the idea of *lines*. Ingold states that:

[...] Here, surely, lies the essence of what it means to dwell. It is, literally to be embarked upon a movement along a way of life. The perceiver-producer is thus a wayfarer, and the mode of production is itself a trail blazed or a path followed. Along such paths, lives are lived, skills developed, observations made and understandings grown. But if this is so, then we can no longer suppose that dwelling is emplaced in quite the way Heidegger imagined, in an opening akin to a clearing in the forest. To be, I would now say, is not to be *in* place but to be *along* paths. The path, and not the place, is the primary condition of being, or rather of becoming. For this reason, I have begun to wonder whether the concept of dwelling is, after all, apt to describe how humans and non-humans make their ways in the world. The concept carries an aura of snug, well-wrapped localism that seems out of tune with an emphasis on the primacy of

movement. Looking back, I rather regret having placed so much weight on it, and now prefer the less loaded concept of habitation. Thus rephrased, my contention is that wayfaring is the fundamental mode by which living beings inhabit the earth. Every such being has, accordingly, to be imagined as the line of its own movement or – more realistically – as a bundle of lines. (Ingold, 2011:12-13, italics in original)

As stated earlier, Ingold's shift from *dwelling* to *lines*, from *wayfinding* to *wayfaring*, is one that is not arbitrary and oppositional, but rather one that is reasonable and progressive. Based on this study's usage of Ingold's notions of *dwelling* and *wayfinding*, a question arises about what this study's stance is regarding Ingold's progression of thought and the implications thereof regarding the notion of the [un]knowing director. Firstly, this study accepts Ingold's progression of thought considering one of the key components of his scholarly project of "... bring[ing] anthropology back to life" (Ingold, 2011:14), which is the offering of a well-developed view about the intricacies of what the experience of being human entails and how human knowledge is acquired and produced. As far as this study is concerned, Ingold's notions of *dwelling* and *wayfinding*, *lines* and *wayfaring* are indicative of his developed contemplation related to his scholarly project to an extent that his reader needs to understand him as such. From this study's perspective, the fundamental difference between *dwelling* and *wayfinding*, *lines* and *wayfaring* lies in Ingold's emphasis on *movement*, particularly *movement* that is 'alongly' as opposed to being across, as a fundamental characteristic of being human (and perhaps 'other-than-human' as well) (2007:91). Additionally, which also speaks to this study's stance regarding the development of Ingold's thinking over time from *dwelling* to *lines*, is my observation that Ingold's *lines* project, in comparison to his *dwelling* project, provides a more detailed account of the ever-emergent, transient and non-vertical character of (human) knowledge and its acquisition through *movement*. Compared to Ingold's *dwelling* project, *lines* deals more elaborately with what knowledge is and how it is acquired. With regards to this study's notion of the [un]knowing director, one can say

that Ingold's (*dwelling*) *wayfinding* is still relevant in that it provides a general, conceptual explanation of what the [un]knowing director does in the context of devising a performance. *Wayfaring*, according to me, deals with the characteristics of how the [un]knowing director ought to undertake their artistic duties and how knowledge is acquired or discovered as the process unfolds. As such:

[...] people do not acquire their knowledge ready-made, but rather *grow into it*, through a process of what might best be called 'guided rediscovery'. The process is rather like that of following trails through a landscape: each story will take you so far, until you come across another that will take you further. This trail-following is what I call wayfaring [...]. And my thesis, in a nutshell, is that it is through wayfaring, not transmission that knowledge is carried on [...]. Indeed 'keeping going' may involve a good measure of creative improvisation. It is in following this path – *in their movement along a way of life* – that people [discover and] grow into knowledge. (Ingold, 2011:162, italics in original)

Ingold's assertion above is related to his earlier-mentioned conception of knowledge as something that is storied and characterised by a complex-process metaphor as opposed to a complex-structure. According to Ingold, it follows,

(f)rom a complex-process perspective [...] [that] movement *is* knowing. The integration of knowledge, in short, does not take place 'up' the levels of a classificatory hierarchy, but 'along' the paths that take people from place to place within the matrix of their travelling. Accordingly [...] we should say that for the inhabitants of the lifeworld, knowledge is not vertically but alongly integrated. (Ingold, 2011:160, italics in original)

Furthermore, Ingold's *alongly* integrated type of knowledge exists in a world in which "... things do not exist, [but] occur. Where things meet, occurrences intertwine, as each becomes bound up in the other's story. Every such binding is a place or topic. It is in the binding that knowledge is generated" (2011:160). The implications borne by Ingold's conception of knowledge for the [un]knowing director are twofold at this point. Firstly, Ingold's conception of knowledge implies that the [un]knowing director is a *wayfarer* who gets to acquire their knowledge about the landscape as they travel through it, i.e. as they engage the process of devising a performance. Secondly the [un]knowing director, as a *wayfarer*, moves in an *alongly* fashion within their landscape and it is through their *alongly* movements—which are not a solitary action or activity due to the presence of their co-collaborators—that they will encounter

artistic occurrences. Furthermore, these artistic occurrences would intertwine over time and yield the required or necessary artistic material(s) and/or knowledge related to the possible outcomes of a devising process. Such occurrences, as maintained thus far, are inherently unforeseen. Ingold's knowledge, as indicated earlier, is *storied* in character and my understanding is that Ingold's knowledge is *storied* because it offers a view of knowledge as something that is derived from the creation of relations about what one has been through in the midst of what one is presently going through, confronted by or discovering in the present. Therefore, *storied* knowledge is accumulative and perpetually active.

Viewed in another light, Ingold's *storied* knowledge is quite akin to Henri Bergson's notion of duration, which is addressed or explained in some parts of what follows in this chapter. Bergson's *Creative Evolution* (1907) has been interpreted and employed by various scholars within and outside the discipline of philosophy. The common threads shared by these various perspectives regarding Bergson's philosophy, as articulated in *Creative Evolution*, are that Bergson should be understood within the context that is his philosophical trajectory over time; that *Creative Evolution* is a culmination of thorough research in the areas of biology, psychology, science, mathematics and the philosophies and/or disciplines of formalism and (radical) mechanism; and that Bergson's thinking is of a robust quality and impeccable detail, considering how it extends Western philosophical enquiry and doctrine. Essentially, a portion of Bergson's text deals with "... the real efficacy of time[,] the difference between organic and inorganic matter, the coordination of parts in organisms, the nature of life and the relation between life and consciousness" (Vaughn, 2007:7&8).

My reading of a relevant segment of Bergson's thinking in *Creative Evolution*,

is focused on how it applies to this study's concept of the [un]knowing director. Thus far, I have identified the relevance of Bergson's philosophy to be his perspective on the evolution of life in relation to time. Specifically, Bergson's notion of *duration* is interesting in how it aids this study's central concept and challenges thinking about the [un]knowing director. Bergson, specifically in the first section of his text, carefully lays the foundational premise in painting the landscape for his philosophical concept of *duration*, which he describes as "...the continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and which swells as it advances. And as the past grows without ceasing, so there is no limit to its preservation" (1907:5). He achieves this by carefully arguing that the/our past is something that is not erased by time, but it is something that manages to sustain itself and filter into the present and future. Additionally, and fundamentally, evolution or evolutionary process is inherently characterised by a quality or reality of undergoing endless change (Bergson, 1907:5-7). In making a point about life's apparent core characteristic of endless change, for example, Bergson develops his argument by referring to a human being's personality:

Our personality, which is being built up each instant with its accumulated experience, changes without ceasing. By changing, it prevents any state, although superficially identical with another, from ever repeating it in its very depth. That is why our duration is irreversible [...]. Thus our personality shoots, grows and ripens without ceasing. Each of its moments is something new added to what was before. We may go further: it is not only something new, but something unforeseeable. Doubtless, my present state is explained by what was in me and by what was acting on me a moment ago. In analysing it I should find no other elements. But even a superhuman intelligence would not have been able to foresee the simple indivisible form which gives to these purely abstract elements their concrete organization. For to foresee consists of projecting into the future what has been perceived in the past, or of imagining for a later time a new grouping, in a new order, of elements already perceived. But that which has never been perceived, and which is at the same time simple, is necessarily unforeseeable. (1907:6-7)

Bergson's evolutionist philosophy, in relation to the above assertion, is of interest to this study because it raises the following questions, some of which may have been answered by how [un]knowing has been conceptualised thus far, especially through

Tim Ingold's discussed key ideas (2000 & 2011). Thus, Bergson has led me to think more deeply about the following related questions:

- 1) What is the [un]knowing director with reference to *duration*?
- 2) What are the implications of *duration* for directing practice as viewed from the [un]knowing perspective?

One of the complexities that one finds in Bergson's *Creative Evolution* is how he shifts his focus between micro and macro levels when discussing evolution. For example, sometimes he refers to humanity in general, some organs that comprise the human anatomy, human intellect in relation to consciousness, organic and inorganic matter, nature's open and closed systems, mathematics, psychology, formalism and mechanism etc. However, it is manageable to follow Bergson because of how he threads his writing around a central argument, which in this case is an argument for and explication of *duration*. I am mentioning this because it is necessary to develop a sense of focus when reading Bergson in relation to the [un]knowing director. Thus, this study considers *duration* in terms of its reference to human beings within a context of life i.e. directing practice within the context of the process of devising a performance.

In consideration of the above-mentioned contextual specification of how Bergson's *duration* applies to this study, it follows that the [un]knowing director's past directorial/professional experiences are significant in influencing or affecting them in the event of a new or current performance-devising process. Such an influence or effect, I imagine, is in the aspect of their manner of doing things in terms of working with performers and other co-collaborators, method or approach of devising, levels of awareness or a lack thereof, each moment of the devising process, ways of arriving at artistic discoveries and subsequent choices, levels of sensitivity in relation to

artistic choices and so forth. The [un]knowing director is therefore not an empty vessel as stated earlier.

Additionally, the aspect of Bergson's *duration* that speaks of the past progressing continuously, gnawing into the future, swelling as it advances and growing without ceasing (1907:5), further emphasises the importance of a director's moment-to-moment experiences of a devising process. This study's creative research project 2 in particular, has facilitated my understanding that a devising process is constituted by specific levels of artistic activities that I have referred to as *molecular*, *micro* and *macro*⁶ in terms of the [un]knowing director's momentary artistic engagements of devising performance practice. The referred-to engagements involve the [un]knowing director's non-predetermined artistic discoveries and decision/choices borne by and through the emergent devising process. For the purpose of providing more clarity, this study's usage or coining of the terms *molecular*, *micro* and *macro*, all of which generally refer to scale i.e. size/dimension, is basically indicative of the study's conception of a devising process's experiential levels or phases of manifestation in terms of the [un]knowing's artistic discoveries and decisions/choices. These (*molecular*, *micro* and *macro*) artistic discoveries and decisions/choices fundamentally refer to, indicate, punctuate and are characteristic of a devising process's varying moment-to-moment degrees of complexity with reference to its inception and 'completion'. Thus, such terminology reflects this study's general sense of what it means by referring to its argued-for devising performance practice to be emergent. As such, the molecular level of artistic activity

⁶ It is necessary for me to make a brief comment about this terminology at this stage because Mark Fleishman (2012a), also draws from Bergson's *Creative Evolution*, and makes use of some of the referred-to terminology with reference to *Performance as Research*, but not entirely in the same way as I do in this study. This is because this study generally refers to the *molecular*, *micro* and *macro* levels of artistic activity as pertaining to the devising process specifically.

generally speaks of the devising process's initial phase, particularly in terms of the director's [un]knowing of artistic discoveries and decisions/choices. For example, the initial phase generally entails the [un]knowing director's embodied efforts of facilitating the producing or discovery of unforeseen and possible artistic material(s) that would have potential for further development through offering some relatively predetermined and/or non-predetermined devising performance exercises/tasks to their co-collaborators, particularly the performers. The micro level partly refers to the devising process's intermediate phase during which the [un]knowing director's unforeseen artistic material(s) yielded by and discovered through the molecular level engagements could/would develop with reference to the envisaged performance's primary text, theme, style, form, aesthetics etc. The macro level refers to the advanced phase of a devising process during which the [un]knowing director's attention is directed towards the momentary refining of the selected or decided-upon artistic material(s) yielded by and discovered through the micro level engagements. It is worth noting that the referred-to levels of artistic activity as applicable to the [un]knowing director's ways of knowing through intuition and collaboration, do not necessarily manifest in a linear manner and can operate ceaselessly due to this study's manifestation of intuition at the least. Generally, then, this study's meaning of the *molecular*, *micro* and *macro* levels of artistic activity are evidenced in the forthcoming chapter that discusses its creative research projects. The forthcoming analytic account of this study's creative research projects 2 and 3 illuminates what I am referring to.

Now, in light of the discussion at hand, one can deduce that [un]knowing with reference to directing practice, is characterised by a reliance on the infinite accumulation of a director's past professional experiences that penetrate a director's

present and future experiences. At the same time, which relates to what I have mentioned earlier, the durational process also involves the [un]knowing director's aspect of undoing (unlearning) or letting go of what has been established in the past in order to make space for (artistic) discoveries in the present. Bergson, in his conceptualisation of *duration*, seems to make a point that there is never a complete and/or static past, present and future, based on the ceaseless and accumulative nature and quality of change found in evolution. It should be no surprise, then, to emphasise that *duration* facilitates the [un]knowing director's state of unlearning, based on the premise that they change endlessly. Nevertheless, the [un]knowing director's state of endless change with reference to their previously acquired experiences and knowledge, does not necessarily mean that their 'past' gets erased as their experience changes. In fact, my understanding is that the director's experience(s) of endless change presents and possibly facilitates additional professional experience and knowledge. Based on factors such as the [un]knowing director's levels of awareness about their momentary and endless changes during a devising process, and the momentary demands and artistic mutations (Bergson, 1907) of a devising process, they would undergo particular, yet temporary changes due to the nature of *duration*. There is a sense, based on my reading of Bergson and as indicated, that the devising process is the evolutionary context within which the [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators originate, grow (evolve), operate and function. At the same time the devising process should be considered as an organism or entity that also evolves; it experiences *duration* because of its intrinsically emergent character.

Therefore, it can be postulated that the creative act of devising a performance needs to be perceived from a primary and secondary perspective. Primarily, it comprises of

the artistic workings of the [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators. Secondly, it is a meta-lifeform undergoing an evolutionary process that is also characterised by ceaseless change. Like other organic matter life forms (Bergson, 1907), its 'ultimate', yet continuously developing state of organisation, could be a 'complete' performance meant for public sharing or presentation at a particular time and place(s). But it could also not end in a performance that is understood in terms of something complete or finished. In other words, the process could be ongoing and continuous and the sharing with an audience can be conceived of as a momentary coagulation of experiences that quickly dissipates back into the stream of ongoing process. Although a performance that is shared with an audience is generally recognised for and characterised by its aspect of repetition, the experience of being a performer, director and audience member who has been part of (theatre) performances whose lifespans lasted for more than one day, leads one to affirm that a performance is never the same. Its structure, aesthetics, form, text, cast of performers and length might be standard, but its experience is never the same for all parties involved. Thus the devising process, its participants and eventual outcome that could be a 'complete' performance, can be understood as being in duration.

One of the main reasons why this study considers *duration* to be interesting and challenging, especially regarding its perspective of ceaseless change, lies in the fact that Bergson does not provide specificities about the levels of change that an organism (here, the [un]knowing director) undergoes through the course of its evolution (during the devising process). Additionally, Bergson leaves it to one's imagination to fathom exactly how the past gnaws into the future, in the terms of the current study, the specificities of the [un]knowing director's process of change from the beginning to the end of a devising process, especially considering the

observation that they are not an empty vessel. Despite the gravity of the challenge to put one's finger on the specific levels and kinds of change attributed to *duration*, one needs to appreciate its fundamental implication for the [un]knowing director's practice within the context of devised performance. Nevertheless, a key and useful characteristic of *duration*, as Bergson continuously asserts in *Creative Evolution*, is that the changes borne by evolution cannot be predicted or predetermined. His specific term for the impossibility of evolutionary predetermination is "unforeseeable" (Bergson, 1907:6-7). The usefulness of the unforeseeability lies in supporting Ingold's (2000 & 2007) contribution to this study's manner of conceptualising [un]knowing as mentioned. Bergson's following assertion carries interesting implications for directing practice when viewed from an [un]knowing perspective:

[...] to foresee consists of projecting into the future what has been perceived in the past, or of imagining for a later time a new grouping, in a new order, of elements already perceived. But that which has never been perceived, and which is at the same time simple, is necessarily unforeseeable. (1907:7)

On one level, Bergson speaks of the impossibility of foreseeing something that has never been perceived before. On another level, one can read Bergson's assertion as being indicative of the dangers or counter-productivity of foreseeing with reference to the evolution of life. In employing or interpreting Bergson's thinking about evolution, one can deduce that it is impossible and inadvisable/unproductive for a director to predict, predetermine or foresee the eventuality of a devising process - i.e. a 'complete' performance - right from the onset, because the performance has not been perceived or realised elsewhere in the past.

If viewed constructively, the impossibility of foreseeing and its problematics offer an idea for directing practice as considered by this study. Such a contribution is found in the area of knowledge. In this study's case, the contribution is with regards to how a director acquires relevant knowledge related to their participation during a

'new' devising process and its eventual outcomes. The [un]knowing director, when faced with the impossible and problematic nature of foreseeing or predetermining, needs to place their focus on the changes or artistic developments of the evolving devising process as a strategy to overcome the problem of foreseeing or predetermining.

From this study's perspective at the least, I can assertively suggest that one of a director's required skills is the ability to use all of their senses in the act of 'registering' the unpredicted or 'unforeseeable' (1907:7) artistic emergences or mutations in Bergson's terminology. These mutations and eruptions, consequently, are the offspring of the director's creative workings with their performers or co-collaborators at the least. As much as the director offers their performers tasks and/or exercises that are intended to satisfy a particular goal during the unfolding of the devising process, they, based on Bergson's logic, cannot foresee the results of the tasks given to the performers. Therefore, the [un]knowing director's knowledge of the eventual artistic outcomes of the devising process cannot be predicted or foreseen but are gathered over time.

To some extent, non-predetermination or unforeseeing within the context of devised performance, and possibly with reference to directing practice in general, proposes that a director's previously acquired knowledge is important as it makes them who they are at the beginning of a new process of devising performance and possibly directing a predetermined play text. Such knowledge, however, is bound to change over time in the form of unlearning and learning anew, due to the unforeseen or unpredicted mutations and eruptions presented by working collaboratively with their co-collaborators, the physical space within which the devising process takes place, the materials and objects that they work with etc. Additionally, the [un]knowing

director is also bound to change in areas beyond their sphere of knowledge about the artistic outcomes of a devising process. For example, a director's previously used strategies or methodologies of eliciting and developing artistic material such as theme, concept or content are bound to change with each devising process due to (creative) evolution's inherent characteristics of ceaseless change and unforeseeability.

Bergson's explication of evolution, through his concept of *duration*, is clearly at odds with theories that favour (pre)determinism and treat or approach the conditions and eventualities of evolution as calculable and set in stones whose inscriptions and carvings are all pre-set and given. Specifically, a part of his evolutionist or process philosophy critically converses with the discourses of science, mathematics, finalism and mechanism, most of which share the commonality of reductionism and repetition with regards to evolution. My study's conceptual thrust, as illustrated and indicated, is certainly located within a non-representational realm, which is a point that will be explicitly dealt with in closing this chapter's discussion, and fundamentally echoes the thinking that:

The essential function of our intellect, as the evolution of life has fashioned it, is to be a light for our conduct, to make ready for our action on things, to foresee, for a given situation, the events, favourable or unfavourable, which may follow thereupon. Intellect therefore instinctively selects in a given situation whatever is like something already known; it seeks this out, in order that it may apply its principle that "like produces like." In just this does the prevision of the future by common sense consist. Science carries this faculty to the highest possible degree of exactitude and precision, but does not alter its essential character. Like ordinary knowledge, in dealing with things science is concerned only with the aspect of *repetition*. Though the whole be original, science will always manage to analyse it into elements or aspects which are approximately a reproduction of the past. Science can work only on what is supposed to repeat itself—that is to say, on what is withdrawn, by hypothesis, from the action of real time. Anything that is irreducible and irreversible in the successive moments of a history eludes science. To get a notion of this irreducibility and irreversibility, we must break with scientific habits which are adapted to the fundamental requirements of thought, we must do violence to the mind, go counter to the natural bent of the intellect. But that is just the function of philosophy. (Bergson, 1907:29-30, italics in original)

At this point of explicating the [un]knowing director, it is necessary for me to acknowledge something that could possibly be considered as a conceptual

inadequacy. Such inadequacy would be based on the fact that the Prologue of this thesis purports for this study's identity, philosophical orientation and general positioning as being (Southern) African in character, which is missing thus far in this conceptual framework. Specifically, this means that most of the ideas that I have used in explicating the [un]knowing director thus far and generally throughout this thesis, are of Western scholars. The main reason for this is that these ideas are used due to their efficacy, which is basically similar to Leopold Senghor's approach to developing his philosophy and certainly reflective of my complex situation as a scholar who is African-centered yet predominantly trained in and exposed to the Western tradition of scholarship.

Now, as a means of appropriately addressing the possible conceptual inadequacy, what follows here is the necessary discussion of the [un]knowing director with specific reference to an aspect of Leopold Senghor's philosophy of Negritude. As mentioned in the Prologue, Senghor is fundamentally influenced by Bergson's key philosophical ideas with some apparent point(s) of deviation that are indicated by Kebede (2003:17) with reference to intuition. However, this study's conceptual framework acknowledges the existence of such a deviation or the difference(s) in Bergson and Senghor's thinking while needing and choosing to focus on the fundamental influence that the former philosopher has on the latter as a point of departure. The rationale for this need and focus is based on two points. Firstly, is the point that it would be imprudent of me, or anyone for that matter, to ignore Senghor's self-acknowledged inspirational influence that his intellectual project of Negritude derived from Bergson's philosophy. In fact, Senghor gives a sense of such influence by regarding Bergson's seminal philosophical work as the "revolution of 1889" (Diagne, 2019:22). Put in some detail, is the assertion that:

Thus, Senghor follow[ed] Bergson in undertaking the task of finding a new comprehensive approach to the real, outside the course of philosophical thought as it has been oriented by Aristotle and outside what culminated in the mechanistic thought of Descartes and scientific positivism. This nonmechanistic approach appeared to him as the meaning of African art, in which he saw the manifestation of a *vital* knowledge of the real, which he understands as an access to the *subreality* of visible things. (Diagne, 2019:23, italics in original)

Based on Diagne's above assertion, then, it is difficult for one to fathom the possibility of Senghor's philosophy by ignoring Bergson's influence thereon. The second point is the way in which Senghor's philosophical perspective that African art is philosophy, which is based on Bergson's philosophy, provides this conceptual framework with the necessary intellectual recourse in terms of afore-mentioned conceptual inadequacy.

Senghor's notion of Negritude is generally useful in assisting my efforts of contextualising this study as articulated by some of the details of its Prologue. However, his philosophy is particularly useful for explicating this study's notion of the [un]knowing director with reference to his notion of *rhythm* (Diagne, 2011:45-96, italics in original). This is mainly because Senghor's idea/notion of rhythm adds to the explicatory layers that are provided by Ingold and Bergson thus far. Ingold's (2007) discussed notion of wayfaring and argued-for general epistemology of being-within (2000 & 2011), and Bergson's (1907) notion of duration seem to share a vital commonality in terms of the [un]knowing director's conceptual characteristics of non-predetermination and an inseparable subject-object epistemological interrelation. These characteristics, from this study's perspective, resonate with Senghor's idea of rhythm.

Now, the first point that I need to mention about Senghor's notion of rhythm is that it is driven by or based on the African philosopher's intention to articulate a metaphysics of African art (Diagne, 2011:55). Put in another way, it is a metaphysics of African art that also translates into an ontology thereof. This ontology, arguably

similar to any other kind of ontology, inherently carries and articulates its particular people's way(s) of being in the world. Secondly, it is worth mentioning that Senghor's general philosophy of Negritude, an aspect of which is rhythm, draws from Bergson's idea of the *vital force* (Diagne, 2011:81-84, italics not in original). Based on my understanding, this idea of vital force refers to the underlying or 'molecular' constitutive energy that gives rise to matter or any material form. For Senghor, it is the 'molecular' energy state(s) that gives rise to a particular object of African art on the one hand and a state of being or becoming in general, on the other hand. The vital force in terms of Senghor's thinking speaks of the "*sub-reality*" (Diagne, 2011:86, italics in original) of material forms such as African art objects or products.

As much as Senghor articulates his philosophy of Negritude with reference to African art objects, and this study's notion of the [un]knowing director is located in the terrain of artistic process instead of product/object, the relevance of some of his key ideas such as rhythm definitely exists. This is because it is through Senghor's notion of rhythm, that this study can productively explicate the [un]knowing director from an Africanist philosophical lens. As will be discussed henceforth and demonstrated later in this thesis, the [un]knowing director essentially speaks of the artistic process of directing practice from a particular African perspective that is also characterised by Senghor's notion of rhythm. As such, I have made the two aforementioned points so as to provide a basic foundation and premise for how Senghor's is an appropriate philosophical progression, particularly after Bergson, for this study's explication of its notion of the [un]knowing director that is Africanist in character.

Following from the above-mentioned, let me proceed by stating that Senghor's notion of rhythm is clearly indicative of a particular way of being in the

world that is defined by a key characteristic that: “We open up ourselves to the object, the art object in particular, by means of a *rhythmic attitude* that puts us on the same wavelength with it, i.e. with its rhythm: this is what it means to be in touch with its *spirituality*” (Diagne, 2011:86, italics in original). With reference to the [un]knowing director, Senghor’s assertion has a few conceptual implications. Firstly, is the implication and perspective that the [un]knowing director is the kind of artistic practitioner who engages with the devising process through a rhythmic attitude. From the onset, this rhythmic attitude resonates with Ingold’s (2011) perspective of knowledge being the kind of enterprise that is acquired through alongly-like movement. This is simply because movement, at least at a rudimentary and literal level, does involve rhythm in one way or another. However, Senghor’s rhythmic attitude is fundamentally not literal, but speaks of a particular socio-cultural approach and orientation as applicable to an African in the broadest sense of the ethno-cultural category. As indicated, this orientation and socio-cultural approach with reference to this study, applies to the [un]knowing director’s way(s) of being during the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising process. It is the kind of attitude, or way of being, that requires and means that the [un]knowing director is certainly not detached from their practice of devising performance with their co-collaborators in one way or another. Furthermore, the [un]knowing director is the kind of practitioner who is acutely sensitive, i.e. skilled in employing their senses optimally during their moment-to-moment collaborative engagements with the devising process.

I am arriving at such an observation about the aspect of the [un]knowing director’s required state of sensitivity so as to foreground this conceptual framework’s forthcoming details about intuition, in addition to this study’s discussion on its creative research projects. Over and above Senghor’s notion of rhythm,

particularly as defined by his above assertion, the observation aptly explicates the [un]knowing director also because the creative research projects provide evidence for the ways in which I, as the [un]knowing director, have practically grappled with my ways of employing a rhythmic attitude. These ways are possibly demonstrative of alongly movements (Ingold, 2011), taken moment-to-moment through a rhythmic attitude.

The last key implication about Senghor's notion of rhythm is that it is also suggestive of the aspect of non-predetermination that Bergson's philosophy speaks of as mentioned earlier. I have identified such implication because I imagine that the act of being *open* to the art object does speak of non-predetermination at least in terms of a hypothetical African art object's 'viewer' or 'receiver's response(s) to or experience(s) of the art work. In this study's case, Senghor's rhythmic attitude implies that the [un]knowing director engages with the devising process through an approach of being open to all sorts of possibilities regarding their unforeseen artistic discoveries and choices. I also think that Senghor's idea of equating rhythm to spirituality can easily be dismissed for its immediate and/or perceived mystical connotations. Nonetheless, I am of the view that he made such an assertion for emphatic purposes geared towards illuminating the gravitas of rhythm as a particular metaphysics. Additionally, I think that his perspective of equating rhythm to a 'receiver's' act of *touching* an art object's spirituality is on par with the idea of "*sub-reality*" (Diagne, 2011:86, italics in original) in terms of his perspective of African art as philosophy. This is because of my impression that an African art object's sub-reality is suggestive of the sublime and non-predetermined nature of rhythm. Thus, the [un]knowing director's rhythmic attitude is fundamentally characterised by their non-predetermined engagements with the devising process, particularly in terms of

the moment-to-moment “sub-reality” thereof.

Considering the above details of Senghor’s usefulness for the task of explicating the notion of the [un]knowing director, I have realised that his notion of rhythm also exists with an additional philosophical idea. Specifically, the idea is Senghor’s Bergson-derived epistemology that is once again premised on a perspective about the inseparability of the subject-object dyad and the experience of being *within* time i.e. duration (Bergson, 1907). This actual experience of time exists outside the prism of temporal sequencing that is separated by mechanistic intervals in such a way that there would exist ceaseless change in the evolutionary processes of matter. As indicated earlier in this chapter, Bergson’s philosophy of time challenged the dominant Western philosophy of the 19th century that generally privileged scientific reductionist thinking, which in turn positioned human intellect or analytical reasoning as the only form of valid knowledge. Bergson’s philosophy thus posed a challenge to Western philosophy in that it gave voice to the kind of thinking that transcended the limitations of Western scientific and philosophical discourse in the form of intuitive knowledge. This study engages with intuitive knowledge as defined later in this chapter and thesis at large for its particular argument and context. Nevertheless, Senghor took Bergson’s philosophy of time on board and differentiates between two ways of knowing namely (a) “reason-eye” and (b) “reason-embrace” (Diagne, 2019:25).

Essentially, the difference between these two ways of knowing is that the former is synonymous with analytic knowledge employed by Western scientific reductionist thinking that is challenged by Bergson through arguing for the latter, which is intuitive knowledge. Thus, Senghor’s affinity for Bergson’s philosophy is not surprising if one considers an observation that “... when he writes that when we

contemplate an art object we receive it in a “rhythmic attitude,” which means that we are truly on its wavelength: “We *dance* it” (Diagne, 2019:24, italics in original). I am making such a deduction in order to suggest that in addition to expressing his perspective that African art as philosophy speaks of the inseparable subject-object epistemological interrelation, Senghor also seems to state that such epistemology is a kind of dance that requires its dancer to follow a basic and externally-derived ‘choreographic composition’ thereof. This would be in addition to another kind of ‘choreography’, one that is internally-derived and arguably resides in the realm of its sub-reality. Put in another way, it is the kind of dance that is characterised by its dancer’s engagement with what one can call an outer impulse prescribed by the predetermined, externally-derived ‘choreography’ and an essential internal impulse facilitated by the non-predetermined, internally-derived ‘choreography’.

Comparatively, the latter would emanate from the dancer’s *Spirit*, as I have used the term in this study’s Prologue. As such, my sense is that the sub-reality is the terrain of intuitive knowledge. I certainly accept that my current deduction is questionable. However, the main point that I am trying to establish is that Senghor’s “*reason-embrace*” (Diagne, 2019:24, italics in original) arguably reflects Bergson’s primary influence on his philosophical thought in one way or another.

In terms of explicating the [un]knowing director, this study certainly leans towards both of Senghor’s notions of the “reason-eye” and “reason-embrace” (Diagne, 2019:24). Generally, this will be revealed in the forthcoming discussion of this study’s creative research projects whereby it is clarified as to how this study’s sense of intuition, as realised during the moment-to-moment unfolding of the devising process, involves a complex interplay between my experiences of employing rational (reason-eye) and intuitive (reason-embrace) thought. This is in

relation to the non-predetermined artistic discoveries and choices that are an outcome of my collaborative undertakings throughout the investigative cycles constituted by this study's creative research projects.

As briefly indicated earlier in this conceptual framework, the [un]knowing director's practice is characterised by their molecular, micro and macro level engagements with their devising process. At this stage of the thesis, I can briefly state that Senghor's *reason-embrace* is generally present during the molecular level of the devising process because that is the level during which I would collaboratively engage with the emergent devising process through intuition, i.e. without being analytical, so to speak. Relatedly, Senghor's *reason-eye* is generally present during the micro and certainly during the macro levels of the devising process as these generally involved my analysis of where the devising process would be in terms of its non-predetermined artistic discoveries and choices that need my artistic analysis for further development and eventual 'concretisation'. Therefore, it is worth emphasizing that *reason-embrace* suggests my close proximity, intimate participation or involvement, action whereas *reason-eye* suggests distanced analytical reflection.

Based on the methods used for this study's creative research projects, the various moments during which I would literally be up on my feet and immediately respond to my co-collaborators' embodied artistic proposals throughout a devising process, essentially equate to the [un]knowing director's manifestation(s) of Senghor's *reason-embrace*. The moments during which I would look at, listen to and 'think' about the non-predetermined artistic materials yielded by the devising process's progression essentially equate to the [un]knowing director's manifestations of Senghor's *reason-eye*. However, it is worth mentioning that a rigid differentiation of the ways in which Senghor's eye-reason and embrace-reason generally operate,

is something that creative research projects 2 & 3 in particular, problematise.

Therefore, the kind of problematising that I am referring to is based on this chapter's forthcoming discussion of intuition and this study's creative research projects, both of which point to a perspective that intuitive knowledge and analytical knowledge do interact in intricate and complex ways with reference to the [un]knowing director.

The concept of [un]knowing, by implication also raises a curiosity about the aspects of consciousness and unconsciousness related to a director's work during a devising process. As a result, questions arise such as: What does it mean for a director to be conscious or unconscious? How unconscious could a director possibly be when working? Is it possible for a director to be partly conscious of some things, but not of others when making or devising a performance? William Ball, in his reflective account of directing practice illustrates the existence of a director's experience(s) related to unconsciousness by stating that "[d]uring the truly creative process, the creator is essentially unaware of anything, almost unconscious of his surroundings, oblivious to past or future, and totally unaware of the passage of time" (1984:17).

An expert account of the human mind's conscious and unconscious states is something that I cannot offer based on my lack of expert knowledge about consciousness and unconsciousness. Based on my limited understanding and subjective human experiences, however, consciousness refers to a human being's state of awareness of their environment, actions, feelings, thoughts, desires etc., and unconsciousness is its opposite. These states are at play throughout our life experience(s) as human beings. Therefore, a theatre director, just like any other human being and practitioner, also experiences these states during their work. This makes it necessary for me to attempt to explicate the notion of the [un]knowing

director in consideration of how consciousness and unconsciousness may relate to it.

Navigating the Unknown: The creative process in contemporary arts (Bannerman, Sofaer & Watt, 2006) is a result of the Centre for Research into Creation in the Performing Arts (ResCen) project that focused on creativity through unravelling the internal, external, conscious and unconscious experiences of its then six research associate artists' creative processes that were specific to their creative practices and projects. A common thread shared by these research associate artists is that their creative practice of devising and/or creating their works is largely characterised by [un]knowing in one-way or the other. With reference to consciousness and unconsciousness, Bannerman writes about 'In/tuition', a term which speaks of the interplay between consciousness and intuition within the context of creative practice (2006:14-22), particularly the devising process. His analysis of the ResCen research associate artists' works and accounts of their devising processes shows that consciousness and intuition are inherent aspects of creative practice that are made sense of in various ways by individual artists.

Consciousness, in my understanding of Bannerman, is characterised by a creative practitioner's awareness and usage of their acquired knowledge and skill of their craft in the form of their art-making or performance devising methods. It was through employing their conscious field that the practitioners - i.e. research associate artists - made specific decisions related to the creation or devising of their individual projects, amongst other things. Bannerman's reference to intuition is somewhat likened to what could be perceived as the artists' experiences and manifestations of their unconscious field during their creative processes. Unconsciousness, then, is characterised by the artists' moments of being unaware

and/or unknowledgeable of how they realised tangible and identifiable aspects (such as artistic choices) of their creative processes that enabled them to realise their creative projects. More importantly, Bannerman asserts that creative processes are characterised by the complex interplay of a practitioner's skills in conjunction with the workings of their conscious and intuitive (unconscious) fields. An [un]knowing director, then, is a skilled practitioner who also travels through and/or within the unfolding landscape of their artistic practice, using the workings of their conscious and unconscious fields in ways that are guided by a fluid interplay of the two fields.

The ResCen's referred-to research project is specific to engaging with creativity within the context of the performing arts. The essence of its argument strongly highlights intuition as a fundamental aspect of artistic activity and catalyst of artistic discovery, which resonates with this study and its concept of the [un]knowing director. *Navigating the Unknown: The creative process in contemporary arts* (Bannerman, Sofaer & Watt, 2006), however, does not go to greater lengths to offer an explication of intuition, given its scope and intention. Therefore, it is one perspective amongst many others that offers insight about intuition. These perspectives and conceptions of intuition span across disciplines such as philosophy, science, cognitive psychology, mathematics etc. As a result, it must be stated that there are numerous theories and models that explicate intuition and I will discuss some of these in what follows.

The key importance of intuition (and collaboration) with reference to this study's notion of the [un]knowing director will become clearer when we arrive at the forthcoming methodology and data discussion chapters. During the process of grappling with the concept of intuition, I have come across two helpful studies. The first is Barbara J. Daley's (1999) paper that deals with the difference in the learning

processes of novices and experts within the domain of nursing. The second is Fernand Gobet and Philippe Chassy's (2008) discussion paper on the theory of expert intuition, also within the domain of nursing. Right from the onset, it can be noted that the two studies I am referring to here address the subject of intuition with reference to professional practice and expertise. This is quite a conscious choice that is intended to point to the fact that the current study understands intuition as a form of knowledge that is contingent to or reliant on a professional practitioner's (the [un]knowing director's) acquisition of adequate skill(s) and knowledge over time. Daley's paper on the learning processes of novices and experts is interesting because it essentially deals with ways of knowing within its/a particular context. Essentially, Daley's paper reveals that while novices "... learn through more formal mechanisms, including review of policy procedures, attendance at continuing education programs and reading journals" (Daley, 1999:138), on the opposite end of the learning continuum,

[...] the expert professional "has an intuitive grasp of the situation and zeros in on the accurate region of the problem without wasteful consideration of a large range of unfruitful possible problem situations" (Benner, 1982:406). Expert nurses (Benner, 1984) have an unusual perceptual ability to recognize patterns in clinical situations. This pattern recognition goes beyond the theoretical and applies to the uncertainty of real-life situations. (Daley, 1999:135)

My understanding, which is potentially an over-simplification of the matter, is that the learning process of Daley's professional is relevant to that of the [un]knowing director, due to the kinship that it bears with the way(s) of knowing that the [un]knowing director purports. I must admit that there could be a potential problem with relating the [un]knowing director's professional domain or context to that of nursing due to their inherent differences but I am asking you, the reader, to consider both contexts at a basic level in relation to the discussion at hand. A close reading of the outcomes of Daley's study of novice and expert learning processes in relation to

Tim Ingold's earlier-discussed perspectives of the characteristics of what constitutes knowledge, how it ought to be acquired and how it is structured, leads one to deduce the following:

1. An individual or professional practitioner acquires apt knowledge and skill of their profession (Daley) or environment (Ingold) over time.
2. An individual or professional practitioner's knowledge and skill of their profession (Daley) or environment (Ingold) is acquired through practice and constant engagement with what life (the profession or environment) presents, which is arguably unpredictable.
3. However, it needs to be explicitly stated that the [un]knowing director often also shares the characteristic of knowledge and skill acquisition through formal education routes like a novice nursing practitioner i.e. through formal mechanisms, including review of policy procedures, attendance at continuing education programs and reading journals as mentioned by Daley (1999:138).
4. Therefore, the [un]knowing director's kind of expertise arguably has its foundations in preparatory formalised education routes (mechanisms) of various formations and develops over time through a kind of artistic practice that would contribute to knowledge.
5. An individual or professional practitioner's accumulated knowledge and skill of their profession (Daley) or environment (Ingold) gradually and through practice, arguably equates to their intuitive knowledge that they use in prospective embodied engagements with their environment or in their profession.
6. Therefore, intuition is a form of knowledge in itself, but one that is also a way of knowing since it enables a practitioner/individual to acquire or accumulate

more knowledge about their profession (Daley) or environment (Ingold) through skilled practice.

Based on the above-mentioned deductions, it should be clear that I have chosen not to deal with the problems that are found in the dichotomic status of novice to expert within the context of professional learning and acquisition of knowledge. This is partly because of this chapter's limited scope and its focus. However, one can state in passing that the path from novice to expert is most probably relative and complex to qualify, especially within the context of the creative practice of theatre directing, which is the [un]knowing director's professional domain. Therefore, the above-mentioned deductions should be viewed in terms of their usefulness in discussing intuition as a form and way of knowing that aids in explicating the notion of the [un]knowing director.

Before 'ending' this chapter's discussion on intuition, I need to add Gobet and Chassy's (2008) elaborate paper on the theory of expert intuition in nursing, which is useful to the terrain of intuition. This is intended to make intuition less of an elusive concept or topic while also being an appropriate progression towards reaching this study's understanding, and definition of intuition.

Concerning what has been mentioned earlier about the reality of the existence of various definitions of intuition, Gobert and Chassy state that "There are some differences in the way intuition is defined in the literature (2008:130)," but they go on to suggest that:

[t]here is also a fair degree of agreement in that most definitions include rapid perception, lack of awareness of the processes engaged, concomitant presence of emotions, and holistic understanding of the problem situation. [Furthermore,] [i]t should be noted that emotions have long been emphasise[s] as part and parcel of intuition [...]; [and] the key role of emotion in intuition has recently been buttressed by investigations with neurological patients showing how lack of emotions negatively affects intuitive decision making [...]. To these four features, one can add the idea that intuitions, while not necessarily always correct, must be correct more often than not[.] (Gobet & Chassy, 2008:130)

Their paper discusses Benner's (1984) theory of expertise in nursing in terms of its strengths and weaknesses with the aim of proposing an alternative theory known as the template theory of expert intuition (Gobet & Chassy, 2008:131-132). In summary, Gobet and Chassy's paper is in favour of a theory of expert intuition that accounts for and accepts an interplay of a professional practitioner's implicit and explicit forms of knowledge or analytical and rapid perceptive cognitions; one that is derived from the outcomes of an appropriate research methodology; and one that is aligned to the sufficient evidence gathered from neuroscientific research, challenging the view that intuition is only characterised by holistic processing (Gobet & Chassy, 2008:7-12). A reading of Gobet and Chassy's paper is demonstrative of how and why the template theory of expert intuition is sounder than Benner's theory of intuition. The former theory states that novices differ from experts in that novices have a minimal number of units of perception (perceptual patterns) and meaning that can be built recursively and that are known as chunks. At a macro scale, chunks, it is stated, are known as templates (Gobet & Chassy, 2008:13-14). It should be noted that Gobet and Chassy's theory of intuition, is developed in relation to the general theoretical aspects of rapid perception, lack of awareness of the process engaged, holistic understanding of the problem situation and presence of emotions related to defining intuition. In their explication of template theory with reference to chunks and templates, it is quite clear that expert intuition is a consequence or result of one's memory and how one's memory plays a role in response(s) in the process of acquiring (new) knowledge within and/or about one's profession/environment. For contributing to further explicating the notion of the [un]knowing director with reference to intuition, it follows that this study finds interest in Gobet and Chassy's explanations that:

- a) An expert's intuition stems from their mental pattern recognition in the form of long term memory. This kind of mental activity plays a vital role in terms of the expert's intuitive problem-solving and is generally unconscious in character.
- b) Gobet and Chassy's TempT (Template Theory) also suggests that an expert can be conscious of their moments of intuitive problem-solving or decision-making based on their awareness of their actions in practice.
- c) Expert intuition is acquired over time. Furthermore, it can sometimes be inaccurate in terms of problem-solving or decision-making due to the unexpected or non-predetermined knowledge that is inherently borne by the unknown details found in the momentary lived experiences of professional practice.
- d) Gobet and Chassy reveal that there is empirical evidence that proves a close interrelation between an expert's contextual emotional responses and retrieved long-term memory. Furthermore, these emotional responses somewhat facilitate the expert's intuitive problem-solving and/or decision-making. (Gobet & Chassy, 2008: 133-137)

Gobet and Chassy's explanations lucidly shed light on the phenomenon of intuition in terms of what it entails as an experience and how it functions as a form of knowledge and way of knowing that is central to the notion of the [un]knowing director. A reading of their explanations of intuition, should also indicate the basic, if not key, resonances it bears with Tim Ingold (2000 & 2011) and Henri Bergson's (1907) ideas and conceptions of knowledge, particularly their perspectives that knowledge is evolutionary and accumulative, embodied and acquired through context-specific action(s) in response to the unforeseeable or non-predetermined emergences within a (professional) domain or environment. Intuition, and knowledge as generally considered and conceptualised by this study, are complex and dynamic in character to an extent that they should be defined in a way that encapsulates their interrelated yet varied character. This, in addition to developing an explication of the [un]knowing director, requires one to seek a definition of intuition that articulates such a character. Such a definition states that intuition:

[...] refers to a family of 'ways of knowing' that have in common a lack of clearly articulated comprehension or rationale, but which differ in a variety of other ways. Non-mystical members of this family include:

- *expertise* - the unreflective execution of intricate skilled performance;
- *implicit learning* - the acquisition of such expertise by non-conscious or non-conceptual means;
- *judgement* - making accurate decisions and categorizations without, at the time, being able to explain or justify them;
- *sensitivity* - a heightened attentiveness, both conscious and non-conscious, to

- details of a situation;
- *creativity* - the use of incubation and reverie to enhance problem-solving and
 - *rumination* - the process of 'chewing the cud' of experience in order to extract its meanings and implications. (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000:40, italics in original)

This definition of intuition is also useful for this study because a reading thereof does reveal, or at least suggests, certain key points about the [un]knowing director and their artistic practice. Having been mentioned in one way or another thus far in this chapter and beyond, the points follow:

- a) The [un]knowing director is defined by their engagement(s) with the artistic practice of directing within the context of devising performance. Relatedly, their artistic practice is of a professional nature, which is suggestive of their expertise.
- b) The [un]knowing director's expertise and/or level of skill, which is acquired over time, is one of the bearers or key variables of their intuition. Specifically, the [un]knowing director's intuition operates at the level of their decision-making within the context of their moment-to-moment participation in a devising process.
- c) The [u]knowing director's intuition is sparked, facilitated or catalysed by their acute attentiveness to the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising process.
- d) The [un]knowing director's intuitive decision-making is generally 'unconscious' and emergent in character. However, this does not necessarily suggest that the 'rational' aspect of their thought processes or decision-making is not operative. Instead, it is rather indicative of the general rapid nature of the [un]knowing director's intuitive decision-making and/or cognition.

Now, in addition to this study's fundamental appreciation of intuition, comes its fundamental appreciation and regard for (artistic) collaboration as one of its identified key ways of knowing with reference to its notion of the [un]knowing director as stated earlier. Similar to intuition, the word or concept of collaboration carries different meanings. Therefore, for the sake of clarity I will attempt to provide this study's sense of collaboration by defining it through sketching its basic manifestations. Such a sketching will partly be drawn from Mark Fleishman's MA

thesis on South Africa's workshop theatre (1991), which is engaged with in a bit more detail in the next chapter, and the collection of essays entitled *Problems of Participation: Reflections on Authority, Democracy, and the Struggle for Common Life* (Blencowe, Noorani & Brigstocke, 2013). These texts are chosen for their usefulness in aiding my attempt to sketch a sense of collaboration within this study's context.

The kind of collaboration that is applicable to this study is one that has its genealogy in South Africa's workshop theatre as argued for in the next chapter. Additionally, the kind of collaboration that is applicable to this study is rooted in the Southern African philosophical ethic and socio-cultural principle of *botho* and cultural practice of *letsema* as indicated in the preceding chapter. It is worth noting that *botho* and *letsema* are crucial conceptual and pragmatic pivots because these notions prescribe and particularise this study's undertaking of collaboration. Specifically, in this instance, the essential implication of *botho* and *letsema* is that they operate as the DNA of this study's conception of collaboration. In the same breath, the current study also finds Leopold Senghor's conception of African art as philosophy to be useful, particularly in terms of the 'social' quality of African art. This aspect of Senghor's philosophy speaks of how artistic practice is not a solitary, but fundamentally collective undertaking in one way or another. His perspective that artistic practice in an African context is collective in nature strongly resonates with the [un]knowing director's I-We perspective because:

[...] even if there are professional artists, 'all manifestations of art are collective, made for all with the participation of all'. Second, it is social in the sense that 'the artisan-poet is situated and engages, along with [themselves], [their] ethnic group, [their] geography' in the creation of 'significant forms' that *give life* to the socio-religious ceremonies [...]. The problem the artist faces is thus not [theirs] alone; it also the collective's and this is why, even though [they are] the sole *inventor* of the work, the *author* of the work is the community who *accomplishes* it. (Diagne, 2011:127-128, italics in original)

Diagne's above reference to Senghor gives an indication that Senghor generally

views African art as a creative practice that is characterised by the impossibility of a single 'author', so to speak. The current study finds this important because such a perspective and socio-cultural state of affairs certainly aids in providing an Africanist philosophical premise for what is later referred to as *co-authoring*, which is acutely characteristic of the [un]knowing director's particular sense of collaboration.

Furthermore, a continued reading of Diagne's (2011:127-132) analysis of Senghor's philosophy makes the point that Senghor's perspective about the 'social' quality of African art essentially argues for the inseparability of the subject-object dyad. My understanding is that such a perspective serves as a substantiation of his pursued "*alternative knowledge*" (Diagne, 2011:130, italics in original) that is premised on Bergson's philosophy in terms of Senghor's distinctive notions of the "*reason-eye*" and "*reason-embrace*" (Diagne, 2019:24).

It follows that the ensuing discussion on collaboration is really premised upon this study's sense of what it means for people to collaborate, especially considering the inherent complexities of (artistic) collaboration in terms of power relations at the least. However, I am of the view that the emergence of such complexities requires a particular response on the side of those who engage in collaboration. In this study's case, that refers to the [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators as they engage with the devising process moment-to-moment through a continuous attempt at applying what Polycarp Ikuenobe refers to as African communal ethics (2020). In defining these ethics, which are derived from *botho*, Ikuenobe states that they speak of a social context whereby: "The community and the conditions [...] it provides promote self-respect, solidarity, social-psychological support, health, security, caring, food, shelter, mutuality, and meaningful decision-making [...]" (2020:131).

I am aware of a possible critique of Ikuenobe's African communal ethics in

terms of their apparent over-simplified, generalised and arguably romantic nature. However, these ethics are useful in articulating this study's pivotal perspective of (artistic) collaboration. As such, this study's kind of (artistic) collaboration is fundamentally and appropriately akin to workshop theatre's fundamental characteristic of collectivity, i.e. collective performance/play-making (Fleishman 1991:70). Writers such as Stephen Wright (2004) seem to suggest that artistic collaboration is something that is not characterised by homogenous uniformity. He seems to be quite suspicious of artistic collaboration, as something that is, amongst other things, productively functional and characteristically distinguished by a general openness to difference(s) and heterogeneity (or diversity) of collaborating participants. Still, collectivity does not necessarily amount to homogeneity within the context of workshop theatre and as Fleishman rightfully states:

There is no way [...] in which it can be argued that a group of disparate human beings, however much they seem to subscribe to a particular unifying group identity or world-view, can be considered to be as homogeneous as a single individual with a singular vision. If it is a singular vision that is being sought, I would suggest the workshop method can hardly be expected to be an appropriate method by which to achieve such a vision. (1991:70)

I am consciously reiterating the point about heterogeneity, which further implies multiplicity, diversity and complexity, as a key characteristic of collaboration in this study's sense of the term. Furthermore, this is being done to reflect and articulate a position that this study is not at all naïve in its conceptualising of the [un]knowing director within the context of devising performance in terms of regarding both collaboration and the [un]knowing perspective in a myopic fashion devoid of any conceptual and experiential shortcomings and/or challenges. In fact, Fleishman's (1991:70-106) study of South African theatre's apartheid era phenomenon of workshop theatre, which provides a culture-specific, historical context for devising performance as applicable to this study, clearly reveals that:

[...] It is far more common for [workshop theatre] groups to operate either by appointing a leader or accepting as leader the individual around whom the group formed, or by some leader or controlling sub-group emerging through the process. What is important to emphasise is that a process of schism occurs within the group, usually quite early on in the process, between the group and certain powerful individuals or factions within the group. This is important because it forms the basis for an essential power relationship that operates through all workshop processes. (1991:73)

Furthermore, Fleishman makes the point that as much as workshop theatre is fundamentally characterised by collectivity, which could presume equality in power relations, workshop theatre is actually characterised by an ethos and practice of collectivity that is inherently shaped by inequality in power relations due to the following factors: (1) gender discrimination, (2) language, (3) life experience, (4) theatre experience, (5) class differences, (6) the actor/activist split (1991:96-106). Then, if one accepts South African theatre's workshop theatre as this study's artistic forebearer, one can accept that its notion of the [un]knowing director within the particular context of devising performance is embedded within an artistic collective practice that is not utopian and innocent with regards to power relations.

Because of the fact that this study did not, from its inception, aim to examine and eventually account for the specific manifestations of power relations in comparison to Fleishman's (1991) above-mentioned study, I can only acknowledge and agree with the following assertion to a general and not total extent, due to the existing distinct characteristics of the [un]knowing director and their particular context of devising as explicated thus far and elsewhere in this thesis:

[...] the process of [performance]-making in the workshop is not a neutral process in which equally empowered participants contribute. It is subject to a whole range of power struggles operating within the workshop. Some are struggles that transcend the specific workshop and reflect struggles for power within the society as a whole, others are specific to particular workshops and contexts. (1991:114)

In thinking through collaboration by providing a sense of how it aids the task of facilitating a conceptual specificity or clarity of the notion of the [un]knowing director within the context of devised performance, it became helpful to also think about

collaboration (collectivity/collective performance-making) through the lens of participation and authority as presented in Blencowe, Noorani & Brigstocke (2013). Such a line of thought follows from the above discussion that references Fleishman's study (1991). The bulk of contributions that appear in *Problems of Participation: Reflections on Authority, Democracy, and the Struggle for Common Life* fulfil the interesting task of offering an alternative perspective on authority in relation to collective and democratic participation, and vice versa, within the sphere of politics. For the sake of emphasis, it needs to be reiterated that collaboration is one of the key concepts in this study as mentioned earlier and evidenced later in this thesis. In this regard the word *collaboration* needs to be viewed beyond its general denotation. The denotation would render collaboration to be viewed as being contingent on the word *participation* simply because of my basic understanding that *collaboration* speaks of a heterogeneous group of people with a shared interest and goal of actively working together or partaking in a series of relevant variously skilled activities/actions to achieve their shared goal or satisfy their shared interest.

Additionally, *collaboration* in its most ideal form, is presumably characterised by an equal sharing of power by the collaborating participants. However, this study calls for an understanding and regard of the word *collaboration* as being interchangeable with the word *participation* as generally appreciated and viewed by most of the contributions that are found in Blencowe, Noorani and Brigstocke's co-edited book. To clarify my point regarding the interchangeable meaning of the words *collaboration* and *participation*, it is necessary to consider Jenny Pearce's following assertion about *participation* in light of this study's conceptualisation of the [un]knowing director in relation to *collaboration*:

Participation needs to expand and extend the domains of human cooperation and coactive power and win the trust of others. Co-producing authority through participation advances confidence in its approach to human endeavour. Non-dominating power

could itself gain authority as coercive power is reduced and its limiting effects on meaningful participation exposed. Thus, without participation, there is no impetus toward authority remaking. Without authority, participation remains the hobby of the enthusiast. (Pearce, 2013:18)

In my view, Pearce's above-mentioned assertion renders *collaboration* as understood by this study, contextually interchangeable with *participation* for the following reasons:

- 1) In the terms of the current study, the [un]knowing director is dependent on collaboration since collaboration fundamentally reconfigures the power dynamics of a performance devising process.
- 2) Such a reconfiguration of power dynamics manifests due to the [un]knowing director's pivotal ethos of a participatory authoring, or co-authoring, of a devising process's emergent knowledge in the form of momentary artistic discoveries and artistic decisions.
- 3) Thus, the [un]knowing director works with the notion of performer as creator, with reference to co-creating or co-authoring of a devised performance.
- 4) It follows then, that the [un]knowing director ideally shares power with their co-collaborators during a devising process. However, each participating collaborator differs at the level of role(s) (for example director, performer, choreographer, lighting designer, music composer etc.) and each role carries distinct responsibilities, expectations and is distinguished by a specific skill-set (knowledge).
- 5) The power dynamics that are facilitated by collaboration (as participation) require a commitment by a devising process's participants to the principle that there is no individual whose authority matters more than the co-constituted authority, shared by all of the participants. This is due to the symbiotic and co-constitutive/co-authoritative relationship that exists between the devising process and its participants, as discussed earlier in this study's current section.

Considering Fleishman's (1991) above-mentioned perspective about how power manifests itself within the context of workshop theatre and Pearce's perspective about *participation* and authority, it should be clear that *collaboration* poses as a concept that seems to characterise the collective act(s) of knowledge production as

a site(s) of power (authority) in the [un]knowing director's devising performance context. Furthermore, *collaboration* as viewed through the lens of *participation* calls for knowledge production to be a kind of site of power. I propose that for one to imagine or even fathom the kind of authority that *collaboration (participation)* calls for, it is useful to begin by seeking clarity as to what could be a fundamental requirement for *collaboration* to achieve its kind of authority, what Pearce refers to as its 'non-dominating' nature (2013:18). It needs to be noted that my sense of a non-dominating authority with reference to *collaboration*, does not at all imply or indicate that the [un]knowing director's kind of devising performance process lacks heterogeneity, diversity, difference or complexity. Rather, I am of the view that non-dominating authority as required by *collaboration* actually ensures heterogeneity, diversity, difference or complexity, particularly in terms of decision-making as applicable to the [un]knowing director. Indeed, I am making the point that *collaboration as participation* is something that cannot be oversimplified or underestimated in terms of how it could be achieved, because of my experiential awareness drawn from this study's directing instances. This oversimplification or underestimation speaks of a situation whereby *collaboration* would be treated as a given whenever a group of people, particularly artists, participate in a project of commonly shared interest i.e. a devised performance. Therefore, *collaboration* has two fundamental requirements that facilitate its attainment. The first, is *trust*, which Naomi Millner writes about as follows:

Trust is not only a matter of realising and legitimising the capacities of others. It also means establishing a 'space of trust' in which participants feel their involvement is structured and their contributions are respected. Establishing spaces of trust mean that individuals can feel confident to speak out in ways they are not used to, or take risks which make them feel vulnerable. [...] Trust in others and spaces of trust are best established when the participative process is seen as one of *inquiry*. There is a problem at stake identified by the facilitator, and others are 'co-investigators'. (2013:31-33, italics in original)

The details that Millner provides about *trust* resonate strongly with this study and its

type of *collaboration (participation)*. On one level, Millner's account indirectly refers to the [un]knowing director as a participating co-collaborator who facilitates a performance devising process from an inquiry perspective, which is exactly what the [un]knowing director is with reference to artistic knowledge co-production. On another level, Millner seems to make the point that for knowledge to be collaboratively produced, *trust* is a fundamental pre-requisite. Lastly, *trust* is a catalyst or tool geared towards the attaining of non-dominant authority with reference to *collaboration (participation)*.

The second fundamental requirement, which goes together with *trust*, is *ethos*, or specifically, an *ethos of participation*. Hence *trust* is contingent upon an *ethos of participation* because:

[...] part of an ethos for participation entails an act of giving *trust*. Only when the facilitator of a participative process actively trusts the current knowledge and abilities of those taking part can a solution be created which is able to successfully invite [co-] participants into a process, and move beyond the framing or interests of a narrow group of people. (Millner, 2013:27, italics in original)

Earlier in the current discussion about *collaboration (participation)* and authority, one of the deductions made was that the devising process is arguably the actual authority due to the symbiotic interrelationship it shares with its participants. The referred-to deduction is also arrived at due to its fundamental consistency with this study's pivotal I-We epistemology that is mentioned in the preceding chapter and that will be further discussed in the methodology chapter.

This study's I-We epistemological perspective also characterises the depth of importance found in *collaboration (participation)* and its accompanying authority, specifically with reference to devising performance as conceptualised by this study.

With the above having been stated, it is also necessary for this study to consider

Blencowe's view that:

Authority derives from people having different knowledges and experiences. We grant authority to others because we suspect that they know better than we do, or have access to some reality that is beyond us – be that access to insider knowledge or the objective facts, to the big picture or the strings of power in an institution. Authority is generally tied to particular circumstances or types of question – I'm an authority in this situation, you're an authority in that. It isn't something that we possess as individuals but rather comes from the different relationships we have to realities that lie outside of us. (2013a:38)

The necessity to consider Blencowe's afore-mentioned view of authority lies in how it problematises this study's articulated understanding of authority with reference to *collaboration (participation)*, particularly in terms of knowledge production. Generally, I do concur with and accept Blencowe's view about participatory knowledge with reference to democracy as expressed in her essay. Furthermore, as articulated earlier, I also concur with the view that authority, at least the kind that resonates with this study's notion of the [un]knowing director, is co-constituted through participation. However, one of the fundamental points of development that I propose between Blencowe's view and this study's conceptualisation is that this study would regard authority as being a result of the different knowledges and experiences (both equating to skill) that the participating co-collaborators bring with them into the process *and*, in addition, the roles they play/occupy in the process of devising. Therefore, authority from the [un]knowing director's perspective and in the context of devising performance is also derived from the different roles that a director and their co-collaborators play, which challenges the view of authority as only being a derivative of different knowledges and experiences that they have acquired prior to their participation and outside of their participation. It is important to make this point because it is also intended to articulate a view that non-dominant, co-constituted authority is reliant on a participatory approach that is geared towards an equitable buy-in and ownership of an authoritative participatory undertaking of a 'special' kind.

Instead of easily accepting the view that authority is something that arises circumstantially on the basis of different relationships that people have outside of themselves as posited by Blencowe, which I do accept based on its context, this study holds a different view due to its particular conceptualisation of the [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators' 'reality' of their particular devising performance context.

My dis-ease, or perhaps contention with Blencowe's view lies in an understanding that the [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators are partly constituted by the very context of their kind of devising performance process and they in turn constitute their devising performance process. Contextually, then, there is no devising performance process without the [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators and vice versa, since both share a symbiotic, vital and emergent relationship. Therefore, Blencowe's notion of *objectivity*, specifically as argued for and conceptualised through her interesting notion of *biopolitical authority* that is lucidly coined in her article entitled *Biopolitical authority, objectivity and the groundwork of modern citizenship* (2013b:20-26), is perhaps narrow as an explication of authoritative participation viewed from the [un]knowing perspective. This is mainly because *objectivity* refers to the exact concept of something that exists 'outside' of people's (members of a community, citizens of a country, co-participants/co-collaborators etc.) immediate, tangible, conscious or material realities that determines and/or facilitates their collectivity. Thus, the [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators' authoritative participation is 'inwardly' constituted instead of 'outwardly' by virtue of their collaborative being 'inside' the practice and the emergent process of a particular devising performance.

At this point it should be evident that this study's notion of the [un]knowing

director is embedded within the discourse of knowledge in one way or the other. Nevertheless, its explication of the [un]knowing director has not overtly dealt with epistemology, which is the 'formal' theory of knowledge. The reason for this is that this study's primary examined terrain is not formally located within the field of epistemology. This study offers an articulation of epistemology that does not satisfy the discursive conventions and content of 'formal' epistemology. At most, the preceding chapter has put forward this study's pivotal I-We ontological and epistemological perspective that is derived from the Southern African philosophy of *botho*. Thus, my reading of the literature that strictly deals with epistemology, especially as found in books such as Michael Huemer's edited collection, *Epistemology: Contemporary Readings* (2002); Paul K Moser's edited collection, *The Oxford Handbook of Epistemology* (2002); Duncan Pritchard's, *What Is This Thing Called Knowledge?* (2006); Keith Hossack's, *The Metaphysics of Knowledge* (2007); Tamara Horowitz's, *The Epistemology of a Priori Knowledge* (2007); and Noah Lemos's, *An Introduction to The Theory of Knowledge* (2007), did not quite benefit this study other than being indicative of 'mainstream' debates in 'formal' epistemology. Furthermore, these texts were also not useful in aiding this study in providing it with the appropriate conceptual tools and vocabulary needed to elucidate its notion of the [un]knowing director. It should come as no surprise that the literature of mainstream epistemology was not very useful to this study, because the concept of the [un]knowing director clearly resonates with the discourses of process, particularly those offered by Bergson (1907), Ingold (2000 & 2011) and Senghor (Diagne, 2011 & 2019), which have in turn facilitated its location in the realm of the non-representational. Conversely, the bulk of the literature on epistemology strongly resides in the realm of representational knowledge. I think that there is nothing

wrong with such a state of affairs. The issue that this study has with representational epistemology, however, is its usefulness and conceptual appropriateness about the subject under discussion. Therefore, one needs to briefly discuss an appropriate text that explicitly deals with non-representational epistemology. Such a discussion is viewed as being a necessary act to reiterate and concretise the conceptual explication of the [un]knowing director in light of its non-representational explanatory tenets mentioned.

Warren G. Frisina's *The Unity Of Knowledge And Action: toward a nonrepresentational theory of knowledge* (2002), is a text that elaborately and systematically argues for an epistemology that challenges the dominant pattern of the Western philosophical premise that supports the known Cartesian and Platonic dichotomies in the general discourse of self, perception, experience and knowledge. Frisina argues the grounds for a non-representational theory of knowledge by lucidly outlining the shortcomings of Western philosophy's traditional and foundational tendencies about the characteristics of human knowledge and how it is acquired. His thesis is that knowledge is non-representational, based on his analysis of the Chinese philosophical tradition. The core of Frisina's thesis is drawn from the Neo-Confucian scholar, Wang Yang-ming, whose philosophical undertakings eventuated in the coinage of his slogan, *chih hsing ho-i*, which translates into *the unity of knowledge and action* (Frisina, 2002). It needs to be clarified that Yang-ming's *chih hsing ho-i* was not necessarily meant to discredit or challenge Western representational epistemology. Rather, it is a doctrine that was intended for pedagogical interests based on his personal-scholarly developments within the Confucian philosophical discourses of his time (Frisina, 2002).

Wang Yang-ming observed that most of his contemporaries tended to

articulate the fundamentals of Chinese philosophy (Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist), but still fell into the trap of a skewed ontological perspective that did not acknowledge the reality of the inseparability of knowledge and action. The Confucian philosophy, to provide a brief explanation, is a Chinese spiritual philosophy that is akin to the Taoist and Buddhist philosophical traditions due to their shared fundamentals. Wang Yang-ming's philosophical project is an articulation of his essential view about what the Confucian philosophical doctrine of knowledge is really about, which is that "[k]nowledge... is not just 'in the head'; it is a way of being in relation to that which is real [since] we know that knowledge is action because the correction of knowledge entails the renovation of ourselves" (Frisina, 2002:76).

Yang-ming's slogan, as discussed in Frisina's thesis of a non-representational epistemology, essentially stems from his Confucian perspective that: (a) the subject-object (internalised human-external world) dualism is a monumental fallacy; and (b) an individual acquires knowledge of the world through being part and parcel of the world. Such a world, according to Confucian philosophy, is consistent with the state of movements that are prompted by the universe's character of ceaseless creation and production. Therefore, according to Wang Yang-ming's Confucian perspective, knowledge is action and it is this key philosophical principle that Frisina explains and uses in his conception and substantiation of a non-representational epistemology.

Frisina constructs his central argument by weaving the threads found between Wang Yang-ming's key philosophical views and the views of identified and appropriate key Western philosophers, namely John Dewey, Alfred North Whitehead, Charles Taylor, Donald Davidson, Richard Rorty and Daniel Dennett. As evidenced through his text, Frisina's choice of Western philosophers is based on how they aid in developing and substantiating his non-representationalist

philosophical project. However, his discussions are not at all naïve or ill-considered, because of his clear demonstration and articulation of the philosophical similarities and differences of these scholars. Drawing from his discussions of Charles Taylor, John Dewey and Alfred North Whitehead's non-representational contributions to Western philosophy and in relation to Wang Yang-ming's *chih hsing ho-i* slogan i.e. *the unity of knowledge and action*, Frisina's text offers three major points that are considered useful to this study in terms of sustaining a philosophical consistency in explicating the notion of the [un]knowing director. Firstly, is the point that non-representational theory of knowledge entails a radical revision of the Platonic and Cartesian representational notions of self and knowledge that thrive on the dichotomies of subject and object, the knower and the known. Such a revision is firstly achieved through Charles Taylor in that he problematises Western philosophy's limited notion of self, which essentially accepts the possibility of an 'interior' self that operates separately from the 'external' world. Relatedly, Frisina states that:

[b]y locating mental states within a so-called inner space, knowledge is lifted clean out of the realm of action. The mind's "inner eye" seems to observe the external world from a metaphysical distance and the vital link between knowledge and action becomes obscure. (Frisina, 2002:19)

In addition to Taylor's efforts of challenging the above-mentioned problematic foundation found in the representational 'camp' of Western philosophy, some aspects of Alfred North Whitehead and John Dewey's philosophies also assist Frisina's non-representational project. For starters, both Whitehead and Dewey place value in relation to the self's formation of identity. Such value also translates into the affective aspect of how humans (and possibly non-humans) relate to their surroundings. A consideration of value in relation to selfhood calls for Western representational epistemology to (re)consider knowledge as something that is

derived, i.e. something that is a product of mutual (inter)action between entities rendering the subject-object dichotomy to be problematic, invalid and implausible. It is worth noting that this perspective about the invalidity, implausibility and problematic nature of the Platonic and Cartesian subject-object schism, resonates with Senghor's Bergson-inspired epistemology of Negritude with reference to how African epistemology is fundamentally opposed to such a schism (Thiam 2014 & Diagne 2011). Secondly, which in a sense is related to the first point, Frisina's text mentions that Whitehead and Dewey share some agreement in their philosophies' conception of (subjective) experience in that both philosophers consider it integral to knowledge. Despite differences that exist between Dewey and Whitehead's conceptions of experience, what is more important is their challenge to representational epistemology that "... we reimagine what we mean by experience. Like Taylor, their goal is to describe experience so that it is inclusive of those things without which it would be difficult to make sense of our lives" (Frisina, 2002:26). Additionally, the key similarities found in Whitehead and Dewey's conceptions of experiences are that (1) both favour philosophical metaphors of processes and organisms as opposed to substances, and (2), both vehemently contest the subject-object/schema-content dichotomies by describing subjective experience as a non-dualistic process of causality and continuity in the sphere of subject-object creation or emergence (Frisina, 2002:101-140). Thirdly, non-representational theory proposes a conception of self as something that does not refer to a complete, closed or static entity since,

[...] there is no perspective from which to view the self as a "formed, unified, present, self-contained substance, something capable of being seen steadily and whole"... because we are constantly engaged in the task of remaking ourselves in response to the changes in our situation. [Additionally], the self is best described as a set of transactions that share certain commonalities but that are also continuous with the transactions constituting the self's broader environmental context. (Frisina, 2002:41)

If one considers the essence of this study's concept of the [un]knowing director in relation to the realities of how directing practice is generally realised—particularly with reference to how a theatre director tends to work within constraints that should nevertheless result in a 'complete' product(ion), i.e. a 'complete' performance that is to be presented to an audience—the above might easily appear to be a utopian, implausible or unfathomable concept. The seeming foundations of this possible utopian status are admittedly a result of this study's conception of the [un]knowing director through its conceptual allegiance to, and affinity for, non-representational, process, organismic and evolutionist philosophical ideas that essentially favour ceaseless change, which then gives rise to a question: can the [un]knowing director's work—given their professional obligation and the limitations of devising a 'complete' production—reach completion?

This study, then, is of the view that its concept of the [un]knowing director within the context of devising performance is a particular theoretical perspective that is located within a socio-cultural context. It is guided by what a director is and how a director ought to go about undertaking their practice while also developing a conception of what knowledge is and how it can be acquired within the context of a professional domain.

Based on this perspective of theatre directing practice, this study's notion of the [un]knowing director challenges the construct of theatre directing practice as being merely characterised by a director's mounting of a 'complete' theatre product(ion) that starts and ends at a designated point. Through this study's notion of the [un]knowing director, the current capitalist world's market-driven constructs and models of artistic product(ion)s can be debunked and problematised. This can be achieved by appreciating the experiential nuances of theatre directing practice,

particularly within the context of devising performance from a post-apartheid South African perspective. The referred-to nuances are non-representational, process-focused, organic and evolutionary in character in addition to fundamentally not being 'time' bound, pre-deterministic and destination-oriented. As much as a theatre director, whether within the context of devising or not, is obliged to create and present a 'complete' product(ion) within a certain time frame, this study calls for a reconsideration of what it could mean to be a director within the context of devised performance from a post-apartheid South African perspective. The following notes, then, encapsulate this study's concept of the [un]knowing director and its perception of devised performance, which constitute my understanding of and approach to this study's examination:

- 1) The [un]knowing director is an intuitive practitioner.
- 2) The devising process is a landscape through and/or within which its participants i.e. the [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators emerge, travel and engage.
- 3) Such a landscape is not pre-formed; it does not pre-exist to be travelled through. It emerges as the devising process goes on.
- 4) The [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators bring skill to the landscape that is derived from previous experience(s) in/with such landscapes, but their knowledge of the landscape in each particular process emerges through constant engagement as they travel along from place to place.
- 5) In this sense travel as *wayfinding* happens through *wayfaring* in a state of [un]knowing and the paths, points or destination only become known through the process or experience(s) of travelling *alongly*.
- 6) The [un]knowing director accumulatively acquires knowledge of their environment in and through action (*movement*).
- 7) The [un]knowing director's process (practice) is *durational*.
- 8) The [un]knowing director employs a *rhythmic attitude* in their momentary engagement with

the devising process.

This chapter has consciously attempted to provide the necessary details that articulate this study's conception of the [un]knowing director in addition to painting the landscape of its specific context of devising performance. Moreover, it is through such an articulation that this study's understanding and/or perception of knowledge, particularly both in terms of what it is and how it can be acquired, is argued for.

Trusting that this chapter has laid the necessary theoretical explication of the [un]knowing director, this thesis proceeds by a discussion of reviewed literature as a continuation of developing its context in relation to the terrains of theatre directing and devising performance.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature that is engaged with in this chapter is aimed at locating this study within the discourse of devising performance and directing practice with reference to the notion of an [un]knowing director. This review is not systematic in its treatment and manner of sketching the two terrains that are devising performance and directing. This is because this study does not perceive the practices of devising performance and directing as islands that exist independently. The assumed and apparent coexistence and symbiosis of these two practices, as indicated by this study's framework, is key in facilitating an understanding of what it envisages to illuminate and propose. Therefore the reader is asked to view the cited literature about devising performance and directing practice not as polarities, but as constituent related strands. This study, in fact, regards devising performance as a theory-practice context amongst other contexts within which directing practice is located.

In relation to what has been articulated as this study's background, specifically my account of what has led me to propose the notion of an [un]knowing director, perhaps it is appropriate to commence by considering existing literary views on directing practice. As a way of acquiring a broad, yet solid comprehension of directing practice, one needs to appreciate and acknowledge the varied array of literature on the subject. This suggests that directing practice is of a complex nature, practically and theoretically, particularly based on a consideration of its 'recorded' or documented genesis and evolution mainly by some relevant Euro-American scholars and practitioners dedicated to expounding directing. A shared view of the literature is that its theorising of directing practice in terms of classification and/or definition, is based on role or function, i.e. the director's roles or functions within the discipline of

theatre. These roles and functions are viewed in relation to other artistic stakeholders (playwrights, actors, scenic designers, costume designers etc.) whose efforts also contribute to the realisation of a theatrical event or performance.

Regarding the aspect of the director's genesis, particularly from a Western perspective, there are two general views. One view is that the director has always been a part of theatre from its inception as a practice. In other words,

[t]he director, under one title or another, undoubtedly has always existed in the theatre, for [their] function is essential and can be performed by no other artist. [They] may conceal [their] art under the title of another, as did the Greek playwrights who were both poet and director, but [they are] usually present. In fact ... [a] fascinating document from sixteenth century Italy, the *Dialogues of Di Somi*, a professional director, provides additional proof of the continuing existence of the theatrical director. [Additionally,] ... records of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries leave little doubt that the director is a vital functionary of the modern theatre, but as our brief history demonstrates, [they have] always been so. (Staub, 1973:14-15)

In responding to the scholarly need to survey the territory of directing practice broadly, spurred by a wondering about whether the emergence and existence of the practice could be totally attributed to the Euro-American scholarly and/or artistic pursuits, one has come across an African scholarly contribution which also affirms the above view. According to Abdul Rasheed Adeoye,

If [...] the theatre directing that exists in the traditional African theatre is collaborative, communal and corporate then, we must insist that there is no reason to conclude that the theatre director cannot be found in the traditional African theatre. This is because collaboration is the main hub of play directing. Any artist who acts as a catalyst in the play production process is nothing but a great collaborator in performance articulation. (2010:90)

On the contrary, another view regarding the genesis of directing practice is that it is a phenomenon of the modernist project i.e. Western modernism. Such a view can be found in assertions such as:

The advent of modern naturalism at the end of the nineteenth century brought the director into being. [...] So the director's first function was to transform virtual solos into part of an orchestrated work. When choice of scenic effect, flexibility and realism of action, spontaneity of speech demanded an arranger and arbiter, the prototype of the modern director came into being, and [their] influence and responsibility has increased ever since. It is unthinkable that a play should be presented without having been first interpreted and then realized by the director. (Morrison, 1973:3)

I propose that it is vital to appreciate the two views regarding the genesis of directing

practice, or the director, not for their evident difference, but for their significant innuendo. Beyond their difference, these views are illustrative of the varied perspectives on/of directing. Indeed, one notes from the literature that directing practice, like other practices that constitute theatre as a discipline, is and has always been in a state of evolution. Such an evolution is exciting as it inherently creates room for further debates, investigative processes and spheres of re-imaginings, which is what this study aims towards. It is in relation to the specified evolution that one must note how views by Staub (1973), Adeoye (2010) and part of Cody and Schneider's (2002) thoughts about the theorising of directing, offer subtle or pronounced and direct or indirect thoughtful statements suggesting the following:

- 1) The emergence of directing practice, as characterised by a director's multifaceted roles, is a phenomenon that is parallel to the existence of theatre.
- 2) The literary 'canonical' predisposition of purporting 'the director' as a Euro-American construct could be narrow and problematic.

Our present age, irrespective of the 'ism(s)' that would best describe it, is characterised by an inclination to evade binaries and narrow generalisations, which makes it necessary to continue this review by sincerely reiterating that "[...] the role and category of the director [...] has never been absolutely stable—not, that is, if stability resembles stasis. Experimentation has always been basic to the role" (Cody & Schneider, 2002:8). It is within the realm of experimentation identified by Cody and Schneider, in terms of positing a philosophical perspective, that my proposed concept of the [un]knowing director pays homage and finds location. Therefore, this study's interest lies in transcending the potential dichotomies that are found in the views that characterise ways in which directing practice has been generally theorised

over the years. As such, it grapples with directing through proposing why and how a director is, or could be, an [un]knowing figure.

The literature on directing practice clearly points to how directing can be explicated by noting sound schools of thought, which I would like to refer to as the *orthodox* and *contemporary* schools. I still emphasise the need to consider these schools not in opposition to each other, but as two points on the continuum of directing because such a consideration could facilitate an evolution of directing practice. Thus, the two schools of thought are better considered not in terms of temporal sequencing, but as theory-practice emergences within and along the terrain of directing. This proposed consideration also borrows from how devising performance and directing practices are regarded by this study's conceptual framework.

The *orthodox* school of thought, in its variations over time, is quite assertive in viewing a director as a theatre practitioner whose major role is to interpret a play text through rehearsals and the production process, with the goal of satisfying a playwright's or dramatist's intentions captured in that text. Additionally, it is of the view that a director is responsible for coordinating and harmonising the creative efforts of actors, scenic designers, costume designers etc. with the intention of creating a unified and final picture in the form of a theatre performance. Central to the *orthodox* school of thought's well-grounded perception of a director, is its view that "[t]he director is the master of all arts of the theatre ... [,they are] the core artist" (Staub, 1973:16); and "[t]he director is the helmsman of the theatre, [they pilot] the ship of the theatrical production, avoiding shoals and reefs [...]" (Tairov, 1969:90-91). Interestingly, the *orthodox* school of thought gives a firm impression that a director needs to have a predetermined plan that is based on their concept or directorial

interpretation of a play text. Such a predetermined plan provides a specific artistic framework that determines the nature of the rehearsal process and ultimately the predetermined theatre production. One fully appreciates this kind of a conception for its role in constituting a discourse of directing practice while also providing a lens for the idea of an [un]knowing director in relation to how this study's conceptual framework has posited the idea. It is necessary to mention that this school of thought's view of directing does not disregard the collaborative aspect of creating a theatrical performance. This, in relation to my study's conceptual framework, illustrates how the [un]knowing director is not entirely unique to devising performance, specifically with reference to a reliance on and inclination to a collaborative directing ethos. This, then, could be indicative of the possibility that directing is inherently a collaborative undertaking irrespective of whether one works with a predetermined plan or not. Based on my directorial undertakings and the forthcoming reviewed literature on devising performance, one can assert that directing is inherently collaborative, which then tentatively makes the idea of an [un]knowing director a plausible perspective for directing practice. However, I do acknowledge that the notion of an [un]knowing director is arguably more prevalent within the context of devised performance as indicated by this study's conceptual framework, methodology and data analysis sections.

The *contemporary* school of directing, as previously suggested, is best considered as another point within and along the terrain of directing. It comprises of directorial practices that the literature regards as aligned to the emergence of a contemporary (or post-modern) theatre. Relative to the *orthodox* school, the *contemporary* school of thought offers the view that a director's role is not primarily one of satisfying a playwright or dramatist's intention(s) through interpreting, but one

of creating a unique theatrical performance (Sidiropoulou, 2011:2). Essentially, this school is of a theatre whose director promotes a shifting of power from the solely literary, verbal, linear and homogenous modes by aligning with one whose directorial,

[...] key elements include the celebration of deconstruction, anti-textuality, hybridization, and heterogeneity. [A theatre wherein] [a]nti-mimetic, ritualistic, and physical performances draw on the principles of cubism to construct jarringly dissimilar events, which the spectator is invited to view from multiple angles. (Sidiropoulou, 2011:3)

The idea of a director-auteur appears to be a category or classification of directing practice according to the *contemporary* school of thought. It is a notion whose genesis is attributed to the efforts of theatre theorists and practitioners “such as Edward Gordon Craig, Adolphe Appia, Max Reinhardt, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Bertolt Brecht, and Antonin Artaud” (Sidiropoulou, 2011:3). The branch of auteurship cannot be solely attributed to the theoretical or philosophical grounds of one individual. Like other human-related phenomena, particularly those located within the arts, it is a result of various factors. One of these factors is the influence of philosophy on culture and/or vice versa. With specific reference to auteurship in directing, the philosophical influences generated through the *death of the author project* by Roland Barthes (1977:142-148) and others, facilitated a state whereby,

[i]nevitably, the reinvention of theatrical language and critiquing of canonical dramatic works, which Artaud had notoriously defamed as “masterpieces,” presupposed an investment in a performance text emerging out of the collaborative intuitions of all the artists involved in its making but ultimately bearing the signature of a director, who would no longer act simply as a privileged stage manager of slightly increased artistic responsibilities. Notwithstanding the enthusiastic, for the most part, acknowledgment of the director’s new function, no one can deny that the pyramid of interpretation in the theatre has undergone a dramatic reversal, replacing the author, hitherto posing at the highest tip of the pyramid, as the exclusive interpreter of the world, with the director-auteur as the new author[ity]. (Sidiropoulou, 2011:5)

Some prominent Euro-American twentieth and twenty-first century practitioners (director-auteurs) such as Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brook, Eugenio Barba, Richard Schechner, Robert Wilson, Elizabeth LeCompte and Robert Lepage, just to mention

a few, have taken their predecessors' baton and continued to create a theatre that characterises the *contemporary* school of thought's view(s) on directing practice.

The South African theatre practice spectrum, with reference to auteurship and in relation to the Euro-American theory-practice landscape, has a lineage arguably dating from the 1970s and continues to exist through theatre performances offered by a myriad directors such as Barney Simon, Athol Fugard, Malcolm Purkey, Christopher Weare, James Ngcobo, Liz Mills, Marthinus Basson, Stephanie Brink, Mark Fleishman, Geoffery Hyland, Jay Pather, Aubrey Sekhabi, Nico Luwes, Gerben Kamper, Yael Farber, Mandla Mbothwe, Kim Kerfoot, Lara Bye, Mwenya Kabwe, Warren Nebe, Monageng Vice Motshabi, Warona Seane, Neil Coppen, Khomotso Matsunyane, Jefferson Tshabalala, Khutjo Green, Sandra Temmingh, Mncedisi Shabangu, Ookeditse Phala, Lara Foot, Thando Doni, Claire Stopford and many other professional and semi-professional practitioners in mainstream, alternative theatres and other performance platforms. This points to the widespread currency of auteurship, which does not mean that directing practice as viewed by what I have termed as the *orthodox* school of thought has been or is extinguished. In fact, present-day directing practice in South Africa at least, is constituted by practices that inform, constitute and characterise both schools of thought, thus resulting in its varied, complex, dynamic and non-static nature in South Africa and globally.

Explanations of what is meant by the *orthodox* and *contemporary* schools of thought that constitute directing as a discourse have been offered earlier on in this review. As mentioned, these schools refer to the director's role as a way of defining directing practice. It is worth reiterating that the reviewed literature on directing indicates shared similarities that could be illuminated with reference to examples. On the one hand, the literature concurs that a director is not solely defined by role in

relation to their co-collaborators, but also by specific principles that are essential to the realisation of a 'unified' theatrical performance and an audience's experience. Thus, directing practice is premised on the basic concept of unity, its subsidiary notion of coherence and realisation through "*Emphasis and Selectivity, Proportion, Rearrangement and Intensification*", all of which are identified as basic (fine) art-making principles (Carra & Dean, 1980:4-6). As evidenced by the reviewed literature, there are no set rules about how these principles of directing should be realised. However, this does not mean that directing practice is non-defined other than according to the varied perspectives on a director's role(s). Therefore, directing practice is defined by a director's focus on, interest in and interaction with elements of the theatre, and performance broadly, namely:

- a) The theatre-visual ... [, which] is all that part of the theatre which appeals directly to the eye.
- b) The theatre auditory ... [, which] is that component which makes its chief appeal to the ear.
- c) The theatre kinetic ... [, which is], the theatre as movement. (Staub, 1973:2-5)

These elements evidently define directing practice, as they constitute the foundation and premise of the role(s) that a director plays in relation to different stakeholders of the theatre or co-collaborators involved in the venture of creating a theatre performance. Informed by various writings on directing, coupled with personal experiences of directing through my directorial undertakings and conversations with other South African theatre directors, one can assert that the three above-mentioned elements are those around which theatre directing practice pivots irrespective of the multiple ways in which they are made sense of and practically satisfied by individual directors. The various methods and strategies of directing, despite their primary focus on play interpretation, play creation and/or performance-making, articulate the primacy of a director as a figure whose task is to organically, strategically or systematically integrate the collaboratively generated visual, auditory and kinetic

artistic elements and materials of the theatre.

In addition to these three elements that generally prescribe a director's artistic practice, it needs to be mentioned that a director's practice is also generally articulated by their dealings with a performance space's architecture or spatial configuration, which could somehow be associated with Staub's (1973:2) theatre-visual element. Specifically, directors work within the domains of proscenium, thrust, arena stage and/or environmental theatres. The latter is defined as, "found natural or architectural spaces [that] may use various combinations of the [proscenium, arena and thrust stages]" (Boretz & O'Neill, 1987:4-6). These basic spatial configurations, including those that are characteristic of other traditionally non-conventional sites of performance (restaurants, shopping malls, recreational parks, hospitals, prisons etc.), indicate that a director also deals with directorial artistic fundamentals referred to by Carra and Dean as composition, picturisation, movement, rhythm and pantomimic dramatization (1980:94-250). Although Carra and Dean's five fundamentals are with reference to directing a play text, which is only but one context and facet of directing practice, a director is arguably bound to variably deal with them within the broader context of engaging with or realising Staub's (1973) suggested visual, auditory and kinetic key elements. Given the fact that performance is no longer solely defined by conventionally staged theatre performances, coupled with the complex and varied nature of directing, a director's engagement with the visual, auditory and kinetic elements of the theatre and performance can be realised in numerous ways. This also implies that there is no inflexible rubric as to how a director can satisfy the fundamentals of directing a theatre performance.

The second similarity that is shared by this study's reviewed literature illustrates how the discourse of directing also comprises of theoretical perspectives

resulting from scholarly and/or artistic observations, considerations or reflections on practice by certain individual directors. It is interesting to note that these theoretical perspectives cut across a wide spectrum and lie on the continuum of directing practice between the *orthodox* and *contemporary* schools of thought as illustrated by Schechner (1973), Ball (1984), Cole (1992), Mitter (1992), Cody & Schneider (2002), Mitchell (2009), Barba (2010) etc.

An analysis of the literature, particularly with reference to the aspect of theorising directing in terms of scholarly and/or artistic observations, considerations and reflections on practice, further confirms and illustrates the following:

- a) Directing practice is reliant on specific fundamentals or principles that render it to be an art form.
- b) Directing, consciously (directly) or subconsciously (indirectly) purports a strong theory-practice synergy or interrelation.
- c) Directing theoretical notions (director as auteur, director as dramaturge, director as facilitator etc.) vary and are influenced by politics, culture, critical theory, a director's artistic orientation and predetermined or unforeseeable professional trajectory etc.
- d) Directing practice is task-based, irrespective of a director's choice of theatrical form, choice of performance site and the site's architecture or spatial configuration, choice of text (play text), the text's genre, and whether a director works with a predetermined text or devises from scratch etc.

Indeed, various ways of a director's dealings with the visual, auditory and kinetic elements of the theatre (Staub, 1973), in addition to satisfying the fundamentals of directing (Dean & Carra, 1980), are articulated in the form of practical exercises, interviews and written reflexive accounts of and/or by various Euro-American directors. Discussing all of these accounts and referring to all of the documented practical exercises is superfluous because such an activity will only point to the manner in which directing is rich, complex and varied, which has been sufficiently

reiterated. Therefore, my choice of exemplary accounts that are indicative of directing theories emanating from certain individual director's observations, considerations and reflections on their practice is based on an identified resonance with my own directorial practice, which forms part of this study's methodological strand.

This review suggests a stance that directing practice is based on certain principles and that these principles evidently emanate from principles of (fine) art (Dean & Carra, 1980) and other scholarly and/or artistic examinations. This stance is not implausible due to practice-based realisations by scholar-practitioners such as Richard Schechner whose artistic undertakings with *The Performance Group* in addition to his scholarly interests in the areas of "anthropology, social psychology, psychoanalysis, and gestalt therapy [were] the bases of [his] belief that *performance theory* is a social science, not a branch of aesthetics" (1973:vii). Schechner's belief offers room for a debate that this review will not enter due to its focus. What is more interesting and useful to this study is his realisation that:

I know that when I direct a play, I get totally absorbed in its web of themes, moods, actions, and people. And that writing about directing is the hardest thing for me to do because I know that everything I say is subjective. My theories bend like light around a strong gravitational source - the play I am currently directing. [...] As I direct I do not stand off from the play I am working on or from the performers. I do not measure my responses beforehand. I don't come into rehearsals with a prompt-book under my arm, literally or figuratively. I get inside the play I am directing at a level that determines the rest of my life. I don't do this willfully. It happens because I love every play I direct, grow to know it intimately, and experience its faults as well as its beauties and pleasures. And each time I direct a play, I proclaim a method only to find out when I am finished that what I've found out is not something general but the particular ways of directing the play I've directed. Looking back over the years of working in environmental theatre, I don't despair acknowledging that my own way of directing remains a mystery to me. Self-awareness is the hardest thing to achieve, and I have not achieved it. What I can write about are some specific techniques. (1973:287)

Schechner's account illustrates how I have arrived at a point of suggesting that theoretical perspectives that are based on a certain director's individual scholarly-artistic observations and reflections on practice do explicate directing practice to some extent. My understanding is that Schechner, at least at a point in his directorial

career dominated by working with *The Performance Group*, suggests a theory-practice-based perspective of directing that is (self-) conscious or reflexive, insider-orientated and evolutionary in character. The fact that he wears the scholar-artistic practitioner hat, somewhat illustrates the theory-practice character of directing. His account also points to the challenge of particularising directing practice based on an individual director's experiences because of the unavoidably subjective nature of directing, which is common to other artistic undertakings. This, in consideration of the points regarding directing, leads to the reality of a shared acceptance of existing basic principles or fundamentals of directing, and non-universal or individually held ideologies or theories that inform directing strategies, methods etc., and these constitute directing practice within the Euro-American sphere. My inclination towards Schechner and other directors whose practice relates to the above-mentioned perspective (Bell, 1984, Barba, 2012, Bogart, 2001 etc.), is derived from a sense of how it pictures directing to be a practice of an organic character that enfolds and absorbs a director and their co-collaborators in the act of creating a theatrical performance. This does not mean that the path of directing does not have potholes or that directing is independent of analytical cognition and does not require skill. Rather, I find an aspect of Schechner's reflection to be quite akin to this study's notion of an [un]knowing director, particularly its aspect of a director moving within and along the landscape that is the process of creating a performance as it unfolds i.e. without predetermining or predicting its contours and outcome.

Jessica Lejowa's MA Research Report entitled, *Shifting understandings of performance practice in an African context through auto-ethnography* (2010), posits unknowing as a possible methodology that can be employed when devising performance from a director's perspective. Her argument, amongst other factors,

spurred my initial thinking about the notion of an [un]knowing director, as it was the first account that I came across which explicitly expressed a director's experiences of devising performance and regarded unknowing as a fundamental characteristic of those experiences. Lejowa's MA Report is based on three theatre performances that she directed and devised in collaboration with her respective co-collaborators, specifically performers, over a period of two years. In concluding her research findings, Lejowa states that:

[...] I have come to regard beginning a [devising] process without knowing how to do it, what in fact is being investigated, and what the investigation will yield, as a methodology. I began *Even as I walk* [one of her collaboratively devised theatre works] with a vague idea, but did not know how I would dramatise the idea, nor did I know whether the process would yield anything that could be engaged with robustly for its theatricality, its concept, its subject matter. (2010: 74-5)

Thus, Lejowa's thesis posits the notion of an [un]knowing director within the context of devising performance practice. Her theoretical proposition about devising performance, which is constructed through her research, also shares some key characteristics with those offered by Oddey (1994); Bicat and Baldwin (2002), and Heddon and Milling (2006).

Similar to Lejowa (2010), Anne Bogart (2001) also provides an indication that unknowing is an inherent characteristic of directing practice irrespective of a director's level of experience and/or expertise, or theory-practice context (devised performance, auteurship, "play" directing etc.). Bogart offers an account of her vast experiences as a theatre director and states that:

Every time I begin work on a new production I feel as though I am out of my league; that I know nothing and have no notion how to begin and I am sure that someone else should be doing my job, someone assured, who knows what to do, someone who is really a professional. I feel unbalanced, uncomfortable and out of place. (Bogart, 2001:84)

Bogart's statement might be interpreted as one that refers to her lack of skill and/or knowledge. Her work and reputation would disqualify such an interpretation and I would argue that she could not have been able to make any of her works as a

director if she did not have any skill or knowledge of directorial practice. I think that Bogart's statement, like Lejowa's, is an attempt to express her experiences of not having had complete knowledge about the eventual outcomes of her devising processes and that this initiates an anxiety. Simply put, this kind of not knowing arguably refers to a directing methodology that is independent of a complete and predetermined artistic plan that a director would collaboratively implement.

Regarding the theory-practice context of devised/devising performance, Deirdre Heddon and Jane Milling's *Devising Performance* (2006), provides an account of this practice's genesis and evolution from a particular geo-political and cultural perspective. Their text is valuable because it makes a contribution to the literature that specifically and directly focuses on devising performance. *Devising Performance* details a history of devising performance from a Western i.e. British, American and Australian perspective. According to the history offered by Heddon and Milling, devising performance practice has its ancestry in "specific political and cultural conditions of the 1950s and 1960s in the West" (Heddon & Milling, 2006:13). The post-war period in the West being referred to by Heddon and Milling, inspired a politically oppositional and alternative artistic practice to the orthodox models of authorial power and artistic hierarchy in the form of devising performance practice. Thus, devising performance,

[...] is variously: a social expression of non-hierarchical possibilities; a model of cooperative and non-hierarchical collaboration; an ensemble; a collective; a practical expression of political and ideological commitment; a means of taking control of work and operating autonomously; a de-commodification of art; a commitment to total community; a commitment to total art; the negating of the gap between art and life; the erasure of the gap between spectator and performer; a distrust of words; the embodiment of the death of the author; a means to reflect contemporary social reality; a means to incite social change; an escape from theatrical conventions; a challenge for theatre makers; a challenge for spectators; an expressive, creative language; innovative; risky; inventive; spontaneous; experimental; non-literary.(Heddon & Milling, 2006:4-5)

As one can note, Heddon and Milling's definition of devising performance practice

provides a framework for its form, aesthetics, ideological composition, function(s) and/or intention(s). Furthermore, Heddon and Milling generally admit to the existence of performance devising methodologies employed by artistically distinguishable devising companies. However, their focus is on performance devising methodologies that are not reliant on working with a pre-existing play-text or any specific material as a starting point for devising performance. Sarvan (1988); Cole (1992); Bogart (2001); Govan, Nicholson & Normington (2007); and Mermikides & Smart (2010), point to the reality that devising performance has evolved to an extent that it is also characterised by multiple devising methodologies that firstly might include working with a primary text and secondly cut across performance forms and practices. These texts call for an expanded view or (re)consideration of devising performance practice in relation to its history, particularly in relation to the framework that is offered by Heddon and Milling (2006).

The specific research conducted by Suzan Letzler Cole (a Professor of English and Director of the Drama Concentration at Albertus College-USA) culminated in *Directors in Rehearsal: A Hidden World* (1992). Cole illuminates theatre directing practice as realised by some contemporary American theatre director-auteurs such as Elizabeth LeCompte and Robert Wilson. LeCompte's employment of a collaborative performance devising methodology, which is also accompanied by some 'unknowns' specific to her role as a director in the form of artistic choices and discoveries, indicates how an [un]knowing director is arguably not a notion that is exclusive to a devising process that is not spurred by a pre-existing text or primary source, and that devising performance practice is also constituted by the working methods of director-auteurs whose creative work starts with a primary text of sorts. Furthermore, it indicates how some director-auteurs

challenge the orthodox categorical split of directors who work within the theory-practice contexts of devised performance and text-based play directing. Lastly, it also alludes to the literature's recurring note that the [un]knowing director could be a valid view that basically, or partially, explicates directing practice based on the literature's revelation that unknowing, in terms of artistic discoveries and choices, seems to be intrinsic to all directing practice.

Alison Oddey's study, *Devising Theatre* (1994), resulted from her impulse to propose a theoretical and practical guide for devising theatre as a response to the lack of literature on devising theatre at the time she wrote her text. Her work draws from her extensive professional experiences as a Drama and Theatre Studies lecturer (University of Kent), professional theatre practitioner and workshop facilitator. It is also derived from her specific research on some British devising theatre companies (Oddey, 1994: xi-2). She defines devising theatre as a practice that,

[...] can start from anything. It is determined and defined by a group of people who set up an initial framework or structure to explore and experiment with ideas, images, concepts, themes, or specific stimuli that might include music, text, objects, paintings, or movement. A devised theatrical performance originates with the group while making the performance, rather than starting from a play text that someone else has written to be interpreted. A devised theatre product is work that [...] enables a group of performers to be physically and practically creative in the sharing and shaping of an original product that directly emanates from assembling, editing, and re-shaping individuals' contradictory experiences of the world. (Oddey, 1994:1)

Oddey's work, at least to some extent, provides a summary or synthesis of devising performance practice. It shares some similarities with Heddon and Milling (2006).

These are:

- a) Collaboration as an integral characteristic of devising performance practice, hence the focus on theatre companies characterised by a collaborative ethos;
- b) The role of context and intention in relation to the processes and outcomes of devising performance;
- c) Detailing the various methodologies and processes of devising performance;

d) A focus on a performance devising methodology that begins without a pre-existing play text.

Tina Bicat and Chris Baldwin (2002) continue in the same vein as Oddey (1994), Swain (2011) and Bradwell (2012), by offering a practical handbook on devising performance and directing. Their work also shares some of the above-mentioned characteristics of devising performance practice. Despite its weaknesses, which can be attributed to simplifications and generalisations regarding devising performance, it offers a direct description of a director's role within the theory-practice context of devising performance. It is important to note some similarities between the roles mentioned below by Bicat and Baldwin and those mentioned earlier in this review. The importance of making such a note lies in the suggested need to view the theory-practice constituents of directing discourse not only for their differences, but also as points on a continuum as suggested in this review. For Bicat and Baldwin, a director,

[...] is responsible for ensuring that the production is conceptually and aesthetically coherent, that the story is clearly told, that it can be seen and heard by the audience, that it is stimulating and entertaining, and, most importantly, that it is not boring! But to get to this point there are a number of specific tasks that must be set and completed, and a number of questions that must be posed and answered. [...] Rather than being at the top of a hierarchical structure, the director is at the centre of the rehearsal fulcrum, ensuring that everyone is working together, and at the same time, making sure that the project remains conceptually consistent and elegant. But it should also be pointed out that the director does not have the answers to difficult problems secretly stored away waiting to reveal themselves at the correct moment. It is the team (of which the director is one) who must work to find the answers to the problems they have set for themselves. (2002:12)

Bicat and Baldwin (2002), like Oddey (1994), Heddon and Milling (2006), Swain (2011), Bradwell (2012) and others, propose methodologies that performance companies can employ when devising original or new performances and directing them. The above-mentioned description of a director's role within the context of devising performance also makes mention of the possible unknowns that a director is likely to encounter without detailing their specifics. The point, again, is that unknowing seems to be a recurring feature of directing within the theory-practice

context of devising performance.

As a way of working towards a discussion that seeks to conclude this study's literature review, I need to start by making mention of an obvious point related to the literary sources that constitute its major content. The point that I am referring to is that this review's content is constituted by scholarly contributions about directing practice and devising performance from and relevant to Western, i.e. Euro-American, perspectives as mentioned earlier. This, if one thinks about it, carries an implication regarding one of my subjectivities as this study's researcher. The implication is that my formal training through the South African post-apartheid university education system as a theatre practitioner in general, is majorly Western-oriented with strong Anglo-Saxon roots, despite the way I introduced myself to you, the reader, and defined my identity as a researcher in the opening section. I am raising this point to sincerely make it clear to you that I do not take this scholarly subjectivity for granted. Furthermore, I needed to highlight my educational subjectivity to also share with you that this study's literature review cannot avoid dealing, however briefly, with the task of engaging on directing practice and devising performance without considering the relevant discourse on African drama and theatre. The need for this study's literature review to appropriately deal with the discourse on African drama and theatre has two roots being:

- 1) Providing this study with a socio-political context and identity as necessitated by the rhetoric of its introduction and methodology sections.
- 2) Following from the above point, satisfying this study's need to discover the possible and cultural genesis of directing practice and devising performance in the context of South Africa.

Thus, what follows here deals with the above-mentioned matter(s). Before going any further, I must mention that this study's major focus and subject is not African drama

and theatre in a strict or direct sense. The implication of such a reality is that its discussion of African drama and theatre will partly be 'global' (i.e. general African context) and partly 'local' (i.e. South African context). As with any other discourse or subject matter, the discourse about African drama and theatre is characterised by scholarly contributions that offer views that tend to be oppositional in nature about various aspects of African drama and theatre and what differentiates it from Western drama and theatre.

Furthermore, scholarly contributions about African drama and theatre (Gilbert & Tompkins 1996; Harrison, Walker & Edwards 2002; Banham 2004; Okagbue 2007; and Adeoye 2010) include differences of opinion about the nature of African drama and theatre with reference to its sacred and/or secular nature. This observation also points to the reality that there exist numerous definitions of African drama and theatre, depending on the perspective of different scholars. Nevertheless, most general definitions of African drama and theatre refer to characteristics of traditional African drama and theatre as a point of departure. For the sake of clarity, please note that traditional African drama and theatre refers to what scholars such as Dhlomo (1977), Ogunba (1978); Soyinka (1988), Kerr (1995), Sirayi (2000) and others commonly refer to as pre-colonial African drama and theatre. Traditional African theatre,

[...] is a festival theatre. It housed the total theatre performance aesthetics which is a theatre of collective rhythm. In all its ramifications, the total theatre idiom is the essence of the African theatre. African theatre is also technophobic and even within its monologic theatricals; the total theatre idiom welds many performance kernels into one unique, communicative, entertaining and educative performance. [Additionally,] the African theatre relies heavily on the total theatre aesthetics of dance, music and song, puppetry, poetry, acrobatic display, incantation and invocation, evocation and chanting, mime and pantomimic dramatisation and so on. The concept and scope of traditional [African] theatre [...] includes drama, dance, music, visual plastic, costume arts and functioned as mass media for every given community for it is highly rationalised and organised. It has two ideational categories; the spiritual and the secular. (Adeoye, 2010: 16-17)

In the spirit of providing a definition of traditional African drama and theatre

emanating from South(ern) Africa, allow me to share a definition of pre-colonial African theatre that appears in Mziwoxolo Sirayi's doctoral thesis entitled, *The Pre-colonial Tradition of Black South African Drama and Theatre*:

[I]ts communal aspect, a collective working in a symbolic language of the fears, hopes and wishes of organic community, a placation of the gods (the natural elements) and a place of the dead who are called to intercede for the living. There is no proper 'script' and therefore no single author, sometimes not even a proper audience since the audience itself is fluid and indefinable, constantly merging with performers. (2000:58)

As stated earlier, the above-mentioned definitions of traditional or pre-colonial African drama and theatre are intended to provide a 'global' (i.e. continental) and 'local' (i.e. regional-national) context in terms of definition. A reading of the two definitions points to how the first one fills the apparent gaps or absences in definition found in the second one and vice versa. For this study's purposes, it is less interesting to develop a discussion that seeks to articulate whether I agree or disagree with the above-mentioned definitions of traditional or pre-colonial African drama and theatre. What is more useful and noteworthy for this study is coming to terms with the evidence-based reality that African drama and theatre, in South Africa and Africa at large, does indeed have a history that arguably also constitutes a key context for this study's argued for notion of the [un]knowing director and its fundamental operational context of devising performance. The following part of this discussion on African drama and theatre is intended to substantiate and/or demonstrate the above-mentioned assertion.

An engagement with the literature on African drama and theatre, particularly within the context of South Africa, has illuminated relevant scholarly research and debates that are clearly assertive about the existence of performing arts forms in Africa, their validity and distinct nature, preceding Western colonial disruptions of, and interactions with, the indigenous African forms. One of the examples of such scholarly research is found in Fleishman's MA dissertation (1991), entitled *Workshop*

Theatre in South Africa in the 1980s: A Critical Examination with specific reference to Power, Orality and the Carnavalesque. Fleishman's research aids in shedding light on the possible historical context and basis of this study's notion of the [un]knowing director within the context of devising performance. On par with the earlier provided definition(s) of pre-colonial African drama and theatre, at least to an extent, Fleishman further contributes what is specific to South Africa by stating that:

Amongst the indigenous peoples of South Africa many performance forms existed with well developed dramatic elements. These included:

- 1) The oral narrative: the *inganekwane* (Zulu), the *intsomi* (Xhosa), the *tsono* (Sotho), and the *dinaane* (Tswana);
- 2) The oral praise poetry: the *isibongo* (Nguni), and the *diboko* (Sotho); and
- 3) A variety of song and dance. (1991:28)

The scholarly research on African drama and theatre, particularly with reference to the pre-colonial moment, seems to differ in terms of the sacred and secular nature of traditional or pre-colonial African performance forms. This leads to a situation whereby Sirayi (2000) and Fleishman (1991) project 'dissimilar' scholarly stances regarding the sacred-secular variable that characterises pre-colonial, or traditional, or indigenous African performance forms, in South Africa at least. These dissimilar scholarly stances generally have to do with focus. In this case, Fleishman (1991) explicitly focuses on the orality aspect of pre-colonial African performance forms instead of the sacred-secular aspect thereof in comparison to Sirayi (2000). Nevertheless, Fleishman's work productively serves this study through its engagement with South Africa's Nguni indigenous oral performance tradition, particularly in the form of the Xhosa *intsomi* and Zulu *inganekwane* forms. It also discusses the Western improvisatory oral performance tradition of the carnival, which he specifically refers to as the *carnavalesque*, with the aim of illuminating parallels shared by the Western and (Southern) African oral performance traditions. To succinctly outline what I am referring to, I refer to Fleishman's note that:

[...] Both are built around stable traditional elements which are passed on from one generation of performers to another. In both there is an absence of a pre-determined, written text. Performance 'texts' are created through a process of improvisation around the stable elements of the tradition at the moment of performance. Both traditions include a number of performance forms in any one performance, with a strong emphasis on gesture, mime and overall rhythmic body movement. Performances of both traditions take place in non-designated performance spaces. [...] Finally, both the carnival tradition and the oral performance tradition have a popular orientation and are aimed at collective interaction and the enjoyment of corporate or communal solidarity over the specialised, individuated, critical appreciation of abstract literary or artistic values. (1991:45-46)

In consideration of the notion of the [un]knowing director, as explicated in its conceptual framework section and Fleishman's above-mentioned similarities of the (Southern) African and Western oral performance traditions, there exist three key foundational and interfacing definitive characteristics, namely:

- 1) An artistic-creative operational performance ethos characterised by non-predetermination as primarily pertaining to the performer-as-creator.
- 2) An artistic-creative operational performance method characterised by moment-to-moment improvisatory emergences as pertaining to the performer-as-creator and audience.
- 3) An artistic-creative operational performance process, experience and outcome characterised by collaboration or collective input and/or interaction as pertaining to the performer-as-creator and audience.

A reading of Fleishman's study regarding (Southern) African oral performance traditions, and others dealing with the same subject matter, does indicate that the afore-mentioned foundational and interfacing definitive characteristics manifest themselves at the level of 'final' performance on the part of the *performer-as-creator* of the African oral performance tradition. At a glance, this might collapse or jeopardise this study's identified resonance and its genealogical basis for the notion of the [un]knowing director. I can, however, argue that the possible or evident existence of such a state or instance of jeopardy can be resolved by considering and dealing with the issue of the history, nature and existence of a theatre director in traditional or indigenous or pre-colonial African drama and theatre, with reference to

what this literature review refers to as the *orthodox* school of thought about theatre directing practice, in addition to a particular and useful description of South Africa's Xhosa *intsomi* performer.

With regards to debates about the history, nature and existence of a director in traditional, or indigenous, or pre-colonial African drama and theatre, it is necessary to state that the general basis of such debates emanates from, and exists parallel to, the primary debate about the history, nature and existence of African drama and theatre itself. As a result, which also ties with this literature review's earlier discussion about the history of Western directing practice, I am compelled to continue this discussion by referring to Adeoye's thus far cited article entitled, *On Theatre Scholarship and Controversy: The Case of The Director in The Traditional African Theatre* (2010). Adeoye's article foregrounds the antagonistic and protagonistic views regarding the validity and existence of the theatre director in traditional African drama and theatre. A reading of Adeoye (2010:88-89) reveals the existence of a strong African scholarly contingent that asserts the existence of the theatre director in traditional African drama and theatre. Thus,

[...] In the theatre, the theatre director is a paradox. [Their] identity has always been a subject of controversy and [their] functions too keep expanding. Scholars such as Whiting (1961), Brook (1966), Hodge (1971), Staub (1973), Morrison (1984), Cole (1992), Wilson (1994), Barranger (1995), Johnson (2001 and 2003) and Musa (2000 and 2007) have critical[ly] (sic) reviewed the person, identif[ied] responsibilities and functions of the theatre director in the theatre. In most of these scholars' theoretical submissions, it can be concluded that the space of the theatre director should not be defined and confined to [their] roles and functions in the literary/modern theatre directing with proscenium stage mentality alone. In basic terms also, the theatre director has been confirmed to be a team leader, organiser, presiding officer, communicator, coordinator, unificator and above all, an artist and performance maker. The director includes every individual who assists or helps in putting together various minor or major performances or the person who coordinates, leads or manages a group of performers towards a holistic performance. The word 'director' should therefore be looked at from various multi-dimensional perspectives. (2010:90)

For reasons that constitute this study's rationale as it is stated in its introductory chapter, this study appreciates the necessary scholarly contribution by Adeoye (2012) and other scholars who have grappled with the subject matter of directing

practice with reference to traditional African drama and theatre. Such an appreciation also stems from this study's need to discover the genealogical basis and historical context of the [un]knowing director as mentioned earlier in the current discussion. The following notes are a summary of my observations drawn from the scholarly literature on African drama and theatre that the study has engaged with, directly or indirectly related to directing practice:

- 1) On one hand, one can argue that the emergence of the director came into being at a simultaneous juncture with the inception of modern African drama and theatre as a consequence of colonisation in Africa.
- 2) On the other hand, one can argue that the role of the director has always been present in traditional African drama and theatre as argued by Adeoye's relevant article.
- 3) It follows then, that directing practice is inherently and essentially embedded in traditional African drama and theatre.
- 4) In traditional African drama and theatre, the director's role is essentially apparent during the unfolding of a live performance offered by an African oral performance tradition solo performer as in the case of Southern African oral performance tradition(s).
- 5) The directorial role within the context of traditional African drama and performance is implicit in some cases and explicit in other cases.
- 6) The directorial role within the context of traditional African drama and theatre is communally constituted and manifested through actor-audience interactions as a performance unfolds gradually.
- 7) Therefore, directing practice within the context of traditional African drama and theatre is characterised by three key attributes, namely: a) actor-audience interactions (which arguably equate to the idea of co-authoring); b) a strong improvisational and/or intuitive approach on the part of the performer; and c) directorial competence that is highly reliant on the acquisition of the skills and mastery of a performance form, style, genre, musical instrument etc. as a performer and not necessarily as an individual director.

As a way of substantiating and illustrating some of these observations, I will now share with you Harold Scheub's description of the Xhosa *intsomi* (oral narrative)

performance as it appears in Kirby's article entitled *Indigenous African Theatre* (1974). Scheub's description is also pertinent in that it indirectly shows why this study finds Fleishman's (1991) work useful in providing a foundational genealogy of the [un]knowing director. For Scheub, then:

The creation of a *ntsomi* is essentially a solo performance. The focus is the performer. [They have] memorized no "lines"; [they have] a repertory of "core-clichés," and in the arrangement of the parts and the whole, [they] in effect [write their] own script. [They are their] own director, [their] own cast of characters. [They are] actress, singer, dancer, mime, and the only general guides that [they have] are a general theme sanctioned by the tradition and [their] own experience. [They have] almost unlimited freedom to extemporize. [They are] called upon, usually without prior notice, to bring [their] intellect and imagination to the task of transforming the core-images into fresh and original productions. (in Kirby, 1974:26)

In addition, the usefulness of Fleishman's (1991) study about Africa's oral performance traditions within the context of Southern Africa is in respect of what is known in that context as workshop theatre. Workshop theatre is a form of South African theatre that seemingly emerged in 1957 through Athol Fugard's early artistic contributions, particularly *No Good Friday* (Fleishman, 1991:56), due to its aspect of collaborative playmaking practice. This form became firmly established in the mid-1970s initially through the artistic contributions of Workshop '71 and the Serpent Players (Fleishman, 1991:60-61).

This form of theatre was political in that it challenged South Africa's apartheid-era theatre practice that was characterised by the dominance of a Western modernist literary theatre that the country inherited from its colonial past. Workshop theatre firstly posed the challenge through its characteristically transgressive provision of a space for the resuscitation of South Africa's indigenous African performance forms, particularly the oral performance traditions that were systematically marginalised through colonisation and its latter development into apartheid. Secondly, it created artistic content that spoke truth to power in various ways. Finally, it relied on collectivism and countered the general conventions of

South Africa's Western-based literary theatre then, in terms of content, form and aesthetics. From a general perspective and in relation to some of the above-mentioned points, Fleishman regards workshop theatre as a South African contemporary theatre form that was rooted in African indigenous oral performance forms in that:

1. It was not dependent on writing for its production. Workshop theatre could be made by anyone regardless of education, regardless of an ability to write well or to speak English well.
2. It had the potential to incorporate elements of the oral performance tradition; aesthetics, forms, modes of production.
3. It functioned as a form of oral history/memory. Workshop theatre documented contemporary events from non-hegemonic perspectives not so much as factual, chronological records of events, but as bundles of meaning, relationships and themes across the linear space of a time. Making workshop theatre was one way in which people from marginalised groups could express their sense of themselves in history. It was a process by which they actively attempted to explore and come to terms with realities of their lives and position in society. [1991:64-65]

At this point of the discussion it is necessary for me to explicitly state that this study does consider workshop theatre helpful on two levels. On one level, workshop theatre can arguably be the South African equivalent or 'version' of devising performance practice as alluded to earlier. Furthermore, I am still insistent on this study's choice to refer to its investigative context as devising performance and not workshop theatre based on preference and my fundamental view that workshop theatre is arguably quite distinct from devised performance in terms of the central content that it consciously pursued in relation to South African theatre history, particularly during the country's apartheid era. This does not mean that the 'original' workshop theatre, at least in terms of form, aesthetics and playmaking process has not developed and adapted post-apartheid. In fact, it would be grossly false for one to talk about a total non-existence of workshop theatre within the landscape of post-apartheid South African theatre since some latter day South African theatre practitioners do consciously refer to the work that they make as workshop theatre

and not devised performance for various reasons. On another level workshop theatre, as I have been trying to explore, argue and demonstrate, also serves this study by constituting its foundational genealogy since it is evidently a development of South Africa's African indigenous oral performance traditions in more ways than one.

A reading of Fleishman's study, specifically in its section that deals with the playmaking process of workshop theatre, stipulates the two general ways in which a group leader (director) functions in workshop theatre. These are:

1. The leader can operate as a facilitator helping individuals to find their own voices, both in terms of what they choose to say and how they choose to say it, and as a mediator between the struggling factions, attempting to reach consensus between them through negotiation as regards the meaning of what is produced. Ideally, this would involve the leader not having an agenda of [their] own which would enter into the power struggle in the group.

2. The leader can be an arbitrator in the struggle for meaning. In this respect the leader would act as an adjudicator settling disputes between factions and ultimately having the final say as to what is to be included in the meaning of the 'text' that is to be performed at the end of the workshop [...]. (1991:109)

In light of this study's conceptual framework that explicates the [un]knowing director, and in addition to some of the contents of its data analysis, it would be very clear that this study bears strong resonance with the first point regarding the group leader (director) functions of workshop theatre. Furthermore, Fleishman's detailed explanation of the playmaking process as realised in workshop theatre points to the idea that the process is reliant on and strongly characterised by collaboration and improvisation as key playmaking methods, which are fundamentally akin to the [un]knowing director's workings as realised through their particular context of devising performance.

As stated earlier in the preceding chapters, it is necessary to keep in mind that this study's particular sense and undertaking of collaboration pivots around the South(ern) African philosophy of *botho* and the cultural practice of *letsema*. Furthermore, this study's sense of intuition is arguably rooted in the South(ern) African indigenous oral performance traditions' aspect of non-predetermination

and/or improvisation. Thus, the [un]knowing director within a context of devising performance is arguably a 21st century species of South African theatre practice that has a heterogeneous and complex genealogical track starting with Southern Africa's indigenous oral performance traditions that developed over time into workshop theatre practice within the context of South Africa.

Based on this chapter's contents, this study holds a position that debunks possible binary perspectives of directing practice through proposing an appreciation of the practice as one that is strongly characterised by experimentation over time. Moreover, this chapter has provided details of the landscape of the academic literature pertaining to devising performance while also constructing a genealogy of its notion of the [un]knowing director with reference to (Southern) African drama and theatre. From this point, the discussion will move on to deal with the methodology employed in the study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

From the onset, it is necessary to request you, the reader, to kindly recall some of the details contained in the preceding sections of this thesis, particularly its Prologue and Introduction chapter (conceptual framework). The referred-to details, specifically, are those that have articulated my subjective positionality and make-up (identity, socio-cultural disposition, ideology etc.) as this study's primary researcher in addition to an indication of the study's subject, context, employed research methods, and its particular epistemological and ontological orientation. Based on the referred-to details, then, it should come as no surprise to the reader when I declare that the current study is certainly located within the broad methodological terrain of qualitative research. My declaration and/or acknowledgment will be illuminated and substantiated by this current chapter's discussion henceforth, at the least. As an act of being more explicit about why the current study's methodological nature appropriately fits the broad category of qualitative research or inquiry, I offer the following useful definition aimed at contextualising the current study with reference to its overarching character:

Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials—case study, personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, artifacts, and cultural texts[,] productions [and creative processes], along with observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts—that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. Accordingly, qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand. It is understood, however, that each practice makes the world visible in a different way. Hence, there is frequently a commitment to using more than one interpretive practice in any study. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018:43)

The above definition of qualitative research, hopefully, serves the task of offering you, the reader, an adequate framing of the current study's general methodological nucleus. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that the current study is also aligned to the discourse of artistic research, which I understand to be a valid 'stream' located

within the broad spectrum of qualitative research.

Considering this study's above-provided framing, it follows that a study's choice of methodology ought to be reflective of its researcher's pivotal perspective on what academic research is and how their research should be appropriately conducted as determined by the relevant or applicable academic disciplinary particularities. With that being stated, please note that this study's specific research methodology is *practice as research*, which is discussed next. Furthermore, this chapter also presents the current study's epistemology in a manner that is both direct and indirect in the spirit of articulating and illustrating its essentially fluid and emergent character as has been indicated earlier in the thesis.

3.1 Practice as Research

As indicated in the above framing, the research methodology of *practice as research* is located within the broader discourse of artistic research. Based on my observations, the scope of scholarly literature drawing the landscape of artistic research within academia in terms of its background, philosophical underpinnings related to perspectives on knowledge, ways of challenging academic methodological research orthodoxies etc., is quite vast. With specific reference to *practice as research*, this observation is supported by Fleishman's statement that: "The establishment and growth of interest in the idea of practice or performance as research is reflected in the increasing number of publications devoted to the subject that grapple with the concept in all its heterogeneity and complexity" (2012a:28). Examples of this scholarly literature, some of which Fleishman (2012a:36) mentions, are *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* edited by Barrett and Bolt (2007); *Mapping Landscapes for Performance as Research* by Hunter and Riley

(2009); *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts* edited by Smith and Dean (2009); *The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts* by Biggs and Karlsson (2011); *Research Methods in Theatre and Performance* edited by Kershaw and Nicholson (2011); and Borgdorff's (2012), *The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia*. Before going any further, it is worth mentioning that in consideration of the vast amount of scholarly literature on artistic research in general and *practice as research* in particular, this study finds Fleishman's article entitled, *The Difference of Performance as Research* (2012a), particularly interesting. This is mainly because it explicates *practice or performance as research* by partly drawing from Henri Bergson's (1907) *Creative Evolution*, which is key for this study's conceptual framework.

Now, for the purpose of providing a general context of artistic research, it is befitting to note Borgdorff who identifies the rudiments of artistic research as follows:

Characteristic of artistic research is that art practice (the works of art, the artistic actions, the creative process) is not just the moving factor and the subject matter of research, but that this artistic practice – the practice of creating and performing in the atelier or studio – is central to the research process itself. Methodologically speaking, the creative process forms the pathway (or part of it) through which new insights, understandings and products come into being [...]. The distinctiveness of artistic research, nevertheless, derives from the paramount place that artistic practice occupies as the subject, method, context and outcome of the research. Methodological pluralism – the view that various approaches deriving from the humanities, social sciences, or science and technology may play a part in artistic research – should be regarded as complementary to the principle that the research takes place in and through the creation of art [...]. Artistic research [also] does not really involve theory building or knowledge production in the usual sense of those terms [...]. It is more directed at a not-knowing, or a not-yet-knowing. It creates room for that which is unthought, that which is unexpected – the idea that all things could be different. Especially pertinent to artistic research is the realization that we do not yet know what we don't know. (Borgdorff, 2012:46)

Borgdorff's above definition is useful for the current study at a level other than providing a definition of artistic research. It aligns with the concept of the [un]knowing director, particularly in terms of the notion's explicated and argued-for key characteristic of non-predetermination with reference to knowledge. This characteristic is certainly illuminated by the next chapter's discussion of this study's

creative research projects in a way that hopefully evidences the particular ways in which non-predetermination manifested. Borgdorff's definition of artistic research qualifies the [un]knowing director in terms of validating this study's perspective about the way(s) in which the kind of knowledge(s) it pursues is "[...] more directed at a not-knowing, or a not-yet-knowing" (2012:46).

In addition to Borgdorff's explication is the essential characteristic that artistic research, particularly *practice as research*, debunks major Western orthodoxies about knowledge as identified by Nelson (2006), Fleishman (2009), and Barrett and Bolt (2007) amongst others. The key characteristic being referred to is that *artistic/practice as research* rejects a Cartesian approach that splits mind and body (the cerebral/cognitive and the embodied/experienced) and favours an approach that integrates 'mind and body,' one that is context specific and emanates from that context/environment. It is thus characterised by Graeme Sullivan's idea of *embodied cognition* (2011:107). Furthermore, *practice as research* purports to an epistemology of what I will refer to as *productive intimacy* based on the premise that it is unfathomable for a researcher to distance themselves from the phenomenon being studied (the subject and/or object of study) in one way or the other. This study's notion of *productive intimacy* is fundamentally akin to Leopold Senghor's earlier mentioned epistemology of Negritude because:

[...] It is the unspeakable that the subject can only experience or know in a relation of identity with the object of knowledge, a relation of emotion that urges the subject of knowledge to go beyond ratio in order to reach further towards the object-in-movement. This relation of knowledge is the experience of being the other, a relation of identification with the other when the subject becomes the object of knowledge, goes beyond "discursive reason," and adopts the *raison-oeil* (reason-eye), *raison-toucher* (reason-touch), to seize the object in its totality, that is in its fluidity. (Thiam, 2014:53, italics in original)

Regarding the above-mentioned characteristics of artistic research in general, and *practice as research* in particular, this study has been primarily methodologically realised or conducted by my direct and active embarking upon three (co-)devising

performance processes as a director (artist)-researcher during which the methods of 'quasi' auto-ethnographic field note-taking and reflective journaling were employed. Additionally, this study has also employed the method of generating, disseminating, receiving and analysing a structured questionnaire from seven South(ern) African theatre directors regarding their individual directing practice as relatable to the inquiry. Specifically, this questionnaire was comprised of the following questions based on the key contents of the literature review and conceptual framework outlined in the preceding chapters. Furthermore, the questionnaire was developed to address the study's research question in addition to identifying the possible validity/plausibility of the notion of the [un]knowing director:

- 1) What is your directorial practice about? Is it in the territory of devised performance and/or orthodox play directing?
- 2) Based on your professional practice and experience(s), what is a director?
- 3) How do you make artistic choices (choice of play text to direct; cast of performers; performance venue; directorial concept of a play text; devised performance concept; devised performance theme; directorial style; aesthetics etc.) and arrive at artistic discoveries when you are directing?
- 4) Based on your professional experience(s), what is your response to the positing that a director is an (un)knowing figure?
- 5) What role does collaboration play in your directorial practice?
- 6) What role does intuition play in your directorial practice?
- 7) What kind of cognition do you employ in your directorial practice between the rational and intuitive?

This study's creative research projects served as three related or co-constitutive case studies, which means that they should be appreciated as three methodological constituents of one holistic research undertaking. These case studies manifested in the form of a 2012 co-devising performance project with Remix Dance Theatre (Cape Town) entitled *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhlha*. This project served this study as its

pilot creative research project that informed a subsequent 2016 untitled, co-devising performance project with a group of Tshwane University of Technology Drama students. Lastly, there followed a 2018 co-devising performance project entitled *Mohahlauli/BAHAHLAULI* with another group of Tshwane University of Technology Drama students.

The case studies played the critical role of clarifying the study's potential contribution to new knowledge and its actual examinable outcomes in relation to its specified research question. It became clearer over time that this study's examinable outcome should solely be of a literary nature in the form of a written thesis and would not include a 'complete' live performance, 'complete' recorded performance or some series of recorded audio-visual traces and instances of my artistic processes. My choice was based on my realisation that this study, in terms of its creative research projects, is *process* (devising performance process) and not product (a 'complete' performance) focused. The kind of process that I am referring to here, is the kind that required me to be reflective through compiling documented literary accounts of my devising processes.

Now that the 'all-encompassing' fundamental characteristics of artistic research have been brought to the fore with regard to this chapter's provision of some specific method-related details, I will proceed by being specific about its chosen usage of the term *practice as research* instead of other terms located within the broad methodological terrain (discourse) of artistic research. I decided to use the term *practice as research* after careful thought and realisation about this study's methodological nature in addition to undertaking the accompanying and inevitable activity of immersing myself in the discourse of research in the arts and *practice as research* in particular. It was through such an undertaking that I encountered a

pattern of apparent interchangeable usage by scholars of the terms *artistic research*, *creative arts enquiry*, *practice as research*, *performance as research*, *studio-based research*, *practice-led research* and *research-led practice*. As a reminder, this study is an examination of directing practice within the context of devised performance from a South(ern) African perspective. As a theatre director, I am its primary subject and object of study. Furthermore, my embodied experiences of co-devising and directing Remix Dance Theatre (the dance company with which *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha* was created in 2012) and the Tshwane University of Technology Drama students in 2016 and 2018, are its primary loci of knowledge because they are the study's primary research contexts.

After applying more thought about my struggle with the discourse's identified pattern of the interchangeable usage of terminology, I have resolved that it is helpful, necessary and productive for one to be attentive to the similarities of research in the arts and not be baffled by the seemingly inconsequential non-existence of uniformity in terminology. Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean strengthened my resolve by mentioning Barbara Bolt's notion of "*praxical knowledge* [, which ...] suggests a reciprocal relationship between theory and practice ..." (2009:6, italics in original) as a key common denominator of research carried out through artistic practice(s). My understanding of Bolt's *praxical knowledge*, at least in relation to *practice as research*, implies that the methodology is fundamentally characterised by an intrinsically mutual, yet complex, interaction between 'theory' and 'practice'. Simply put, such complex interaction arguably equates to 'theory' and 'practice' being two sides of the same coin in a sense that both inform each other in various complex ways and/or degrees when a researcher employs *practice as research*.

Ultimately, I chose the term *practice as research* to some extent based on

Brad Haseman's notion of a performative paradigm, which draws from "... J.L. Austin's (1962) notion of performativity." For Haseman:

In this third category of research—alongside quantitative (symbolic numbers) and qualitative (symbolic words)—the symbolic data, the expressive forms of research work performatively. It not only expresses the research, but in that expression becomes the research itself. When research findings are presented as such utterances, they too, perform an action and are appropriately named "performative research". (Haseman, 2007:150)

It follows that this study's preference for and conscious choice of using the term *practice as research* encapsulates and reflects my experiences of employing the methodology. These experiences are not directly related to the theoretical canon of performance theory, part of which considers performance i.e. practice as being,

[...] an inclusive term. Theater is only one node on a continuum that reaches from the ritualizations of animals (including humans) through performances in everyday life – greetings, displays of emotion, family scenes, professional roles, and so on – through to play, sports, theater, dance, ceremonies, rites, and performances of great magnitude. (Schechner, 2003:xvii)

Rather, my choice of the term *practice as research* is informed by its resonance with Fleishman's assertive perspective that:

Performance [...] does not cover the world with meaning [,] it opens up the world of meaning. It is a process of discovery that allows us to penetrate the surface of the world [...]. [Performance] is a process of attentive engagement and an exploratory search for knowledge that is non-representational and in a constant process of emergence. (2009:122-123)

I would kindly like you, the reader, to consider two points that are related to Fleishman's perspective on performance. Firstly, the degree of occurrence of the word *process* in Fleishman's perspective needs to be noted, which makes it crucial for my rationale and preference for using the term *practice as research* since this study is an examination of the creative-artistic *process* and of directing practice within the context of devising performance. Related to the aspect of the degree of occurrence, one also needs to note that the word *process* is used affirmatively in Fleishman's view. Secondly, Fleishman continues by arguing his case for performance as a way of knowing that is experimental in nature and arguably

characterised by the use of one's intuition during their moving along, and within, an unstable 'course' that yields unforeseeable discoveries (2009:124). Fleishman's characteristics resonate with my understanding of what the methodology of *practice as research* entails, hence this study's preference for the term. Additionally, his perspective of performance is fundamentally akin to this study's concept of the [un]knowing director as illuminated and explicated by its conceptual framework.

3.2 Auto-Ethnography

As a way of developing the discussion on this study's employed methodology, I will continue by mentioning a few points that serve the purpose of framing the way in which the development of the discussion proceeds. From a researcher's perspective, I find it fitting and necessary to work hard at ensuring that I bring the reader as close as I can into the world(s) of my/this research. I have done this firstly through the conversational tone and perspective that I established earlier in this thesis and the provided reasons why I chose to take such a route in relation to the task of writing this thesis. In continuing with such a task, I have also found it useful to strategically or adaptively draw from the research methodology of auto-ethnography and its method of reflective journaling, which are in a sense demonstrative of Borgdorff's earlier artistic research characteristic of *methodological pluralism* (2012:46). I am using the words *strategically* or *adaptively* to indicate that my study's intended and specific outcome is not about producing an auto-ethnography. Rather, auto-ethnography is used in a particular way and for a particular reason. For the purpose of providing clarity and specificity through definition,

Autoethnography is an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural. Back and forth autoethnographers gaze, first through an ethnographic wide-angle lens, focusing

outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experience; then, they look inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist cultural interpretations [...]. Usually written in first-person voice, autoethnographic texts appear in a variety of forms—short stories, poetry, fiction, novels, photographic essays, personal essays, journals [etc.] [...]. In these texts, concrete action, dialogue, emotion, embodiment, spirituality, and self-consciousness are featured, appearing as relational and institutional stories affected by history, social structure, and culture, which themselves are dialectically revealed through action, feeling, thought, and language. (Bochner & Ellis, 2000:739)

The above definition is also provided to illustrate that the usefulness of auto-ethnography is due to its validation and qualification of a researcher's articulated or noted contextual subjective experience, in written language, as a method of conducting research. Additionally, auto-ethnography is useful because it serves as methodological justification pertaining to the matter of researcher as subject, which is obviously the case with this study. Lastly, my understanding is that the research methodological tradition of auto-ethnography also calls for a researcher to decide upon the kind(s) of experience(s) that they would like a reader to have when reading their research in the form of an academic article or thesis (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). I am, however, less interested in creating any specific experience of reading this thesis as that could be dictatorial, determinist and difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. Rather, I am more interested in bringing the reader into close 'touch' with this research as best as I can, while also engaging with the task of providing an account of its methodology.

This study employs the method of reflective journaling by adapting Donald Schön's (1983) scholarly text about reflecting *in* practice and reflecting *on* practice with reference to professional practice across various professional practice domains. If one considers the fore-mentioned definition of auto-ethnography, it would become clearer as to why this study states that auto-ethnography and its method of reflective journaling are constituents of its *methodological pluralism* since:

When a practitioner reflects in and on [their] practice, the possible objects of [their] reflection are as varied as the kinds of phenomena before [them] and the systems of

knowing-in-practice[,] which [they bring] to [these]. [They] may reflect on the tacit norms and appreciations which underlie a judgment, or on the strategies and theories implicit in a pattern of behavior. [They] may reflect on the feeling for a situation which has led [them] to adopt a particular course of action, on the way in which [they have] framed the problem [they are] trying to solve, or on the role [they have] constructed for [themselves] within a larger institutional context. (Schön, 1983:62)

At this point of the discussion, I will provide an example of how auto-ethnography and its method of reflective journaling manifested in this study. The following example is taken from this study's second creative research project (the untitled 2016 co-devising performance project with a group of Tshwane University of Technology Drama and Film students). My decision to use this example is because it provides one of the key moments of this study's knowledge production while also revealing how such knowledge was produced through *practice as research* within its context. With regards to this study's usage of its version of reflective journaling, drawing from Donald Schön's notions of reflection *in* and reflection *on* practice, it is evident how the aspect of creative-artistic practice determined the nature of its *methodological pluralism*. What I mean by this is that I, as a director (artist)-researcher, needed to develop an auto-ethnographic note-taking and reflective journaling structure as necessitated by the nature of my artistic practice within this study's context. The structure is in the form of pre-session, during session and post-session auto-ethnographic 'field' note-taking and reflective journaling accounts. This stemmed from my understanding and professional experiences of directing within the context of devising performance, indicative of a director's moments of engagement with their artistic practice. These are the moments in which a director engages with their practice pre-session (when they are generally 'alone' inside or outside the domains of a studio or rehearsal room any time before a devising session ensues); during session (when they are generally working with performers and other relevant co-collaborators actively and immediately inside the domain of a studio or rehearsal

room during the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising session); and post-session (when they are generally 'alone' inside or outside the domains of a studio or rehearsal room at the end of or any time after a devising session). Related to what I have mentioned in the preceding chapter, these pre-session, during session and post-session moments variedly involve and characterise this study's complex manifestations of Senghor's notions "reason-eye" and "reason-embrace" (Diagne, 2019:24). These documented moments or patterns of directorial practice (or process), at least based on this study's methodological manifestations over time, are inconsistent in terms of the degree and quality of each devising session's auto-ethnographical notes and reflective journaling accounts. However, this study does not consider such an inconsistency to pose any fundamental method-related problem, mainly because of the non-predetermined, fluid and emergent nature of directing practice as realised and argued for by this study, which is also related to this study's understanding of knowledge production.

Furthermore, I am of the view that a decision to work towards attaining a consistency in terms of the degree and quality of reflective journaling and auto-ethnographical note-taking would be a counter-productive one. This is because of the impossibility of predetermining or predicting what I ought to or could discover in relation to the study's unforeseen knowledge with reference to its creative research projects, let alone the futility of me predetermining or forecasting (Bergson, 1907:7) a specific length or degree of auto-ethnographical and reflective accounts. I am mentioning these points as a way of articulating methodological details and nuances. It should also be noted that the manner in which I arrived at this study's modes of auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling was also informed by my need to find a systematic way in which I could document, capture and articulate my

specific experiences of the moment-to-moment unfolding of the devising sessions, specifically from a director's perspective, as best as I could. Therefore, the method of documenting and compiling written devising session 'plans', which includes structured auto-ethnographical notes and reflective journal accounts, was intended to serve as a literary form of my embodied experiences with varying degrees of success, which will become evident in the next chapter.

With the above having been mentioned, let me continue by offering an example of a written account from one of the key devising sessions:

Creative Research Project 2

23 May 2016

Day 10

1. Opening and Welcome

- 1.1 How is everybody doing?
- 1.2 Contextualise the session

Session Aim: Look at the performance materials that we have created thus far so as to see the possibilities of structuring them.

2. Exercises/tasks

- 2.1 Performers' group physical warm-ups led by Bongani [...]. [Predetermined; done]
- 2.2 I need to inform the performers about where we are in our process. [Predetermined; done]
- 2.3 View the performance material that we have created thus far. [Predetermined; done]

3. Notes

3.1 Pre-Session Notes

- a) I feel like it would be best for us to spend today's session on viewing the performance material that we have gathered so far. I feel like it might be better for me not to predetermine a sought-for performance structure and to leave it to emerge intuitively.

3.2 During-Session Notes

- a) While viewing the performers undertake their "group walk" from one end of the room to the other, I realised that some of them are not focused and I decided to ask them to stop their undertaking and start with undertaking the exercise of counting from 1-20 as we had done in previous sessions as a way of facilitating and achieving a state of focus that our work needs. The performers undertook this focus exercise and task, which proved to be productive.
- b) **[Intuitive Emergence/Imaginative Response]** While viewing the performers undertake their "group walk" for the second time, I imaginatively saw an image of them undertaking the very same "group walk", but this time the difference is that they individually start to break away from their "group walk". This emergent image seems to be about a performative act that could start the disintegration process of the potentially established opening group performance segment and overarching theme/concept/subject matter of Human Connection. I think that it would be effective if the performers keep repeating their walk until all of the performers have broken away from the 'group walk' line by each delivering a repeated physical expression/signature that they feel like captures the essence of their experiences of attempting to establish Human Connection within the context of their respective 'duets'.
- c) **[Intuitive Emergence]** While watching the performers undertake their "group walk", I intuitively decided upon the order of the performance materials presentations that I

need to view as follows:

1. Rinnet and La Portia's "duet";
 2. Anathi and Bongani's "duet";
 3. Nicholas and Delight's "duet";
 4. Sibusiso's solo presentation that ends up including the other performers;
 5. Nelly's solo presentation that includes Rinnet's solo; La Portia's delivery of Nelly's written text; Bongani and Delight's physical interaction; and Nicholas and Anathi's vocal gibberish interaction.
- d) The session then proceeded with me viewing the performance material that we have gathered thus far, excluding Nelly's material due to her absentia, according to the above-stated order. As stated in one of my previous during session notes and/or post-session reflections, I have decided not to predetermine or impose a performance structure for our unforeseen and prospective performance, because I think that such a decision is appropriate for reaching in an [un]knowing way i.e. intuitively. Therefore, I watched the gathered performance material and just took notes regarding how the material can be strengthened and what structural sequence could I intuitively discover.
- e) **[Intuitive Emergence]** While I was watching Sibusiso's solo presentation that ends up involving the other performers' participation and presence, particularly the point when Nicholas started making whistling sounds, I got a strong feeling that his segment/performance can be appropriate and structurally effective if it either precedes or follows Nelly's solo presentation that ends up including the other performers. This is mainly because its content clearly articulates the possible effects of an individual's repeated failed attempts of establishing Human Connection. I am affectively stimulated by his material because it reaches the psycho-physical expressive intensity that most of the other performers' materials does not reach. However, I am deciding not to finalise this possible performance structural choice until I view Nelly's solo material that gradually ends up involving the other performers' participation and presence.
- f) After viewing Sibusiso's above-mentioned presentation, Anathi and Rinnet made suggestions about how his presentation could be strengthened. My listening to their suggestions made me realise that their suggestions emerged intuitively to them as they were participating in Sibusiso's presentation. Due to their immediate request for my response about their suggestions, I intuitively decided that we should put Anathi's suggestion to the test because of my immediate identification of its potential effectiveness on an emotive/affectionate level and asked Rinnet to suspend our testing of her proposal based on my immediate identification of how essentially similar it is to Bongani and Delight's eventual physical interaction during Nelly's solo presentation that ends up involving the other performers' participation.
- g) **[Intuitive Emergence]** After our discussion of Sibusiso's performance material presentation and the break that we took, the session proceeded with me viewing his presentation and its incorporated aspect of Anathi's suggestion. While viewing the presentation, I got a strong feeling that it could possibly work as the last segment of our unforeseen and prospective performance. I imaginatively saw an image of Sibusiso's segment, and possibly our prospective performance, ending with him lying on the floor after the other performers gradually stop encircling him by individually taking their positions on the periphery of our devising/performance space in a box-like shape that they would create. Coincidentally, this intuitive and imaginative emergence was similar to the suggestion that Rinnet made after Sibusiso's performance material was presented the second time around regarding how it can conclude.
- h) It is worth noting that Sibusiso also suggested how his presented performance material should end. His suggestion was that it should end with him moving from the position of lying on the floor while the other performers continue to encircle him and end up with him joining the other performers as a way of articulating his state of giving up on attempting to achieve Human Connection with the other "characters". My immediate response to his suggestion was welcoming and affirming. However, I eventually asked of him that we should wait until I view Nelly's material for me discovering or having knowledge of a performance structure that should at least be informed by my viewing of all our currently fragmented performance materials.
- i) The session ended after I viewed Sibusiso's performance material for the second

time. I decided for us to end today's session at that point because I still feel and think that it is necessary for me to view Nelly's material, which I currently feel like is probably more appropriate to be structurally placed somewhere towards the end of our unforeseen and prospective performance due to its content and current staging, which I find visually and affectively interesting.

3.3 Post-Session Notes/Reflection

- a) The major point of reflection that I would like to elaborate upon in today's post-session reflection, based on my retrospective identification of what became clear to me, is about what influences my artistic decision-making about what to take and discard with reference to the performance material that emerge from my collaborating performers' undertakings of the molecular, micro and possibly macro levels of activity. Given the fact that today's session is evidently located at the macro level of artistic activity, which is unfolding moment-to-moment, I am realising that my decision-making emanates primarily in relation to or based on my affective/emotional responses to what I see my collaborators do through their spontaneous and embodied undertakings. My affective/emotional responses seem to mostly be the first thing that gets triggered inside of me that inform me or illuminate the possibility of whether or not my collaborating performers' spontaneous and embodied undertakings have the emotional and creative-artistic weight to be included as the appropriate performance material of an/our unforeseen and prospective performance. I have realised that my trust in my intuitive-affectively derived responses seems to be the primary determining factor of the decisions that I make as an [un]knowing director. I have learned, over time, that trusting my intuitive-affective responses tends to work well with reference to my directorial undertakings as the [un]knowing director, because of my training as a director which informs me that the director is the first audience of a performance or performer-derived performance material. This lesson and comprehension thereof have further led to my belief that there is a chance, however slight, that an audience can have a similar emotional/affective response to what they see a performer, or the performers go through during moments of a performance. In addition to my intuitive-affective responses as contributory factors to my artistic decision-making comes my rational thinking, which also occurs simultaneous to my intuitive responses. I have realised that my rational thinking seems to be more operative when it comes to my artistic decision-making with reference to the directorial aspect of staging i.e. composition, picturization, rhythm, tempo, how the theatrical medium's visual, auditory and kinaesthetic elements become integrated and how an overarching performance concept/content can be generated in consideration of my collaborating performers' proposed performance materials. It must be noted that I have realised that there is a continuous interplay of my intuitive and rational faculties of varying degrees throughout my undertaking of a devising process. This interplay leads me to a further realisation of the existence of skilled intuition (as coined in Atkinson and Claxton's (2000) book on intuition).⁷

As indicated previously, the 'raw' materials of knowledge that momentarily emerge through the methodological undertakings geared towards addressing the study's research question are: (1) my personal 'quasi' auto-ethnographic notes and reflective journaling accounts emanating from and related to this study's creative research

⁷ It needs to be noted that the devising session excerpts that are included in this thesis are selected and appropriately edited versions taken from the collection of devising session accounts or entries that constitute this study's creative research projects 1, 2 & 3. These are uploaded on Zivahub, which is the University of Cape Town's data archiving system. I will grant temporary access of these devising session accounts upon request. This also applies to questionnaire responses that were offered by this study's participating South(ern) African theatre directors to be discussed below.

projects; and (2) questionnaire responses from seven contributing South(ern) African theatre directors. The materials and forms of knowledge emerged and were generated in a way that is also characteristic of the following assertion to some extent at least:

Autoethnographers must not only use their methodological tools and research literature to analy[s]e experience, but also must consider ways others may experience similar epiphanies; they must use personal experience, and in so doing, make characteristics of a culture familiar for insiders and outsiders. (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011:4)

In addition to providing an elaborate and clearer account of the rationale for the study's methodological choices and manifestations, I will also emphasise that an additional aim of the current chapter is the fashioning of a framework of interpretation for, and understanding of, the data emanating from the various methodological undertakings. The next chapter, involves my analytic sense of the questionnaire responses from the seven participating South(ern) African theatre directors followed by a discussion of this study's three creative research projects. With this in mind, it is necessary to provide a brief discussion about the above specifically provided example of a devising session account taken from its 2016 creative research. Such a brief discussion is also necessary in aiding my attempts at being emphatic and explicit about the kind of knowledge that this study proposes.

Earlier in this chapter, I made mention of how this study's governing methodology of *practice as research* is also characterised by my term of *productive intimacy* as related to the study's conception of epistemology. I am of the view that the devising session account provided above, even without investing much reading into it, is illustrative of how *practice as research* is contingent upon *productive intimacy* as its inherent epistemology. This is because the referred-to example is clearly indicative of how a) I, as the researcher, was this study's subject and object and b) how my related captured/articulated embodied experiences constitute this

study's 'raw' materials of its proposed knowledge. Particularly, the example is indicative of how intuition and collaboration are fundamental characteristics of the [un]knowing director. Thus, a reading of the above-mentioned devising session account, which is consistently characteristic of this study's creative research projects' devising session 'plans' and their included accounts, reveals that there is something that fundamentally stands out in terms of the method-related aspect of the subject-object dyad. Unlike academic research projects that employ research methods in which it is very easy to delineate and distinguish between the roles of subject and object with reference to a researcher's positioning, this is not the case with this study. Based on the nature of this study's subject of directing practice within the context of devised performance from an African perspective, in addition to its research method of three creative research projects, I am both its subject and object. This study's referred-to subject-object relation is Africanist in that it is arguably demonstrative of Senghor's earlier mentioned Africanist epistemological character of a 'rhythmic attitude' (Diagne, 2019:24).

It is necessary to note that this study is also characterised by a strong element of what seems like a rudimentary or usual manifestation of the method of participant observation that is embedded within methodologies such as Participatory Action Research. This point is solely derived from how this chapter's example of a creative research project's devising session account makes it clear that (1) I, as a director (artist)-researcher worked with performers, or other people, during the creative process of devising a performance; and (2) I, as director (artist)-researcher worked with performers using observation as one of my key strategies and methods that functioned both at the level of artistic and research process. However, this study's kind of participant observation is not general or usual, as it is governed by a

methodological perspective that is fundamentally aligned to Tim Ingold's potentially 'revivalist', radical and transformational anthropology, which speaks of the method of participant observation as follows:

[...] participant observation is *not* a technique of data collection. Quite to the contrary, it is enshrined in an ontological commitment that renders the very idea of data collection unthinkable. This commitment, by no means confined to anthropology, lies in the recognition that we owe our very being to the world we seek to know. In a nutshell, participant observation is a way of knowing *from the inside*. As science studies scholar Karen Barad (2007:185) has eloquently put it: 'We do not obtain knowledge by standing outside the world; we know because "we" are *of* the world. We are part of the world in its differential becoming'. Only because we are already of the world, only because we are fellow travellers along with the beings and things that command our attention, can we observe them. There is no contradiction, then, between participation and observation; rather, the one depends on the other. (2013:5, italics in original)

Clearly, Ingold's perspective is a substantive articulation and characterisation of this study's epistemological notion of *productive intimacy* that problematises and extends limited perspectives of and approaches to participant observation in ways that ground and frame this study's creative research methods. It follows then, that I engaged with the creative research projects as a director (artist)-researcher whose particular realisation of participant observation meant that I was also a subject of the research as I practiced. Therefore, I needed to partly observe my collaborating performers as my way of co-participation. Thus, observation as realised through this study, is certainly a kind of activity, practice and embodied experience that is not merely a methodological means to an end but a fundamental way of being as a researcher in the world(s) of research that is potentially productive of knowledge.

Ingold's assertion also makes another important point regarding his argued-for method of participant observation that is very key. The notion of *knowing from the inside* as defined by Ingold and applicable here also implies that I, as director (artist)-researcher did not 'observe' my collaborating performers through some investigative gaze that was aimed at objectification within the context of our devising performance sessions. As mentioned earlier, I, as a director (artist)- researcher, needed to

observe them not in the form of an *I* and *other* (them) binary, but solely as determined by the demands of directing practice within the context of devising performance as applicable to this study coupled with its grounding I-We epistemology. This point can facilitate an understanding and construct a perspective that the 'method' of *knowing from the inside* is inherently co-constitutive and collapses the binary of the 'knower' and the 'known'. Additionally, this 'method' is suggestive of a researcher's systematic 'doing' or undertaking of 'action' in the form of observation as a kind of participation. The referred-to systematic 'doing' or 'action', particularly as applicable to this study, is arguably a way of thinking as is evidenced by the example provided above of a devising session account from one of the creative research projects. These devising session accounts are essentially documented literary expressions and forms of my embodied momentary *observations* of the creative research projects.

As stated before, it is important to mention that this study's documented observations are fundamentally my observations of devising sessions that operated both at the level of 'self' and 'other' in a way that is not separatist by design, but a way that is indicative and expressive of the collaborative and co-constitutive nature of this study in terms of its creative research projects. The point that I am making is that my documented observations emanating from this study's creative research projects are one of my key ways of 'doing' i.e. undertaking action and thinking within the 'world(s)' of this research that is critically dependent on my co-existence with 'others' i.e. my co-collaborators during each creative research project. In fact, this study's application of *observation* is acutely reflective of its earlier-mentioned and coined I-We epistemological perspective, particularly in terms of its creative research projects. This is mainly because my role, and 'existence' as the [un]knowing director,

is contingent upon my collaborating performers' role and 'existence' within the context of our respective devising performance processes. Furthermore, which is important, I suggest that Senghor's afore-mentioned notions of 'reason-eye' and 'reason-embrace' (Diagne, 2019:24) were at times facilitated by and at times manifested through this study's application of *observation* as evidenced by the creative research projects.

The above articulation is a continued elaboration of this study's epistemology, and part of a framework for the discussion in the following chapter of three creative research projects that were undertaken between 2012 and 2018. In continuing with this chapter's articulation of a framework for engaging with and appreciating a discussion of those case studies, I borrow once more from Ingold who states that:

What then is the relation between thinking and making? To this, the theorist and the craftsman would give different answers. It is not that the former only thinks and the latter only makes, but that the one *makes through thinking* and the other *thinks through making*. The theorist does [their] thinking in [their] head, and only then applies the forms of thought to the substance of the material world. The way of the craftsman, by contrast, is to allow knowledge to grow from the crucible of our practical and observational engagements with the beings and things around us (Dormer 1994; Adamson 2007). This is to practice what I would like to call an *art of inquiry*. (2013:6, italics in original)

In consideration of the salient contents of this chapter, the example of a devising session account as the methodological manifestation of a creative research project, and my explication of this study's conception of knowledge or its apparent kind of thinking through 'doing' (participation as observation and vice versa), Ingold's *art of inquiry* is generally an appropriate framework. This is because it is arguably appropriate and reasonable for me to state that this study's creative research projects are demonstrative of *craftsmanship* in that they are instances of my *thinking through making*. At the same time, this study proposes a middle-ground or 'merger' between Ingold's sense of a *theorist* and a *craftsman*. Indeed, this is because of how such a middle-ground or 'merger' implicitly and intrinsically encapsulates the notion

of *praxical knowledge* (Bolt, 2009:6) as defined and identified earlier in this chapter as one of the key characteristics of *practice as research*. Thus, some of the salient contents of the devising session account provided are characteristic of how a key component of this study's methodology is an *art of inquiry* that is underpinned by *praxical knowledge*.

At this point, and in consideration of the fore-mentioned usefulness of auto-ethnography from this study's perspective, let me conclude this section by offering you two related pieces of writing from my research process, the writing of which did not follow each other sequentially. In other words, I did not write the second piece immediately after writing the first piece. As much as these pieces of writing will or might raise questions about their relevance or relation within the context of this discussion, it needs to be noted that I am providing them for specific reasons aimed at characterising this thesis' account of *practice as research* and its epistemological basis. In relation to what has been stated earlier as one of the key tasks of this section of the thesis, the two pieces of writing are intended to facilitate the reader's immersion into the world(s) of this research. The first piece of writing is what I consider to be a form of non-classified or non-genre specific creative writing that is written in South Africa's Sesotho language. This piece of writing emerged as an extended thought of one of my random reflective journaling tasks done at some stage of writing this thesis. As you will see in what follows, the Sesotho piece of creative writing is followed by the second piece of writing. This second piece of writing is an English version of the Sesotho piece of writing, which I was not at peace to write due to the problems of linguistic translation. However, it seemed necessary for me to attempt writing some sort of an English version of the Sesotho piece of creative writing mainly so that you as a reader who is possibly not proficient in the

Sesotho language, can at least have a sense of the experience that I am articulating in and through the medium of the Sesotho language, interpreting the world(s) of this research with reference to its methodology and epistemology.

Still, my dis-ease in translating my thoughts from Sesotho to English, as stated in this study's introductory section, remains. For structural purposes in relation to my attempts at facilitating clarity on your part, please bear with me in having separated the pieces of writing in the way that they are separated. Please note that the Sesotho piece of writing is entitled *Mohahlaudi-BAHAHLAUDI*, which is similar to the title of this study's earlier-mentioned 2018 creative research project because of the relationship that the piece of writing has to the creative research project. I will offer a discussion of that relationship in the next chapter's section that discusses the referred-to creative research project. *Mohahlaudi-BAHAHLAUDI* is followed by its accompanying English version (translation) entitled *Traveller-TRAVELLERS*. Lastly, please note that the general layout of the two pieces of writing is intentional because it really seeks to serve as a kind of 'subtext' necessary for capturing some sense of 'meaning' expressed by the referred-to pieces of writing.

3.3 Mohahlaudi-BAHAHLAUDI

Ke-RE mohahlaudi-BAHAHLAUDI kodung ya malla, fifing la bosiu

Ha Ke-RE tsebe hore tsela eo Ke-RE etsamayng e tlamfihlisa-REFIHLISA ho kae, lehore neng

*Ke-RE hahlaula Ke-RE ntse Ke-RE khotjwa
Empa tsela ke ena, ha e emise ho bua le nna-RONA*

Ho kgotjweng Ke-RE kgangwa ke mofuthu wa letswalo

Tswalo e leng motswalle wa lefifi

Na ebe lesedi lese le nhladile-REHLADILE?

Na ebe Ke-RE tla khotjwa hape?

Karabo e ngotswe ho tholeng le botebong ba lefifi

Ho hlakile hore tshabo ha se tharabollo ya bothata le maqakabetsi a boima ba tsela

Ho hlakile hore tshabo e ntjhesa-RETJHESA ka lethola

Ke-RE sale fatshe

Ke-RE sa ithathelletse ka kobo ya mobu wa meutlwa

Mobu, mphe-REFE karabo

Mobu, lesedi le hokae?

Mobu o fetola ka lethola

Kea-REA bona hore dijo tsa dikgapha di tshwana le moya oo Ke-RE o phefumolang

Butle, Ke-RE utlwa modumo wa

Ha Ke-RE tsebe ke wa eng

Butle, e kare Ke-RE bona ho hong

Fela Ke-RE sefofu-DIFOFU se-TSE nang le maikarabelo a leeto

Sefahleho saka-SARONA se bopame

Maikutlo aka-ARONA ke seikokotlelo saka-SARONA tseleng

.....

.....

.....

.

..

Lentswe hotswa botebong ba phaphamo yaka-YARONA lere:

TSAMAYA-TSAMAYANG! O-LE NA LE MAIKAREBELO! OTLOLLA-OTLOLLANG MENOTO

LE MAQAQAILANA! TISA-TISANG MESIFA YA PHAPHAMO YA HAO-LONA!

TSEBO,.....TSEBO KE TSELA! TSELA,.....TSELA KE TSEBO!

KE-RE MOHAHLAUDI-BAHAHLAUDI kodung ya malla, fefing la bosiu

E re KE-RE kenetseleng

.....

3.4 Traveller-TRAVELLERS

I-WE am-ARE traveller-TRAVELLERS in the still of the night

I-WE don't know about where this path leads me-US to and when will I-WE arrive there

I-WE travel while I-WE stumble along

But the path is upon me-US, it doesn't stop to talk to me-US

In stumbling, I-WE suffocate from fear

Fear being a companion of the night

Has the light abandoned me-US?

Will I-WE continue to stumble?

The answer is written in the stillness and depth of darkness

It is clear that fear is not a solution to the problem and intense quagmire of the path

It is clear that fear is setting me-US alight with silence

I-WE have still fallen

I-WE am-Are still wrapped with a blanket made of the earth of thorns

Earth, answer me-US

Earth, where is the light?

Earth answers with silence

I-WE can see that the nourishment of tears is like the air that I-WE breathe

Wait, I-WE hear a sound of.....

I-WE don't recognize the sound

Wait, it looks I-WE can see something

But I-WE am-Are blind beings who are responsible for travelling

My-OUR face is disfigured

My-OUR feelings are my-OUR pillar along the path

.....

.....

..

A voice coming from the depths of my-OUR conscience says:

GO! You-YOU HAVE A DUTY! STRETCH Your-YOUR TOES AND TINY FEET!

STRENGTHEN THE MUSCLES OF Your-YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS!

*KNOWLEDGE,.....KNOWLEDGE IS THE PATH! THE PATH,....THE PATH IS
KNOWLEDGE!*

I-WE am-are a TRAVELLER-TRAVELLERS in the still of the night

Let I-WE travel

.....

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION OF QUESTIONNAIRES AND CREATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS

4.1 Questionnaires

As stated in the preceding chapter, this study has employed the research methods of structured questionnaires and creative research projects and their associated devising session accounts as its means of generating the necessary material required to grapple with its research question. As a result, this current chapter is an analytical articulation of the material. The analytical account will proceed by a discussion of the questionnaire responses from the seven devising performance directors namely: **Mwenya Kabwe** (referred-to as **MK** henceforth); **Janine Lewis** (referred-to as **JLew** henceforth); **Jessica Lejowa** (referred-to as **JLej** henceforth); **Godfrey Manenye** (referred-to as **GM** henceforth), **Mandla Mbothwe** (referred-to as **MM** henceforth), **Brink Scholtz** (referred-to as **BS** henceforth) and **Phala Ookeditse Phala** (referred-to as **PP** henceforth)⁸. This group of directors comprises Southern African theatre directors whose directorial practice falls within the ‘category’ of devising performance practice based on how devising performance has been described thus far in this study. All of these directors have professional experience of no less than ten years and mainly operate in South Africa, Botswana and Lesotho, at least during the years within which this study was undertaken. Relatedly, these directors are representative of Southern Africa in terms of nationality in a sense that four of them are South African, two of them are citizens of Botswana and one of them is Zambian. Lastly, five of them are currently university academic staff of drama

⁸ It is worth mentioning that this study’s participating Southern African devising performance directors granted me their consent to use their full names in the thesis.

departments.

These questionnaires emanated from structured one-on-one interviews that I conducted with a group of theatre directors that included **GM** and **MM**. This is why **GM** and **MM's** responses have a verbal conversational tone or responsive quality as compared to **MK**, **JLew**, **JLej**, **BS** and **PP's** responses, since the latter were written questionnaire responses. The reason for this is that it became financially impossible for me to conduct further structured one-on-one interviews with the participating directors considering their disparate residential locations.

I eventually decided to focus on devising performance directors, as opposed to other kinds of directors, because of my awareness that the notion of the [un]knowing director is more prevalent within the context of devising as suggested by this study's title and data analysis. This prevalence has also been indicated and identified in the introduction and literature review chapters. Furthermore, my choice of starting with providing an analysis of the devising directors' questionnaire responses instead of an analysis of this study's creative research projects and devising session accounts, is not coincidental or ill-considered. This is because the devising directors' questionnaire responses served this study by testing the possible validity or plausibility of the notion of the [un]knowing director beyond my own experiences and practice by drawing from or referring to other practitioners' directorial experiences of devising performance.

Essentially, my analysis of the devising directors' questionnaire responses provides a praxis basis for my undertaking of the creative research projects through which I generated devising session accounts. These latter accounts are fundamentally aimed at articulating my conscious, unconscious, internal and intangible experiences of a devising process from its inception to its 'completion' in

terms of the experiences of my own devising processes. Relatedly, the research aim of these devising session accounts is to shed light on exactly what it means for a director to be [un]knowing within the context of devising performance.

Now, what follows is my analysis of the devising directors' questionnaire responses, which I have organised according to the questionnaire's constituting questions that are stipulated in the preceding chapter. Owing to my need to be selective in developing this thesis' argument drawing from its 'raw' data, please note that I have not included the devising directors' entire questionnaire responses as part of this thesis. This also applies to the devising session accounts of this study's creative research projects.

A) Based on your professional practice and experiences, what is a director?

My reading of the responses offered by this study's seven contributing South(ern) African theatre directors was geared towards identifying recurring patterns. Based on my reading of the responses, it is evident that a director is a theatre practitioner whose key role is that of *facilitation* within the context of devising performance. The role of *facilitation* is not of a generalised nature, but one that is particularly related to enabling, coordinating and effectively integrating the creative-artistic efforts of performers and other relevant artistic stakeholders necessary for a theatrical performance to become realised. As such, the following responses are indicative of the point about facilitation:

MK: *A director is someone who facilitates a creative process in order to reali[s]e a piece of performance. I think they are also someone who convenes collaborators in the form of the production team that involves the performers.*

JLew: *A director is a facilitator, creative conduit [...].*

JLej: *[...] Its primary function is to facilitate the creative, emotional or other impulses within an ensemble which relate to, challenge or feed the starting point or stimulus of devising[.]*

GM: *[...] I don't [think] there's a specific type of definition though you'll find it in a book, but for me it's facilitating. I think it's facilitating more than anything, facilitating a process [...].*

MM: *I think my processes go with stages. There's a stage where I become the director and there are stages where I become the facilitator. And throughout those stages the teacher in me never disappears and I operate with that.*

BS: *[...] the director is a facilitator that structures a process of creative engagement (on the*

part of actors, designers, composers, choreographers, writers) with particular sources or a particular concept, increasingly as the process develops also taking on the dramaturgical role of structuring emergent responses [...].

PP: *A director is someone who guides or facilitates the creation of a theatrical offering [...].*
(italics not in original)

I have also noted with interest that **JLej's** general response to Question A refers to a director not as an individual figure, but as a role that can be satisfied by an ensemble within the context of devising performance. Specifically, **JLej's** response to Question A is as follows:

A director is a role occupiable at any point in the devising process by members of the devising ensemble. Its primary function is to facilitate the creative, emotional or other impulses within an ensemble which relate to, challenge or feed the starting point or stimulus of devising [...].
(italics not in original)

The basis of my interest lies in its concurrence with a view, mentioned in the literature review chapter, and pertaining to traditional African drama and theatre, that the director's role can be played by more than one person. Responses and/or views similar to **JLej's** response are arguably indicative of the existence of a directing approach that is fundamentally opposed to the director being a single dominating figure in terms of decision-making at the least. Thus, **JLej's** response clearly reveals and suggests that a director's role manifests by engaging with the gradual unfolding of a devising process with reference to its conscious, unconscious, internal and intangible experiences of decision-making in a way that is more communal/collective and less solitary.

Conversely, a part of **MM's** response to Question A refers to a director as an individual figure. However, **MM** continues later in his response by articulating his discomfort with the term *director* as it supposedly indicates some stability of a director's role and an unproductive or unfavourable power dynamic within the context of devising performance. I am referring to **JLej** and **MM's** responses to Question A because they are indicative of a point that is brought to the fore in this study's literature review section that definitions of what a director is vary due to directing

practitioners' various subjective ideological orientations, perceptions, reflections and perspectives about their individual work or practice. Nevertheless, Question A's responses as offered by **MK, JLew, JLej, GM, MM, BS** and **PP**, consistently point to an understanding that directing practice entails an individual, or ensemble's, undertaking of a directorial role through *facilitation* i.e. the enabling, coordination and integration of the creative-artistic process and practice of devising a performance, which also depends on the artistic contributions of performers, designers, composers, etc.

One of the challenging aspects about coming to terms with the word *facilitation* is that the word means different things for different people, operating within different professional and/or theoretical domains. Additionally, the word is arguably not quite effective in expressing the intricate details of lived experience, in this case a director's experience(s) of facilitating a performance devising process from its inception to 'completion'. In my account thus far, I am clearly equating the word *facilitation* with the words *enable, coordinate and integrate* in a merged manner. A glance at the directors' responses to Question A in terms of their degree of elaboration that might shed light on the actual or experiential particularities of *facilitation*, points to the challenges that I am referring to. Immediately, it is quite obvious that there can never be one concrete response to such questions other than referring to subjective experience(s). This realisation complicates matters related to a simple acceptance that *facilitation* is a common denominator or key definitive characteristic of directing practice within the context of devising performance. However, I am of the view that the main point that needs to be appreciated about *facilitation* as revealed by this study's contributing directors, despite the varying meanings of the term, is that it keeps recurring as a characteristic that defines

directing practice within the context of devising performance.

In analysing the directors' responses to Question A, particularly with reference to the emergent theme of *facilitation*, I have realised that the responses are also indicative of the theme of *decision-making* as an additional definitive characteristic of directing practice within the context of devising performance. Similar to the clearly consistent recurrences that validate the theme of *facilitation*, the theme of *decision-making* is explicitly identifiable in the following responses:

MK: A director is someone who facilitates a creative process in order to reali[s]e a piece of performance. [...] I think they are also someone who convenes collaborators in the form of the production team that involves the performers. *They are also often someone who holds the overall vision of a work.*

JLew: A director is a facilitator, creative conduit, first spectator (Bogart) and *decision-maker*.

MM: [...] A director becomes a director of a company [when they are] *someone who makes the final decision, someone who drives a company to a particular direction, someone whose vision is clear about where to take the company.*

BS: [...] the director is a facilitator that structures a process of creative engagement [...] with particular sources or a particular concept, increasingly as the process develops also taking on the dramaturgical role of structuring emergent responses (for example by writing a script). In the final phases of this process the director takes on what I experience as a more traditional directing role: *making choices concerning, and in a sense holding responsibility for, all aspects of production that relate to how it functions as a piece of 'art'.* (italics not in original)

Furthermore, it is implicitly identifiable in the following responses:

JLej: A director is a role occupiable at any point in the devising process by members of the devising ensemble. Its primary function is to facilitate the creative, emotional or other impulses within an ensemble which relate to, challenge or feed the starting point or stimulus of devising. *The outcome of such a facilitation necessitates that the director role also contains the creative/psychical/emotional experience of the ensemble in its totality*, where research, creation, performance and debriefing are concerned.

GM: *Captain of the ship.* Directing[?] [I]'s a hard question to be honest. I don't [think] there's a specific type of definition though you'll find it in a book, but for me it's facilitating. I think it's facilitating more than anything, facilitating a process [...].

PP: A director is someone who guides or facilitates the creation of a theatrical offering attending to both the subject and object tenets of the performance creative process. *It is the occupation of a director to concern themselves with presence and absence dynamic – the tangible and the intangibles that provide the landscape of the story and its events.* (italics not in original)

JLew's response does not provide much detailed insight about the nature of *decision-making* characterising her directorial practice. Interestingly, **MM** and **BS's** entire responses to Question A provide more details related to the theme of *decision-making* and *facilitation*. **MM's** response makes the point that a director, based on his practice, makes decisions in a way that is sometimes dictatorial and sometimes

cooperative seemingly depending on the particular phase of the performance-devising process. For **MM**, a director is more open to receiving the necessary creative-artistic contributions from his co-collaborators in the beginning phase of the devising process. This is a phase that is characterised by a director's high degree of unknowing i.e. not knowing, regarding the creative-artistic related outcomes of a devising process. **MM's** response also suggests that irrespective of a director's cooperative or dictatorial manner of decision-making, they always rely on the creative-artistic contributions of their collaborating performers and other relevant co-collaborators or artistic stakeholders. The following supports my above analysis:

MM: [...] The director is simple. *[They are] the head, someone who is thinking [...] It's a head in a cooperative way. It's a dictator [...]* I tell everyone right at the beginning that when I work, I will listen to your voices during the first two weeks and I will also listen to my voice during that time. There would be a stage where I say okay, I would just trust my instincts and incorporate your voice. *At the end of the day, I would have incorporated everyone's voice [...]* [E]ven if it's a song[,] language [...], terminology or it's the gesture that exist[s] within that production, then their voice is still there. All that you would have done in that case, is just facilitating the framework. (italics not in original)

Similar to **MM**, **BS's** response to Question A indicates that based on her practice, a director is a decision-making artistic practitioner whose decisions are determined by the different phases of a performance devising process that also seem to determine her task-related focus. As stated earlier with regards to the analytic theme of *decision-making*, I have differentiated between the explicit and implicit indicators of the referred-to theme found in the directors' questionnaire responses. I have identified the implicit questionnaire responses as such because a director's acts of being the *captain of the ship (GM)*, *a container of an ensemble's creative/physical/emotional experience of a devising process in its totality (JLej)*, and someone who is concerned with *the tangible and the intangibles that provide the landscape of the story and its events (PP)*, do involve decision-making.

As indicated earlier, my analysis of **MM** and **BS's** responses to Question A

that illuminate the related themes of *facilitation* and *decision-making* has identified an interesting factor about their conception of directing within the context of devising performance. This conception is that they seem to explicitly differentiate between their experiences of being a *director* and those of being a *facilitator* in relation to the early and later stages of their devising processes. Such a differentiation is interesting at the level of my arrival at a nuanced understanding of other directors' experiences of devising performance with reference to this study. I am of the view that it will be an oversimplification on my part to merely accept **MM** and **BS's** responses as solely being indicative of a split between their moments of being directors and those of being facilitators within the contexts of their respective devising processes. My closer reading of their responses has led to my awareness that their responses are fundamentally illustrative of how a) the terms of director and facilitator are possibly interchangeable in relation to the unfolding of a devising process depending on the various phases of the process; b) alternatively, directing practice is fundamentally contingent upon the skill of facilitation as necessitated by collaboration with reference to devising performance, resulting in a director-facilitator theatre practitioner; and c) at times, a director-facilitator makes creative-artistic decisions more collaboratively/inclusively and sometimes more independently/exclusively.

With specific reference to the theme of *facilitation*, it is also worth noting that this study's participating directors share a common characteristic in that all of them went through the system and process of university education. Additionally, these directors are qualified university lecturers, although some of them are currently not directly involved in academia, who consciously identify themselves as facilitators of teaching and learning. I am making mention of these two factors as a way of teasing out a possible additional variable or contributing factor of the fundamental basis of

their professional orientation as devising performance director-facilitators.

Along with the two above-identified themes and definitive characteristics of directing as evidenced by this study's questionnaire responses thus far i.e. *facilitation* and *decision-making*, I have also identified one more consistently recurring theme. I find it quite challenging to attach a specific term to this emergent theme, mainly because of its apparent explicit-implicit character found in parts of the responses to Question A. For lack of a better thematic term, which in a sense bears an interest for this study's notion of the [un]knowing director, I have analytically identified an emergent theme of *initiation*, not in terms of its denotation referring to ritual practice, but as referring to an act of starting something. Briefly, with reference to the way in which the [un]knowing director and devising performance are defined and elaborated upon in this study's conceptual framework, the term *initiation* characterises a director and their co-collaborators' actual and germinal embodied act(s), through skilled physical bodily movement(s), that initiate a performance devising process. My identification of *initiation* as an emergent theme and definitive characteristic of directing practice within this study's context is based on my comparative interpretation of certain parts of the directors' responses to Question A. To illustrate my point, I have considered the following segments of responses:

MK: [...] They are also often *someone who holds the overall vision of a work.*

JLej: A director is a role occupiable at any point in the devising process by members of the devising ensemble. Its primary function is to facilitate the creative, emotional or other impulses within an ensemble which relate to, *challenge or feed the starting point or stimulus of devising.*

MM: [...] So, everything else sells my vision. *Everything else sells my vision in directing.*

BS: [...] *in devising I start out with as many as possible ideas and impulses and attitude of radical openness to what emerges.*

PP: [...] *It is the occupation of a director to concern themselves with [the] presence and absence dynamic – the tangible and the intangibles that provide the landscape of the story and its events.* (italics not in original)

My interpretation of these responses is that they indicate two things beyond the immediate literal meanings that they carry. My interpretation of these responses is

also arrived at in consideration of their 'originating' larger response. As a result of my attempt to conduct a close reading of the above-mentioned responses, I am of the view that firstly, they seem to express the point that a director is not an empty vessel who engages haphazardly in the process of devising performance. Secondly, they suggest that a director clearly starts a devising session with what I would broadly refer to as a primary text. As indicated by the above-mentioned responses and as stated elsewhere in this thesis, a primary text is any creative-artistic material that triggers a director (whether as an individual or ensemble) to initiate a devising process. Such material can be in the form of a (directorial) vision, concept, subject matter, question, narrative, poem etc. Thus, these two related points of analysis make a case for how directing practice is characterised by the *initiation*. The questionnaire responses that reveal the theme of *initiation* provide further insight or substantiation about a director's role being characterised by the aspects of *facilitation* and *decision-making*. This is based on my analytical stance that a director's embodied act of facilitating a devising process always starts with *initiation* that is geared towards an ignition of the creative-artistic process of devising performance. In fact, a director's role within the context of devising performance, and possibly in other contexts, is constituted by an endless process of *initiation*. As evidenced by the forthcoming analysis of my devising session accounts, a director is responsible for providing their co-collaborators with devising tasks during the course of a devising process as an act of constant *initiation* and *facilitation*. With regards to *decision-making*, I can argue that this aspect of *initiation* is characterised by *decision-making*, whether or not the role is played by an individual or an ensemble. What I mean here is that a director's choice(s) of material(s) that would initiate and sustain the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising process is arrived at through

decision-making in one form or another. In summation, then, and from an analytical perspective, this study's participating devising directors collectively hold a view that a director is defined by the interwoven roles of *facilitation*, *decision-making* and *initiation*.

As a way of concluding my analysis of this study's devising directors' questionnaire responses that grapple with the task of defining the term *director*, I will engage with other parts of **MM's** response, due to the interesting aspects that it highlights for this study. **MM's** response is also taken on board in relation to this study's argument for its notion of the *[un]knowing* director. Specifically, I found interest in **MM's** following selected responses that are a part of his elaborate response to this study's Question A:

MM (1): Well[,] a director sounds to be quite a powerful terminology, which for me [applies] in most cases when it comes to a performance and it's based on a western culture when it comes to a performance or modes of performances or modes of activities that resemble communication to the public. A director becomes very western in that sense.

MM (2): [...] Everything else sells my vision in directing. And there's no two ways about it. I direct. I'm in control and that's the way we were taught about what the director is. And the actor is the part of the body that sells the purpose of the director [...]. What's a director? A director is simple, a teacher that was taught. And in music there's no director. What do we have? We've got a conductor. So for me, [...] *I've mixed up methods that are not innocent from other influences that actually the term director itself is quite complex and I try to dissect it according to the work I do.*

MM (3): [...] Yes, I am a director, but I think it's in the process of directing that also differentiates directors. But also, *it is the work directors are doing that also determines and differentiates directors.* Whether directors would be named differently I don't know maybe it's th[e] terminology. *We still think that if you are actually doing a devised work you cannot be called a director.* (italics not in original)

Thus far, the bulk of my analysis has shed light on the fundamental and common characteristics that seek to define the term *director* as related to this study's context of devising performance. It would be unfortunate for my analysis to lose sight of **MM's** responses, because they add another layer to the analysis that I have provided thus far. Firstly, there is his view or suggestion that the term of *director*, as it has come to be appreciated over time within the context of theatre practice in postcolonial South(ern) Africa, has got a specific geo-cultural origin. This geo-cultural

origin is pre-dominantly Western as **MM (1)** asserts. For the sake of clarity, I am referring to the *term* and not *role of director*, because a part of this thesis's literature review makes the point that the director's role has evidently existed as long as theatre has existed in Africa and beyond. Thus, the point of argument that **MM's** response articulates, and to some extent **GM** and **JLej's** earlier responses, is that the *term of director* has its roots in Western theatre practice and/or culture. This point is also made clear by the response in **MM (2)** stating how **MM's** (Anglo-Saxon-based) higher education and training in drama and theatre arts presented a particular perception of what it could mean to be a theatre director. Secondly, in **MM (1)**, **MM (2)** and **MM (3)**, there can be found the view that directing practice is complex both in terms of defining the term of director and with reference to the various ways in which directors engage with their practice. Generally, this point is a given if one thinks about it. However, **MM's** responses do serve this study in a sense that they provide more substance to a point that I have articulated in the literature review chapter about the complexity of directing practice as stated in some of the literature. Interestingly, and this constitutes my third point about **MM's** above-mentioned responses, is **MM's** suggestion that the complexity of defining the term *director* is or can be attributed to the way(s) in which each directorial undertaking defines a director. My understanding of the latter part of **MM (2)** and the first sentences of **MM (3)** is that a devising director's knowledge with reference to their way of working is arguably *durational* if one considers this study's explication of Bergson's notion of *duration*. This is because **MM's** reference to his usage of mixed-up methods that are not innocent of other influences, is arguably indicative of the complex body of knowledge that he draws from and continues to accumulate with each devising process from its conception to its 'completion'.

In light of my line of analysis regarding **MM (2)** and **MM (3)**, it seems reasonable for me to state that this study's concept of the [un]knowing director fundamentally reveals and characterises the complexity of defining the term *director* in relation to a devising director's practice. Lastly, **MM** makes a very interesting point in the last sentence of **MM (3)** about his sense that it is impossible for a theatre practitioner to be referred to as a *director* within the context of devising performance. **MM's** response is interesting because it further articulates the tensions that come with the term *director* with reference to devising performance at the least. In relation to a point that I have articulated in the conceptual framework chapter about my view and conception of its argued-for kind of collaboration/participation, **MM's** response arguably holds the same view. Specifically, my view is that this study's notion of the [un]knowing director fundamentally calls for a dissolving of a hierarchy in terms of the power dynamics between a devising director and their co-collaborators. Admittedly, such a reconfiguring of power dynamics could probably only be realised ideally, ideologically or superficially in relation to what actually happens when people participate in a devising process. However, it is interesting to imagine and think through what the impossibility of a director's existence would entail with reference to devising performance. I am of the view that the impossibility does not refer to the directorial role *per se*, but is expressive of a particular ideological and culturally-derived conception of directing within the context of devising performance. Thus, the key realisation to consider is that **MM's** assertion strongly resonates with this study's argued for notion of the [un]knowing director, because it is suggestive of devising performance practice being dependent on the manifestation of a directorial role that is consciously embedded in a complex system of co-authorship. The extent of such co-authorship, according to **MM (3)** arguably renders the *director* to be problematic

or constrained in relation to the Western conception of the term and role.

B) How do you make artistic choices (choice of play text to direct; cast of performers; performance venue; directorial concept of a play; devised performance concept; devised performance theme; directorial style; aesthetics etc.) and arrive at artistic discoveries when you are directing?

I am starting this analytical account about the devising directors' responses to Question B by noting that unlike their responses to Question A, one of the major revelations is that there is a great degree of inconsistency regarding the use of or reference to specific terminology. For example, it was easy for me to pick up on the consistent use of the term *facilitation* or *facilitator* within the directors' responses to Question A. Such a consistent appearance and use of a specific term(s) is much less evident in their responses to Question B. I would agree that my noting of an apparent inconsistency in the usage of terminology is not necessarily interesting or fundamentally problematic for the purposes of analysis. However, I think that it is necessary to bring the inconsistency of used terminology to the fore, because it is useful for this study's purposes. Its usefulness lies in how it is reflective of one of the points that has been raised in this study's literature review section about my realisation that directing practice draws from subjective (theory-practice) dispositions. As a result, which is the case with this study's responses to Question B, individual directing practitioners often use different terms or expressions while potentially speaking of phenomena or experiences that could be similar in nature.

Following from the above-mentioned analytic note, it is quite evident that the devising directors' responses to Question B serve the purpose of expanding upon some of the analytical outcomes emanating from their responses to Question A. Specifically, I am referring to the analytical outcome that identified directing practice to be characterised by *decision-making* and *initiation*. I am quite aware that the content of Question B implies that directing practice does entail *decision-making* on

the part of a director, whether or not the directorial role is fulfilled by an individual or more than one person, which might makes it unnecessary for me to develop this analytical account along the lines of *decision-making* as a characteristic of directing practice. However, I would argue that it is analytically responsible for me to take note of content recurrences as found in the data.

In analytically engaging with the devising directors' responses to Question B, I have noticed that the directors also illuminate the characteristic of *initiation* by offering responses that serve as evidence that a devising process does have a specific starting point as initiated by a director, which also has implications for *decision-making*. The kind of starting point that I am referring to is what I have called a primary text in the preceding section. Furthermore, the responses to Question B in relation to directorial *initiation* are also consistent with one of the key points regarding devising performance illuminated by this study's literature review. Here, I am referring to the discovery that devising performance practice is evidently initiated around or reliant on a director's initially decided-upon and subsequent collaborative engagement with a primary text of sorts. It follows, therefore, that my reading of the devising directors' responses to Question B also relates to the point that the director's *initiation* of a devising process is to some extent predetermined. However, this predetermination is not a fixed or static predetermination, but one that is open to the emergences of a devising process through collaboration. As a matter of fact, the devising process is of utmost importance in yielding the emergences that a director works with, from and through. I now offer the following responses in support of my analytical account thus far:

MK: *I rely mostly on resonance. Material that resonates with me and yet is out of reach so that I am compelled to engage in a performance process in order to try to understand it somehow, or make it make a kind of sense [...]. Arriving at artistic discoveries tends to happen as a gradual aligning of ideas, images, energies and often out of the magical presence and work of a group of people in a room who are on an intuitive journey. The*

themes that tend to circulate for me are out of my own biography and pertain to migration, transnationalism and inter-African diaspora and these are also the influences on my aesthetics.

JLew: *Artistic choices are derived from instinctual practice. [...] This may even be as arty-farty as tapping in to the universe. An example may be that I identified a sure theme for this year's production, but the universe kept sending other information whilst I was busy with source-work, clearly sending me in a direction not originally intended [...].*

GM: [...] *So I would like to think that most of the time we always have that particular vision and mission where you want to take the play[,] that is why during that process of devising you can say: listen, don't you think if we go this direction; I see the script is taking us this way; don't you think we can turn it this way? That means you had the preconceived idea already but getting into a space now you want to allow that freedom of the flow of creativity.*

MM: *I think when I have a title, I don't think it's the very first stage of everything. I think it is the desire to tell a particular story even if you know a little bit of that story [...] So, there's a desire, then from that desire it's about digging these stories and in the digging of these stories there are so many other stories [...]. So, at times it is a feeling, a strong desire that can be encapsulated by maybe an idiom[atic] expression. It's a burning thing inside you. It's those kinds of things that it gets heavy up until you do something about them. You feel even lighter and then something else gets heavy again.*

PP: *I do not have a formula for choosing play texts, but I often go with a play that speaks to my soul in terms of its story and message [...]. I always look for the emotional rhythm of the story as my basis for its exploration. When devising I try to lock the exploration within core words or gestures or objects of a theme that governs my devising process and find varying interpretations, inspirations and reactions that spring from them.*

BS: *I'm not sure that I really have perspective on how I make artistic choices. It is an activity that is very much below the level of conscious awareness (for me) and involves an intricate process of practical consideration (i.e. thinking strategically about action within the constraints of specific circumstances), affective impulse (a very fast largely unreflected sense of fit, rightness; often perceived as a rush of energy, or a sense of warmth, or a visceral sense of the excitement of insight, or insight-just-around-the-corner). I think my process is particularly 'intuitive' [...]. (italics not in original)*

Other than what I have identified as the recurrence of *initiation* with reference to the directors' responses to Question B, my analysis also needs to address two points pertaining to the above-mentioned responses. Firstly, I have noticed that **MK**, **MM** and **PP**'s responses indicate that a director's way of making an artistic choice about a primary text and eventual aesthetics (**MK**'s case) is derived from a very personal space. As far as I am concerned, that personal space seems to be characteristic of a state-of-being that is affective in the sense that it is most probably intuitive. In fact, the responses that are offered by **MK**, **JLew** and **BS** are very explicit in terms of identifying *intuition* as the fundamental informing aspect of their artistic choices or decision-making. Interestingly, **BS**'s response goes further in explaining her sense of how *intuition* operates in her directorial practice or artistic process as related to devising performance. Her explanation of how *intuition* operates with reference to

her artistic practice as a devising director is very much congruent with this study's 'preferred' definition of *intuition* by Atkinson & Claxton (2000:40) as mentioned in the conceptual framework chapter. The devising directors' responses to Question B are indicative of *intuition* as an experiential variable in terms of their ways of arriving at artistic discoveries and/or making artistic choices. From an analytical point of view, it is quite clear that their general experiences of *intuition* illuminate how *intuition* is a psycho-physical human experience and way of knowing that operates unconsciously, affectively (emotionally) and in the form of rational thought in complex ways.

Secondly, the intuitive personal space that I referred to earlier in relation to **MK**, **MM** and **PP's** above-mentioned responses, is determined by a director's general past experiences as a human being and/or past professional experiences as a director that have constituted a repertoire of sorts. Furthermore, it is quite clear to me that the **MK**, **MM** and **PP's** responses are indicative of how their ways of choosing a primary text are actually characteristic of how a devising director's process is *durational* in the Bergsonian sense of the notion. This is because **MM's** *intense desire to tell a story*; **PP's** strategy of *choosing a play text that speaks to his soul*; and **MK's** *reliance on personal resonance*, as her way of choosing a primary text and *drawing from her biography* in relation to her aesthetic choices, are concrete instances of how a director's accumulated past experiences relate to present and future artistic decision-making that is conscious and/or unconscious. Further analysis of *intuition* in relation to this study's devising directors is found in the analysis of the responses to Question D.

As a way of building on the analytical details of the devising directors' responses to Question B, I need to provide the following related data excerpts that

should also be considered in conjunction with the above-mentioned. These following excerpts offer other details about the directors' ways of arriving at a point(s) of encountering artistic discoveries and making related artistic choices or decisions.

MK: [...] Arriving at artistic discoveries tends to happen as a gradual aligning of ideas, images, energies and often out of the magical presence and *work of a group of people in a room who are on an intuitive journey.*

JLew: Artistic choices are derived from instinctual practice. *Tuning in to what the needs of the collective are and finding means to express them* [...] For personal/professional creative practice is often the site for performance or the message that first gives rise to the performance I elect on creating, however, [...] *this drive is also informed by [...] what the selection of actors/performers can bring to the party.*

JLej: *I find that rehearsal functions both as an incubator and a trigger for moment to moment discoveries, where the ensemble is concerned.* The concretisation of those discoveries into artistic choices, however, happens in stages. The first stage is reflection and consultation with the ensemble, the probing of their discoveries and/or blocks, and the dialogue concerning the degree to which each discovery is worth pursuing. The second phase is the internal dialogue that I have with myself, post group reflection [...]. These phases are not always chronologically discrete; they may occur simultaneously or in cycles. A critical method of managing the process is journaling.

GM: [...] *you must remember that you are working with individuals, they always come with something that you didn't think of that is meant to enhance it (the vision/idea) and stuff like that. So, stuff develops during the process. Certain things even kill that preconceived idea by changing the direction of that idea, but I mean it's still there [.] But it's taking another direction. [...] Sometimes, not sometimes actually, you are guided as well by the direction in which the devising piece is going. When I work, I would throw it to the actors, you understand? [...] When we are devising or workshopping, almost a lot of things that come bring that thing of okay, we are here, what can we create together? So it becomes more about the actor's responsibility to the piece. That's when I step back to say okay, we've gotten this far, I throw it to you, what's next? I think I use that type of approach [of] what's next. (italics not in original)*

At an immediate glance, generally, it is quite clear that the responses to Question B indicate that *collaboration* is another key way of undertaking directing practice within the context of devising performance. Emphatically, *collaboration* appears to be the devising directors' way of knowing, because most of the responses explicitly or implicitly refer to *collaboration*. Furthermore, as mentioned, it seems like the responses also explicitly or implicitly place a great deal of importance on the actual unfolding of a devising process as experienced by a director and their co-collaborators in terms of the devising process being the major locus of (artistic) knowledge. It needs to be noted that I do not by any chance mean that the devising process is something that exists independent of its participants, which would be a fundamental misinterpretation of the above-mentioned responses. Additionally, it

would contradict some key elaborations about this study's conceptualisation of devising performance. Therefore, the basis of my view that the devising process is the major locus of (artistic) knowledge lies in that the devising process is the actual space in and through which a director's initial predeterminations develop and sometimes change in unexpected or unforeseen ways. Specifically, such predeterminations refer to a devising director's initiating artistic choices i.e. types of primary texts. Such artistic choices are inherently subject to active interaction with a devising process's unforeseen artistic emergences and mutations, as yielded by or borne through, artistic collaboration from the point of conception to 'completion'.

I think that it is also worth noting that from an analytical perspective, I am of the view that it cannot be taken for granted that the devising directors' responses to Question B, particularly regarding a director's ways of working and knowing, are indicative of a political orientation, perspective and practice that rejects the view of a director as an all knowing, authoritative and 'singular' figure. Thus, one can postulate that *collaboration* is a fundamental operating way of knowing that this study's director-facilitators employ in subjective ways. If one were to ask a question as to why is it that *collaboration* is such a key way of working and knowing as revealed by the responses, I am inclined to consider the conscious or unconscious manifestations of this study's identified I-We epistemology as a possible philosophical underpinning and socio-cultural variable of the phenomenon. The basis of my consideration lies in what I have suggested in the introduction chapter, this being that the pursuit of knowledge is fundamentally a collaborative undertaking based on the premise that *I* is contingent upon *We* with reference to African philosophy as applicable to this study.

In addition to what I have provided as my analysis of the devising directors'

responses to this study's Question B, I have also identified an interesting response that sheds light on a director's ways of arriving at artistic discoveries and making choices. Specifically, I am referring to **JLej's** response, which speaks of the systematic way in which she deals with her devising process in terms of her ways of knowing. Firstly, her response is indicative of the high regard she has for artistic collaboration as one of her key ways of knowing. For **JLej**, consultation or conversation with her co-collaborators is the first way in which she engages with the artistic discoveries that would be yielded by 'her' devising process. Secondly, which is related to the first point, she employs the method of critical self-reflection through journaling. It is through journaling that she fundamentally attempts to 'lift out' her unconscious, intangible and internal experiences of her devising process in terms of making artistic choices and satisfying other aspects of her director-facilitator role. Thus, according to **JLej**, *journaling is a critical method of managing the (devising) process*. I have identified such a response to be interesting because of the resonance that it has with my way of generating and/or documenting knowledge within the context of this study's creative research projects as evidenced by my forthcoming analysis of the projects.

C) What role does collaboration play in your directorial practice?

I think that it is necessary for me to start the analytical account of this specific question by acknowledging and mentioning two points for consideration. Firstly, it needs to be noted that I posed Question C having made the assumption that the devising directors do have some understanding of what could be meant by the term *collaboration*. I did so because I didn't provide them with any specific definition of the term *collaboration*, which is not the case with the term *intuition*, found in Question D, and this study's central concept of the [un]knowing director found in Question E.

Such an act, which leads to the second point, could be problematic because it was only through analysing the responses to Question C that my awareness was sparked about my need to have done so. However, I think that my omission in not providing a specific definition of the term *collaboration* as part of the questionnaire, is indicative of my view and stance that *collaboration* is a given within the artistic enterprise and process of performance-making. Such a view is located within and drawn from this study's context as it has been articulated elsewhere in this thesis. With specific reference to this ensuing analysis, my view is substantiated by the following responses:

BS: [...] *In fact, the work is defined by collaboration* and I see my skill and involvement comprising the activity of weaving together a range of encounters and dialogues between people.

PP: *Theatre by itself is not a game of one*, even in one-handers. (italics not in original)

As a result of the above-mentioned point, it is not surprising that my reading of the devising directors' general responses to Question C strongly indicates an acknowledgment of the central role that *collaboration* plays within the context of devising performance from a director's perspective irrespective of how different the directors' conceptions of the term might be. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the devising directors' specific responses to Question C are an extension of some of their responses to Question B. The above-mentioned omission or non-provision of definition, however, has a productive outcome. The outcome that I have identified through analysis is that it has opened a door of interpretation that has enabled me to imagine or identify something beyond the devising directors' unanimous acknowledgement of the central role of *collaboration* in relation to practice. It was through my moments of analysis that I began to wonder about what it means when a group of people acknowledge that something, in this case *collaboration*, plays a central role in what they do or how they work within the context of their artistic

practice. In engaging with such a question as a way of reading the devising directors' responses to Question C, it appeared to me that the responses indicate or mean that *collaboration* is something that equates to a governing principle, fundamental work ethic, governing methodological underpinning or governing methodological ethos. I am strategically using the word *governing*, because I am attempting to make a point that *collaboration*, for the devising directors, seems to reflect a political stance as also indicated in the analysis of Question B.

Continuing from the above-mentioned analysis, I think that it is quite interesting to notice and think further about the identified assertion that directing is inherently collaborative or that it is governed by *collaboration*. It needs to be noted that the way in which I phrased and structured this study's questionnaire was partly motivated by my need to acquire as much detail as possible related to this study's key inquiry and its related layers. Therefore, I generally consider individual responses relatedly. This is based on my analytic noticing of repetition, elaboration and the relational character of the responses. In one way, for example, a part of **JLej** and **MM's** following responses to Question A and C seem to make a point that a director is arguably not always a 'singular' figure, at least in comparison to the general conception of modern Western theatre practice. Viewed in another way, their responses are partly indicative of what the I-We idea signals as opposed to the simple *We* idea:

JLej [A]: *A director is a role occupiable at any point in the devising process by members of the devising ensemble.*

JLej [C]: *Thus, the process and its product should ideally not 'belong' to 'the' director; it is birthed by the ensemble.*

MM [A]: *But also, it is the work directors are doing that also determines and differentiates directors. Whether directors would be named differently I don't know maybe it's [the] terminology. We still think that if you are actually doing a devised work you cannot be called a director.*

MM [C]: *I'm always intrigued by many hands in the space, by many outside eyes. I'm always intrigued by that because [...] there's always a vulnerability of my vision. That it would be torn into pieces and mixed up with other people's and it is through that. Only [when] that happens it's when the magic starts to happen so I can't think of any other piece that I have created*

alone. (italics not in original)

It was during the process of my attempts at deriving the meaning of the term *collaboration* as indirectly defined by this study's devising directors that I asked myself a 'bigger' question as to why *collaboration* plays such a central role beyond the fact that devising performance, and theatre at large, is a collaborative enterprise. It became clear to me that the devising directors in my study share one thing in common, at the least. This commonality is that these theatre director-facilitators are fundamentally located, I would suggest, within what I choose to refer to as the underpinning socio-cultural DNA of Southern Africa as I understand and experientially know it to be, and this reflects a particular ethos that generally and/or ideally pivots around the I-We epistemology that I have articulated in this study's introduction and mentioned in the analysis of Question B. However, my analysis of *collaboration* in this regard arguably applies to this study's participating directors as reflected by their respective questionnaire responses, and is not necessarily the case for all theatre directors in Southern Africa. Therefore, it needs to be noted that this is just my suspicion or assumption emerging from my close reading of these devising directors' responses to Question C. I am of the view that it was necessary to look at the implicit and explicit recurrences found in the responses as a requirement of analysis, but it became clear to me that I also needed to think about the unarticulated or invisible possibilities of meaning. Essentially, then, this is how I have arrived at my suspicion as to why *collaboration* happens to be key for this study's devising directors beyond the given collaborative nature of theatre practice.

Furthermore, which is also an extension of the line of analysis expressed by the above-mentioned, one can argue that these devising directors represent a particular kind of performance-making philosophy that translates into and frames a

performance-making practice within the context of post-apartheid South Africa, specifically and possibly post-colonial Southern Africa in general. My knowledge about the history of South African theatre, particularly with reference to existing forms of theatre during the country's apartheid era, also led to my thinking about the conscious (direct) or unconscious (indirect) possibility that the devising directors also value *collaboration* due to their reality of being decedents of African Storytelling and South Africa's Workshop Theatre traditions, both of which are strongly characterised by *collaboration* in one way or the other. I am making such a point because I think that it is valuable in further understanding the possible basis of and reasons for the expressed centrality and particularity of *collaboration*, which is also political as indicated earlier, within this study's context. The following response provides an interesting perspective of how *collaboration* functions within the context of devising performance:

JLej: For me the key role of *collaboration exists in two threads, which I would describe as intertwined like an alpha helix. The first thread concerns ownership of storytelling. My experience has been that the stimulus for devising often draws collaborators with an active interest in the topic, and who are equally invested in its investigation [...]. The second thread concerns the audience. Collaboration for me as a director, means that the audience has an active role in the devising process, which becomes explicit in performance. The devising process is only over once an audience has experienced the work. This strand I would describe as the collaborative exchange between audience and ensemble, a ritual which blurs the lines of ownership of the devising process once more.* (italics not in original)

I have identified **JLej's** response as interesting because it offers an experience-based view that evidences how *collaboration* functions at the level of a devising process and the level of a 'complete' public performance offering, which in this case would be the outcome of a devising process. Similar to what I have stated as this study's conception of *collaboration*, **JLej's** response, and the responses of other devising directors to Question C concerning *collaboration*, affirms artistic co-authoring as one of this study's proposed key ways of knowing. Furthermore, her response extends the limits of artistic co-authoring to go beyond that found amongst

the participants of a devising process by also including the audience as co-participants. Such a conceptual extension (*alpha helix*) is fundamentally akin to Southern African Storytelling i.e. the oral performance tradition, and South Africa's Workshop Theatre practices. Therefore, **JLej's** *alpha helix* conception of the devising process characterises it as an ever-emergent artistic practice due to artistic *collaboration*.

In concluding this analytic account, I need to bring a few points to the fore. Firstly, which is related to the discussion about *collaboration*, my reading of the devising directors' responses to Question C is that some of the directors speak of *collaboration* in relation to working with performers. Additionally, other responses are an indication of directors' *collaborations* with other relevant theatre practitioners who bring various sets of skills that directors seem not to have e.g. choreographers, voice practitioners, designers etc. As far as I am concerned, this does not present a problem in terms of contradiction or ambiguity, because the centrality of *collaboration* is sustained throughout the directors' responses. Secondly, is the directors' suggestion that *collaboration* is not necessarily reflective of a smooth process of working or way of knowing. Thus, *collaboration* is challenging because it does not privilege or suggest any utopian state of certainty and stability on the part of everyone who participates in the process of devising a performance. *Collaboration*, I would argue, ensures that a director and their co-collaborators are betwixt and between within the context devising performance. This state of liminality is understood with reference to the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising process from its conception to 'completion' as applicable to [un]knowing.

D) What role does intuition play in your directorial practice?

As indicated in my analytical account of Question C, I decided to provide a definition

of the term *intuition* as an accompaniment to the research questionnaire. Essentially, my motivation to do so was to ensure specificity and clarity as to what *intuition* means within the context of this study and due to my reading of the literature on the subject of *intuition*. The literature made it quite clear that the term *intuition* carries different meanings for different people, disciplinary domains or areas of study. Therefore, it is necessary for me to start this analytical account by reiterating that the definition of *intuition* arrived at for this study, at least by the time that I developed and circulated its research questionnaire, is as follows:

- [Intuition] refers to a family of 'ways of knowing' that have in common a lack of clearly articulated comprehension or rationale, but which differ in a variety of other ways. Non-mystical members of this family include:
- *expertise* - the unreflective execution of intricate skilled performance;
- *implicit learning* – the acquisition of such expertise by non-conscious or non-conceptual means;
- *judgement* – making accurate decisions and categorizations without, at the time, being able to explain or justify them;
- *sensitivity*- a heightened attentiveness, both conscious and non-conscious, to details of a situation;
- *creativity* – the use of incubation and reverie to enhance problem-solving and
- *rumination*- the process of 'chewing the cud' of experience in order to extract its meanings and implications. (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000:40)

Through undertaking a basic reading of the devising directors' responses to Question D, it is quite clear that they regard *intuition* to be of fundamental importance to their practice. My analysis of their responses also indicates a general consistency between the above-mentioned definition of *intuition* and the directors' articulated experiences of *intuition* in cases where such articulations exist as found in the following responses:

JLej: If I had to use a single word to describe my directing practice, *I would say it was intuitive. It is a very personal approach, shockingly private at times, and completely devoid of mechanisms for defense from logic and critique.* Intuition allows me to connect with my collaborators on multiple levels, it protects me from the guilt of pushing performers to the brink of whatever they fear, it robs me of the fear of my own failures, it drags me into discoveries [...].

GM: So, it comes and goes. It's there, *it's always there but you know when you work with people, I think that's where the intuition thing works, you tend not to think, but it's there.*

BS: *Intuition is absolutely central.* This is something that *feels like it's about spontaneous impulse, visceral and emotional response; but I can see that it is very much rooted in years of experience* (knowledge built up slowly over different experiences and contexts). *This knowledge becomes very quickly and imperceptibly activated in the moment of response, on*

the floor or mulling over the material in a way that feels unconsidered and automatic, but that I imagine is in fact relying on a very fast and unconscious process of analysis. (italics not in original)

Beyond the above-mentioned analysis, my close reading of the devising directors' responses to Question D also reveals two points about intuition. Firstly, *intuition* seems to be referring to a cognitive experience and embodied state of being that is immediate, unpredictable and majorly operational during the actual unfolding of a performance-devising process. For the purpose of facilitating clarity, I will state that I am of the view that the unfolding of a devising process operates on two levels. On the one hand, it operates at the level of a director's lived, embodied and immediate artistic interactions with performers and perhaps other co-collaborators within the domains of a specific and appropriate physical space such as a studio or rehearsal room. On the other hand, I would argue, it operates when a director is engaging with a devising process in the absence of their co-collaborators. Based on my experiences of *intuition* during the creative research projects or case studies conducted for this study, a devising process is literally manifest at the pre-session, during-session and post-session phases of engagement on the director's part. My noting of the two levels of operation is intended to make the point that a director's work within the context of devising performance takes place inside and outside a studio or rehearsal room whenever they are engaging with any artistic related matter of a devising process. Therefore, one needs to appreciate and consider the devising directors' responses to Question D in light of what I have just mentioned. This is because the contents of the responses related to the manifestations of *intuition* are implicitly or explicitly demonstrative of the referred-to two levels of operation.

Despite what I have noted above in terms of the levels of operation of *intuition*, the devising directors' responses also point to something that is closely related to a part of my analytical account of the previous question, Question C. Here

I am referring to my noticing of an interrelation between *intuition* and *collaboration*. The fundamental cause of such an interrelation possibly lies in what could be an obvious premise that a director would need to participate in the process of devising a performance with others in order for their *intuition* to operate. In other words, *collaboration*, at least within the context of devising a performance, is arguably a prerequisite or pre-condition for the activation and operation of a director's *intuition*. In demonstrating what I have noted thus far regarding *intuition* with reference to the devising directors, let me offer some of the responses that form the basis of my analytical noting about *intuition*'s levels of operation and its inextricable interrelation with *collaboration*:

MK: I would say that my directorial practice is largely intuitive within the framework of a project that has some parameters that are more or less defined. *The rehearsal room itself also becomes a less and less structured, and more and more intuitive space as material is generated and the work begins to take shape.*

JLej: In *The Wages of Sin*, I discovered that intuition can mean the difference between holding a collaborator's vulnerability and shattering their faith in your ability to maintain their safety [...]. My instinct told me to facilitate small transgressions in each rehearsal.

GM: It comes and goes because like I said, I think it's that moment when you are triggered. *I think intuition would be that moment when you are triggered as a facilitator or as a director and just want to go with this particular thing. That is where the collaboration thing actually happens because then you can be directed as well as you can be stopped from making what not. So, I think that when it comes it [i.e. intuition] is helped by the team that you are working with; those are the people that can help you with it in terms of don't just do this, you know that whole thing of collaborating?*

PP: Intuition is [...] *the telling dictated by the meeting of the story with the souls of those who bring it alive.* (italics not in original)

Secondly, *intuition* seems to be a cognitive experience and embodied state-of-being that requires a particular kind of engagement of the senses by a director within the context of devising, particularly, the senses of sight and hearing. The following responses are evidence of what I am referring to:

JLej: [...] We each got a chance to tell a story of hurt in our lives, and when this performer's turn came, we interrupted, we refused to listen. On that day I was exhausted. I was following a rehearsal plan on autopilot. Before I knew it, she had broken down, wept, cursed, and dropped out of the ensemble, never to return. *I was not present. I had not listened with my intuitive ear.*

MM: [...] My material for me, actually that's what makes me not to sleep at night *because I always see things. I always trust that [...] I hear things. I hear rhythms.* If you are beating a beat, I hear a complete one and I'll tell you are missing it. We all do that. We all do. *It's a question of being still or humble.* They say that the challenge about actors or artists is that

they always pretend as if they are listening, but they are not hearing. They are pretending that they are looking but they are not seeing [...].

PP: *Intuition is the deeper listening* [...] I believe intuition works best with embodiment – a body's whole engagement with what one does. (italics not in original)

In addition to what I have stated thus far as realisations of my analysis, I am of the view that the responses also point to one thing. Essentially, which is probably indisputable if one considers this study's provided definition of *intuition*, the responses mainly validate or affirm the definitive aspect of *intuition* that has do with *sensitivity*. The devising directors are referring to their lived moments or instances of heightened inner attentiveness in relation to their inner responses to external phenomena (interactions with performers during a devising session) or internal phenomena (an individual director's non-predetermined, unforeseen and immediate insights of various kinds that are related to their devising process). As a matter of fact, **JLej's** response offers an experiential instance of what can happen if and when a director's sensitivity (presence) is not operative during the unfolding of a devising process. Her experience, in addition to **MM** and **PP's**, offer specific insight regarding how *intuition* fundamentally operates from a director's perspective within the context of devising performance. This is because their responses articulate a view that a devising director's role and skill are fundamentally satisfied by and reliant upon *sensitivity* as an operative and definitive characteristic of *intuition*. Furthermore, I can argue that a director's *intuition*, in the form of *sensitivity*, is a devising director's way of ensuring that they are not limited by their predetermined artistic choices during the course of a devising process. The kind of limitation that I am referring to here is one that is characterised by **JLej's** *autopilot mode*, which is counterproductive to the extent of potentially jeopardising the psycho-physical well-being of a director's co-collaborator(s). A devising director's *sensitivity* with reference to *intuition* as a way of knowing during a devising process, then, is also something that functions as a form

of professional work ethic. This is because the absence thereof potentially affects the safety of collaborating participants other than the director. I am particularly noting **JLej, MM** and **PP's** responses about *intuition* and *sensitivity* because my lived experiences of directing as evidenced by some parts of my creative research projects' analysis, concur with their responses. Thus, *intuition* is central to directing practice within the context of devising performance as evidenced by this study.

E) Based on your professional experiences, what is your response to the positing that a director is an [un]knowing figure (with reference to this study's conception of the notion)?

To begin, I will briefly reiterate what I have mentioned in my account of the devising directors' responses to Question D. I saw it fitting to supplement the questionnaire with a specific definition of the notion or concept of the [un]knowing director for reasons I have indicated before. Furthermore, the definition provided of the key notion of the [un]knowing director in relation to devising performance had reached a certain level of development by the time that I undertook the structured interviews and eventually circulated the questionnaire to the participating South(ern) African theatre directors. The definition provided is therefore drawn from the study's conceptual framework and refers to the [un]knowing director and devising performance as follows:

- 1) The [un]knowing director is an enduring (refers to a process of ceaseless formation) intuitive practitioner.
- 2) Similarly, the devising process is an enduring landscape through and/or within which its participants i.e. the [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators travel and engage.
- 3) Such a landscape is not pre-formed; it does not pre-exist to be travelled through. It emerges as the devising process goes on.

- 4) The [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators bring skill to the landscape that is derived from previous experience(s) in/with such landscapes, but their knowledge of the landscape in each process emerges through an engagement as they travel along from place to place.
- 5) In this sense travel happens in a state of [un]knowing and the particular paths, points or destination only become known through the process or experience(s) of travelling.
- 6) As we (the [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators) go or travel; we are more or less conscious of what is going on around us and of what is emerging.

My analysis of the devising directors' responses to Question E has resulted in a clear noting of a consensus about the plausibility of the above idea of the [un]knowing director for directing in general. However, I have also noted that most of the responses seem to carry an underlying implication that the plausibility of the notion is particularly appropriate for directing practice within the context of devising performance. Additionally, some of the responses make a point about the unique nature of each directorial undertaking with reference to devising performance.

Specifically, the following responses provide substance to what I am referring to:

JLej: [...] *I believe that every devising and directing process is unique*, influenced by changing and varied circumstances within the ensemble set up and outside of it. Thus, a director encounters a different terrain each time they undertake a devising journey.

MM: [...] I always say to people that *each and every process for me is different* but there's a sense of structure that exists. (italics not in original)

Briefly speaking, it can be argued that the unique nature of each directorial undertaking within the context of devising performance is not surprising, particularly because of the variable of non-predetermination that is inherent to devising as argued for previously. However, my analysis of the responses has led to my awareness that **JLej** and **MM** are alluding to the fundamental emergent and non-

predeterministic characteristics of devising performance practice. Furthermore, these characteristics tend to operate in relation to some sort of predetermined circumstances or structures in the form of a devising director's ways of initiating and sustaining the emergent devising process.

In analysing the devising directors' responses to Question E, I have also come across a difference in the individual responses, particularly in terms of their degree of elaboration. For example:

MK: I think the director for a devised work is very much an [un]knowing figure in the way that the term is used in the study. The notion of traveling on a road that is only formed as it is travelled on is one that makes sense to me to describe the process of making work in this way.

JLew: I fully agree. This director is in a wide encompassing artistic flow.

BS: I strongly recognise myself in this understanding. At times this has made me anxious about my skill as a director: that is, I have experienced the position of 'not knowing' as a shortcoming or lack that has been coded for me to all sorts of less-than self-representations (also related to being a woman, an introvert, and so on). But I have also become increasingly aware of the ways in which I do 'know', and very clearly and sharply, but in a way that feels like it is stumbled upon, encountered in others and in the world and not something that I am able to pull up from within myself, on my own, in the space of my own thought. It is a phenomenological sense of knowing but knowing as recognition or encounter, not generation or production (through conceptualisation or imagination and so on).

This resulted in my need to identify what the content of the individual responses seems to speak of in relation to the kind of inquiry contained in Question E other than the above-mentioned consensus. It follows that my reading of the responses indicates the following points and discoveries for this study:

1. [Un]knowing is a way of knowing that is in relation and particular to directing practice within the context of devising performance practice.
2. [Un]knowing requires a director to employ a kind of waiting with patience as a way of dealing with the unknown as pertaining to devising performance practice. This kind of waiting requires a director's *sensitivity* as one of the key forms of their *intuition* with reference to artistic discoveries and choices.
3. [Un]knowing is a way of knowing that is uneasy, because it is punctuated by a director's experiences of anxiety due to their lack of control in terms of the

unexpected emergences of a devising process.

4. A director is not an empty-vessel at any given point of a devising process.

This is because a director's interrelated and ever-present roles of *initiation* and *decision-making* exist throughout the course of a devising process. These roles are based, to some extent at least, on previous experience(s) and developed skill that the director brings to the process.

The above-mentioned points are useful and necessary to note as far as they serve the purpose of illuminating reasons as to why or how the respondents affirm the plausibility of this study's notion of the [un]knowing director and devising performance practice. In addition to these identified points or discoveries, I have also noted something in the devising directors' responses that I consider to be possibly interesting. I have noticed the existence of reference to the term *story* as found in the following responses:

JLej: [...] I want to say that *a director's knowing comes from a certain human, and possibly inherent, recognition of the feeling that facilitates story-telling*; it comes from a basic necessity to extend the bond required to join an audience to the story through the ensemble.

MM: [...] And that routine also it's about going to the most scary places that challenge my confidence that makes me to actually say I don't know what I'm doing but also into a place of wait[ing]: *I think I'm becoming more and more accepting of the uncomfortability of waiting for the story to come. I think my faith is growing of knowing that a story will come.*

PP: [...] *Unknowing here denotes a form of listening (deeper listening and understanding) to the story and nature in which it needs to be told. The director here needs to travel within the story and outside of it with [their] [co-]collaborators.* The journey is that of a discovery and like a composer you use notes to create the music, yet you follow the notes into their story of the song and when it ends too soon then it is what it is. (italics not in original)

One can analytically deduce that the above-mentioned responses seem to assert that a director, and their co-collaborators, engage with a *story* in one way or the other. Therefore, a director is a storyteller. Obviously, this depends on the kind(s) of artistic work that a director collaboratively engages with, as a sought-for and prospective outcome of their devising process. However, I think that it is useful to consider the respondents' proposal of a director as storyteller in another way.

Specifically, it is quite useful for this study to consider a director as a storyteller with

reference to the performance tradition of Southern African storytelling. This is mainly because Southern African storytelling, for example in South Africa's Nguni cultural sphere, possibly aids in further explicating the notion of the [un]knowing director if one considers the details of how an Nguni Southern African storyteller operates. My basic experiential knowledge about Nguni storytelling, which is generally similar to other indigenous storytelling traditions in South Africa, informs me that a storyteller is a skilled performer whose knowledge of the performance practice is acquired experientially and over time.

Additionally, the performance practice operates through a performer's experiential assimilation of core images that provide a story's structure or content with a basic frame. It is necessary to note that these core images come from the tradition, specifically those experiences that the particular storyteller has had of that tradition. In other words, the performances they have participated in previously as performer or as audience. This is important because it aligns with the elements of 'initiation' of the initial sources upon which the devising process is built. Additionally, the performer gets to perform a story from the position of unforeseeability and non-predetermination. This means that the storyteller gets to make the story in collaboration with an audience as the story is told. In this way, one can postulate that the [un]knowing director is a storyteller within the context of Southern Africa, at the least.

Overall then, I am of the view, from my analysis of the directors' responses to the questionnaire, that they serve the study in two productive ways. Firstly, their responses do provide the required substantiation that supports this study's hypothetical statement that a director is an [un]knowing figure. Secondly, which is related to the first point, their responses have also provided details about how and

why this study's notion of the [un]knowing director is plausible with reference to the context of devising performance practice. Essentially, the referred-to questionnaire responses have illuminated the following analytic categories or keywords that constitute the practice of the [un]knowing director: *facilitation, initiation, decision-making, intuition, collaboration, waiting* and *story*. These analytic categories, as indicated earlier, were identified through my close reading of the responses, which lead to my identification of their explicit or implicit meanings. Succinctly, the key findings that have emerged with reference to the mentioned analytic categories or keywords are:

1. The [un]knowing director is defined and/or characterised by their primary role of facilitating a devising process from its inception to 'completion'. As such, the notion of *director-facilitator* is evidently appropriate for performance-devising practice.
2. *Facilitation* involves the [un]knowing director's skill of enabling, coordination and integration of the creative-artistic process and practice of devising performance that is also highly dependent on their co-collaborators' various artistic contributions throughout a devising process.
3. The [un]knowing director' role, in terms of *facilitation*, can be played by an individual or ensemble.
4. The [un]knowing director's *facilitation* role is inherently realised through their interconnected roles of *decision-making* and *initiation*. All of these roles are interwoven, have to do with the director's [un]knowing in the form of artistic discoveries and choices, and are manifest throughout the various phases of a devising process.
5. The [un]knowing director's role of *initiation* throughout the devising process, is

indicative of the fact that their practice and/or way(s) of knowing, do involve a degree of predetermination in the form of primary text, various performance-devising tasks etc. However, this degree of predetermination essentially provides the initiating trails (*wayfaring*) that would set the devising process in a variety of motions and actually facilitates the moment-to-moment unfolding thereof. Therefore, the referred-to predetermination is the [un]knowing director's strategic way of knowing that is fundamentally subject to non-predetermination.

6. The [un]knowing director's decision-making approach is sometimes collective/inclusive and sometimes independent/exclusive depending on the various stages of a devising process and other complex variables.
7. Indeed, *collaboration* and *intuition* are the [un]knowing director's key ways of knowing that are fundamentally interdependent. However, both ways of knowing are characterised by various complexities that are inherently embedded within the artistic-creative practice of devising performance.
8. The [un]knowing director's particular undertaking of *collaboration* is defined by the bedrock of its African I-We epistemological perspective. Once again, it is worth stating that this study's I-We perspective is not in any way suggestive or devoid of complexities pertaining to problematic power relations, for example, that constitute a devising process.
9. The [un]knowing director's experiences of *intuition* during the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising process are indicative of the way(s) in which their process is *durational* in Henri Bergson's (1907) terminology.
10. The manifestations of the [un]knowing director's *intuition*, are reliant on their ability to be sensitive to the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising

process. In turn, the referred-to sensitivity translates into the [un]knowing director's literal embodied act(s) of *waiting* patiently for the unforeseen or non-predetermined emergences of artistic discoveries and choices throughout a devising process. This kind of waiting is certainly dynamic in a sense that it is a way in which the [un]knowing director attains the non-predetermination of artistic discoveries and choices as their way of working and/or knowing.

11. The [un]knowing director's process/practice arguably has its core artistic-creative 'heritage', essence or genesis in the Southern African oral performance tradition. This 'heritage', particularly in the form of Nguni storytelling, inherently necessitates the engagement of their process with the notion of *story*(telling) due to the fundamentally collaborative and intuitive definitive aspects thereof. It is worth noting that the earlier-mentioned brief discussion on the artistic practice of Nguni storytelling with reference to core images, is arguably also indicative of how the Nguni storyteller's process is *durational*. Based on this logic, the [un]knowing director's process is defined by *story*(telling).

As stated in the introductory frame that I have provided for my analysis of the devising directors' questionnaire responses, this study's employed method of a questionnaire was intended to lay a praxis foundation for my undertaking of the creative research projects. This chapter's next sub-section, then, is my analytic account of the creative research projects that I undertook as a means of grappling with the research question and grounding hypothetical statement.

4.2 Creative Research Projects

a) Project background and description

As an *art of inquiry* that is a research instance of *thinking through making* or doing (Ingold, 2013:6), this study's creative research project 1, was essentially the kind of research project that is akin to what Schön identifies as an 'exploratory experiment' because it is exemplary of the following categorical description:

When action is undertaken only to see what follows, without accompanying predictions or expectations, I shall call it *exploratory experiment*. This is much of what an infant does when [they explore] the world around [them], what an artist does when [they juxtapose] colors to see what effect they make, and what a newcomer does when [they wander] around a strange neighborhood. It is also what a scientist often does when [they] first [encounter] and [probe] a strange substance to see how it will respond. Exploratory experiment is essential to the sort of science that does not appear in the scientific journals, because it has been screened out of the scientists' accounts of experimental results (perhaps because it does not conform to the norms of controlled experiment). Exploratory experiment is the probing, playful activity by which we get a feel for things. It succeeds when it leads to the discovery of something there. (1983:145, italics in original)

As much as this study's creative research project 1 was an exploratory experiment, it is important to acknowledge that it was a kind of experiment that did not engage with experimentation merely for the sake of experimenting. This means that it was driven by specific research objectives that were prescribed by the study's written proposal that was eventually approved by the University of Cape Town's Doctoral Board. What this means, which I have stated in the chapter preceding the current one is that creative research project 1 was geared towards satisfying the following research aims:

1. Piloting this study by testing its research methods at the level of creative research i.e. embodied directing practice within the context of devising performance.
2. Discovering possible insights or knowledge regarding this study's research question (what is the [un]knowing director?).

Concerning the first above-mentioned research aim, I need to mention that in addition to the research methods of auto-ethnographical note-taking and my own reflective journaling as they have been adapted in this study, creative research project 1 involved the initially intended methods of:

1. Audio-visual recordings of the devising sessions.
2. Individually generated reflective journal accounts of devising sessions by my collaborating performers.

I am bringing the above-mentioned method-related information to the fore, because such information indicates how I started the project with certain methods in mind, some of which did not work successfully if one considers the project's duration in terms of its beginning and 'completion'. This manifestation, if anything, is really demonstrative of how the idea and actual process of *setting forth [un]knowingly* could be equated to a method-related *exploratory experiment* (Schön, 1983:145).

The reason(s) pertaining to why the above research methods did not work successfully in creative research project 1 will form part of the project's forthcoming discussion. Irrespective of such a methodological shortcoming, creative research project 1 was a useful instance of research that served as a necessary platform from which I, as a researcher, managed to realise what Schön refers to as a researcher's lived experience of getting a feel for things by means of probing through playful activity (1983:145).

In addition to satisfying the research aim of piloting this study in terms of its research methods, I need to bring another key background factor of creative research project 1 to the fore. This factor also contributes to how this project was not an 'innocent' and 'uninformed' *exploratory experiment* (Schön, 1983:145). As a key requisite of an aspect of this study's general methodology of *practice as research*,

this project's undertaking was also based on my knowledge and awareness of some of this study's key theoretical underpinnings that are articulated in the conceptual framework chapter. Specifically, I undertook creative research project 1 only after my research proposal was approved by my institution. A reading of my approved proposal indicates that I took it upon myself to try to be as elaborate as I could be at the time about the concept or notion of the [un]knowing director. This requirement was a result of the consistent feedback that I received from my supervisor, fellow PhD scholars, other lecturers within my department and colleagues from elsewhere about my need to be clear about my conceptualisation of the [un]knowing director. As one can imagine, my initial elaboration was that of a literary engagement with this study's identified theories and it subsequently took up a substantial portion of my submitted and later approved proposal. This development led to my undertaking of creative research project 1 as a researcher who had a 'stable', yet provisional, hunch about the notion of the [un]knowing director in terms of its theoretical conceptualisation.

This in turn resulted in my participation in the devising sessions of creative research project 1 through a perspective of reasonably conjured or decided-upon 'things' to look for in terms of terminology. Specifically, I am referring to the 'things' that I have termed *intuitive emergences* in relation to the contents of creative research project 1's devising session accounts. Such a terminology, which remained consistent throughout the devising session accounts of this study's creative research projects, was initially borrowed from some of the key contents of my conceptual framework regarding the notion of the [un]knowing director. Thus, my sense was that this study's creative research project 1 required me to assume the role of an artist-researcher whose research methodology fundamentally required an embodied

practical experimentation that was exploratory in character and guided by what to look for and/or how to term the particular manifestations of creative research project 1 in the form of devising session accounts. Based on what I have established in this thesis' conceptual framework chapter, the 'things' that I was looking for in and through creative research project 1, and then in creative research projects 2 and 3, are the [un]knowing director's way(s) of knowing in terms of artistic discoveries and their related, accompanying or subsequent artistic choices. Therefore it can be argued, which I have indicated earlier in this discussion, that creative project 1 was this study's initiating instance of *artistic (embodied) research* (Borgdorff, 2012) that was geared towards the manifestation of an *exploratory experiment* (Schön, 1983:145) and an *art of inquiry* (Ingold, 2013:6) focused on undertaking the research task of *hypothesis-testing*. However, this kind of hypothesis-testing is not simply characterised by a confirmation or disconfirmation in terms of a researcher's working with competing hypotheses, one of which would need to attain its empirical validity by "... demonstrating a competitive resistance to [experimental] refutation" (Schön, 1983:146-147). Furthermore, hypothesis-testing is one of the three kinds of experiments according to Schön (1983), of which the *exploratory experiment* is a second. In order to provide clarity about what I am referring to, it is helpful to note his assertion that:

When the practitioner reflects-in-action in a case [they perceive] as unique, paying attention to phenomena and surfacing [their] intuitive understanding of them, [their] experimenting is at once exploratory, move testing, and hypothesis[-]testing. The three functions are fulfilled by the very same actions. And from this fact follows the distinctive character of experimenting in practice. (Schön, 1983:147)

Schön's categories of experiment could lead to confusion in relation to the current discussion because a researcher's hypothesis-testing generally forms part of an experimental situation. However, the potential of such confusion can be resolved by an appreciation of the view that the two categories namely exploratory experiment

and hypothesis-testing, serve each other in a reciprocal manner within this study's context. Such an appreciation can be facilitated by a consideration of the fact that I undertook creative research project 1 as an initial means of grappling with the research question: what is the [un]knowing director? This research question, as indicated in the introductory chapter, carries an implied hypothetical premise and statement that: a director is an [un]knowing figure. However, as opposed to testing various competing hypotheses through my undertaking of creative research project 1, and research projects 2 and 3, I operated from the vantage point of a traveller whose collaborative artistic research practice was characterised by a reciprocal and simultaneous undertaking of hypothesis testing and exploratory experimentation. I undertook creative research project 1 with *Remix Dance Company*, a Cape Town-based integrated dance company. *Remix* comprised of 8 differently abled performers. Three of the performers were on wheelchairs while also not sharing similar physical abilities. Five of the performers were 'able-bodied' performers. Within this group of performers four of them shared a contemporary dance orientation/training and one of the performers had a theatre acting and movement orientation/training. One of the performers within this group of five performers spoke through sign language.

The project was collaborative in its devising and presentation. It commenced on the 23rd of January 2012 and was 'completed' on the 16th of March 2012. The project was entitled *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha*. At this point of sketching the background factors related to this creative research project, I need to bring three points to the fore. Firstly, my choice of deciding to collaborate with *Remix* was a result of three reasons being: (a) *Remix* expressed an interest in working with me as a director based on its knowledge of my body of work at the time, which had the

potential of contributing to the diversity of its own artistic profile or body of work; (b) my personal interest to work with a contemporary dance company as a director who had never had such prior experience coupled with my artistic need to explore a 'new' aesthetic in my body of work at the time; and (c) working with *Remix* had the added advantage of me working with professional performers who I did not need to pay and a professional company that had some money for production costs, which I did not have as a PhD student. Secondly, I was excited to work with professional performers because this study's conceptualisation of the [un]knowing director partly speaks of the aspect of adequate skill as an appropriate and required characteristic for the kind of traveller who would best participate in the study through Ingold's *wayfinding* (2000:220). I am aware that the conceptual framework section regards *wayfinding* as generally being applicable to the [un]knowing director. However, one needs to remember that I have also suggested that the [un]knowing director works with co-collaborators who bring certain skillsets to the work. This is because *wayfinding* is essentially,

[...] a skilled performance in which the traveller whose powers of perception and action have been fine-tuned through previous experience, 'feels [their] way towards [their] goal, continually adjusting [their] movements in response to an ongoing monitoring of [the] surroundings. (Ingold, 2000:220)

Thirdly, the time frame that *Remix* provided for our collaboration in terms of its initiation and 'completion' seemed quite sufficient for me to undertake creative research project 1. This points to the fact that I undertook project 1 having had a sense that I would need as much time as I could get in order to get a feel for things (Schön, 1983:145), particularly in terms of the actual lived/embodied experiences of working with this study's initially chosen methods that were geared towards my grappling with its research question within the context of creative research. I do recall that one of the challenges that I experienced regarding my undertaking of

Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha was that I did not sufficiently consult my supervisor, specifically in terms of discussing possible ways in which I could employ my specific research methods in the most effective and productive ways. Therefore, this project became a necessary and useful ‘fiasco’ in terms of my lived experiences of piloting this study on the level of research methods. However, which will be illuminated by this continuing discussion, this project was productive in one way or the other as a moment of *practice as research* in light of the fundamental characteristics of artistic research as articulated in the previous section.

b) Being inside *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha*

In consideration of my need to bring you in close touch with this study in terms of its creative research projects and as a way of continuing the discussion of creative research project 1, I need to refer you back to a useful and earlier-mentioned assertion from an earlier chapter that:

The finished portrait is explained by the features of the model, by the nature of the artist, by the colours spread out on the palette; but, even with the knowledge of what explains it, no one, not even the artist, could have foreseen exactly what the portrait would be, for to predict [and predetermine] it would have been to produce it before it was produced—an absurd hypothesis which is its own refutation. (Bergson, 1907:7)

Bergson’s assertion is useful because it articulates an adequate and fundamental perspective that guided my undertaking of creative research project 1 and the subsequent creative research projects that formed part of the study, both in terms of the outcomes of the devising process and the research outcomes. Additionally, I also need to refer you back to another useful and earlier-mentioned assertion that:

[...] people do not acquire their knowledge ready-made, but rather *grow into it*, through a process of what might best be called ‘guided rediscovery’. The process is rather like that of following trails through a landscape: each story will take you so far, until you come across another that will take you further. This trail-following is what I call wayfaring. And my thesis, in a nutshell, is that it is through wayfaring, not transmission, that knowledge is carried on [...]. Indeed ‘keeping going’ may involve a good measure of creative improvisation. It is in following this path – *in their movement along a way of life*— that people [discover and] grow into knowledge. (Ingold, 2011:162, italics in original)

Now, it should come as no surprise that I started my devising process with *Remix*

Dance Company with the knowledge that ours would be the pursuit of an artistic endeavour in the form of a 'complete' theatre performance that is prescribed by the limitations of specific commencing and 'completion' points. However, as an artistic-researcher, I started the devising process without having any complete knowledge of our project in terms of the nature of its eventual theme, directorial style, performance venue, technical requirements i.e. lighting, sound, costume and make-up, the length of the envisaged performance at the level of its public presentation etc. Thus, the 'finished' portrait that became *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha* was unforeseen and non-predetermined. However, it would be illusive and misleading for me to avoid or fail to acknowledge that the devising process of *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha* was indeed inclusive of a certain degree of predetermination on my part, at the least. The specific predetermination that I am referring to is basically found in the first (**Opening and Welcome**) and second (**Exercises**) sections of the devising session accounts as evidenced by the following example from creative research project 1:

Creative Research Project 1

25 January 2012

Day3

1. Opening and Welcome

1.1 How is everybody doing?

1.2 Contextualising the session

2. Exercises

2.1 Ritual of warming-up the rehearsal space

- This exercise is done by the entire company, including myself. Each company member touches the walls and windows of the rehearsal room while humming, if possible or necessary based on one's feelings. The objects that are found nearby the rehearsal room's walls and windows can also be touched. This activity's primary intention is to enable each company member to physically, emotionally and psychologically locate themselves in the rehearsal room while also preparing themselves to fully be present throughout each session. **[Repeated exercise; done]**

2.2 Performers walk anywhere within the rehearsal space. They should respond to the drum beat(s) in the following manner: one drum beat means that the performers should increase the pace at which they were walking; two drum beats mean that the performers should change the direction in which they were walking; and three drum beats mean that the performers should come to an immediate complete stop/freeze. Each performer works with an association while doing the exercise. Today's association, which emerged intuitively, was: ***reaching out to/for someone that you are longing for.*** **[Repeated exercise; done]**

2.3 Grotowski's warm-up exercises

These are selected exercises from Grotowski's *Towards a Poor Theatre*. They are done individually and include the following:

- A performer walks around the space with their hands on their hips and knees slightly bent.

- A performer walks around the space with their knees accordingly bent so that their hands touch the sides of their feet.
- A performer walks around the space while walking on the tips of their toes.
- A performer walks around the space while making small circles with their arms stretched out sideways. **[Exercises were not done today]**

Each of these exercises needs to be undertaken while each performer is working with an internal association.

2.4 Mannequin Exercise

This exercise is done individually by a performer's initial psycho-physical exploration and eventual embodiment of a mannequin. It is important for each performer to be specific in the eventual embodiment of their mannequin. Each performer's eventual embodiment requires them to be totally committed to and honest about their embodiment. During the advanced stage of the exercise, I will go around the 'rehearsal room' tapping each performer on their shoulder as an indication for them to gradually 'step out' of their mannequin embodiment.

[Exercise was not done today]

2.5 Mirror Exercise to be done in pairs.

This exercise is done in pairs. There is a leader and a follower. The leader undertakes very basic and clear physical gestures that the follower (the mirror) needs to emulate with as much precision as possible. Performers need to alternate roles when I provide them with the signal to do so. **[Exercise was not done today]**

2.6 Call Me by Your Name exercise to be done in pairs

This exercise is done in pairs i.e. by two performers. It is done by the performers facing each other while being silent. As the exercise progresses, the two performers should get to a point where one of them literally or figuratively sees themselves in their partner's eyes. Thereafter, the performer who sees themselves in their partner's eyes should give their partner the verbal instruction/request of: Call Me by Your Name. Thereafter, the partner who receives such an instruction can either respond accordingly or maintain their silence depending on what they feel when they receive such a verbal instruction/request. The exercise develops through the two performers' calling and response if and when it emerges. **[Exercise was not done today]**

2.7 Telepathy Exercise to be done in pairs

This exercise is done in pairs i.e. by two performers. It is done by the performers facing each other while being silent. As the exercise progresses, the two performers should develop an unplanned telepathic conversation about whatever subject matter emerges for them as they continue to face each other in silence. **[Exercise was not done today]**

2.8 Each performer selects and uses two body parts to express an emotion. The performer should focus on isolating their body parts of choice as much as possible by imagining that the rest of their body parts do not exist. **[Exercise was not done today]**

2.9 One performer follows their partner's finger with their entire bodies wherever their partner leads them within the space as best as possible. **[Exercise was not done today]**

2.10 The Social Continuum Scale (of 0-10) Exercise

Performers individually place themselves on an imaginary scale of 0-10 as a means of answering the following question: ***are you ready to let go of the person that you longed for during exercise 2.2.*** Thereafter, each performer starts by stating their names, saying on which point of the scale have they placed themselves and why they have taken such a position, one at a time. Other performers must listen to what each speaking performer says. Thereafter, each performer goes to the person who said something that bears resonance with them and physically touches that person's shoulder without letting go of touching them. This is followed by each performer stating who they are touching and why. Lastly, the performers thank each other for listening and sharing. **[Exercise was not done today]**

2.11 The Chinese Prop Exercise **[This exercise is one that I know, but did not plan to undertake during Day 3. The need and decision to request my co-collaborators to do the exercise emerged intuitively as I was observing the dance technique class that precedes each devising session.]**

This exercise is done in the following manner: divide the company into 2 groups of 4; each group has person A, B, C, D; person A and B are partners and persons C and D are partners; A & B stand next to each other and face C & D who also stand next to each other; A whispers something into B's ear; B says to C what he/she has heard from A; then D whispers something into C's ear who then says to B what he/she has heard from D. A & D have the

freedom to verbally whisper anything and B & C have the freedom of how to verbalise what they have heard from A & D. **[Exercise was done today]**

3. Notes

3.1 Pre-session notes

I did not write any pre-session notes for Day 3

3.2 During-session notes

a) **[Intuitive Emergences]** The company was emotionally invested in the exercise (today's exercise 2.2). I got a sense that the performers had a clear focus on their longed-for person, which affected their movement quality and tempo-rhythm. Company members made pauses each time they reached the start/finish line found on either horizontal sides of the demarcated rehearsal space (studio). My side-coaching of advising the performers to allow their individually felt impulses to propel their movement(s) seemed to have had an enabling effect in terms of the performers' ability to be focused and spontaneous. The company members' unplanned variation of their movements and/or physical expressions could be an indicator of their experience of being led by their impulse(s). **I feel like the theme of reaching out to somebody who is longed for or missed can potentially be a thematic arch for a performance that the company will make as an outcome of our devising process.** The performers' variations in physical tempo-rhythm and quality of movements throughout the exercise are other emergences that can be developed. Chuma's act of playing with her feet on the floor is an interesting signature. I wonder where does it come from. Zama's act of getting off of his wheelchair and moving at a fast pace on his chest was great and can also be developed. Chuma's act of slowly lying on the floor on her chest while having a sharp focus on feeling the floor with her body can also be developed. The idea of people watching others while others are engaging in some physical activities; the idea of longing in isolation while one is in the presence of others; and the idea of the performers engaging in physical contact while walking in a straight line/lines can also be developed. The following questions are in my mind as I watch the performers participate in the exercise: what is at stake (feeling-longing)?; what colour is your longing?; what/who are you longing for?; why are you longing for them/it?; how does your longing taste like? The idea of performers undertaking a physical exercise while stopping, starting, getting tired and regaining energy has an interesting visual and emotional quality, particularly in terms of how it expresses the highs and lows of the individually and communally experienced impulses. It is an indicator of how performers affect each other on stage/in performance.

b) The Chinese-prop exercise

Partners: Zama & Olivia; Chuma & Andile; Owen & Malcolm; Nadine & Mpotseng;

Intuitive Emergence as I am observing the performers' undertaking exercise 2.11: I see and feel like there is a possibility of playing with the idea of how being physically close but consciously distant can be developed; I need to think of working with uneasy pairs; the image of the performers sitting in two lines that are facing each other looks beautiful; this exercise can be adapted by replacing words with physical actions as a way of exploring and/or drawing a physical vocabulary and staging possibilities. I am noticing that most of the performers' exchanges are jokes, some are compliments and others are statements of ridicule. I wonder what would happen if four performers were to be 'against' or in non-literal conflict with the other four performers as a conscious layer of their interactions?

3.3 Post-session notes

I did not write any post-session notes for Day 3

For the sake of attaining a satisfactory level of discursive coherence, I need to mention from the outset that the continued discussion of creative research project 1 is specifically centred around the following themes: (1) *predetermination*, (2) *intuition*, (3) *collaboration*, and (4) *method-testing*. These themes are drawn from my close reading of the devising session accounts that constitute creative research project 1 as determined by the accounts' useful insights in relation to this project's research

aims, which in turn obviously serve this study.

Based on the above-mentioned example from creative research project 1, it is clear that I, as the [un]knowing director, did employ a structured approach as a way of *wayfinding* and travelling *along* (*wayfaring*) (Ingold, 2000 & 2011) the landscape of devising *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha* with my co-collaborators. This structure was employed consistently during the course of this study's creative research projects. Additionally, it is clear that the referred-to structure is characterised by two related points namely (a) I did not generally engage with the devising sessions haphazardly and in a way that meant that I was an empty vessel because I came to the devising sessions with a 'provisional plan' in the form of exercises and/or devising tasks that I regarded as being appropriate and useful; and (b) I had a certain body of knowledge in the form of provisional devising session 'plans' and how to engage with the facilitation of a performance devising process that was primarily relevant for this study. I am bringing these two points to the fore for the purpose of immediately dismissing the perception or suspicion that this study's notion of the [un]knowing director implies that a director is a practitioner who has no body of knowledge that they bring into their practice at any given point within the context of devising performance. This is certainly one of the few opening points that are made as this study's basic, key and preliminary foundations of its conceptualisation of the [un]knowing director as explicated earlier in this thesis. Furthermore, it is also exemplary of how I generally fulfilled my directorial role of *initiation* moment-to-moment during the devising process, which resonates with how the respondents defined the role of director in the questionnaires.

In consideration of Ingold (2011:162) and Bergson's (1907:7) above-mentioned useful and pivotal assertions, I can further assert that my collaborative

devising of *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha* with *Remix Dance Company* has shed light on this study's conceptual aspect of predetermination. This kind of predetermination, however, is not the kind that fundamentally translates or equates into the [un]knowing director's knowledge about the momentary and eventual outcomes of a devising process in the form of an envisaged 'complete' performance or *finished portrait*. Rather, it is the kind of predetermination that has the fundamental aim of initiating a devising session in relation to a session's identified aims. Therefore, the insight that is drawn from creative research project 1 regarding the aspect of predetermination, clearly indicates that my 'provisional plan' in terms of a devising session's exercises and/or devising tasks characterises *wayfaring* as an undertaking that is contextual i.e. non-haphazard, emanates from somewhere and/or is initiated by something, and one that is momentary. *Wayfaring*, at least as applicable to this study, is momentary because I, as the [un]knowing director, could never predetermine the extent to which, and ways in which, a devising session would actually unfold in relation to its 'provisional plan'.

The devising session account that I have provided thus far in this discussion of creative research project 1 does point to the fact that I would generally come into a devising session with a 'thought-through' and decided-upon (predetermined) session 'plan'. However, I started the devising process of *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha* while being aware of the possibility that one can never really know what the actual moment-to-moment manifestation of a devising process would be like in terms of what would actually happen in that process, which exercises and/or devising tasks and how many would be undertaken by the end of a session for example. Additionally, one can also never really know what the actual moment-to-moment manifestation of a devising session would be like in terms of the actual outcomes of

exercises and/or devising tasks, specifically in the form of possible artistic discoveries. As hinted at by this discussion's thus far provided devising session account of creative project 1 and argued for in the conceptual framework section, part of the key essence of working in an [un]knowing fashion is inherently characterised by the reality that such unforeseeable manifestations of exercises or devising tasks are the actual trails that determine how a devising session ensues moment-to-moment. It is for this very reason that the collaborative devising of *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha* was marked by a strong recurrence of a pattern in which some exercises would be done whereas other exercises would not be done as per the devising session 'provisional plan'. If one thinks about this, it is certainly suggestive of the aspect of *decision-making* (of a particular kind) because a devising process primarily comprises of collaborating individuals, one or some of whom has or have the responsibility to make decisions, at least in terms of what is to be actively done moment-to-moment as the devising session unfolds. It follows, then, that I was the individual whose artistic role majorly required momentary decision-making within the context of collaborating with *Remix Dance Company*. This aspect of momentary decision-making will be elaborated upon during the following discussion about intuition as related to creative research project 1.

As indicated through some of the contents of the preceding chapters, this study seeks to address the ways in which the [un]knowing director is characterised by a particular way of making decisions during the course of directing practice within the context of devising performance. Now, a reading of the earlier-provided example of the devising session account from creative research project 1, which is similar to most accounts of the project and those of creative research projects 2 and 3, clearly illuminates the fundamental role that intuition plays in this study. Specifically, that

account serves as evidence of the role of intuition with particular reference to decision-making. Based on the reading of most of creative research project 1's devising session accounts, it is quite apparent that intuition was also fundamentally operative at the level of my identification of the momentary non-predetermined or unforeseen artistic discoveries. These non-predetermined artistic discoveries are the 'things' that I have consciously decided to refer to as *intuitive emergences*. As stated earlier in this chapter, my usage of the term *intuitive emergences* was drawn from the initial conceptual framework. Therefore, I came about this terminology based on my basic knowledge that I, as this study's director artistic-researcher, would be engaging with this study's devising processes by paying attention to the moment-to-moment unfolding thereof. This kind of unfolding would be the kind that ought to be emergent, dynamic and fluid in character. Furthermore, I would need to engage with such an emergent artistic practice (process) through my intuition pre, during and post a devising session. Thus, this study's creative research project 1 served the purpose of piloting the actual, lived and embodied undertaking of my deployment of *intuitive emergences* as a specific way of identifying, making sense of and naming the way(s) in which intuition operated in terms of its facilitation, catalysing or yielding of non-predetermined artistic discoveries and the necessary decision-making on my part that eventuated in artistic choices that constituted *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha* over time. In addition to the earlier-provided example of creative research project 1's devising session account, I will offer another devising session account as a way of emphatically illustrating the role of intuition within the project's context as prescribed by its aims:

Creative Research Project 1

31 January 2012

Day 7

1. Opening and Welcome

1.1 How is everybody doing?

1.2 Contextualising the session

2. Exercises

2.1 Ritual of warming-up the rehearsal space [...]. **[Repeated exercise; done]**

2.2 Grotowski's warm-up exercises [...]. **[Exercise was not done today]**

[...] 2.4 Each performer selects and uses one body part to express an emotion. The performer should focus on isolating their body part of choice as much as possible by imagining that the rest of their body parts do not exist. Then each performer should select and use two body parts to express an emotion. The performer should focus on isolating their body parts of choice as much as possible by imagining that the rest of their body parts do not exist [...].

[Exercise was done today]

[...] 2.6 Call Me by Your Name Exercise **[Exercise was not done today]**

3. Notes

3.1 Pre-session notes

I am noting that Mpotseng's dance technique class exercises are mostly similar to those she facilitated and coached last week. This observation also applies to Owen's dance technique class this week. This approach of working with repetition is recurring in my rehearsal/devising sessions with the company. So far, I have realised that repetition enables the performers to undertake the exercises with more ease, confidence and depth. Our repeated focus on developing our ability to work with impulse and/or spontaneity evidently has positive results in terms of how the company members' ability to engage with their impulses has improved.

Providing different layers or specific focal points that underlie the repeated physical exercises keeps the company members creatively stimulated. Repetition affects the creative evolution of our work positively in a sense that it never becomes an obstacle to the creative evolution but it actually adds more depth to the artistic emergences that take place during each rehearsal/devising session. **[A note about the role of repetition in our/my way of working i.e. how I facilitate artistic discoveries within the context of devising performance.]**

3.2 During-session notes

[...] f) **Intuitive Emergence:** I 'see' an image of the performers sitting on the floor/on seats with their mouths taped. I also 'see' the performers sitting or standing while they are tied with a rope. I also 'see' the performers randomly scattered on the floor while lying as if they are dead. Each of them then slowly awakens as per their impulse or performance cue that is possibly related to a text.

g) **Intuitive Emergence:** The undetermined/impulsive and out-of-synch movements that the performers are making (exercise 2.4) give the feeling of patients/people that are imprisoned in a mental asylum. Maybe our performance can be about the relationship between sanity and insanity or the process of self-revelation through genuine exposure and transcendence of one's disabilities/inabilities. (What are our disabilities/inabilities?)

h) **Intuitive Emergence:** The image of the performers lying in different positions, angles and directions is intriguing, powerful and has a distorted visual quality that can work depending on the type of text that will emerge as we go along.

[...] j) **NB Note:** I am starting to feel like focusing our sessions' explorations for the purpose of unearthing specific material from the performers, but a part of me still feels like there is more that needs to be explored. It's just that I am anxious about us having too much material to work from or with. I acknowledge my anxiety, but will not allow it to overwhelm me. I don't know where our journey will lead us to, but do feel like our process has yielded interesting artistic emergences some of which are personal for each performer in terms of their learning and unlearning. (While observing exercise 2.4)

[...] m) **Intuitive Emergence:** Malcolm's action of breathing in and out loudly with his arms out-stretched looked visually powerful. I feel like we can develop and use it as part of his movement segment that could be expressing an inner battle with self. Observing him felt like he broke out of something that held him back.

3.3 Post-session notes

a) **Intuitive Emergence:** As I am writing these notes gathered from today's session, I keep on 'seeing' an image of all of the performers sitting on wheelchairs. Their faces are placed on their thighs and all of them are breathing at a similar pace, but then their breath patterns become more out of synch and have different audio qualities.

- I feel like this image is gripping as it makes a statement about the common human experience of having weaknesses/inabilities irrespective of race, gender, sex, religion, nationality, ethnicity and physical 'ability'. I feel like the theme that is based on engaging with the broad question of what one's 'inabilities' are other than the physical can be interesting to explore. Engaging with such a question through performance needs to be open-ended whereby the performers do not need to present a conclusion about dealing with and transcending their 'inabilities'. I think that such a theme might shift perspectives about Remix's body of work in that it might facilitate or yield a shift from focusing on how dancers of different physical 'abilities' move/dance to focusing on appreciating and exploiting different physical 'abilities' to their maximum and beyond. I think that an interplay between the individual and community as subjects is key for such a work because of how it may/can speak volumes about individual (personal) and communal (familial, national, regional, continental and global) 'inabilities' [...].

Similar to the earlier-provided devising session account of Day 3, Day 7's devising session account also serves as evidence of how I, through intuition, would generally work by having a provisional plan that outlined certain exercises that were to be undertaken, but ended up deciding only to ask my co-collaborators to undertake a few or some of the exercises. Such decision-making was based on how the undertaking of one exercise, for example, would yield *intuitive emergences* that I considered to be potentially useful artistic discoveries in light of our collaborative task of devising an envisaged theatre performance/production. It is worth noting, once again, that the referred-to *intuitive emergences* were consistently characterised by non-predetermination or unforeseeability. Additionally, these *intuitive emergences* are indicative of the devising process's non-predetermined artistic material that could evolve into the envisaged performance's artistic materials such as theme, concept, directorial or performance style, performance text, segments of a performance etc. It is also necessary for me to state that creative research project 1 is illustrative of how intuition was operative from the onset because I have noted *intuitive emergences* from the first days of devising *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha* as evidenced by the earlier-mentioned devising session account of Day 3. I am of the view that such a reality is not coincidental because I came into the devising process with a focused 'gaze' of

what to look for and at. Thus, I came into the devising process knowing that I needed to focus my attention on closely examining how the devising of creative project 1 would come into being moment-to-moment as best as I could.

In the spirit of taking this discussion further by attempting to explicate my noted manifestations of intuition as realised through and during creative research project 1, I will also draw your attention to the fact that my intuitive decision-making as I, together with my co-collaborators, momentarily travelled along the non-predetermined trails that constituted the path-like landscape of devising *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha*, took the form of my feelings (I feel like ...), thoughts (I think that ...) and seeing through my imagination's eye (I 'see' an image of ...) at various stages of the devising process. Such a manifestation of intuition, it needs to be noted, was quite general at the beginning of the devising process and became more refined over time once the process had evolved and yielded non-predetermined artistic discoveries and eventual choices related to the title, performance venue, performance text (theme and/or concept), aesthetics, directorial and performance style etc.

In addition to the above-mentioned points regarding the manifestations of intuition as realised and piloted through creative research project 1, it is also necessary to bring two points to the fore based on some of the contents of the project's thus far provided devising session accounts. This is necessitated by my need to explicitly provide details that would particularise intuition within the context of this study with the aim of attaining this study's key aspect of critically examining directing practice within the context of devised performance. The first point is that creative research project 1 makes it clear that I, as the [un]knowing director, work with and through intuition by further working with and through *observation*. As

evidenced by this discussion's devising session accounts, and others, my observation of my co-collaborators' undertaking of exercises and/or devising tasks triggered my noticing of a devising session's *intuitive emergences*. As much as some devising session accounts of creative research project 1 are not direct or explicit in pointing to what I am mentioning about the role of observation in relation to intuition, I can assert that observation is a key 'variable' of intuition within the context of creative research project 1. This does not mean that the manifestations of intuition during and through creative research project 1 were solely dependent upon my moment-to-moment observation of my co-collaborators during the lived moments of its devising sessions. However, I can argue that the things that I *felt, thought of and imagined* as pertaining to the project's momentary artistic discoveries and their accompanying or subsequent choices were related to observation as a key 'variable' of intuition.

With reference to some contents of my devising directors' questionnaire responses regarding the role of intuition in their directorial practice, the kind of observation that I am referring to here is arguably akin to *sensitivity* as one manifestation and/or 'requirement' of intuition. Additionally, Tim Ingold's earlier-mentioned definitions of *wayfinding* and *wayfaring* fundamentally offer a sense of the relation between observation and intuition. Essentially, this means that the [un]knowing director's skilled performance of moving *alongly* within the unfolding and/or non-predetermined landscape of a devising process requires their holistic acute ability of observation as a necessity to 'feel' (intuit) their way moment-to-moment. Relatedly, I can also mention that there were some instances during the course of devising *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha* that I would develop a devising session 'plan' based on my observation of my co-collaborator's undertaking their dance

technique classes that were not directly part of our project, but preceded each of our devising sessions. Irrespective of their indirect relation to our project, my observation of the *Remix Dance Company* dance technique classes was beneficial to our project as evidenced by the following example:

Creative Research Project 1

01 February 2012

Day 8

2. Exercises

[...] 2.7 The social continuum scale of 0-10 **[What is your relationship to death?]** In responding to the question, individually place yourself on the scale and be very clear about the scale number on which you have placed yourself; then verbally state your scale position, name and surname when you are ready to do so; then state the reason(s) for placing yourself on your scale number of choice; other performers should listen to each performer who speaks with the intention of identifying anything that may bear resonance with themselves; then the performers move to touch each other based on the resonances of each testimony; then the performers that end-up touching each other should spontaneously make a uniform physical/vocal statement that expresses why are they all touching each other; it is during this uniform statement that the performers who end-up touching each other can play with repetitively verbalising the name of the person whose 'testimony' resonates with their own. **[This exercise is adapted and it emerged while I was planning this session during my observation of Andile's dance techniques class.] [Exercise was done]**

3. Notes

3.1 Pre-session notes

[...] b) The Remix technique classes, which precede each devising session, are beneficial to our process in that they assist the performers to develop technical skills as dancers, which is something that I am not skilled to share with the company given my training as a director and not a choreographer or dancer. They also assist in facilitating a spirit of ensemble and afford me the time to observe how the performers creatively interact with each other. Generally, the technique classes make it unnecessary for our devising process to deal with dance technique, something which some of the company members i.e. the new Remix members without dance/movement training need. **[The key benefits of me observing the performers during their dance technique classes that preceded our devising sessions.]**

- c) **Intuitive Emergence:** While I am observing today's dance technique class, I keep 'seeing' an image of the performers smearing themselves with mud in various ways while working with different motifs. I also 'see' the performance area being an indoors space that is covered with soil and containing steel tubs that are filled with water. Some of the performers appear to be moving on their wheelchairs (Malcolm, Nadine and Zama) and others (Chuma, Owen, Andile, Mpotseng and Olivia) move flat on the floor. The ones on the floor never get on their feet. The performance area seems to have a rectangular configuration. This image is strong and possibly presents a staging possibility.

The second point that I would like to bring to the fore from creative research project 1 is that I, as the [un]knowing director, work with and through intuition by additionally working with and through *repetition*. Specifically, the repetition that I am referring to is both in terms of the general structure of the devising session

whereby a session would always start with what can be referred to as a *check-in* conversation, if one can borrow some terminology from the domain of Applied Drama and Theatre practice. Such a conversation served the purposes of reflecting on an earlier devising session or inquiring about my co-collaborators' well-being before embarking upon a current devising session, and my contextualisation of a current devising session in terms of its aims drawn from where we were in our devising process. This form of repetition speaks to my particular way of being ethical by consistently attempting to identify and ensure my co-collaborators' state of psycho-physical well-being in addition to framing our daily creative-artistic explorations. In terms of the project's general devising session's structure, the *check-in* conversation would be followed by what the provided devising session accounts identify as the undertaking of a *Ritual of warming-up the rehearsal space* exercise that I evidently also participated in. The rationale for engaging with this activity or exercise is provided in the devising session accounts of creative research project 1. The second form of repetition is in the form of some exercises and the exploration of some performance segments that emerged momentarily during the latter period of devising *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha*. Unfortunately, explicit accounts of such repetition do not exist within the scope of creative project 1's devising session accounts due to the project's method-related inconsistency, which I will speak to in ending this discussion. However, I can state that this kind of repetition took the form of my active observation of my co-collaborators undertaking a non-predetermined or emergent segment of our envisaged performance. This would be followed by me requesting my co-collaborators to repeat the performance segment until I would intuitively

discover a way in which such a segment would develop leading to its/a subsequent performance segment. Therefore, repetition is a key research discovery because I understood that it also operates as a key 'variable' of intuition as applicable to this study.

It is on the basis of the above that I consider the manifestations of intuition, as piloted through and evidenced by creative research project 1, to be positively complex and interesting, because of the following summarised points:

- 1) Intuition is mostly dominant or operative during the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising session, which is evidenced by the number of *intuitive emergences* that are found in most of the during-session notes of creative research project 1. However, in some cases intuition is also operative before (pre-session) and after (post-session) a devising session has taken place.
- 2) Intuition is operative or manifest through its two key enabling 'variables' of *observation* and *repetition*.
- 3) Intuition enables the [un]knowing director to engage with an emergent devising process through *wayfinding* and *wayfaring* in ways that are arguably fluid and symbiotic.
- 4) Essentially, intuition is evidently one of this study's key ways of knowing and a valid form of knowledge that qualifies the [un]knowing director as an intuitive practitioner.

This discussion of creative project 1 indicates that intuition is a fundamental aspect of the notion of the [un]knowing director at the level of moment-to-moment embodiment and/or artistic practice (process), which also indicates how it generally functions as one of this study's key ways of knowing and as a form of knowledge. However, I also need to emphasise the fact that collaboration is also one of this

study's key ways of knowing within the context of creative research project 1. But before going any further with unpacking the element of collaboration, please note that the key contents that deal with how collaboration has been explicated in this study's conceptual framework chapter were not available to me at the time that I undertook creative research project 1. This should come as no surprise because the development of this thesis, specifically in terms of its writing, has been accumulative over time, which implies that this study's conceptual explication of collaboration was nowhere near being as developed as it appears now. Nevertheless, as I have stated earlier and as indicated by those devising session accounts that I have provided, I, as the [un]knowing director would not have achieved anything in terms of realising *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha* where it not for the presence of collaboration. This is because of how directing practice within the context of devising performance, particularly as realised through this study, inherently implies collaboration. This kind of collaboration is defined and characterised by a productive, symbiotic and integrated usage of skills as pertaining to myself as a director and my co-collaborators (*Remix Dance Company*). In the case of creative research project 1, I was a professional director who collaborated with professional performers of a particular kind in an endeavour to realise a devised performance. My working with and through intuition majorly depended upon what my co-collaborators brought to the fore in relation and response to my momentary 'proposals' or 'offerings' in the form of exercises and devising tasks. Hence, my *feelings, thoughts* and *imagination* operated as manifestations of my intuition moment-to-moment during the course of our collaboratively devised performance project. Such a state of affairs is a valid and appropriate reflection of this study's I-We epistemological and ontological perspective in terms of its creative research projects in general. As smooth-sailing as

this sounds, however, my undertaking of creative research project 1, in terms of its aspect of collaboration, led to the following notes that reveal how collaboration actually manifested during the course of undertaking the first project:

1)

Creative Research Project 1

30 January 2012

Day 6

3. Notes

3.1 Pre-session notes

[...] c) My mind is hooked on my working process with the company in terms of where we are collectively and where each company member is individually. I am conscious of my thoughts and feel like there are other thoughts that I am not conscious or making sense of based on my realisation that there is a lot on my mind about our work. Anyway, I am realising that a director, especially when they employ a collaborative approach, does not always need to inform their co-collaborators about all of the reasons as to why they require or request the company (of performers) to undertake certain exercises or devising tasks. I feel like it is necessary for me to employ this 'semi-secretive' approach because I feel like my co-collaborators need to find their own reasons as to why we do certain exercises based on their lived experiences of those exercises. At this stage of our process, at least, I feel like my co-collaborators need to develop a much deeper and stronger collaborative spirit that can be achieved by attaining group and self-trust. I also feel like each company member has got some internal obstacles that need to be overcome, which is great as attending to such a need may offer the material that we can develop for performance.

2)

Creative Research Project 1

15 February 2012

Day 15

3. Notes

3.1 Pre-session notes

[...] Our explorations in each session have yielded possible recurring topics, themes or subject matters which can be focused on for the purpose of developing a text. These are loss, feelings, death and/or transformation. Considering such artistic emergences, my intuition tells me that we should dwell on exploring the theme of death/transformation and consider working with personal loss, ability and inability as sub-themes. I have also been thinking about the best way of how we can collaboratively decide on a specific and common theme of exploration. I think that it would serve us well if I can make a solid thematic proposal then move to the level of reaching a consensus with the company. Collaboration is certainly not a utopia. It needs a sensitive, careful, flexible and strategic facilitator, particularly in our case of traveling the unknown. Our landscape has been constantly unfolding and its points are still entirely [in]tangible. In fact, traveling the unknown does involve a constant interplay of knowing and unknowing, learning and unlearning. Remix is an interesting company for me to work with as the nature of its dynamics (gender, language, professional orientation, professional experiences, culture, physical 'ability' and 'inability') have created a great platform for me to engage with [un]knowing. I feel quite fragile at the moment because it feels like we have reached a point along our unfolding landscape at which we need to make a critical artistic choice, specifically in terms of theme. However, I have a slight feeling that it might be early for us to settle on or for a specific thematic choice. A part of me wants to seek guidance or input from the rest of the company regarding the matter of thematic choice, but another part of me tells me to

make a provisional decision that I should propose to the company [...].

3)

Creative Research Project 1

20 February 2012

Day 18

3. Notes

3.3 Post-session notes

- a) Today's session started with a discussion about the company's views and feelings about life and death as our work's specific thematic arcs. Not every company member was present and we agreed to decide about our prospective and yet unforeseen performance's themes so that we can focus our work much more.

These three 'data' excerpts or examples are really pertinent to evidencing the actual manifestations of the aspect of collaboration drawing from creative research project 1. This is because of what the excerpts illuminate, which is twofold. Firstly, the excerpts generally refer to the devising process of *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha* as *our work*, as opposed to *my work* as the [un]knowing director. With reference to this study's discussion about collaboration (participation) as it appears in the conceptual framework chapter, it is quite clear that creative project 1's kind of collaboration is arguably suggestive of co-authoring in terms of my reliance on the notion of performer-as-creator and co-authority in a sense that my co-collaborators' momentary creative-artistic contributions levelled our 'playground' when it came to the delineation of power during our devising process. This in turn illustrates my collaborators' investment in our devising process, which arguably placed us on the same level of power because the deployment of our skills, as determined by our varying roles, meant that we were equitably endowed with the task and responsibility of 'serving' our devising process since our collaborative creative-artistic undertakings constituted the devising process itself.

Secondly, the excerpts are evidence of my conscious attempts at ensuring that I employed a collaborative approach when it came to making some key artistic decisions. Specifically, I facilitated the collaborative decision-making about *Dipolelo*

le Mafaratlhatlha's focal thematic subject as evidenced by the above-mentioned 'data' excerpts of Day 15 and Day 18. Our collaborative decision-making about our prospective performance's theme was also met by the manifestations of intuition on my part, which partly indicates how intuition and collaboration are inseparable ways of knowing and forms of knowledge as applicable to this study. The provided 'data' excerpt from Day 6, in addition to the other two provided excerpts, is fundamentally illustrative of how collaboration is not devoid of pressing complexities in one way or another. It can be a reasonable ideal, but it is probably impossible to predetermine its actual realisation, especially within the context of an artistic company that is in the formative stages of becoming an ensemble, which was the case with *Remix Dance Company* at the time of our collaborative devising of *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha*. This point is based on the fact that *Remix* had just employed two or three, new company members.

In ending this discussion of creative research project 1, I will turn to the discussion theme of method-testing, which is related to one of the two research aims that led to my undertaking of the discussed project. I was quite honest by stating earlier that creative research project 1 was a necessary and productive 'fiasco' at the level of testing its initially decided upon methods of: (1) my own auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling accounts of devising sessions; (2) audio-visual recordings of the devising sessions, and (3) individually generated reflective journal accounts of devising sessions by my collaborating performers. A reading of creative research project 1's devising session accounts in their totality essentially reveals that one of the three tested methods, which is my auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling accounts of devising sessions, ultimately became the most useful in terms of its comparative degree of consistency as a research method that

was geared towards providing useful research 'data' that addressed this study's research question. It follows, then, that my close reading of creative research project 1's devising session accounts and my general retrospective or post-practice reflection thereon, point to the fact that the initially intended method of using audio-visual recordings of devising sessions fundamentally did not prove to be effective. This is partly because I had only managed to use a video camera as an audio-visual recording device days after the devising process of *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha* had begun and majorly because I eventually realised that this method was not very productive in capturing my moment-to-moment noting of *intuitive emergences* since these emergences were mainly from my first person perspective when articulating the during-session, pre-session and post-session *intuitive emergences* as and when they occurred. Relatedly, I realised that I did not really need to view the devising sessions from a camera's perspective because the camera's perspective did not offer much tangible, useful and substantial 'data'. The referred-to method's impact was minor and arguably inconsequential to this research because its usefulness only satisfied a need that is evidenced in the following 'data' excerpt:

Creative Research Project 1

15 February 2012

Day 15

3. Notes

3.2 During-session notes

[...] e) The camera seems to be working if we don't place much attention on it. However, I think that my experience of our process will be one dimensional if I operate the camera. The company gave me their permission to use the camera provided I operate it and keep the footage confidential. Using the camera is a good method in that it allows us to capture and review artistic material that emerges from our devising sessions.

Similar to the above, the initially intended research method of using or generating 'data' from my co-collaborators' individually generated reflective journal accounts of our devising sessions proved not to be productive and useful over time. With regards to the failure of this method, I realised that it was partly a result of my problematic

assumption that my co-collaborators would find it manageable to participate in a devising process through engaging with structured reflections on their individual creative-artistic processes that primarily needed to have been written down. Additionally, I realised that my co-collaborators' challenge of taking on such a method of individually engaging with their creative-artistic practice possibly had something to do with the way in which dancers are presumably trained and work. Dancers are generally trained to focus on executing a choreographer's predetermined choreography and are not generally accustomed to a creative-artistic process that is possibly characterised by a *pushing forwards* without taking moments to track and trace artistic discoveries that could produce or determine a creative-artistic *way forward*. My assumption was also problematic because of the fact that one of my co-collaborators could not fully express themselves through handwriting, coupled with other factors. Therefore, I as a director artistic-researcher was fundamentally at fault for deciding-upon using a research method that I didn't thoroughly think through in terms of the extent to which it would be productive and appropriate in consideration of the company of performers that I would be working with in the project. As evidenced by the following 'data' excerpts, I did acknowledge my challenges of using the research method of my co-collaborators' generated reflective journal accounts of our devising process. However, as stated thus far, I consistently struggled to employ the method, which led to its ultimate failure.

Creative Research Project 1

31 January 2012

Day 7

3. Notes

3.3 Post-session notes

[...] b) I am finding it difficult to push the performers to use reflexive journaling during our process thus far. This is because I get a feeling that the performers have a different orientation when it comes to making work [or] mak[ing] meaning of our devising process and engag[ing] with what emerges for them personally/artistically and the kinds of things that they are learning and unlearning. I feel like I will be forcing matters by being adamant about journaling as an individual record of each performer's artistic journey with specific reference to

our research. I do realise the value of journaling for our research and I need to find a way to make it work in consideration of the fact that not all the performers can use their hands to write [...].

Creative Research Project 1

08 February 2012

Day 11

1. Opening and Welcome

[...] I need to acknowledge that it is not everybody's orientation to make meaning of our devising process through reflection [...]. I need to encourage the company to write their reflections in consideration of specific headings that I have mentioned earlier; I also need to encourage the company to do their best in being clear in their reflections so that their reflections can be accessible to a reader other than themselves; I also need to inform the company about the importance of structuring their reflections i.e. pre, during, and post-sessions over a certain period such as daily or weekly [...]. I need to provide time for the performers to engage with their reflection during our sessions.

Last but not least, is the research method of my self-generated auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling accounts of devising sessions. Given the fact that this discussion of creative research project 1 is mainly based on some of the contents of my devising session accounts thereof, I am of the view that this method proved to be comparatively useful in terms of its degree of 'data' gathering. However, its fundamental shortcoming lies in its inconsistency in terms of my generating of its pre-session, during-session and post-session notes at various stages of creative research project 1. Specifically, this kind of inconsistency is found in the following 'data' excerpts that are located within different phases of the devising process of *Dipolelo le Mafaratlhatlha*:

1)

Creative Research Project 1

27 January 2012

Day 5

1. Opening and Welcome

- 1.1 How is everybody doing?
- 1.2 Contextualising the session

2. Exercises

- 2.1 Ritual of warming-up the rehearsal space [...]. **[Repeated exercise; done]**
- 2.2 Group warm-up exercise led by Andile [...]. **[Exercise done]**

2.3 Encounters [...]. **[Exercise was not done today]**

2.4 Blind leader [...]. **[Exercise was done today]**

3. Notes

3.1 Pre-session notes

I did not write any pre-session notes for Day 5.

- 3.2 During-session notes
I did not write any during-session notes for Day 5.
- 3.3 Post-session notes
I did not write any post-session notes for Day 5.

2)

Creative Research Project 1

17 February 2012

Day 17

1. Opening and Welcome

- 1.1 How is everybody doing?
- 1.2 Contextualising the session

2. Exercises

- 2.1 Ritual of warming-up the space [...]. **[Repeated exercise; done]**

3. Notes

- 3.1 Pre-session notes
I did not write any pre-session notes for Day 17.
- 3.2 During-session notes
I did not write any during-session notes for Day 17.
- 3.3 Post-session notes
I did not write any post-session notes for Day 17.

* Today we've solely worked on the physical expressions of each performer's sense and imagination about their creation process. **[Task Done]**

As one can imagine, the first 'data' excerpt is located within the early phase of the project's devising process and the latter is located within the project's intermediate phase, towards its last phase. Based on my recalling of the project, the apparent method-related inconsistency of my note-taking and reflective journaling, which specifically relates to the relative paucity of reflection, was a result of two reasons. In the first instance, the method-related inconsistency regarding the early phase of creative research project 1 was majorly caused by my gradual process and experience of developing an acquaintance with the actual method itself. Additionally, the inconsistency was a result of my experience of being overwhelmed by my research method, related to my need to sustain my 'data' gathering momentum in the midst of managing my recurring state of anxiety brought about by working with a professional dance company for the first time, and a professional company with whom I had agreed to devise a full-length or 'complete' production, which I could not jeopardise in any way. Furthermore, I was also finding it difficult to come to terms with my realisation that some of my initially intended research methods were not

succeeding in terms of my productive implementation thereof. In the second instance, the evidenced method-related inconsistency was majorly caused by an inability to balance my research need to capture and articulate the momentary creative-artistic emergences of creative research project while I simultaneously had to be actively on the floor working with my collaborating performers in further exploring and refining our creative artistic emergences geared towards arriving at a point of us having a 'complete' performance that was to be shared with an audience. Therefore, my inability to consistently employ the discussed method was also arguably exacerbated by the 'external' pressure for my collaborators and I to 'complete' our devising process by delivering a 'complete' performance product to *Remix Dance Company* itself and the public in turn.

Thus, this study's creative research project 1 does reveal that working in an [un]knowing manner can be endless because one cannot set a specific time frame regarding exactly how long it will take for a devising process to bear fruit in terms of yielding a 'complete' performance product, which is a point that I have made in the latter part of this study's conceptual framework section. It also follows, then, that time limitations in the form of a devising process's beginning, middle and ending arguably lead to the [un]knowing director's 'compression' of intuition as related to the exploration of artistic discoveries and their accompanying or subsequent artistic choices or decisions. The referred-to 'compression' of intuition does not mean that the director's intuition ceases to operate in one way or another. Instead, my experience of creative research project 1 and this study's subsequent projects, made me realise that the [un]knowing director's 'compressed' intuition essentially requires them to collaboratively make the most effective artistic decisions as best as they can, that would culminate into their devising process's state/phase of incomplete

'completion'. This state/phase of incomplete 'completion' is one that equates to a performance that would be shared with an audience. Furthermore, this state/phase is arguably indicative of the way(s) in which the [un]knowing director's process is *durational* in terms of the 'reality' of its perpetual becoming or emergent character.

Despite the difficulties encountered, my undertaking of creative research project 1 was very fruitful in that it shed light on the appropriate and productive nature of the method of my self-generated auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling accounts of devising sessions. This means that I became clearer through engaging with this project as a method-related piloting, *exploratory experiment*, that my consistent usage of the method of note-taking and reflective journaling formed the basis of my need to embark upon this study's creative research project 2. The other rationale for my undertaking of a second creative research project is a direct research outcome of creative research project 1 in the form of my learning that this study is fundamentally an examination of the devising process and not an examination of a 'complete' theatre product(ion). This, then, leads to the following discussion of creative research project 2.

Creative Research Project 2: Knowing [un]knowingly

a) Project background and description

I will begin the discussion of creative research project 2 by mentioning an important and necessary point related to constructing a perspective of its reading. It is helpful to read and consider this section as not being exclusive or separate from the discussions of creative research projects 1 and 3. It is by virtue of such a perspective, in fact, that the reader will be able to grasp how this study's creative research projects are demonstrative of artistic research that has been undertaken

over time while focusing on its attempts to explore, explicate and validate the notion of the [un]knowing director. Therefore, the ensuing discussion starts by framing its reading through appealing to your consideration, as the reader, that creative research project 2 essentially builds upon the research foundation that was laid through creative research project 1 as articulated by the latter part of the preceding discussion. Ideally, then, I would like to suggest that the discussion of the various creative research projects in this study should be engaged with holistically.

As this study's continued instance of exploratory experimentation (Schön, 1983:145) and as an art of inquiry (Ingold, 2013:6), creative research project 2 was undertaken during my lectureship tenure at Tshwane University of Technology's Drama and Film Department. Specifically, the project's period of initiation and 'completion' was from 25 April 2016 – 27 May 2016 and my co-collaborators were drama students. Considering the project's duration, it might seem like such a duration was relatively sufficient. However, the project's actual undertaking in the form of devising sessions was limited to two to three devising sessions per week that culminated in ten devising sessions in total, each lasting approximately four hours. These logistical facts were not coincidental, but were a result of the nature of my challenges related to having undertaken a substantial portion of this study as a university lecturer. Firstly, I had limited time to undertake the project with the selected group of students. The Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) drama students who participated in this project as my co-collaborators comprised of seven senior (third and fourth year) students. Three of the students were part of my 2015 collaboratively devised departmental debut project entitled, *Dipolelo Gotswa Borwa*, and the other four were students that I had no previous experience of working with at TUT. My choice of working with these students was based on their availability, need

to acquire coursework credits and our identified mutual interest in collaborating with each other. Furthermore, my general decision to work with senior students was based on my need to attempt to maintain the 'variable' of relatively 'skilled' participants as a pre-requisite of its aspect of skilled collaboration. Secondly, my department could only provide me with the material resource of a studio two to three times a week for the purpose of undertaking the project or 'rehearsals'. Thirdly, I would need to personally finance any technical requirements that the project would need or satisfy any of its possible related financial costs. As much as these background factors could have posed a monumental challenge in terms of my undertaking of creative research project 2, that was not the case because I came into the project knowing very well that its research aims did not require our collaborative realisation of a theatre product(ion). Instead, I knew that the project required me to focus acutely on the moment-to-moment unfolding of its devising sessions, which implies that the project required me to focus much more on my artistic process or practice of devising. In fact, this project's material limitations, including its duration of ten sessions, were extremely beneficial in that they enabled me to really ensure that I did all that was in my power to satisfy the project's following research aims, both of which were/are this study's way and means of exploring its research question:

- 1) Sustaining the research method of my auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling.
- 2) Discovering possible insights or knowledge regarding this study's research question i.e. what is the [un]knowing director?

I must reiterate that the project's first above-mentioned research aim is a direct outcome of creative research project 1. The second research aim above was

addressed through my grappling with the following related, interchangeable and embedded research aims:

- 1) Discovering and articulating the intricate practical details of directing [un]knowingly.
- 2) Articulating what intuition and collaboration entail with reference to the [un]knowing director.

Consistent with the approach that I employed in reading the devising session accounts from creative research project 1, my reading of the accounts from creative research project 2 has revealed certain *themes*, which should be essentially appreciated as specific points of discussion that capture this project's key insights as related to its research aims. The referred-to themes are: (1) *sustaining the research method*; (2) *ways of knowing [un]knowingly*; and (3) *the language and process of directing [un]knowingly*. These themes should be appreciated relationally because their 'ordering' is not indicative of their exclusivity nor is it suggestive of the degree of their relational importance in any form pertaining to this study's research question.

b) Being inside creative research project 2

1. *Sustaining the research method (of note-taking and reflective journaling)*

Drawing from the general experience of undertaking creative research project 1 and its eventual useful outcomes that are method-related, I need to state that creative research project 2 was methodically consistent in terms of my structuring of the devising sessions. This point is indicative of the basic, yet general, aspects of predetermination and repetition at the level of research method in this instance. Hopefully, these aspects of predetermination and repetition have been adequately addressed in creative research project 1's discussion to an extent that I am only choosing to provide two 'data' excerpts of creative research project 2 as evidence

thereof. However, it should be noted that the provision of only two 'data' excerpts that are indicative of such predetermination and repetition does not at all suggest the minimal presence or recurrence thereof as some of the key variables that are characteristic of the [un]knowing director as evidenced by creative research project 1. Instead, such a choice serves the function of articulating the point that the way in which creative research project 2 generally managed to satisfy its aim of sustaining the research method was consciously premised around predetermination and repetition both in terms of structure and/or approach within the context of devising sessions. Hence this kind of predetermination and repetition had also translated into my consistent generating of provisional 'plans of action' in the form of devising session exercises/tasks, which was generally also the case with creative research project 1:

Creative Research Project 2

3 May 2016

Day 2

1. Opening and Welcome

1.1 How is everybody doing?

1.2 Contextualise the session

Session Aim: Building on where we left-off from the last session so as to continue our process of creative-artistic exploration.

2. Exercises/tasks

2.1 Performers' individual vocal and physical warm-ups [...]. **[Predetermined; done]**

2.2 Group warm-up exercise led by Bongani [...]. **[Predetermined; done]**

2.3 Counting from 1-50 as a group [...]. **[Predetermined; repeated exercise; done]**

2.4 Walking as a group from one end of the room to the other **[Predetermined; repeated exercise; done]**

2.5 Viewing of the performers' performance material proposals **[Predetermined; not done]**

3. Notes

3.1 Pre-session Notes [...].

3.2 During-session Notes [...].

3.3 Post-session Reflection [...].

Creative Research Project 2

13 May 2016

Day 6

1. Opening and Welcome

1.1 How is everybody doing?

1.2 Contextualise the session

Session Aim: Look at the performance proposals that some of the performers (Bongani & Anathi; Sibuso, Nelly & Rinnet, Nicholas & Delight) have prepared and work on developing them in the way in which Rinnet and La Portia's 'duet' developed.

2. Exercises/tasks

2.1 Performers' group physical warm-ups led by Bongani [...]. **[Predetermined; done]**

2.2 Counting from 1-50 as a group [...]. **[Predetermined; repeated exercise; done]**

2.3 View and develop Delight and Nicholas' 'duet' because we have never worked on it since they proposed it from their initial spontaneous and immediately-embodied creative exploration; view and develop Nelly & Rinnet's individual performance material since we have never worked on it since they proposed it from their initial spontaneous embodied creative exploration. **[Predetermined; done]**

3. Notes

3.1 Pre-session Notes [...].

3.2 During-session Notes [...].

3.3 Post-session Reflection [...].

In further elaborating upon creative research project 2's evidenced aspects of predetermination and repetition as illustrated by the above-mentioned 'data' excerpts, I will address two points. Firstly, part of the terminology that I have specifically used within the **Exercises** section of creative research project 1's devising session accounts generally indicates basic information related to whether or not an exercise/task was done. Relatedly, part of the terminology that I have specifically used within the **Exercises** section of creative research project 2's devising session accounts also indicates similar basic information about whether or not an exercise/task was done. The only fundamental difference is found in my use of the word **predetermined** as it appears in the project's **Exercises** section as evidenced by the above-mentioned 'data' excerpts of Day 2 and Day 6. The use of the word **predetermined** is a conscious method-related choice that illustrates my enhanced acknowledgement of the aspect of predetermination as a variable and characteristic of the [un]knowing director, or as a foundational yet determined premise of [un]knowing in and through the process or practice of devising performance. It does not at all however challenge or collapse the [un]knowing director's fundamental variable of non-predetermination that I have argued for relative to creative research project 1.

The second point of elaboration lies in one of the seemingly simple differences that exist in the phrasing of the **Notes** 'sub-section' 3.3 of creative

research project 1 and 2's devising session accounts. It can be clearly noted that project 1's **Notes** 'sub-section' 3.3 is named ***Post-session Notes*** whereas the same 'sub-section' is named ***Post-session Reflection(s)*** in project 2's devising session accounts. The existence of such a difference is essentially indicative of the productive manner in which creative research project 1 has served and is closely related to the currently discussed project. This is because the method-related experiential outcomes of creative research project 1 sparked my awareness about the need to be much more reflective in my written elaborative expressions of creative research project 2's post-session moments. Therefore, this insight or illumination foregrounded and framed the way in which I needed to refine and sustain the method of auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling in the sense that I was clearer that the post-session phase of my then upcoming creative research project 2 would provide a viable opportunity for me to generate reflective journal accounts that would in turn constitute the general content of each of its prospective devising session accounts.

This discovery, and insight, certainly proved to be generally accurate in consideration of my experience of undertaking creative research project 2 with reference to its research aim and theme of sustaining the research method of note-taking and reflective journaling. Furthermore, this insight has partly inspired the general character of creative research project 2's devising session accounts in terms of their literary and descriptive quality and depth. This refers to their length of elaboration across its **Notes**' 'sub-sections' of pre-session notes, during-session notes and post-session reflections. It is helpful to bear this in mind because most of this discussion's 'data' excerpts are comparatively denser or more elaborate in relation to those of creative research project 1. This is also because I undertook

creative research project 2 with the general aim of being more articulate in my accounting of its moment-to-moment unfolding. Creative research project 2 is generally illustrative of the particular ways in which the [un]knowing director is fundamentally characterised by an epistemological manifestation of Leopold Senghor's notions of "reason-eye" i.e. analytic knowledge and "reason-embrace" i.e. intuitive knowledge (Diagne, 2019:24). This is because its mentioned **Post-session Reflections**, and **Pre-session Notes** to some degree, are arguably, or comparatively, illustrative of my moments of experiencing my/the "reason-eye" as I would be reflecting on a devising session. Conversely, creative project 2's **During-session Notes** are arguably illustrative of my moments of experiencing my/the "reason-embrace" as I would be in the studio with my co-collaborators immediately responding to their physical artistic contributions in ways that would generally disable my analytic faculties while interacting with my co-collaborators moment-to-moment. However, which is what I have stated in the conceptual framework, this study's particular sense of intuition, fundamentally implies a complex symbiotic relation between intuitive knowledge and analytic knowledge. At the same time, it can be argued that there are moments in which each of the referred-to forms of knowledges are comparatively more pronounced as the devising process unfolds.

As much as the above discussion on creative research project 2's aim of sustaining the research method of note-taking and reflective journaling through the format or structure of pre-session notes, during-session notes and post-session reflections is thus far more 'positive', I also need to mention that my sustenance of the research method also manifested both in the form of noted limitations, challenges, and benefits. These noted limitations and benefits particularly speak to the research method's aspect of reflective practice with reference to reflecting *in*

action and reflecting *on* action (Schön, 1983:62). The following ‘data’ excerpts are ‘categorised’ firstly into those that are indicative of the method’s identified benefits and secondly into those that are indicative of the method’s identified limitations:

- The benefits of auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling

Creative Research Project 2

4 May 2016

Day 3

3. Notes

3.1 Pre-session Notes

- a) [...] Yes indeed! Coming to think about, employing a reflective approach, specifically in the form of ensuring that I commit myself to reflecting on my directorial practice on a day to day basis when I am devising, is productive because it challenges me to be articulate and conscientious about the complex feelings, thoughts and experiences that I have before, during and after the moment-to-moment embodied undertaking of a devising process as an [un]knowing director. I feel like reflecting on my directorial practice on a day to day basis is also a strategy that enables me to slow time down and try to distil my immediate and moment-to-moment lived/embodied experiences of a devising session. Essentially, I am realising that being reflective of my day to day practice as an [un]knowing director enables me to be aware of the experiences that I would normally let time ‘swallow’ due to the intensities of immediate and embodied moment-to-moment experiences of directing within a devising context. This then leads to my provisional, at least for now, deduction that one of the key characteristics of the [un]knowing director is that they are a reflective practitioner, which is consistent with one of the salient characteristics of the [un]knowing director drawing from its conceptualisation/theorisation. It is through my written reflections that I can at least attempt to bring to the fore those internal experiences encountered during moments of devising and to somehow track my encountered and unforeseen micro and macro artistic discoveries about a prospective performance that was unforeseen from the onset. It is through reflecting that I feel like I am starting to come to terms with the intricacies of [un]knowing.

Creative Research Project 2

6 May 2016

Day 4

3. Notes

3.3 Post-session Reflection

- a) The way that today’s session unfolded moment-to-moment with reference to its [...] artistic discovery and outcome, led to my realisation that my consistency in noting my observations and intuitive responses during a devising session is determined by my embodied and immediate identification of whether or not a session affords me the chance to take notes during its moment-to-moment manifestation, which further depends on what is appropriate or useful in terms of note-taking and reflecting [...]. Thus far, I feel like my pre-session notes and post-session reflections comparatively tend to articulate my thoughts, feelings, decisions and lessons more elaborately because my research experience through this devising session is that I manage to be more reflective moments before and after being in the depth of an immediate devising session with my co-collaborators. I do think that my experience does make sense, hence the need for the [un]knowing director to be reflective in their directorial practice as a strategy of reaching, illuminating, documenting and articulating instances of molecular, micro and macro level artistic knowings within a devising context.

- The limitations of auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling

Creative Research Project 2

25 April 2016

Day 1

3. Notes

3.1 During-session Notes

- g) NB! NB! I think that it will be best for me to aim for accumulating during-session notes that I can then expand on in my post-session reflections because I am noticing that my attempt of actively and lengthily reflecting during a session reduces my focus and/or level of awareness, listening and/or observation regarding the performers' undertaking of tasks, which can yield useful artistic material for our prospective performance or outcomes of our devising process. Alternatively, I need to set time for recording any during-session reflections/notes during a break session that I should set for each devising session.

Creative Research Project 2

9 May 2016

Day 5

3. Notes

3.3 Post-session Reflection

- a) I am pleased with today's session because we have managed to make progress in relation to the process of developing the bits and pieces of work that my co-collaborators spontaneously created and proposed. The first thing that seems to be important to reflect upon post today's session and in relation to a part of my post-session reflection of yesterday's session is about my challenge of not managing to take sufficient note of the during-session emergences as and when they occurred. Given the contents of my during-session notes section of today's devising session i.e. section 3.2; it is quite clear that I have somehow managed to take note of the intuitively emergent tasks and/or decisions that were obviously not predetermined. I remember quite well that I started today's session having been conscious of my experienced challenge of not having succeeded to take any useful and substantial notes of my intuitive emergences during yesterday's session and somehow wanted to see what I would experience during today's session in terms of my referred-to challenge. I think that my conscious awareness related to my during-session note-taking of intuitive emergences and any other important occurrences and discoveries drawn from yesterday's session, put me in a state of awareness about my need to do my best to take note of intuitive emergences and any other important occurrences and discoveries during today's session, which I did manage to achieve to an extent. It is in retrospect of my experiences of taking note of today's intuitively emerged tasks, choices and decisions that I realised how it reduced my awareness of moments when my collaborating performers would be engaging in a task and/or spontaneous and immediately-embodied creative explorations that required my moment-to-moment contribution as a director in the form of my immediate probing, provision of feedback, requesting of responses of their lived experiences during (some) moments of a spontaneous embodied creative exploration, my immediate offering of suggestions about staging possibilities etc.; all of which could lead to my intuitive decision-making as a director.

As much as I challenged myself to and partially succeeded in taking the necessary notes during today's session, I am realising more and more that it is more productive for me to rely on my post-session reflections as accounts of the pertinent and consciously registered instances of intuitive emergences (tasks and decisions/choices) that are related to our devising process's generation of artistic material (knowledge) about our unforeseen and prospective performance. I am not at all suggesting that my act of taking note of the during-session emergences is counter-productive for our devising process. I am just realising that my act of taking note of the during-session emergences is currently posing a challenge related to my required level of awareness moment-to-moment as I collaborate with my performers in developing the bits of artistic material that we have assembled thus far with the aim of discovering our unforeseen and prospective performance. I am realising that it is during the moments of developing the artistic performance material, which is quite scattered and seemingly unrelated at the moment, that I need to be up on my feet and immediately respond to the performers' spontaneous and immediately-embodied creative explorations without a time lapse that might be caused by my act of writing a note about an unforeseen and intuitive emergence. I am

sure that our devising process will go back to the stage during which I can be able to observe my collaborating performers while being able to take notes during a session. Given where we are at the moment, I need to be on my feet and work with my intuition immediately as it occurs during the course of exploring possibilities of developing the bits and pieces of artistic material that we have. I suspect that my act and method of taking notes during a session will not end. However, I just need to accept that it is productive for me not to heavily rely on it if and when it becomes an obstacle for me in the form of reducing my much-needed level of momentary awareness when my co-collaborators and I are in the creative state of flow that is characteristic of experiences of creative exploration during our devising sessions.

Creative Research Project 2

25 May 2016

Day 9

3. Notes

3.2 Post-session Reflection

- a) I did not manage to take notes during today's session because I needed to view my collaborating performers' embodied undertakings of their/our performance material while being on my feet so that I could directorially engage with it based on the immediate creative-artistic emergences that required my attention as and when they occurred. My challenge with today's session was also due to the fact that two of my collaborating performers (Nicholas and Sibusiso) were absent and today's session required everybody's presence so that I, through my co-collaborators' creative-artistic efforts, could work towards possibly achieving the session's aim of structuring the remaining performance material for our draft unforeseen and prospective performance. I immediately dealt with the referred-to challenge by deciding to ensure that today's session becomes productive through focusing on directorially strengthening the performance segments that involve my collaborating performers who were present in today's session.

I have decided to develop a discussion of the benefits and limitations related to creative research project 2's research aim of sustaining the method of note-taking and reflective journaling in an inclusive and related manner because I am of the view that it is more productive to understand the referred-to benefits and limitations as holistic or integrated indicators of how the method manifested during the course of the project. This decision is also derived from one of this study's fundamental perspectives that knowledge is integrated and produced through a skilled trail-following kind of approach, which is also consistent with my earlier-mentioned insistence about the need for the creative research projects to be viewed and appreciated as related and integrated research undertakings that seek to address its research question.

With specific reference to the benefits of my sustained employment of the

research method of auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling, creative research project 2 generally illustrates that the [un]knowing director is a reflective practitioner whose artistic practice employs Senghor's "reason-eye" and "reason-embrace" (Diagne, 2019:24) at various moments and/or phases of a devising process. The research task of consciously ensuring that I manage to capture and articulate the momentary unfolding of creative research project 2 actually stems from one of this study's key background factors and rationale as discussed in the introduction chapter. This refers to my pre-PhD performance devising processes that were characterised by a lack of any sustained awareness of the momentary emergences of a devising process that culminated in a 'complete' performance over time. Therefore, as evidenced by this project's Day 3 and Day 4 excerpts, a sustained use of the method of auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling carries a key benefit in that it is the fundamental way in which this study has recorded and articulated the discovered intricacies pertaining to directing [un]knowingly.

On the other hand, based on creative research project 2's identified research method limitations, the accounts above suggest that my lived experience of being part of a devising process as the [un]knowing director were made complex by my need to 'slow' time down so that I was consciously aware of intuitive emergences moment-to-moment. This need to 'slow' time down was related to my research need to achieve something that is very difficult to achieve, which is the [un]knowing director's determined act of momentarily committing to being consciously aware and discursively articulate of his immediate embodied experiences of intuitive thoughts and feelings. These essentially equate to intuitive emergences, which are in turn indicative of my momentary intuitive discoveries and possible eventual choices or

decisions. These thoughts and feelings would be pre-reflexive under normal circumstances i.e. those circumstances that do not require a director's sustained, conscious awareness of a devising process's moment-to-moment unfolding. However, the sustained use of the method of auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling essentially demonstrates how I needed to consistently transcend the referred-to state of pre-reflexivity as best as I could in order for me to satisfy, discover and articulate the intricacies of what it entails to be the [un]knowing director. On this note, it is important for me to assert that I sincerely hope that this discussion is not constructing an implicit 'illusion' about the referred-to method-related success of creative research project 2. My lived experience of undertaking a devising process speaks to the impossibility of me always being aware of my momentary pre-reflexive thoughts and feelings that would in turn constitute my momentary artistic discoveries and their subsequent choices or decisions.

A reading of creative research project 2's above-mentioned 'data' excerpts that are indicative of the limitations of auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflexive journaling, relatedly echo what I am stating thus far about the challenging nature of employing the research method. Specifically, the method's limitations reside within the context of my devising session's during-session notes. As evidenced, some excerpts indicate my discovery of how the methodological endeavour of sustaining my generation of devising session notes and reflections facilitated my basic awareness that the pre-session notes and post-session reflections were generally effective forms of reflecting *on* action (devising practice/process) and my during-session notes were generally effective forms of reflecting *in* action. In fact, this project's Day 1 during-session notes offers a mitigating measure about how it would be strategic for me to set aside time during a devising session to engage in an act of

reflecting *in action* effectively. This degree of effectiveness would be in the form of my ability to elaborately articulate the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising session in terms of its non-predetermined and intuitively borne artistic emergences (artistic discoveries and their eventual choices) as informed by my 'selective' conscious awareness. A reading of Day 5's post-session reflection, in addition to the project's devising session accounts in general, does illustrate that Day 1's offered mitigating measure served creative research project 2 productively, due to the sufficient existence of the project's during-session notes and the useful nature of their content.

This discussion's chosen 'data' excerpts that speak to the limitations of note-taking and reflective journaling generally reveal that the method's limitations in relation to during-session notes were caused by my need, at times, to be on my feet while engaging with my co-collaborators momentarily. These times, generally, are characterised by my inability to take note of (literally write down and/or reflect upon) a devising session's momentary intuitive emergences as and when they occurred. These are the moments that are generally aligned to Senghor's assertion that: "We open up ourselves to the object, the art object in particular, by means of a *rhythmic attitude* that puts us on the same wavelength with it, i.e. with its rhythm: this is what it means to be in touch with its *spirituality* (Diagne, 2011:86, italics in original)." It follows from the above that the moments during which I was on my feet while engaging with my co-collaborators momentarily were the actual instances of my reflecting *in action*. This is because reflecting *in action* is a kind of reflection that occurs without the accompanying step of articulation i.e. without needing to write anything down. What this requires is an expansion of the reflective moment and the reflective action over a longer duration before a moment for articulation (writing

down/recording) arises. In other words, the director as artistic-researcher must develop the skill to hold on to the reflective insight without needing to write it down. This is how my instances of reflecting *on* action relatively equate to Senghor's "reason-eye" (Diagne, 2019:24) and my instances of reflecting *in* action relatively equate to how the "reason-embrace" (Diagne, 2019:24) manifested.

The interesting point that is illuminated by the limitation mentioned is that it is fundamentally suggestive of how I work as the [un]knowing director, particularly when I am working during a devising session with my co-collaborators. Based on what the limitation suggests and in consideration of what the contents of the devising session accounts reveal about how I work, it is clear that I generally work through two modes of observation. The first mode is characterised by my momentary ability to generate during-session notes and the second mode is characterised by my inability to generate during-session notes. A general reading of creative research project 2's during-session accounts do reveal that the devising sessions during which I have managed to generate useful and elaborate during-session notes are indicative of the following:

- a) I am able to consistently generate useful and elaborate during-session notes that are somewhat characteristic of reflection(s) *in* action comparatively early during the course of a devising process.
- b) I am able to consistently generate useful and elaborate during-session notes that are characteristic of reflection(s) *on* action comparatively from the intermediate towards the final phase of a devising process.
- c) The linguistic tense of my generated useful and elaborate during-session notes that are characteristic of being reflection(s) *on* action is retrospective, which arguably renders them to be akin to my post-session

reflections.

- d) Therefore, the sustained method of auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling is fundamentally beneficial and useful in spite of its inherent “limitations” as related to the [un]knowing director.

2. Ways of knowing [un]knowingly

For the purpose of framing the reading of the following discussion on the current theme, its contents and presentation, it needs to be noted from the outset that it is comparatively less interactive and elaborate in relation to the previous theme’s discussion. My rationale for the referred-to state of affairs is stated after the following ‘data’ excerpts, which specifically account for creative research project 2’s discoveries about collaboration and intuition as this study’s particular ways of knowing. As much as the following ‘data’ excerpts are ‘divided’ in their presentation, please note that their contents should not be viewed separately, reasons for which will become clear.

- Collaboration

Creative Research Project 2

3 May 2016

Day 2

3. Notes

3.2 During-session Notes (the actual process of collaboration)

[...] d) I think that I need to reflect on my thoughts about collaboration as a way of working as part of my post-session reflection. This is because I still need to understand what it is or what it entails since I am getting a continued realisation that it is one of the [un]knowing director’s key ways of knowing through arriving at the moment-to-moment discoveries that could then lead to knowledge about a prospective performance’s macro artistic details that I have mentioned thus far. However, I am noticing for now that it entails the following steps:

1. I participate in the devising session by offering the performers predetermined or intuitively emerging [exercises or devising tasks] i.e. non-predetermined performer-related exercises or devising tasks.
2. The performers undertake the task or exercise.
3. I closely observe their undertaking of the task or exercise.
4. I take note of what emerges to me intuitively while being in the moment(s) of observing the performers’ immediate and non-predetermined embodied undertakings and/or exploration(s) of the task or exercise.
5. I make the performers aware of what their embodied explorations have yielded in terms of my intuitively identified possibilities regarding the required artistic material of content/theme/subject matter/concept/performance style etc.

3.3 Post-session Reflection

[...] The outline that I have provided is indicative of the reality that I still need to offer devising and/or performer-related exploratory tasks to my co-collaborating performers whether or not I have predetermined them, encountered them unexpectedly or decided upon them intuitively. It all goes back to the point that the [un]knowing director still needs to offer something to the performers that they would then explore and it will be through the performers' immediate and embodied explorations that possible artistic material would emerge because it is only then that I would encounter artistic discoveries that might be taken further as possible artistic material (decisions). This lesson, realisation and discovery points to the vital importance of collaboration as one of the [un]knowing director's key ways of knowing about the unforeseeable required artistic material that would become the possible flesh of a performance work that was not predetermined from the beginning of the devising process. Collaboration as a way of knowing speaks of the primary reliance that the [un]knowing director has on the actual moment-to-moment unfolding of the devising process. This is because it is through the performers' participation and exploratory embodied undertakings within the context of a devising session that my emotions get stirred, my imagination gets triggered and my entire being gets to be alive in identifying unknown or unforeseeable [possible] performance material. This does not mean that this way of knowing is exclusive to the workings of the [un]knowing director. However, I think that the interesting difference lies in the reality that collaboration does not become a means to an end, but occupies a position of vital importance to an extent that one can posit that the [un]knowing director, together with their co-collaborators, cannot arrive at micro points or moments of discovery that would lead to macro-artistic knowings without collaborating in ways that I am mentioning. I am not at all under the illusion that this kind of collaboration as a way of knowing is utopian because that would be false. This is because there is an endless amount of uncertainty that confronts the [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators in the devising process regarding when they would reach a point of micro artistic discovery that would yield macro artistic knowings [...]. Therefore, I am realising that the [un]knowing director's encountered intuitions, as stipulated thus far, can facilitate a devising process's progress; does require time to reach a point of clarity that could then eventuate into micro and macro level material; and will probably not operate in isolation with reference to decision-making due to the primacy of collaboration as a way of knowing. At the very least, I can state that the [un]knowing director works with collaboration and intuition as symbiotic ways of knowing.

Creative Research Project 2

13 May 2016

Day 6

3. Notes

3.2 During-session Notes (the actual process of collaboration)

- a) Today's session started with my viewing of Delight and Nicholas' 'duet' since I had never got to spend time on exploring its possibilities of how it could develop into being a segment of our unforeseen and prospective performance. I did not know if it carried any artistic/performance potential whatsoever and my way of figuring that out was for me to ask them to repeat it a number of times while I was waiting for my intuition to spark or my immediate conscious awareness or attentiveness to facilitate my identification of how it could possibly be developed as a segment for our prospective and unforeseen performance. Similar to the way in which I intuitively developed Rinnet and La Portia's 'duet', I got to a stage of asking certain questions regarding their thoughts about what their spontaneously created 'duet' was about in terms of situation, 'character' relationship and meaning. My thought to ask them such questions was based on my discovery of its effectiveness as a devising strategy taken from my experience of how it assisted me in developing Rinnet and La Portia's 'duet'. Essentially, such a strategy emerged as being useful with reference to me determining whether or not it is appropriate for our collaboratively discovered over-arching and primary devising theme/concept/subject matter of Human Connection and its subsidiary one of Listening, which would in turn inform my proposal for us to consider keeping or discarding it as possible performance material for our unforeseen and prospective performance. Therefore, the way in which I worked with Delight and Nicholas in developing their 'duet' was essentially similar to the way in which I

worked on Rinnet and La Portia's 'duet'. It is a way of knowing that was characterised by me repeatedly viewing their proposed spontaneously discovered and proposed performance material as a way of discovering its potential for artistic development through my immediate intuitive responses that were facilitated by my immediate conscious awareness or attentiveness of their 'duet'; and my momentary immediate directorial interactions with their proposed 'duet' through questioning, making comments and immediately informing them about points that they need to explore further that were related to their 'duets' staging, meaning and 'character' relationship. I was very conscious of ensuring that I do not steer the development of their 'duet' in the direction of merely and forcefully being appropriate for our collaboratively discovered and decided-upon primary devising theme/concept/subject matter of Human Connection because I felt like it was, and still is, important for our unforeseen and prospective performance to continue emerging through our spontaneous and immediately-embodied creative contributions, and my intuitively made artistic decisions.

The way in which I worked with Delight and Nicholas was another good instance of collaboration as a way of knowing because we would not have reached a point whereby we ended-up with a draft segment for our unforeseen and prospective performance had I not given them a devising task that led to their spontaneously created proposed performance material, which in turn required my immediate directorial interaction or engagement that eventually led us to a point of having a segment that appeared and proved to be an appropriate and relevant segment of our unforeseen and prospective performance. As an attempt to provide a provisional yet specific account of my understanding of what collaboration as a way of knowing entails, I can state that it firstly requires the [un]knowing director to stimulate their collaborating performers by providing them with performer-related exercises and/or performance devising tasks that could either be consciously predetermined or spontaneously determined through their intuition as a skilled theatre practitioner during the unfolding moments of a devising process. Secondly, it involves the performers' creative responses to and active engagement with the referred-to tasks through their primarily spontaneous embodied explorations that could yield potential performance material(s) that further requires the [un]knowing director's immediate creative engagement or interaction with the referred-to potential performance material(s) by using their intuition as a skilled practitioner. Seemingly, this would eventually lead to the discovery of performance materials that could constitute an unforeseen and prospective performance. Thirdly, it involves the [un]knowing director's requirement to make artistic decisions at the molecular, micro and macro levels of artistic activity. Such decisions are made intuitively, which also includes rationally, in a non-prescriptive way during the unfolding moments of a devising process, which are fundamentally unpredictable in character. Relatedly, the [un]knowing director's way of making the artistic decisions that would constitute the required artistic knowledge of an unforeseen and prospective performance drawing from the outcomes of a devising process's molecular, micro and macro levels of artistic activity, is primarily consultative and secondarily non-consultative. The existence of this primarily consultative and secondarily non-consultative way of decision making, based on my current devising process and previous one(s), is attributed to the primacy of collaboration as a way of knowing and the inevitable or inherent need for the [un]knowing director, arguably similar to any other kind of director, to make the relevant artistic decisions based on their co-collaborators' artistic contributions and as required by their role as director. I am stating this because of my strengthened realisation that collaboration as a way of knowing does require a greater amount of consultation on the director's part with reference to artistic possibilities and discoveries that are made during the devising process. Additionally, I have realised that a director's consistent employing of a consultative approach to decision-making within the context of devising performance, is an effective strategy in the facilitation of a creative 'space' or platform that is characterised by a levelled status through the valuing of each collaborator's contribution. However, I have yet again realised that it is the [un]knowing director's duty to make artistic decisions in a non-consultative way that performers, or other co-collaborators for that matter, cannot make at the molecular, micro and macro levels of artistic activity during a devising process. There is nothing surprising about such a realisation because both the [un]knowing director and their co-collaborators (performer-as-creator) have certain skills that stipulate their respective roles during a devising process. However, it is necessary to point this out [in relation to] unpacking collaboration as a way of knowing, because one could easily over-simplify such a way of knowing by not acknowledging that the [un]knowing director sometimes needs to make decisions in a non-consultative manner because of their role as determined by the

fundamentals of directing practice.

- Intuition

Creative Research Project 2

23 May 2016

Day 7

3. Notes

3.3 Post-session Reflection (intuition as a way of knowing)

- a) The major point of reflection that I would like to elaborate upon in today's post-session reflection, based on my retrospective identification of what became clear to me, is about what influences my artistic decision-making in terms of what to take and discard with reference to the performance materials that emerge from my collaborating performers' undertakings of the molecular, micro and possibly macro levels of creative-artistic activity. Given the fact that today's session is evidently located at the macro level of artistic activity, which is unfolding moment-to-moment, I am realising that my decision-making emanates primarily intuitively in relation to or based on my affective/emotional responses to what I see my co-collaborators do through their spontaneous and immediately-embodied undertakings. My affective/emotional responses seem to mostly be the first thing that gets triggered inside of me that informs me or illuminates the possibility of whether or not my collaborating performers' spontaneous and embodied undertakings have the emotional and creative-artistic weight to be included as the appropriate performance materials of an/our unforeseen and prospective performance. I have realised that my trust in my intuitive-affectively derived responses seems to be the primary determining factor of the decisions that I make as an [un]knowing director. I have learned, over time, that trusting my intuitive-affective responses tends to work well with reference to my directorial undertakings as the [un]knowing director because of my training as a director which informs me that the director is the first audience of a performance or proposed performance material. This lesson and comprehension thereof have further led to my knowing that there is a chance, however slight, that an audience member can or may have a similar emotional/affective response to what they see a performer, or the performers, go through during moments of a performance in relation to an artistic choice that I arrived at intuitively based on my affective aspect/[faculty]. In addition to my intuitive-affective responses as contributory factors to my moment-to-moment artistic decision-making comes my rational thinking, which also constitutes my intuitive responses. I have realised that my rational thinking seems to be more operative when it comes to my artistic decision-making with reference to the directorial aspect of staging i.e. composition, picturization, rhythm, tempo, how the theatrical medium's visual, auditory and kinaesthetic elements become integrated and how an overarching performance concept/content can be generated in consideration of my collaborating performers' proposed performance materials. However, I have realised that there is a continuous interplay of my affective and rational faculties of varying degrees throughout my undertaking of a devising process. This interplay actually leads me to a further realisation of the existence of skilled intuition (as coined in Atkinson & Claxton's (2000) book on intuition). My particular intuitive-affective responses, coupled with my intuitive-rational thinking, are essentially active at all times during the moment-to-moment manifestations of a devising process's molecular, micro and macro levels of artistic activity with reference to my artistic decision-making. Therefore, I do think that my emotions [/feelings], imagination and rational thinking share a close symbiotic relation that might be distinguished by degree in relation to levels of artistic activity and decision-making. Thus, I have realised that I primarily respond and make artistic decisions and choices intuitive-affectively based on my general life experiences (aesthetic inclinations/preferences, temperament, ideology, culture etc.) and intuitive-rationally based on my knowledge of directing practice and what the practice entails with reference to what a director needs to consider and work on in their undertakings of devising and/or mounting a performance. Specifically, the knowledge of directing practice that I am referring to has been acquired over time through my previous and current experiences of university education, professional practice and continues to be acquired through each directing undertaking within the context of devising performance that I embark on, which

obviously includes my current devising process.

Creative Research Project 2

24 May 2016

Day 8

3. Notes

3.3 Post-session Reflection (intuition as a way of knowing in relation to collaboration)

- a) Today's session was strongly characterised by my fulfilling of the director's role of structuring [our] collaboratively generated performance material in a manner that is non-predetermined, that is derived from my acute observation of my collaborators' immediately-embodied undertakings of the generated performance material and additionally based on my moment-to-moment intuitive-affective responses to and intuitive-rational thinking about my co-collaborators' immediate embodied undertakings. As I have stated or alluded to in my post-session notes/reflections of yesterday's session, I am realising and learning that the [un]knowing director's way of working (knowing) repeatedly seems to be dependent on and characterised by an interplay between their intuitive-affective responses and intuitive-rational thinking throughout the molecular, micro and macro levels of artistic activity that constitute a devising process. I think that today's work resided in the realm of the macro level of artistic activity since it was about our collaboration, through satisfying our respective roles of performer and director [, being] geared towards discovering our unforeseen and prospective performance's structure. I might be wrong or have not yet reached a point of clarity about what distinguishes the [un]knowing director's creative-artistic experiences of a devising processes' molecular, micro and macro levels of artistic activity with reference to the intuitive-affective responses and intuitive-rational thinking interplay. However, I feel strongly, based on my experiences of my current devising process, that my feelings and rational thinking do have a very close interplay. I do not want to be conclusive about anything related to what I am talking about, but I am currently assertively inclined to concur with the definition of intuition that Atkinson & Claxton⁹ provides in their book entitled *The Intuitive Practitioner* because it includes thinking through feelings and rational thinking or consideration as forms of (skilled) intuition within the context of professional practice. I realise that most of my during-session notes and post-session reflections of my current and previous devising process seem to identify and narrowly distinguish my experiences of intuitive discoveries/emergences from my experiences or instances of rational thinking. This has led to my realisation that I, as the [un]knowing director, primarily work through my intuition, which is true based on my discovered understanding of intuition. Therefore the only or major alteration I would make to my referred-to realisation, based on my retrospective thinking over time during my previous and current devising process, is that I do work intuitively but I have realised that my non-predetermined creative-artistic discoveries and decisions are a result of an interplay of my immediate affective responses, spontaneous imagination and immediate or retrospective rational thinking that manifests pre, during and/or post a devising process's unfolding moments of its molecular, micro and macro levels of artistic activity. I am becoming clearer of my identified difficulty to actually separate the moments when my affective, imaginative and rational cognitive faculties are in operation because now I am realising that each rational thought or imaginative creative occurrence is arguably always accompanied by a feeling(s) and vice versa. It is mainly a matter of degree in my awareness as to which of these faculties is dominantly present or recognisable.

Firstly, the above-selected 'data' excerpts serve the purpose of illustrating and

⁹[intuition] refers to a family of 'ways of knowing' that have in common a lack of clearly articulated comprehension or rationale, but which differ in a variety of other ways. Non-mystical members of this family include: *expertise* [...]; *implicit learning* [...]; *judgement* [...]; *sensitivity* [...]; *creativity* [...]; and *ruminantion* [...]. (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000:40, italics in original)

evidencing how creative research project 2 is a case in and through which my thinking had generally developed about the notion of the [un]knowing director. Secondly, these 'data' excerpts are illustrative of how creative research project 2 was my conscious and investigative attempt to discover, identify and articulate the intricacies of the notion of the [un]knowing director with specific reference to its applicable ways of knowing. Now, a reading of these selected excerpts, in addition to creative research project 2's general devising session accounts, further illustrates how their content is characterised by my clear intention of satisfying this project's aim in a way that is exploratory, yet quite conscious in a sense that the content of the devising session accounts tend to be investigative while being assertive at times. This characteristic makes the content of the devising session accounts quite self-evident to the extent that the following discussion need only cover a few points to avoid regurgitating insights that I regard to be possibly unnecessary since they are evidenced by the 'data' excerpts themselves.

Intuition and collaboration need to be appreciated relatedly as the [un]knowing director's discovered ways of knowing. However, I need to address a few points that are related to collaboration based on how it has been conceptualised in the conceptual framework chapter. One of the matters that the conceptual framework chapter addresses, with reference to Fleishman's (1991) dissertation about South Africa's theatre practice of *workshop theatre*, partly addresses the aspect of power dynamics within a *workshop* process. Just as a reminder, it needs to be noted that this study has made an earlier-mentioned argument for how South Africa's *workshop theatre* practice is the forebear both of the [un]knowing director and devising performance as applicable to this study. Now, it is because of such a relationship that it is necessary for this discussion to offer a perspective about collaboration

because of the key role that collaboration plays within the contexts of *workshop theatre* and devising performance within this study's specific context.

As indicated during my elaboration of creative research project 2's description and background, I, as a director artist-researcher, undertook the project as a lecturer who was collaborating with student performers or performers-in-training. Whether I like it or not, this relationship with my co-collaborators possibly implies the existence of a particular power dynamic. My conscious decision to constantly ensure that I did not position myself as an all-knowing entity was an indication of my acknowledgment of the probable existence of an imbalanced power dynamic in addition to my fundamental directorial orientation of being a director-facilitator. Therefore, I undertook creative research project 2 while being aware of such a power dynamic, which led to my constant attempts to ensure that it did not jeopardise the quality and level of collaboration that I needed to attain and sustain through(out) the project. It is also worth mentioning that my conceptualisation of collaboration had developed to a large extent during creative research project 2 as compared to how it was during my undertaking of creative research project 1. Its developments were specifically derived from my scholarly encounters or engagements with Fleishman (1991) and Blencowe, Noorani & Brigstocke (2013), which facilitated my enhanced appreciation of the complexities of artistic collaboration, more especially because I was a professional practitioner who was collaborating with professionals in the making. Thus, I still continue to agree with the reality that artistic collaboration tends to be accompanied by a potentially problematic power dynamic. However, some of this current discussion's 'data' excerpts do illustrate that, (a) I made a consistent effort to ensure that my co-collaborators and I artistically engaged on a 'levelled plain' as much as possible considering the limitations of our project; and (b) my way of

attaining a desired power dynamic was a result of my appreciation of our devising process as the actual 'epicentre' of power because it is through the task of devising that we all got to fulfil our artistic roles by making use of our different skillsets.

I do acknowledge that the way in which collaboration has been realised through this study could be mainly dependent on or determined by my general directorial orientation as the [un]knowing director, which arguably renders it to be particular to this study. As indicated by this current discussion's 'data' excerpts which reveal how collaboration manifested moment-to-moment during creative research project 2, my directorial orientation is aligned to trusting the actual moment-to-moment unfolding of the devising process. They also reveal that safety and valuing of my collaborating performers as illustrative of the Basotho philosophical ethic of *botho*, are pivotal aspects and pre-requisites of facilitating the kind of collaborative practice that fundamentally resists a hierarchy that positions a director at or as its apex in one way or another. It is because of such a professional and political orientation that this study's conceptualisation of collaboration takes its particular stance since this project's above-mentioned 'data' excerpts are explicitly illustrative of the ways in which this study's particular kind of collaboration has also been realised through what I have defined as 'co-authoring' and 'co-authority' as its key variables. As a matter of noting, creative research project 2's manifestation of collaboration essentially offers a view that collaboration is not devoid of the existence of a possibly imbalanced power dynamic, at least based on the variable of professional skill as attained through previously acquired knowledge. Thus, creative research projects 1 and 2, at the very least, do appreciate the complex nature of power within the context of collaboration, or what Blencowe (2013a) refers to as 'participation'. This then illustrates the point that collaboration as a way of knowing is

something that cannot merely be achieved by a collaborative and exploratory traveling *alongly*-like artistic endeavour if it is not initiated and nurtured in a particular way that is geared towards a conscious and concerted levelling of the 'playing ground'. As indicated by creative research projects 1 and 2, this kind of levelling is certainly not innocent, co-incidental or devoid of underlying problematics with reference to collaborative decision-making. Over and above, this study's way of facilitating or attaining a fairly balanced power dynamic pivots upon its perspective about how knowledge is fundamentally co-constitutive. In fact, I am of the view that creative research projects 1 and 2, emphatically illustrate this study's purported-for I-We epistemological and ontological perspective that is launched in its introduction and methodology chapters in particular. Relatedly this study's I-We perspective, as stated earlier in this thesis, is rooted in the Basotho philosophy of *botho* and the socio-cultural practice of *letsema*.

I can mention two points that are evident and pertinent insights regarding the aspect of intuition as elaborated upon through creative research project 2's above-mentioned 'data' excerpts and devising session accounts in general. The first insight, is that intuition and collaboration are this study's two particular, symbiotic and certainly contingent ways of knowing. The second insight, which is related to the first, is that this project in particular, is emphatically illustrative of how my understanding of intuition (in this case) has been accumulative. This accumulated understanding can be seen with respect to the problematics of the questionnaire that I developed and disseminated to participating South(ern) African theatre directors. The referred-to questionnaire has been provided in the methodology chapter and clearly suggests that I was initially of the view that *intuition* and *rational thinking* were two separate kinds of cognition in relation to the notion of the [un]knowing director. Evidently, this

project fundamentally articulates my discovered insight that intuition actually manifests both in the form of my feelings *and* my rational thought process as co-constituents thereof that do have an interplay to varying degrees during the course of a devising process. This is why I have earlier indicated that while this study is certainly aligned to Senghor's notions of "reason-eye" and "reason-embrace" (Diagne, 2019:24), this study's referred-to kind of intuition, arguably offers a constructive "extension" of Senghor's basic epistemology by evidencing an appreciation of the possible interplay between the "reason-eye" i.e. analytic knowledge and "reason-embrace" i.e. intuitive knowledge.

What I am referring to in this instance does not take away from what I have earlier established about Senghor's notions of "reason-eye" and "reason-embrace" (Diagne, 2019:24) in terms of this study's method-related aspect of reflecting *on* action and reflecting *in* action. Continuing from the earlier point, the questionnaire also suggests that intuition and collaboration do play a certain role within the context of devising performance practice related to a director's decision-making, which is not a problem considering what the above general discussion on the theme of *ways of knowing [un]knowingly* reveals. However, somewhat problematically, the questionnaire has positioned the roles of intuition and collaboration as being independent, not co-constitutive, unrelated or not contingent, which has been emphatically 'collapsed' by this project's insights that point to the converse. These insights, I would argue, are not necessarily indicative of a fundamental conceptual shortcoming, but are a fundamental and productive research development that is on par with the manifestations of *practice as research's* methodological pluralism and its understanding of knowledge as an emergent enterprise, which is argued for by, and applicable to, this study.

3. *The language (terminology) and process of knowing [un]knowingly*

I trust that creative research project 2's thus-far developed discussion has made it clear that it was driven by exploring possible insights related to its earlier-mentioned project-specific related research aims. Based on the above-discussed theme of *ways of knowing [un]knowingly*, this study has started to provide specific insights related to the aim of articulating the intricate details that give a sense of how collaboration and intuition function within my particular practice as the [un]knowing director. Some of the project's thus-far 'used' devising session accounts variedly make mention of the following terms: *molecular*, *micro* and *macro* levels of artistic activity and/or decisions. These terms do speak to the *language (terminology) and process of knowing [un]knowingly*, which is the current point of discussion. I have made a conscious choice to leave this theme as the last point of discussion mainly because it seemed like it would be more sensible and appropriate to structure creative research project 2's general discussion as such.

My thinking was based on a funnelling-like approach in evidencing the intricacies of the [un]knowing director's practice and not based on degree of importance or relevance. Rather, it was based on my thinking that knowledge about the intricate details of knowing [un]knowingly would serve to illuminate the specific 'minute' details of a critical examination of directing practice, which is what this study is supposed to demonstrate and achieve in general. It follows, then, that the following chosen 'data' excerpts are my practice-centred and exploratively co-produced insights that shed more light about what lies within the 'veins' of this study's *ways of knowing [un]knowingly*.

Creative Research Project 2

3 May 2016

Day 2

3. Notes

3.3 Post-session Reflection (**establishing the language of [un]knowing**)

[...] c) One of the things that keeps coming-up for me, including today's sessions and previous devising sessions of this current creative research project, is about the [un]knowing director's way(s) of making decisions in relation to the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising session. As I have indicated in one of my above-stated during-session notes, I have realised that one should try hard to ensure that they don't make micro and macro-related decisions as a result of feeling under pressure of time. Instead, one should endeavour to look at the recurrence of an artistic intuitive emergence as a strategy of decision-making. I think that employing such a strategy could be challenging depending on the predetermined or decided-upon duration i.e. the timespan from its beginning to 'completion' of a devising process. However, I feel like there could be something beneficial about working with or using the devising method of repeating some performer-related exercises or devising tasks because my experiences in my current and previous devising undertaking(s) have revealed to me that repetition enables the [un]knowing director to weigh the strength of their micro and macro artistically related intuition(s) so that they allow their unforeseen intuition(s) to swell or intensify, which would then make it denser and clearer in relation to the making of micro and macro artistically related choices or decisions [...]. Therefore, I am realising that the [un]knowing director's encountered intuitions, as stipulated thus far, can facilitate a devising process's progress; does require time to reach a point of clarity that could then eventuate into micro and macro level material; and will probably not operate in isolation with reference to decision-making due to the primacy of collaboration as a way of knowing. At the very least, I can state that the [un]knowing director works with collaboration and intuition as symbiotic ways of knowing.

Creative Research Project 2

6 May 2016

Day 4

3. Notes

3.3 Post-session Reflection (**the language and process of [un]knowing in detail**)

4. [...] As much as I have managed to capture most of my co-collaborators' useful moment-to-moment (during-session) embodied creative explorations until this point to a productive extent, some of which have yielded artistic material that I have identified through my intuition [...], this does not mean that I was occupying the above-mentioned outside-in position. It is in reflection that I am realising that the reason I have managed to make my during-session notes during the devising sessions other than today's, is probably because of the way in which the sessions' unfolded moment-to-moment experiences afforded me the opportunity to do so because I had to ensure that I observe my co-collaborators' moment-to-moment molecular embodied creative explorations that could yield micro artistic material, which could in turn lead to macro artistic material and choices. My usage of terminology in the preceding sentence points to my lesson [or realisation] that my collaborating performers' moment-to-moment embodied creative explorations, which I have thus far referred to as being on a micro level in my previous devising session reflections and notes actually belongs to the molecular level of manifestation of a devising process. This lesson does make sense because Rinnet and La Portia's 'duet' that we have worked on today is a micro level artistic manifestation that was a result of their molecular, spontaneous and immediate responses to a task that I had given them. Their 'duet', as it existed before we started working on it during today's session, can be regarded as having been a molecular manifestation since it carried or contained possibilities of artistic material that could constitute a part of the micro level manifestation of our devising process in the form of our prospective performance. Their 'duet' before today's session had a molecular artistic form that was not stable due to its immediate and spontaneous propulsion into the realm of the physical/visible. However, such a molecular form, based on the outcomes of today's session, underwent a further development of form, which I now realise as being appropriately micro in character and scale due to the macro artistic possibilities that it seems to have for our unforeseen and prospective performance. Specifically, I feel like Rinnet and La Portia's 'duet', especially after its molecular form developed into what or how it is through today's session, stands a good chance to become a constituent of our unforeseen and prospective performance's macro presentation structure and content due to its relevance to our collaboratively and consensually decided-upon content/concept/subject matter of Human Connection and Listening. I think that it is

necessary for me to now go back to reflecting and expanding upon the point that I have raised earlier on regarding my challenge of not having managed to write my during-session notes in today's session, which should be indicative of how Rinnet and La Portia's 'duet' developed from its molecular to its apparent micro artistic development.

5. I have been thinking about some pertinent points made by my study's conceptual framework that seek to define the [un]knowing director. My thinking has been spurred by my need to grapple with the intricacies of what directing in an [un]knowing manner entails. I think that one of my most important understandings that my current devising process with my co-collaborators is facilitating, has to do with the aspect of the [un]knowing director's moment-to-moment knowings of the artistic details of their unforeseen and non-predetermined devised and prospective performance. My supervisor has done his best in making me aware that my research's possible most valuable contribution [could be] in my ability to articulate a devising director's unconscious, internal and intangible experiences of a devising process from its inception to its 'completion'. Therefore, he has instilled in me an awareness that I need to focus on articulating my moment-to-moment experiences of a devising process that can shed light on exactly what does it mean for a director to be [un]knowing within the context of devising performance. I am now realising something in consideration of my supervisor's stance and some of the key points of my conceptual framework thus far, particularly what Tim Ingold talks about in his anthropology of knowledge in the form of his notions of *wayfinding* (a skilled performance as one travels within an unfolding landscape) and *wayfaring* (momentary trial-following=travelling alongly). I think that Ingold's referred-to notions are seemingly akin to what I have been noting in most of my reflections of my current devising process and certain parts of my draft conceptual framework. However, I am now strongly realising and learning that the moment-to-moment experiences and discoveries open up a space or create a platform through which the [un]knowing director makes artistically related decisions that would in turn constitute knowledge about an unforeseen, prospective and non-predetermined performance that could be shared with an audience if a devising process eventuates to that level. Furthermore, I am now strongly realising and learning that the moment-to-moment manifestations of the [un]knowing director's collaborative undertakings with their co-collaborators operate at a **molecular, micro** and **macro** levels of artistic activity within the context of devising performance. For now, it seems like the **molecular level of artistic activity** within the [un]knowing director's devising context has to do with the following: (a) the director's offered predetermined and/or intuitively emerged (derived) exploratory devising performance material and/or performer-dependent tasks (performer-training tasks/exercises, performance style exploratory tasks/exercises, performers' spontaneous or prepared exploratory performance material tasks/exercises etc.); (b) the performer's spontaneous or prepared immediately-embodied undertakings of or response to the director's offered predetermined and/or intuitively derived exploratory devising performance material and/or performer-dependent tasks; (c) a director's immediate observation of the performer's spontaneous or prepared immediately-embodied undertakings of or response to their offered predetermined and/or intuitively derived exploratory devising performance material and/or performer-dependent tasks; and (d) a director's usage of repetition regarding their collaborating performers' spontaneous or prepared immediately-embodied undertaking of or response to their offered predetermined and/or intuitively derived exploratory devising performance material and/or performer-dependent tasks.

For now, it seems like the **micro level of artistic activity** within the [un]knowing director's devising context has to do with the following: (a) a director's simultaneous usage of their intuition, which comprises an interplay of their affective and imaginary faculties; and rational consideration of varying degrees in the process of encountering instances of possible artistic knowledge (material) regarding their collaboratively discovered, prospective and unforeseen performance; (b) constant exploration, reviewing, developing/refining and selection of the discovered artistic knowledge (material) that are a result of and highly dependent upon artistic collaboration. For now, it seems like the **macro level of artistic activity** within the [un]knowing director's devising context has to do with the following: (a) the director's organisation of the selected fore-mentioned artistic knowledge (material) into a 'cohesive' performance structure that is characterised by the integration or disintegration of the auditory, visual and kinaesthetic artistic elements that [could] constitute a theatrical performance. However, my offered explication of the molecular, micro and macro levels of artistic activity will remain provisional until I conclude my devising process.

Creative Research Project 2

13 May 2016

Day 6

3. Notes

3.2 During-session reflection

a) [...] The most regular case of moments during which I made decisions non-consultatively either in a predetermined or non-predetermined manner i.e. intuitively, is at the molecular and micro levels of artistic activity in the specific form of me deciding upon and proposing which devising tasks should be undertaken during each devising session and how could the unforeseen emerging artistic material be developed in terms of being segments of a possible and sought-for performance. [...] It was during my experience of viewing and developing Delight and Nicholas' 'duet' that I had an immediate intuition, which I followed, to ask La Portia to spontaneously explore creating a soundscape for their 'duet'. This intuition was a result of the sounds that I internally 'heard' La Portia deliver as a vocal underscore of Delight and Nicholas' 'duet'. My intuitively decided-upon task for La Portia was that she should view Delight and Nicholas' 'duet' as they were presenting it during our devising session, identify her general emotional response to their immediately-embodied undertaking and spontaneously create a non-literal and emotionally contrasting vocally expressive sound of any sort that she should keep delivering as Delight and Nicholas undertake their 'duet' as it progressed. La Portia undertook my offered task and the 'duet' developed in addition to her contribution, which yielded an interesting potential constituent performance material for our unforeseen and prospective performance. All that I did at the end of our process of developing Delight and Nicholas' proposed 'duet' was to consult with the three of them regarding their feelings and thoughts about its potential as a segment for our unforeseen and prospective performance. Their responses were in support of my proposed decision for us to 'deposit' it based on their discovered awareness of its relevance and appropriateness regarding our collaboratively discovered overarching performance devising theme/concept/subject matter of Human Connection and Listening. As a way of further specifying what I am referring to by the molecular, micro and macro levels of artistic activity by using Delight and Nicholas' 'duet' as an example, I am realising that the molecular level of artistic activity is the initial intuitively and non-consultatively decided-upon devising task that I had given them and some of the other performers to work in pairs and devise a physical and/or vocal score that is about one performer wanting to communicate something to their partner through a non-literal, physical and/or vocal expression while their partner also rejects their communicated message through a non-literal, physical and/or vocal expression. The micro level of artistic activity is the performers' proposed spontaneously created non-literal, physical and/or vocal score that requires my immediate directorial engagement or interaction upon its presentation. My referred-to directorial engagement or interaction is aimed at our creative exploration of ways in which the proposed scores could be artistically developed into possible segments (material) that could constitute our unforeseen and prospective performance. The macro level of artistic activity [...], is the selection and structuring of the initially unforeseen potential performance material emerging from the performers' undertaking of the above-mentioned micro level artistic activities into a ['complete'] performance that is contextualised by its initially unforeseen theme/concept/subject matter.

I need to continue this current discussion by referring to the first above-mentioned 'data' excerpt because it makes an important point that I have mentioned in passing regarding my identified intricacies of working as the [un]knowing director with reference to creative research project 1's analysis. As a result of the referred-to point's recurrence, I need to address it explicitly. Now, based on the reading of creative research project 2's above-mentioned 'data' excerpt, it can be clearly noted

that I, as the [un]knowing director, have been dealing with the 'variable' or factor of *time*. I am referring to *time* here with reference to the moment-to-moment noted experiences of a devising process. I mention this point because it could seem like this study is generally oblivious in its appreciation of the moment-to-moment unfolding of *time* as experienced through the devising sessions that constitute this study in general. Furthermore, I must explicitly state that this study's conception of *time* with specific reference to the moment-to-moment unfolding of its/the devising process fundamentally operates on two levels. On one level, this study's time entails the timespan of a devising process from its beginning to its 'completion'. On another level, this study's time fundamentally equates to Henri Bergson's (1907) notion of *duration*. This is because my thus-far provided devising session accounts of creative research projects 1 and 2 are generally indicative of how my 'captured' or articulated lived experience of devising performance essentially indicates my being in the ceaseless flow of time especially when it comes to the manifestations of intuition and collaboration as this study's ways of knowing in the form of artistic discoveries and choices. In consideration of these identified levels of operation, then, this study suggests that its *time* comprises of a complex nature of *duration*. Based on the contents of some of creative research project 2's 'data' excerpts that are selected for the discussion on its theme of *sustaining the research method*, including the majority of the project's Day 2 selected 'data' excerpt, it is quite clear that *time* is a factor that seems to be related to my intuitive and collaborative decision-making. As evidenced by the excerpts, *time* has yielded the following challenging experiences on my part in relation to my collaborative and intuitive decision-making:

- a) *Time* potentially yields pressure on my process of intuitive and collaborative decision-making.

- b) Relatedly, *time* has an effect on the extent to which I can afford to 'suspend' my intuitive and collaborative decision-making during the course of a devising process.
- c) This study's research methods of auto-ethnographical note-taking and reflective journaling, which are its specific forms of reflecting *in* action and reflecting *on* action, evidently 'slow' the passage of *time* in relation to intuitive emergences and their potential subsequent choices.
- d) Therefore, *time* is arguably a persistent factor in relation to my intuitive and collaborative decision-making process.

I think that it is complicated and difficult for me to specifically detail the manifestations of *time* beyond what some of the devising session accounts suggest or reveal about it, mainly because such an endeavour is not this study's fundamental pre-occupation. However, it is important and necessary for me to have noted the above-mentioned points on *time* as a factor in my practice's aspect of decision-making because, in my view the provision of these points serves the function of further demystifying the notion of the [un]knowing director by revealing the embedded challenges within its practice context.

In relation to the above-mentioned rationale for briefly noting *time* as a factor in collaborative and intuitive decision-making, I note that I found myself in need of trying to imagine how the unfolding trajectory of my devising process during creative research project 2 could be distilled to 'specific' junctures that could or would inform me about the intricate details of my decision-making, i.e. ways of knowing. As such, my undertaking of creative research project 2, which is explicitly articulated by a part of Day 4's above-mentioned 'data' excerpt, shows that my articulation of the *language and process of knowing [un]knowingly*, is really based on and inspired by

my thinking over time about how some of the conceptual details of the [un]knowing director could yield a specific terminology that speaks of the language and process of [un]knowing. Put in another way, the way in which I achieved an enhanced definition of the terminology of *molecular*, *micro* and *macro* levels of artistic activity and/or decision-making is partly an instance of this study's praxical knowledge. Particularly, I have retrospectively realised that my usage of the terminology was somehow prompted by Fleishman's (2012a) earlier mentioned paper about Performance as Research and was refined over time through my understanding of how the *molecular*, *micro* and *macro* scales could constitute this study's conception of devising performance practice. As such, which is not explicitly evidenced by the 'data' excerpts of Day 4 and Day 6's devising session accounts, is the related point that in retrospect, this study's produced *language (terminology) and process of knowing [un]knowingly* was my intuitive attempt to illustrate how and why my devising and directorial process is emergent. Thus, an emergent process, as far as I can imagine it, is characterised by its *molecular*, *micro* and *macro* processes and their accompanying formations that manifest moment-to-moment in a way that is fundamentally non-predetermined.

I am of the view that the general contents of the above analytic account of creative research project 2 have illuminated the way(s) in which it is a method-related development of its preceding project. Additionally, this development has yielded fruitful insights in terms of addressing this project's research aims in the form of facilitating the necessary clarity about the practice of the [un]knowing director (intuition and collaboration) as best as possible especially considering the notion's inherently complex nature as evidenced by its aspect of *time*, amongst others. What follows is my analytic account of creative research project 3.

a) Project background and description

Considering some of the contextual or project framing details that I have mentioned in the preceding analysis of creative research project 2, it goes without saying that this study's creative research project 3 is the kind of project that completes the investigative cycle of this study's case study examination. Therefore, the analytical contents that constitute this ensuing discussion were derived from my research perspective of necessary selectivity so as to provide details that I have identified as useful in terms of satisfying the research aim of addressing this study's research question. This, then, fundamentally indicates that I will be comparatively brief in highlighting creative research project 3's key data recurrences in relation to creative projects 1 and 2 so as to articulate its useful discoveries while avoiding unnecessary repetitions of content.

Similar to creative research project 2, this project was undertaken during my lectureship tenure at Tshwane University of Technology's Drama and Film Department. Specifically, the project's period of inception and 'completion' was from 14 February – 24 March 2018 and my co-collaborators were drama students and other students from the institution's Department of Entertainment Technology. The latter group of students participated in the project as technical crew members. With regards to the project's specific manifestation in terms of timeframe, its actual undertaking took the form of three devising sessions per week. Each devising session was generally four hours.

Unlike creative research project 2, this project had logistical disadvantages based on this study's pursued notion of the [un]knowing director in a way that I will explain. Before offering such an explanation, let me briefly offer a necessary detail

about this project's genesis. Creative research project 3 came about as a result of an understanding that this study's creative research projects needed to be characterised by an investigative cycle as indicated earlier. Such an investigative cycle, in light of this study's preceding projects, would be attained by my undertaking of a third creative research project.

Now, bearing in mind the above-mentioned logistical disadvantages, creative research project 3 also satisfied my duties as a lecturer in that it was one of the scheduled departmental productions of the year 2018. Logistically, the realities of a planned departmental production carry a fundamental challenge for this study in terms of my need to make certain key artistic predeterminations before the devising process started. Specifically, this meant that I needed to make artistic choices about the project's 'performance' venue, public presentation phase i.e. number of 'performances', technical requirements, basic choice of staging in terms of audience seating and capacity (stage design), and decide upon the project's title in addition to needing to provide its synopsis before the devising process unfolded. These are the kinds of resource-based logistical requirements and disadvantages that creative research project 2 did not have. I consider these resource-based logistical requirements as disadvantageous because of how they might have compromised my ability to sustain this study's key aspect of non-predetermination, especially in terms of macro level artistic decision-making. This study's concept of the [un]knowing director within the context of devising performance is a research case that argues for how a devising process ideally starts from the molecular and gradually culminates into a macro state in a manner that is processual and emergent. This is with reference to the devising process's non-predetermined, moment-to-moment artistic discoveries and decisions or choices. This was clearly not entirely the case in

creative research project 3.

Nevertheless, my analysis of the above-mentioned material circumstances that constitute creative research project 3's background factors, led to my realisation of the opportunity that they provided. The opportunity that I had identified was that this project, irrespective of its 'externally'-derived challenge of artistic predetermination to an extent, could potentially be an interesting exploratory experiment (Schön, 1983:35). Specifically, I arrived at the idea that this project could be a way in which I 'staged' my PhD investigation in light of the key discoveries that were yielded by creative research projects 1 and 2. My idea was based on my curiosity to explore how I could undertake a creative research project that would somehow culminate in an artistic product(ion)/performance in the form of a publicly presented artistic process i.e. devising process. As such, this meant that I needed to find a way of ensuring that creative research project 3 would still be a developing devising process by the time it reached its public presentation phase. If one thinks about it, this project was quite ambitious because of how it attempted to extend the boundaries of post-apartheid South African theatre practice that generally privileges artistic product over process, which also carries implications about the time that a devising process would be given from its initiation to 'completion' by a relevant institution. Due to my need to satisfy ethical considerations geared towards ensuring my co-collaborators' general experiential safety, each public presentation of this project was accompanied by a framing statement that I literally presented to the audience members before they entered the theatre (devising session space and/or 'performance' area). Moreover, this project's last public presentation was immediately followed by a facilitated discussion about my PhD study so as to provide more details to the public about creative research project 3 and its preceding

projects. At the end of each public presentation, audience members were informed about, and invited to, the facilitated discussion because the discussion was consciously part of creative research project 3's public presentation 'package', although the discussion only followed the project's last 'performance'.

This project's title was *Mohahlaudi-BAHAHLAUDI*, which is the title of the Sesotho piece of writing that appears in this study's methodology chapter. As mentioned in that chapter, the piece of writing is a literary performative expression that encapsulates my employing of *practice as research*, which obviously includes this study's creative research project 3. Hence the relationship between the Sesotho piece of writing's title and this project. Over and above this, creative research project 3 was driven by my need to satisfy the research aim of discovering 'new' possible insights or knowledge regarding this study's research question.

b) Being inside *Mohahlaudi-BAHAHLAUDI*

Given what I have established regarding the nature of creative research project 3 with reference to its methodological service of completing the investigative cycle, it needs to be noted from the onset that it shares a fundamental resonance with the preceding creative research projects. Such resonance is indicated in my discussion of the two preceding creative research projects in the form of my employing of a structured approach of *wayfaring* and *wayfinding* (Ingold, 2000 & 2011) as key characteristics of how I undertook the devising sessions that constitute creative research project 3. It follows, then, that in addition to the earlier mentioned kinds of artistic predeterminations that I made prior to my collaborative undertaking of this project, the other kind of predetermination was in the form of my devising session 'plans' as a way of satisfying my directorial role of *initiation*. Furthermore, my undertaking of this project also yielded the manifestation of *intuition*, through

observation and repetition, and *collaboration* as this study's sustained ways of knowing moment-to-moment at the level of creative research projects. The language and process of [un]knowing i.e. the molecular, micro and macro levels of artistic activity, discoveries and choices, was also sustained. As a result, my analysis of this project's devising session accounts has generally not facilitated my discovery of 'new' knowledge relating to this study's thus far established key symbiotic ways of knowing i.e. intuition and collaboration. Thus, I am of the view that it is useful for me to only provide the following data excerpt as necessary evidence of how creative research project 3 sustained the preceding projects' discoveries regarding this study's aspect of predetermination and key ways of knowing on my part as the [un]knowing director:

Creative Research Project 3

14 March 2018

Day 12

1. Opening and Welcome

1.1 How is everybody doing?

1.2 Contextualise the session

Session Aim: Recapping of the 'performance' material that we have discovered and developed thus far and continuing to devise from that point onwards.

2. Exercises

1.1 Warming-up of the space ritual [...]. [**Predetermined; done**]

1.2 Performers' individual vocal and physical warm-ups [...]. [**Predetermined; done**]

2.3 Group warm-up exercise led by Brandon [...]. [**Predetermined; done**]

2.4 Recapping of the physical and vocal 'performance' material that we have developed thus far so that my collaborating performers remember it, especially so as to make sure that we try to 'clean' the material as best as we can and that all of us are on top of the material.

[**Predetermined; done**]

2.5 Continuing to devise more material from Linda's solo searching segment.

[**Predetermined; done**]

3. Notes

3.1 Pre-session Notes [...].

3.1 During-session Notes

- a) I am sitting down while observing my collaborating performers undertake their space warming-up and group warm-up activities. I am getting a feeling and seeing a blurry image through my imagination about how Linda's *solo searching* segment can end. I'm still not seeing the image vividly. But at this stage, I see his searching culminating into my collaborating performers who are forming the centre stage line gradually closing gaps in-between themselves, which is preceded by them stomping their feet once in a simultaneous manner and raising their right hand fingers to point at the ceiling and ending up tilting their faces towards the 'audience'. Linda ends up sitting down in front of them

centre stage. This could then either lead to the 'communal search' segment or something else in terms of a physical segment. **[Intuitive Emergence]**

3.2 Post-session Reflection

- a) Today's session, after my collaborating performers undertook the predetermined and planned warm-up activities, was spent on the embodied recapping of our thus far devised sounds/vocal work 'performance' material. The purpose of such a decision from my side was to ensure that my collaborating performers start strengthening or improving their ability to embody our thus far devised sound/vocal work 'performance' material in a confident and competent manner. I must note that my facilitation of such a recapping activity yielded productive results because my collaborating performers eventually managed to improve on the quality of their embodiment of our thus far devised sound/vocal 'performance' material. The manner in which I facilitated the referred-to task or activity literally involved me being on my feet and giving direct performance-related notes and questions geared towards improving my collaborating performers' embodiment of our thus far generated sound/vocal 'performance' material. I listened carefully to each sound and pointed out its areas of weakness while also drawing from my guided intuitive and immediate responses to what I was listening to. One thing that became clear to me as I was working with my collaborating performers on our sound/vocal 'performance' material was that they needed my guidance as director-facilitator in assisting them to overcome the difficulties they encountered in the form of listening to each other when it comes to doing the kind of work that was required to attain the artistic progress that was required. This observation reminded me of an observation that I made from my creative research project preceding this one. The kind of observation that I am referring to is that as much as I as am the [un]knowing director who highly privileges collaboration that is characterised by a co-authored and participatory authority, it is still my responsibility to provide direction and make decisions that are sometimes unnegotiated due to what my collaborating performers expect and perhaps need, especially at times when they struggle to work together in overcoming a certain problem that arises during the unfolding moments of a devising process. I do not think that such an observation compromises the ethos of participation and a shared authority, but reemphasises the point about the different roles that collaborating participants play during a creative-artistic process such as the process of devising a performance. Therefore, it is clear that when performers don't know what to do next in terms of undertaking and advancing a devising task, the [un]knowing director who relies on collaboration still needs to provide direction, even if it is by negotiating or proposing a way forward. It could be possible that I am running away from the reality that a director holds a considerable amount of power within the context of a devising process, but I do not think that is the case with the [un]knowing director. The main difference is around what roles does the [un]knowing director need to fulfil and what are the roles of their co-collaborators. I certainly do agree with the perspective that decision-making is one of the [un]knowing director's roles. However, the [un]knowing director's way of making decisions is pivoted on collaboration in one way or the other. In fact, collaboration is a catalyst of collaborative artistic discovery, which then leads to decision-making that is fundamentally characterised by the [un]knowing director's making of negotiated decisions at various stages of a devising process. Relatedly, I have also learned that some of the decisions that I make as the [un]knowing director are not always negotiated especially those located within the sphere of macro level artistic choices/decisions. Nevertheless, I still hold the perspective that collaboration is beyond fundamental because I would not be able to reach the sphere of macro level artistic discoveries and choices had it not been for my co-collaborators' immediate and embodied molecular and micro level artistic activity engagements that ultimately produce the macro level artistic discoveries and decisions.
- b) The key above-mentioned notes about collaboration within the context of my current creative research project really speak volumes about how I work and have been working as the [un]knowing director with specific reference to collaboration as one of the two key ways of discovering and acquiring the necessary artistic knowledge related to my collaborative devising performance projects. I mean, what I have described in the above-mentioned point of yesterday session's post-session reflection, is testimony of what followed after I facilitated my collaborating performers' process of us working on our thus far gathered sound/vocal 'performance' material. Specifically, what we did next was to pick up from the ending of Linda's *solo searching* segment, which intuitively emerged to

me as noted earlier. I asked Brandon to work with me on exploring the realisation of my proposed intuitive emergence about how Linda's solo searching segment could end, which unfolded well through collaboration but still needs work beyond today's session. Thereafter, our session proceeded with me opening the doors for Brandon to make a contribution, as per my request from the previous session, about working with the rest of my collaborating performers in exploring a psycho-physical segment that was about the 'community' searching for its 'thing'. Brandon took this on, which I firstly framed and explained to the rest of my collaborating performers. Based on his immediate intuition, I assume, he talked through how he saw the segment unfolded to the rest of my collaborating performers. Thereafter, my team of collaborating performers explored and tried it out a few times while I was up on my feet and observing its embodied manifestation very acutely. I remember observing my collaborating performers undertake this exploration and feeling quite stuck due to not knowing what to do with it in terms of developing it. As always, I was waiting for an intuitive emergence that would inform me as to what to propose to my collaborating performers, including Brandon, regarding how to develop it. Similar to how I have dealt with my experiences of being creatively 'stuck' or 'blank' during the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising session, I asked my collaborating performers to repeat their exploration for the fourth time until my intuition informed me about how it could develop in a particular way. Considering how Brandon articulated his proposal as to how this segment should happen, I encountered an intuitive emergence that was not in the form of an image that came about through my imagination, but a feeling that I had about the need for more than one performer to play the activation role at different stages of the explored segment. Furthermore, I got a strong intuitive emergence that this segment would need to be 'concluded' by one of our devised vocally expressed sounds that would lead to a positive/lighter ending considering the fact that all of our preceding segments have been dominated by struggle, darkness and anguish. We will still need to explore how this moment of lightness is arrived at through being cued by this referred-to intuitive emergence about how the 'community' searching moment/segment characterised by a communal struggle, anguish, darkness can end and transition into one of lightness [...]

As stated before, the above-mentioned data excerpt, which is characteristic of creative research project 3, shows the way in which this study's method of note-taking and journaling was continuously employed. Moreover, it provides supporting details that show how this project's daily structure is consistent with the preceding creative research projects. Lastly, the above-mentioned data excerpt is evidence of the consistent way in which intuition and collaboration were the fundamental means through which the project unfolded momentarily particularly with reference to my way of working and/or knowing as the [un]knowing director. As much as creative research project 3 is generally indicative of its capacity to sustain this study's key methods and discoveries that shed light on the study's research question, the project yielded a research outcome that initially troubled me. Gradually, I gained an awareness that the project's seeming 'failure' to facilitate discovery of 'new' knowledge was arguably

acceptable because the project completed this study's investigative cycle in a manner that 'reproduced' its key discoveries regarding its research question.

Other than creative research project 3's above-indicated kind of productivity or success, my analysis of the project's devising sessions' accounts has pointed to the project's additional interesting variable. The specific variable that I am referring to, which has also been addressed in my analytical account of creative research project 2, is that of *time* in relation to the [un]knowing director's ways of working and/or knowing. Based on the referred-to analysis of creative research project 2, it has been established that time is an evident variable that affects the [un]knowing director's practice in one way or another. However, the interesting difference here, as mentioned in creative research project 3's background and description, lay in my conscious need to 'slow' time down in the process in attempting to ensure that this project would culminate in a public presentation, at a university's theatre, that was a performance not in the form of a 'complete' product(ion), but in the form of a devising process exposed to an audience. I had clear reasons for such a macro level artistic choice. The following data excerpt speaks of the way in which I attempted to 'slow' time with reference to my momentarily discovered intuitive emergences, decision-making etc.:

Creative Research Project 3

16 March 2018

Day 13

1)

3. Notes

3.1 Pre-session Notes

a) Today's session is meant for us recapping or going over all the 'performance' material, which are now clearly located at a macro level artistic choice. The purpose of this choice, which I decided upon and proposed to my collaborating performers during our previous session, is partly meant for us to slow time down so that we manage to still keep our work at the level of making prospective discoveries and not rush into 'completing' our devising process. Additionally, such a decision is meant to ensure that my collaborating performers develop their skill of good execution. However, given the nature of the way in which we've been working in terms of my and our making of artistic discoveries and choices through intuition and collaboration, I cannot predetermine the actual outcomes of today's session despite its specific aim of us recapping our 'performance' material with the aim of attaining a desirable level of mastery in terms of execution.

b) My thinking about time in relation to its implications on my/our making of artistic discoveries and choices (molecular, micro and/or macro) has not stopped. This is because I've been somewhat trying to compare this creative research project and the previous two in terms of the time factor with reference to the [un]knowing director's ways of making artistic discoveries and choices. As I have stated in the above pre-session note, the 'performance' material that we have devised at this stage has taken a particular shape which locates it at the macro artistic level of choices. These choices have been reached through my collaborating performers' embodied and immediate molecular and micro level artistic undertakings. This then points to my realisation, yet again, that intuitively derived artistic emergences, discoveries and choices can actually present themselves at any given moment during or throughout the unfolding moments of a devising process. I think that my choice and strategy to ensure that our working process is continuous irrespective of its externally predetermined duration i.e. the time given by an institution for a devising process to start and end with the public presentation of a 'complete' performance; is indicative of the possibility that a devising process, which is a 'performance' in the case of my current creative research project, can continue until the creative impulse to devise a performance has produced the artistic material that it needs, which can then be structured into a 'complete' performance. As compared to my previous two creative research projects, one of which was a 'complete' performance and one of which was a draft of a 'complete' performance; this creative research project is strategically meant to explore how a process of devising can be the 'actual' performance. I am quite aware that such a choice might not be feasible for directing practice within the context of post-apartheid theatre practice that is heavily product(ion) driven or 'complete' performance orientated. Therefore, I think that this project, in terms of its focus and privileging of process until the phase of public presentation, is quite idealistic. However, I still feel strongly that the key point about my research is to address the question of how a director can make discoveries and artistic choices, at least within the context of devising performance within a particular South African context. Therefore, I am yet again learning that the [un]knowing director's creative-artistic hunch takes shapes when it does, but externally imposed restrictions such as the time given by an institution for a performance work to be made could or do have an effect on the time that it takes for the [un]knowing director's creative-artistic hunch to take shape in the form of their devising process to bear a 'complete' performance. Therefore, there is a relationship between time and intuition. However, a creative process such as a performance-devising process is something that can be characterised as a ceaseless stream which has got non-predetermined manners of flowing in the form of artistic developments over time. In my case, my intuition is fundamentally sparked or initiated by factors other than time. Anyway, I look forward to the unfolding of today's session and our public presentation phase, which officially starts next week Tuesday so as to discover our audiences' experience of our work, which is a process of devising.

If one considers the content of creative research project 2 that speaks of my understanding of the *time* factor in terms of its relation to my intuitive way of making artistic discoveries and choices, the above-mentioned data excerpt generally concurs with the points that I have made. On the other hand, the above excerpt carries a question as to how a devising process equates to or can be perceived as a 'conventional'/'non-conventional' theatre performance. During my undertaking of creative research project 3, I really thought this was an interesting question to grapple with. I still think that it is an interesting question. However, I have realised that such a question has a simple answer which is that a devising process can

arguably equate to or be perceived as a 'conventional'/'non-conventional' theatre performance once it is being shared with an audience. In fact, the strategy that I have employed of 'slowing' down time through asking my collaborating performers to repeat certain performance segments with the aim of refining their embodiment and general execution of those segments is arguably also indicative of my conscious awareness of our need to 'perform' to an audience. This awareness of needing to 'perform' to an audience, then, points to the possible complexity about the experiential nuances of my attempt to stage a devising process as an actual product(ion). This complexity is quite interesting for this study's notion of the [un]knowing director within the context of devising performance when it comes to its practical applicability as a possible non-conventional form of theatre practice, at least in South Africa. Nevertheless, creative research project 3's fundamental usefulness is found in its function as an investigative platform and instance through which I have grappled with the notion of the [un]knowing director regardless of its public showing form.

As much as the latter part of the above-mentioned data excerpt notes my assertion that my working with and through intuition as one of my key ways of knowing is fundamentally sparked or initiated by factors other than time, it is clear that time is arguably quite a significant variable in cases in which a devising process has an externally imposed and predetermined duration in terms of its inception and 'completion'. Thinking back to the general experience that my co-collaborators and I had with our project's public presentation phase, I remember that our audiences were generally bewildered by the offering of our artistic process as product(ion). The essence of their bewilderment, other than their immediate engagement with a seemingly non-conventional theatre 'performance', was really based on their

curiosity about how and when our devising process would reach a point of 'completion'. Furthermore, they were curious about the kinds of experiences they could have had if our public presentation was much earlier during our devising process. I am of the view that such questions are potentially interesting in relation to what constitutes a theatre performance. But such questions may not be fundamentally interesting to the basic moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising process with reference to the [un]knowing director's ways of knowing.

Generally, then, creative research project 3's apparent artistic outcome was my exploration of how a devising process that is still on-going, could be publicly presented as an actual theatre product(ion). Such an outcome does not necessarily carry any significant insight in the form of a key research outcome relating to this study's research question. However, creative research project 3 essentially illuminated an insight that the state of [un]knowing on the director's part, is possibly one that is ceaseless or endless. Its major restriction, if one thinks about it, is the restriction of a given timespan for a devising session in terms of its inception and 'completion'. This means that from an [un]knowing perspective, the devising process can continue until it exhausts itself in a way that cannot be predetermined.

As stated earlier in this discussion of creative research project 3 and elsewhere in this thesis, the notion of the [un]knowing director is characterised by complexities that potentially render it useful within the context of devising performance practice from a South(ern) African perspective while also revealing its idealism with reference to professional post-apartheid South African theatre and performance practice.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The conversation that this thesis has centered upon was guided by this study's research question as indicated in the introduction chapter. Additionally, I have stated that this study's research question i.e. 'what is the [un]knowing director?', implies a hypothetical statement that a director is an [un]knowing figure within the context of devising performance. It follows that the purpose of this section is to consolidate this study's key findings based on my analysis of the questionnaire responses and creative research projects as it appears in the preceding chapter. As such, this section will arrive at a specific, yet overarching, response to this study's research question. This response is arrived at through what I am putting forward as a conclusive 'frame'.

Considering how this conversation has ensued until this point, it is hopefully clear that I have attempted to articulate this study's specific context both at the level of providing it with an identity (philosophical, ideological, socio-cultural etc.) and at the level of locating it within the related broader contexts of directing practice and devising performance. Through this explication, a conceptual foundation was laid that places emphasis on the key aspect of non-predetermination as being fundamentally definitive of the [un]knowing director as a skilled, creative-artistic practitioner who employs intuition and collaboration as their key ways of knowing pertaining to artistic discoveries and decisions/choices. In terms of intuition, this study evidently views intuition as a way of knowing that is characterised by a constant interplay between the [un]knowing director's affective (emotion-based) and rational cognitions that are manifest in variably conscious and unconscious ways during the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising process. In terms of collaboration, the Basotho philosophy of *botho* and cultural practice of *letsema* have

grounded the [un]knowing director's idealistic realisation of this way of knowing while acknowledging the inherent complexities thereof, particularly with reference to problematic power dynamics borne by and through devising performance practice. These particular ways of knowing are symbiotic because they do not operate exclusively or independently in terms of the [un]knowing director's way(s) of engaging with their artistic discoveries, decisions/choices during the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising process. Tim Ingold's concepts of *wayfinding* and *wayfaring* (2000 & 2011) and Henri Bergson's (1907) philosophical notion of *duration* have also been pivotal in explicating the [un]knowing director and their particular process of devising performance as being fundamentally emergent in nature. Additionally, Leopold Senghor's notions of a "rhythmic attitude", "reason-eye" and "reason-embrace" (Diagne, 2019:24) have been pivotal in explicating the [un]knowing director.

Regarding its general discussion of directing practice, this study has identified and referred to the *orthodox* and *contemporary* schools of directing practice as constituents of the discourse. However, this study's position essentially purports for a non-binary view in terms of the various developments of directing practice over time. Accordingly, directing practice should be appreciated in terms of the key element of experimentation that arguably defines it as an artistic practice that has always existed as a part of theatre arts in Africa and the world at large. Furthermore, this study has sketched the literary terrain of directing practice and devising performance while also illuminating how and why its notion of the [un]knowing director is a 21st century species of South African theatre practice that has a complex genealogy emanating from Southern Africa's indigenous oral performance traditions that developed over time into workshop theatre practice within the context of South

Africa.

Now, the conclusive 'frame' that I have referred to is centred upon the related concepts of *story* and *time*, both of which have mainly emerged from this study's data analysis chapter. At this stage, it is worth mentioning that the data analysis chapter has been productive in the sense that it has evidenced the plausibility and validity of the idea of the [un]knowing director based on the questionnaire responses. Additionally, the data analysis chapter has shown the specific ways in which intuition and collaboration operate and constitute the [un]knowing director's key symbiotic ways of knowing in terms of their artistic discoveries, decisions/choices. The general data analysis has illuminated that these two key ways of knowing are also characterised and bound by the specific elements of *initiation*, *facilitation* and *decision-making* during the moment-to-moment unfolding of a devising session. Therefore, I am of the view that the research aim that has been mentioned in this study's rationale as my professional need to identify the ways in which I work, at least, in terms of engaging with artistic discoveries and decisions/choices has been illuminated and hopefully clarified. As such, the [un]knowing director's specific language and process with reference to intuition and collaboration, i.e. the *molecular*, *micro* and *macro* levels of artistic activity and decisions/choices, have also been identified and crystalised as best as possible.

Now, this study's referred-to conclusive 'frame' of *story* and *time* is undertaken by briefly addressing the question: how is the [un]knowing director's practice *story-like*? Thus, the following engagement with this question expresses this study's 'ultimate' response to its grounding research question stated in the introduction chapter.

The preceding chapter's analytic account, specifically where it deals

with the questionnaire responses, identified that directing practice within the context of devising performance is centred on a director's collaborative engagement with story in one way or another. Such an engagement seemingly gives a sense that story equates to a 'complete' performance that is shared with an audience. However, I think that in order for one to understand story as an aspect of my proposed 'conclusive' frame, it is necessary to consider story in another way. As a way of facilitating such consideration, I will employ Harold Scheub's (1998) conception of story due to its relevance. That relevance is based on the fact that Scheub's conception of story is a result of his analysis and theorising of the Southern African oral performance tradition of storytelling, which is identified earlier in this thesis as the genesis of the [un]knowing director's practice. Scheub argues that story is an indigenous Southern African artistic form and practice that entails something other than the mere unfolding of an oral narrative i.e. sequentially organised images (1998:17), and one that is collectively shared and co-created by a storyteller or performer-creator and their audience. In other words, it is co-authored by the performer and the audience. I do acknowledge that Scheub's conception of story is also generally indicative of a 'complete' performance. However, his explication clearly offers details about the creative-artistic form and practice of Southern African story, which is fundamentally operative during the non-predetermined moment-to-moment interactions between a storyteller or performer-creator, and their audience. Here it must be stressed that in this tradition, the story is not rehearsed, it is produced in an improvisational manner, based on core images from the tradition, and in relation to the particular context of each story performance. As such, the story does not emanate from, and is not determined by or reliant upon a written text as is the case with modern European theatre. This implies that Southern African

storytelling is characterised by the performance's development or moving forward in a way that is fundamentally momentary and/or emergent. At the least, the storyteller's knowledge of the tradition would be the starting point that is then moulded through the unfolding live performance. These characteristics of Southern African storytelling practice are aligned to the [un]knowing director. Once again, my argument here is that this aspect of non-predetermination characterising the momentary manifestations of the Southern African storyteller's creative-artistic practice remains the bedrock of the [un]knowing director's practice within the context of devising performance. The referred-to details suggest that the oral narrative's meaning constitutes its essence and efficacy. The narrative's meaning is constituted by its generated emotions (feelings) through using rhythm (repetition as a storytelling technique) and trope (the complex layering of an oral narrative's images into metaphor) (Scheub, 1998:8-13).

In view of Scheub's above-mentioned conception of story in addition to a reading of the preceding chapter's analysis of the creative research projects—particularly with reference to intuition and collaboration as symbiotic ways of knowing—I argue that story or perhaps storying¹⁰ conceptually characterises the [un]knowing director's practice. This is based on the evidenced finding that I, as the [un]knowing director, fundamentally engaged with my emotions and repetition during the momentary unfolding of devising performance. Furthermore, this study's focus on artistic process also acknowledges an understanding that a devising process is generally geared towards a 'complete' performance (story) that is intended to be shared with an audience. It is necessary to mention this because the [un]knowing

¹⁰Mark Fleishman distinguishes story and storying as follows: “[...], a *story* is a particular category or form of artistic or cultural expression defined by a set of stylistic conventions or norms. *Storying* on the other hand is the process of ‘making and doing’ with stories, that involves, variously but not only: composition, construction, playing, performance, listening, watching and responding.” (2012b:156, italics not in original)

director's intuitive and collaborative engagements with the devising process are certainly defined by an artistic exploration that is arguably geared towards the kind of meaning-making that constitutes Scheub's story in one way or another. Therefore, this study acknowledges the general process-product nature of story (Scheub, 1998) as an emergent creative-artistic form and practice that is fundamentally characterised by non-predetermination in terms of some key artistic decisions/choices at the least. For elaboration and specification purposes, it is necessary to mention that in addition to the key characteristic of non-predetermination that serves as a common denominator between the [un]knowing director and Southern African storytelling practice, there are two further points to be made.

Firstly, Scheub's referred-to definition of story arguably casts the storyteller as the kind of performer who is an embodiment of Senghor's assertion that: "[...] when we contemplate an art object we receive it in a "rhythmic attitude," which means that we are truly on its wavelength: *We dance it* (Diagne, 2019:24)". This is because congruent to my argument, the Southern African storyteller's performance equates to a kind of an African artistic practice and/or 'product' that the performer is fundamentally or inherently not dissociated from based on its momentary, communal and subject-object interconnected nature, which is akin to the [un]knowing director and their practice. Relatedly, I am also putting it forward that the Southern African storyteller's performance is one that is illustrative of Senghor's "reason-embrace" (Diagne, 2019:24) because it is acutely intuitive in nature. Secondly, Scheub's (1998: 15-17) definition of story makes it clear that rhythmic patterning and organisation of emotions related to a story's constituting images and momentary efficacy, are crucial characteristics of the art form. Now, based on the illuminated reality that the

[un]knowing director works or essentially knows through their emotions, including thoughts, and rhythmical undertakings in the form of artistic collaborative repetition, Scheub's mentioned definition of story becomes pivotal for the [un]knowing director. As a way of summarising the above discussion on story and its applicability to this study coupled with my need to be more explicit about a related and pertinent conclusive note, I am asserting that the [un]knowing director's practice is not something imposed from the outside i.e. another borrowing from the global North. Instead, it is something in the DNA of devising performance makers or directors from the global South. Not in terms of content, structure or style because all of their works are different, which is the case even in my own project across the three creative research instances, but in terms of compositional mode or strategy. The referred-to compositional mode is thus shaped by an understanding and experience of story and the making of story in the particular context of Southern Africa. And in this regard the current mode of making described and argued-for by this thesis, is part of or has a genealogy that begins with oral storytelling, moves to workshop theatre and then becomes the kind of practice that I and the rest of my 'subjects' are engaged in now in a post-apartheid era. And it is shaped by a more or less conscious philosophical aesthetic rooted in the I-We, *botho* and *letsema*.

The other aspect of this study's mentioned conclusive 'frame' is *time*.

I must state that this is also drawn from Scheub's (1998) conception of story and has relevance for this study. This relevance lies in the fact that storytelling (performer-audience interactions), manifests in such a way that "... the past exerts its will on the present, is assessed in terms of the present: the message of storytelling is the tension generated by seemingly antithetical temporal arrangements. (Scheub, 1998:270)" This observation of and assertion that story entails the inseparable or

interdependent interplay of the 'past' and 'present' strongly resonates with Henri Bergson's (1907:5) notion of *duration*, which led to my deducing that the [un]knowing director's process is also *durational*, amongst other things, as argued-for in the conceptual framework. For the sake of clarity, I will remind the reader that this study reached an eventual view of *time* in terms of duration (a devising process's timespan from its inception to 'completion') and Bergson's *duration*, both of which are also inseparable. Furthermore and emphatically, time with reference to the [un]knowing director's practice/process is about the dialectical interplay between the momentary instances of emergence in the process and the limitation of the overarching timespan. In other words duration is the experience of time as it unfolds but within the framework of a finite horizon of time. Nevertheless, the manner in which time manifests through story points to the way(s) in which story unfolds and its meaning generated. Thus, the [un]knowing director's process suggests that from a Southern African perspective, at the least, directing practice within the context of devising performance is *story-like* because

Story is thus a very complex emotional, historical, and cultural experience, and is never centered on a single, isolated storytelling event; it involves the totality of one's storytelling experience[s]. Nor can story ever be divorced from the mass of emotions, initially untidy but given form and neatness, for the moment of performance, by the performer, using the tools of [their] art to provide rhythmic context for our experiences. There is therefore no canonical interpretation of story, just as there is no ur-version of a tale. This is not a weakness but a strength [...]. (Scheub, 1998:276)

Somewhat similar to the Scheub's above assertion, I feel and/or think that the [un]knowing director's practice, especially considering its general complexities, is appropriately characterised by the broad meaning of the following Sesotho Sangoma song mentioned in the introduction chapter:

Oa ntaela moya

Oa ntaela moya

Oa ntaela moya

Oa ntaela moya

O re ke tsamaye moya

O re ke tsamaye moya

O re ke tsamaye moya

O re ke tsamaye moya

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