

Investigating the effects of applied somatic principles on perceived stage presence

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ABSTRACT

What makes for strong stage presence? What otherwise makes a dancer 'absent' on stage? This study investigates how stage presence, as an element of performance within contemporary dance, can be effected by interventions that integrate somatic principles.

An intervention study was devised, from which participants' feedback was analysed. Pre- and post-intervention evaluations were conducted using Chatfield's (2009) Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance and the data from semi-structured interviews with the participants and the evaluation panel members was also included in the analysis.

This study furthers the dialogue on the importance of stage presence as an element of performance in contemporary dance. The findings suggest that the integration of somatic principles into dance training can lead to perceived improvements in dancers' stage presence, along with perceived enhancements in other areas of their dance practice. Moreover, the study points to the need for further research on stage presence as a component of performance, as well into the development of techniques and practices, such as those based on somatic principles, that can be implemented in training to improve dancers' stage presence.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

While a dancer rehearses the techniques and the choreography of a performance piece, she must also work on developing her delivery of the piece. Therefore, the interpretation of the performance piece by the dancer is also a part of her practice, as dance is not only a physical form but an art form as well. What makes an audience watch, and keep on watching, a dancer on stage? What makes an audience appreciate watching a particular dancer? In the jargon of the performing arts, this quality is commonly referred to as *stage presence*.

Stage presence is what ‘pulls’ the audience towards the dancers, it is that quality that draws the public to the performers, and it is an essential element of dance performance (Koner 1993). As such, the limited amount of research that has been done on stage presence in contemporary dance, and the virtual absence of scientific and academic analysis on the subject, is a surprising finding. In fact, the study of stage presence has been more readily taken up in the realms of acting and musical performance than in that of dance, curious again as the usage of the term ‘stage presence’ is commonly used in dance reviews and other media.

In order to further along the dialogue on the importance of stage presence as an element of performance, the aim of this study is to investigate the effects of somatic interventions on dancers' stage presence. Somatic principles have become an integrated part of contemporary dance training for some time now, and are variously employed by dance teachers to assist their students in improving and developing a wide range of aspects of their dance practices (Fortin, 2002).

An intervention study was designed to incorporate different methods of data collection in the investigation of the effects of somatic principles on stage presence as an element of performance in contemporary dance. Analysis focussed on the qualitative findings derived from the feedback of participants during somatic interventions and from semi-structured interviews conducted with intervention participants and evaluation panel members. Pre- and post-intervention performance evaluations were conducted using Chatfield's (2009) Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance.

My rationale for conducting this study comes from my years of experience as a dancer, teacher and coach for dancers. Over the years of teaching students and coaching dancers of all levels and ability, I came to notice that the somatic principles that I incorporated into my practice were beneficial to my students not only on a technical level, but also an artistic level that allowed them to experiment on the performance elements of their dance. It is these potential beneficial effects that I set out to explore in further depth in the context of this intervention study.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Presence

“[Performance] involves a search – a transformation from outer to inner self, from performer as acrobat to performer as artist. It is said one is born with it: that very electric quality that spellbinds the audience – grasps its attention – leaves an unforgettable impression. We call it presence.” (Kroner, 1993)

Stage presence derives from the notion of ‘being present’ or, as John Cage (cited in Goodall, 2008) would say, of 'being in the moment'. Specific to the field of dance, Holmes (2009) suggests that stage presence is about the dancer pulling the audience onto the stage with her or him, and that the dancer must fully understand the emotions of the choreography in order to convey stage presence to the audience. Joseph Poulson, dancer of Susan Marshall & Company, defines stage presence as having a dialogue with the audience, the environment, the music and the imagination (cited in Zuckerman, 2007).

Stage presence can at times be referred to as an intrinsic, natural, or essential aspect of the dancer's self and the dancer's performance, as in the following two statements:

“Stage presence is the essence of a dancer's being that is projected when they expose themselves, connecting with the audience, making them feel something. Its also what separates artists from technicians.” (Howard, 2008)

“To understand dance for what it is, it is necessary we know from whence it comes and where it goes. It comes from depths of man's inner nature, the unconscious, where the memory dwells. As such it inhabits the dancer. It goes into the experience of man, the spectator, awakening similar memories.” (Graham, 1966, pp.83-84, cited in Lepecki, 1996).

However, opinions diverge as to whether stage presence is in fact an inherent characteristic of a dancer or if it is a skill that can be taught or otherwise gained through experience. In interviews conducted with professional dancers on the topic of stage presence, Alicia Zuckerman (2007) found such a difference in their views. For instance, Jennifer Ringer, Principal Dancer of the New York City Ballet, believes that stage

presence is “something you are born with”, whereas Ma Cong, Principal Dancer and choreographer of Tulsa Ballet, relates that stage presence concerns “reaching out to the audience” and that this can be taught (Zuckerman 2007).

Within the wider field of the performing arts, there are many teachers, researchers and authors who would argue that particular techniques can be made use of in the development of stage presence in dancers and other performers (e.g. Jones, 2008; Howard, 2008; Koner, 1993). Pauline Koner’s (1993) *Elements of performance: A guide for performers in dance, theatre and opera*, includes exercises that address the enhancement of stage presence for dancers. Technical aspects of performance that she has found to be beneficial for her students to work on for improved stage presence are inner focus, muscle intensity, rhythmic timing and breathing. Koner (1993) furthermore asserts that the mental aspects of motivation, intention and inner focus are key elements of performance, and that, if teachers can nourish in their students the integration of these elements of performance into their dance, they will excel as performers and have a strong stage presence (Koner, 1993).

In particular, the aspect of stage presence that Koner (1993) refers to as inner focus can be understood along similar lines as the philosophy behind what is termed in the field of positive psychology as ‘flow’. Flow has been described as an optimal performance experience and is characterised by a complete absorption of the person in what they are doing (Csikzentmihalyi, 1990). A number of studies have investigated the factors that constitute, and contribute towards, the state of optimal performance that professional athletes and dancers describe as being ‘in the flow’, ‘in the moment’ or ‘in the zone’ (Hefferon & Ollis 2006). Research has shown that dancers relate their experiences of flow as complete immersion into their performances, of being fully involved in what they are doing and of being in the present, their minds not shifting to other thoughts (Csikzentmihalyi, 1990; Hefferon & Ollis, 2006; Bradley, 2008).

2.1.1 Developing stage presence

According to Holmes (2009), developing stage presence starts from the studio, where dancers work on dance technique and skill acquisition. This is a crucial step, as a performer needs to be comfortable with the movements he is executing before he can concentrate on the delivery of the interpretation of dance. Howard (2008) furthers this point by suggesting that if confidence can be enhanced within technique training sessions, then dancers' higher confidence in their ability to perform will translate into greater stage presence.

Beyond its integration into the technical aspects of dance training Holmes (2009) suggests that the key elements for developing stage presence stem from practising a range of other techniques, such as breathing with the music, exploring new ways of moving and finding pleasure when performing. Jones (2008) furthermore proposes that dancers can potentially achieve greater stage presence through the tools of theatre performance, such as through exercises that cultivate self-assurance, promote connection with the music, and explore the inhabiting of an imaginary character.

As per the literature above, arguments have been put forth as to the potential to develop and enhance stage presence in dancers and other performers, and that, moreover, it has been shown that a range of tools and techniques have been devised by teachers and researchers towards this end (e.g. Jones, 2008; Howard, 2008; Koner, 1993). Yet the body of research and associated literature on the enhancement of stage presence in dancers remains limited, and, although the works of the aforementioned authors can serve as guidelines for current practice, further investigations into this important component of performance are needed. In the following section, the field of somatics will be considered and as providing a set of tools that could be applied by dancers and dance teachers in the development of greater stage presence.

2.2 Somatics

As recent research has found somatic techniques to enhance self-image and confidence (Diaz et al., 2008), it can be further posited that somatic techniques can contribute to the enhancement of dancers' stage presence. There are a variety of tools that can be employed in the enhancement of stage presence, as stage presence comes from different aspects of a dancer's repertoire of skills. On the psychological level, a dancer's confidence in her ability will affect her stage presence (Howard, 2008), while her physical ability to perform the choreography will also come into play (Koner, 1993). Somatic techniques and principles work simultaneously on the body and the mind, taking both the psychological and physical body into consideration (Johnson, 1995). As evident in the existing literature, the development of stage presence comprises work on both the physical and the psychological elements of dance performance (e.g. Koner, 1993; Howard, 2008). Therefore, an investigation into the effects of somatic principles and techniques on stage presence proves a viable and important line of inquiry.

2.2.1 Definition

The term *somatics* was first used by Thomas Hanna in reference to the connection between the body and the mind. The term is derived from the Greek word, *soma*, meaning 'the living body' (Johnson, 1995). Hannas' definition of somatics, and his explication of the philosophy behind it, implies that the field understands and explores experience as lived and from an inner perspective (Hanna, 1988). Therefore, while a somatics approach recognises that experiences can be objectively observed, these experiences must first and foremost be considered and examined from the perspective of the individual who embodies and lives out his or her own experiences (Johnson, 1995).

Furthermore, the distinction between what are understood as somatic *principles* and what are considered somatic *techniques* must also be defined. Elizabeth A. Behnke explains that *principles* are fundamentals within a field (cited in Johnson, 1995). In somatics, fundamentals are the recognition of the importance and power of awareness and consciousness, as well as respect for the individual as an autonomous human being. As for *techniques*, they refer to the specific methods that have arisen from such

principles (Johnson 1995, p.317). Within somatics, further principles include the use of breath and the arousal of body awareness, while specific techniques that have been developed on the basis of such principles are Feldenkrais Technique, Alexander Technique and Body Mind Centering (BMC), to name but a few.

According to extensive research, somatic principles and techniques have been shown to improve motor learning (Batson, 2009), proprioception (Batson, 2009) and release of tension (Batson & Schwartz 2007; Eddy, 2009). It has also been demonstrated that somatic principles and techniques improve dancers' abilities to gain deeper awareness and understanding of their bodies, particularly with respect to alignment and proprioception (Batson, 2009; Batson & Schwartz, 2007). Along with improvements in body awareness, the integration of somatic principles and techniques into dancer training can lead to increased mobility for better ease of movement, and can aid in preparing the mind to accomplish movements with as much ease as possible (Johnson, 1995). For example, the conscious use of breath and the deliberate release of body tensions can facilitate the execution of dance technique and therefore allow the dancer greater freedom in the interpretation of movement (Fortin & Girard, 2005). Movement hence becomes embodied by the dancer, who, through interpretation of the choreography, imbues his movements with purpose and meaning (Koner, 1993).

For the interventions devised for this study, the researcher incorporated somatic principles that are used across somatic techniques. These somatic principles were: breath, imagery, touch and rest. These principles, as well as their selection for and relevance to the study, are explained below.

2.2.2 Breath

Breath is a common principle used across somatic techniques (Johnson, 1995). In this study, breath was used to enable dancers to enhance their body awareness and to facilitate the ease and comfort of movement. When movements can be performed with ease and comfort, dancers can focus on the intentions of their movements, potentially enhancing their stage presence can be achieved (Koner, 1993). In Body Mind Centering (BMC), breath is commonly used by practitioner as a first point of focus on the inner

body awareness (Cohen, 1993). Appropriate and efficient breathing techniques can be found across a range of schools of practice, including yoga traditions, Pilates, and all manner of meditations and relaxation techniques. The principle of breath is important not only for dancers but for all moving and living bodies (Sabatini, 2000; Spreads, 1992). As breath features as a prominent principle across the field of somatics, the researcher incorporated breath as a focal point of practice and application during the study's intervention sessions with participants.

2.2.3 Imagery

In the field of psychology, research has shown that visual imagery is used by athletes and dancers to enhance performance (Weinberg & Gould, 2007). In one particular study by Nordin and Cumming (2008), the use of imagery by dancers was found to aid in learning and performance, as well as to enhance psychological traits such as self-confidence. Similarly in somatic practices, imagery and visualisation techniques are used with the aims of improving skill acquisition and execution, and psychological well-being. For instance, Skinner Release Technique (SRT) utilises imagery for the enhancement of movement efficacy (Eddy, 2009). Visualisation and imagery is also integrated into the somatic technique of *constructive rest*, in which one's body is at deliberate rest (usually while lying on the floor on one's back) and the mind is focussed on a specific goal such as assimilating the information received in a session or visualising a particular task that one practiced or performed (Batson, 2007). Such uses of visualisation and imagery can affect neuromuscular changes and allow greater integration of movement, taught material and new choreography (Geber & Wilson, 2010).

2.2.4 Rest

Glenna Batson (2007), researcher in the area of somatics in dance, looked into the effects of rest on motor learning skills. Her research was based on the principle of rest, which is a somatic principle across techniques (Batson, 2007). While specific techniques use different approaches to rest, each technique nonetheless recognises and exploits rest as a constitutive element of the motor learning process (Batson, 2007; Batson & Schwartz, 2007). The importance of a balanced 'activity-to-rest' ratio has become a fundamental concept in the acquisition and retention of motor learning skills (Batson, 2007; Batson & Schwartz, 2007). Although there is a gap in the literature to support the implication of rest within a dance training programme, Batson uses findings from studies into sports and martial arts to support her stance on the importance of re-evaluating dance training to include a better activity-to-rest ratio.

2.2.5 Touch

Touch is a somatic principle that has numerous and varied applications across somatic techniques and practices. In Feldenkrais Technique, through hands-on guidance the practitioner facilitates his client's movements to create new patterns of motion, allowing the client's movements to become more efficient and effortless (Feldenkrais, 1985). In Pilates, touch is used by teachers as a corrective method (Eddy, 2009). In structural integration and Rolfing, the practitioners use their hands to work on their clients' fascias to enhance their mobility and posture (Eddy, 2009). In this study, the somatic principle of touch was used by the researcher as a tool to raise her participants' body awareness and as a way to provide them with feedback stimulus.

2.3 Evaluating performance and stage presence in contemporary dance

The assessment of qualitative components of dance through observation requires an evaluation method that has clear criteria and is understood by all observers in the same way (Chatfield, 2009). Establishing measuring tools for dancers' performance is essential in the field of dance science in order to enable both the assessment and the development of training methods that not only enhance the technical components but as importantly the artistic components of dancers' performance (Krasnow & Chatfield, 2009). As research progresses, it is becoming increasingly evident that, along with the physiological, technical and bio-mechanical measures that are of significance to dancers' well-being, of equal importance are the qualitative components of dance, which is not only a physical form but an art form as well (Chatfield, 2009). To date, the lack of standardised valid and reliable evaluation measures for aesthetic components of dance continues to render the objective assessment of such components an ongoing challenge in the field of dance science (Angioi et al. 2009).

One of the few and latest attempts in this area of research was taken up by Krasnow and Chatfield (2009) who together developed a Performance Competence Evaluation Measure (PCEM). This measure was devised as a result of their extensive investigations into the previous research on the evaluation of performance in dance and aesthetic sports, into existing descriptions of dance techniques and into somatics-based theoretical models for the assessment of qualitative aspects of movements. The criteria for PCEM are *full body involvement, body integration and connectedness, articulation of body segment* and *movement skills*. Krasnow & Chatfield (2009) created PCEM to evaluate students and professional contemporary dancers, and state that the measure was not intended to be applied to non-dancers or to those practising other styles of dance. Furthermore, the PCEM criteria does not allow for the assessment of artistic or aesthetic components of dance. Therefore, despite the innovation and thoroughness of Krasnow & Chatfield's (2009) assessment criteria for dance performance, on account of the limitations mentioned above, PCEM had to be rejected by the researcher as unsuitable an evaluation method for this study.

Yet to the benefit of this research study, Chatfield (2009) also developed his Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance, which (see Appendix 4) consists of the following

criteria: *level* (from non-dancer to professional dancer), *skill*, *space*, *time*, *energy*, *phrasing* and *presence* (see Appendix 4). Chatfield's (2009) Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance uses broader criteria than Krasnow and Chatfield's (2009) PCEM, as well as features the addition of a component of presence. Due to the test's more inclusive components, which allowed the researcher to invite participants of different levels of ability to participate in the research, as well as its incorporation of the artistic component of stage presence, Chatfield's (2009) Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance was determined by the researcher to be a relevant and suitable method of assessment available that could be viably adapted for the purposes of this study.

Stage presence is a key element of dance performance (Koner, 1993). A variety of tools and techniques are available to and used by dancers and dance teachers to develop and enhance stage presence. Research has found that dancers require refined technical abilities, and to feel at ease and comfortable in their movements to allow them to focus on the interpretation of choreography, all of which facilitates strong stage presence. It has also been suggested that dancers' confidence enhances stage presence (Howard, 2008). As somatic principles have likewise been found to be beneficial for dancers, for their confidence (Diaz et al., 2008), for their motor learning skills, mobility and body awareness (Batson, 2007), this study was designed to investigate if somatic principles could also contribute to the enhancement of dancers' stage presence.

Chatfield's (2009) Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance was used by the researcher as a tool to evaluate the stage presence of participants' pre- and post-intervention performances. Additionally, qualitative data on the effects of somatic techniques were collected through the researcher's field notes and the feedback from participants during intervention sessions, as well as from interviews conducted with panel members and participants after the post-intervention evaluation. These methods and the findings derived from them will be further outlined and discussed in the subsequent chapters.

3.0 METHOD / METHODOLOGY

3.1 Ethics

Ethical approval was obtained for this study from the Trinity Laban Ethics Board. Each of the four participants signed a consent form to participate in the research as well as a medical Par-Q questionnaire (see Appendix 6, 7 &8). Each of the three panel members and four participants signed consent forms agreeing to the video recording of the intervention sessions, the interviews and the post-intervention evaluation sessions, as well as the use of the video footage by the researcher as part of the presentation of the study. Information disclosed by the panellists and participants is kept in complete confidentiality; pseudonyms were used for all subjects involved in this project to maintain anonymity. All data collected is stored securely.

3.2 Participants

A call for participants was sent out to dance students at schools with vocational dance programmes. The researcher also recruited amongst contemporary professional dancers. Participation was open to any level, ability or style of dance. The only criteria: to be over 18 years old and to have a choreography prepared which the dancers or dance students wanted to work on for the study. By the beginning of the research period, four female contemporary dancers volunteered to participate and were accepted on the study.

Three of the four participants came from an inclusive dance perspective of contemporary dance, in which dancers with disabilities are included in training and performance with dancers without any disabilities (Benjamin, 2002). Two of these three dancers were wheelchair users, and their dance backgrounds are described in the table below (Table 1). (See Appendix 2 for participants' dance backgrounds.)

Table 1: Participants' specifications

Participant	Age	Gender	Level	Specifications	Number of intervention sessions	Number of intervention hours
Eight	23	Female	Year one student of a vocational dance programme	_____	6	12
Three	38	Female	Professional dancer and teacher	_____	3	6
Eleven	22	Female	Pre-professional dancer and teacher at Candoco's Youth company	Dancer with Cerebral Palsy – manual wheelchair user	5	7.5
Ten	41	Female	Professional performer	Electric wheelchair use	2	9

3.3 Panel members

Three volunteer panellists were recruited as assessors. All panellists were professional dancers and/or teachers of dance, and through these roles therefore familiar with contemporary dance and with the observation of dancers. In order to achieve as objective evaluations as possible from the panellists, they were not informed of the principle aim of the study's use of Chatfield's (2009) test (Angioi et al., 2009).

3.4 The intervention

A series of intervention sessions using somatic principles was devised by the researcher and tailored for each of the four participants. Six to twelve hours per participant were scheduled depending on participant and studio space availability. The duration of each session varied from an hour and a half to two hours, depending on participants' availability and studio schedules at Laban (See Table 1 for the specific time per participant). Each individual session was devised to adapt to each participants' choreography, her technique requirements, her level of understanding of the principles of somatics as well as her response to the interventions and to specific exercises as she performed them.

The somatic principles used throughout the sessions and for all participants were chosen for their presence across all somatic techniques. Specifically, principles of breath, imagery, rest and touch (Johnson, 1995) were all used for all participants. To illustrate the use of imagery, examples of exercises employed to incorporate this principle were: imagining an environment that was dark and scary; imaging that the limbs of the dancers were long tree branches; images of breath going from the lungs throughout the body and out of the hands and feet of the dancers (Nordin & Cumming, 2008). Constructive rest was also used to provide dancers with time to integrate the new material and body experiences (Batson, 2007). Touch was used to enhance dancers' body awareness (Johnson, 1995). Breath was explored to enhance clarity and dynamics in movements (Koner, 1993).

Throughout each intervention sessions, the researcher took detailed field notes of all the exercises. Each session was also video recorded for future reference (See Appendix 1 for a detailed table of the intervention sessions for each participant).

3.5 Evaluation

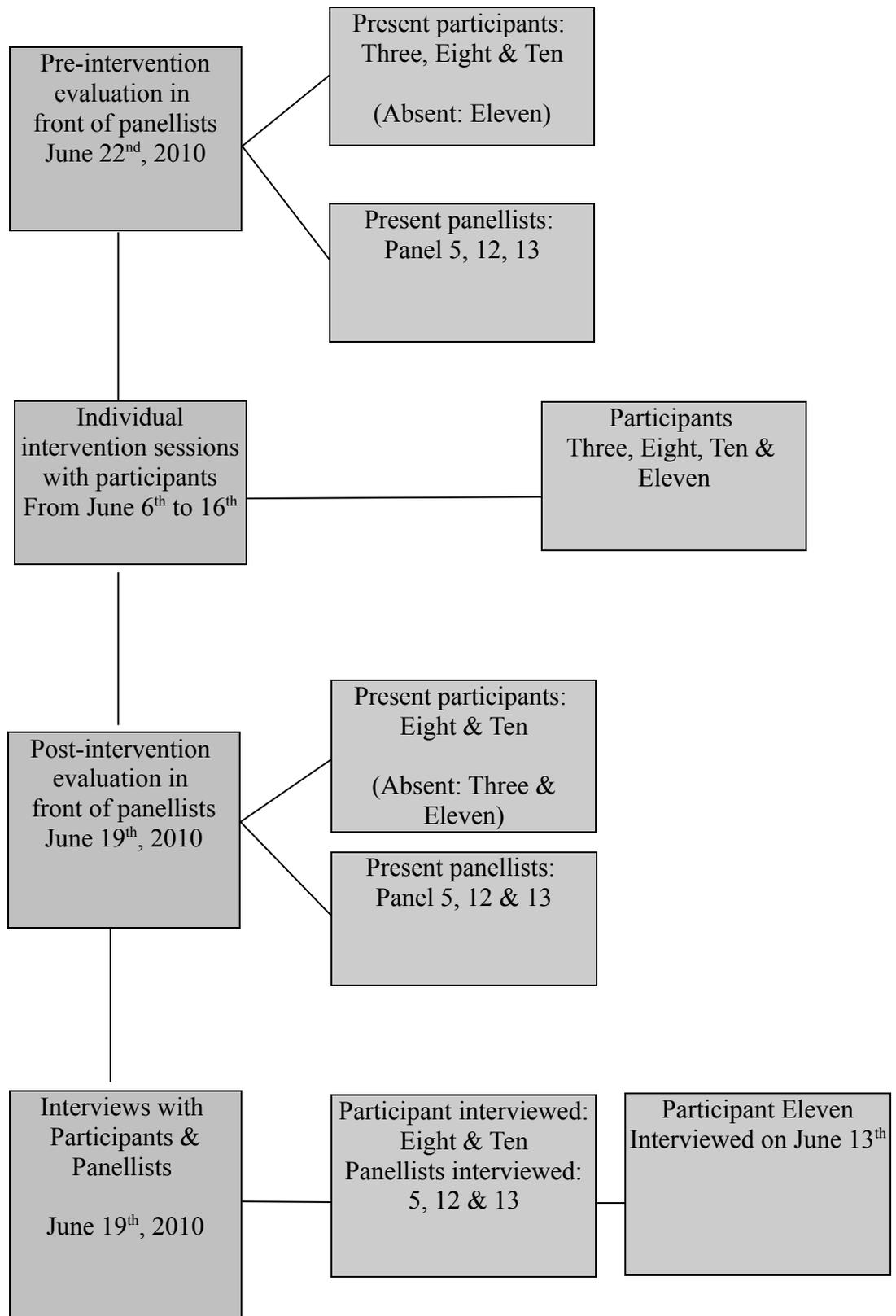
Following the intervention period, the dancers performed live a second time, in front of the panel members, repeating the Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance (Chatfield 2009). The purpose of the evaluation in front of panellists was to evaluate each dancer's pre- and post-intervention abilities. Each dancer was compared to herself and not to others. In this regard the differences in the dancers' levels and bodily abilities were assured not to disturb the efficacy of this method of evaluation and assured relevance in the use of this test in the study.

Panel members were given instructions on the functioning of the Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance (Chatfield, 2009) (see Appendix 4). These instructions were given to all panel members at the same time before the pre-intervention evaluation as well as before the post-intervention evaluation. The Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance assigns an ordinal grade for each of the following components: *level, skill, space, time, energy, phrasing* and *presence* (see Appendix 4). Participants each arrived for the pre-intervention evaluation prepared with a choreographed piece that was less than five minutes in duration and that had been previously performed as part of a professional performance. For both the pre- and post-intervention evaluations, the participants in turn performed live in front of the panel members; panellists then completed Chatfield's evaluation sheet for each dancer once she had finished performing her piece. This process was done twice, once for pre-intervention evaluation in which three of the four participants performed (participant Eleven could not be present at that time due to scheduling) and once for the post-intervention evaluation (in which two participants performed, participants Eleven and Three were absent). Panellists followed the criteria provided by Chatfield (2009).

Following the post-intervention performance, the researcher conducted one-to-one semi-structured interviews with each participant and each panel member in attendance. Interviews with dancers focussed on collecting feedback on the intervention sessions they partook in during the study, as well as on their own perceptions of their stage presence. Interviews with panellists first centred on learning of the differences perceived by panellists in the participants' pre- and post-intervention performances, and then enquired into their perceptions of the participants' stage presence. It was at this

point in the study that the panel members were informed that the aim of the study was to investigate stage presence.

3.6 Research timeline



3.7 Establishing trustworthiness

For this study, the researcher was positioned both as researcher and practitioner in somatics, creating a bias that the researcher was well aware of. To allow the research to be conducted with a non-judgemental manner and to avoid her personal projections onto the research data, everything that happened in the studio where the interventions took place was conducted by the researcher strictly in her role as practitioner. Although field notes were taken during intervention sessions, no stance from the researcher's perspective was taken at this point, and all data collected was left for the researcher to analyse after the interviews (the final stage of the study) took place. This allowed for the researcher to put two hats on with as much objectivity towards the research as it was possible (Ely et al., 1991).

A triangulation method was used whereby the researcher collected data in three different ways (Ely et al., 1991). First, using the Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance (Chatfield, 2009) to evaluate the participants' performances and stage presence pre- and post-intervention. Secondly, by interviewing the panel members and the dancers after the second performance. And finally, through the researcher's recording of all the field notes of the procedures and aims (see Appendix 1) and comments of participants during the intervention sessions. Generating data from three different sources ensures greater validity to the developing patterns of data (Ely et al, 1991; Wisker, 2008).

The interviews conducted with individual participants and panel members after the post-intervention performances were each transcribed in their entirety (see Appendix 3). Transcripts were sent to the participants and panel members for review to ensure that the comments collected from them reflected and conveyed their positions as they had intended and that such data could therefore be used reliably in this study. All intervention sessions, performances and interviews were video recorded and can be requested for independent review by contacting the researcher.

To allow for analysis that was as objective as possible, Nvivo 8 (software for qualitative data) was used to organise the interview and field note data for coding. This procedure also allowed the researcher to step back from her practitioner role and into her researcher role. The subsequent coding the interviews and "think aloud" (thoughts and comments of the participants during the intervention sessions) of the participants and

panel members enabled themes to emerge from the data. To further validate the data analysis process, a colleague was asked to review the transcribed interviews with And verify the researcher's coding of emergent themes in the data. An inductive reasoning approach and interpretative methodology has been applied to the analysis of the study's collected data, since, as a subject, stage presence, is subjective in nature and the responses to it can be different from all involved subjects (Ely et al. 1991).

4.0 RESULTS & FINDINGS

4.1 Results from the participants' perspective

There was a generally positive response in the participants' perceptions of the benefits of the somatic interventions to their dance technique, their performance abilities and their stage presence. All four participants found that the tools that were used during the interventions were not only helpful at that time, but all participants also stated that they would each adopt some of these tools in their future dance training. Particular themes emerged from the analysis of the verbal feedback provided by the participants during the intervention sessions, as well as from the semi-structured interviews. Of these themes, those relating to body awareness, confidence and the participants overall experience of the interventions emerged as prominent and will be further explored and elaborated in the following sections.

4.1.1 Meaningfulness and sense of purpose

During the intervention sessions, positive results were reported from the participants in terms of their own perceived improvements in their performances as well as regarding how they felt about their choreographies.

A good example of this came from the first session with participant Three, in which imagery and breath exercises specific to her choreography were used. The researcher introduced a technique that allowed participant Three to discover the most efficient breathing patterns to facilitate different movements. As a result, participant Three related to the researcher that she "*felt more a sense of belonging*" with her choreography. Imagery work, in which the researcher guided participant Three through the 'gathering of images' that she could relate to her choreography, had also allowed her to give meaning and a 'sense' to her movements which she had previously approached in a strictly technical manner.

Participant Eight provided similarly positive feedback after her first session, which again incorporated the use of imagery and breath exercises, stating: "*[The choreography] felt less meaningless.*" A similar perception of the meaningfulness of the

somatic work in relation to her choreography occurred with participant Ten. As she described it: “[*The choreography*] did feel different. ... *It wasn't so shallow.*” The sense of meaning that participant Eight and participant Ten derived from the imagery and breath exercises relates to the importance of motivation and intention as key elements of performance. Through exploring and then ascribing meaning and purpose to the movements, it can be argued that, subsequently, stage presence can be positively affected (Koner, 1993).

The last session with participant Eight was a revision of all the work that had been done during the course of her intervention period with the researcher, with particular attention given to the breath patterns and the imagery that she had explored with her choreography. After this session, participant Eight felt that the choreography had taken on another dimension and that fact in itself made the piece more interesting for her to work on. As she explained, “*Because of the amount of layers, its much fuller now and it still feels good to do. I was quite surprised as I thought I would be bored with doing it anymore.*” Using somatic principles to revisit the choreography with the participant, allowed her to explore new movement patterns (Eddy, 2009), by thinking of where and how the movement comes from it also becomes fuller (Cohen, 1993). The exploration of the choreography and its meanings through somatics gave the dancer a new way of approaching her work, and gave it more meaning and purpose, as per Koner (1993), having purpose for the movements is necessary for a dancer to have greater stage presence.

4.1.2 Confidence

Confidence was a common theme amongst the participants and they each found that the intervention sessions gave them more confidence. This theme had its variations, from confidence in themselves (self-confidence), to confidence in their bodies, and to confidence in their abilities to perform tasks (self efficacy). For instance, after the first session with participant Three, she related how important trusting her body is for her work as a dancer. Being a dancer and a teacher, she works with her body on a daily basis and feels that she requires confidence in it to work efficiently: “*I was thinking of how to trust the body is important to me and my work as a dancer.*” She also mentions

how the somatic work done during the intervention sessions helped her trust her body because, according to her, *“It’s deeper work.”*

Although all participants mentioned confidence at some point during the interventions, participant Eleven, was the dancer that was most impacted by the somatic work with regards to building her confidence in her body, in herself as a dancer, and in herself as a person. *“After each session my confidence about myself really grows, I feel like I know it a little bit more. With each session I get to know the choreography deeper”*. As participant Eleven has Cerebral Palsy (CB), she lacks the confidence that her body will respond to what her brain commands it to, and she often feels like her body and her mind are two separate entities. Her work with the researcher on breath and touch seemed to help participant Eight connect with her body, giving her the confidence that it could be trusted and that it could perform the movements that she wanted it to.

The theme of confidence was also brought up by panellists as an element of what is needed for strong stage presence. *“[Stage presence] its about the belief in what you are doing.”* As is found in the literature, the more confidence a dancer has on stage, the better she can draw an audience into her performance (Jones, 2006; Howard, 2008). Yet the relationship between confidence and stage presence has not been directly addressed in research, and therefore no assumption as to any causal connection can be made within this study. Nevertheless, this common trend amongst the participants indicates a potential link that would benefit from further research, and that would contribute to enlightening teachers, dancers and choreographers alike on the importance of confidence in the enhancement of performance and stage presence.

4.1.3 Body awareness

In the field of somatics, body awareness is a common thread throughout the field of practice. Throughout the intervention sessions, all participants showed an appreciation for the body awareness exercises, which were based on Body Mind Centering (BMC), Feldenkrais, Skinner Release Technique (SRT) and Authentic Movement. They reported an enhancement in their body awareness through the opportunities provided by the somatic work to explore their movements in different ways and from different perspectives.

Body awareness exercises performed during the intervention sessions not only allowed participants to explore movement in novel ways but all participants reported that such exercises also enhanced other aspects of their dance. A good example of this is participant Eleven's comment: *"I feel a lot better about it, then when I first started. When I first started I liked the piece but I was not comfortable doing it. I enjoyed it before, but now my body also enjoys it to. And it's not often that my body and my mind agree."*

As participant Eleven speaks about being 'comfortable', she refers to her dance less in terms of technique and more in terms of her experiential perceptions of performing the movements, therefore shifting her concentration onto elements of the performance experience beyond simply technical execution (Koner, 1993). Furthermore, by embodying the choreography in such a way, with body and mind in agreement, this dancer was able to perform her choreography as a piece of art, giving it a purpose that is not only movement for the sake of movement, but movement with intention (Koner, 1993).

Participants also reported positive feedback when the researcher facilitated body awareness through touch exercises (see Appendix 1). With participant Ten, a wheelchair user with limited mobility of lower and upper limbs and who always performs in a seated position on her electric wheelchair, the researcher performed an exercise based on Skinner Release Technique (SRT) in an attempt to allow, and to investigate if, the creation of a connection between the participant's lower body and upper body would enable her to feel more present in her performance. From the perspective of participant Ten, this exercise resulted in her feeling *"more of a connection, not like a top-half and a bottom-half, but more of a whole... It has awakened the nerves of feelings of my legs."* While touch and body awareness are not necessarily linked to stage presence, the mobility and movement patterns of a dancer can be increased by the proper use of touch (Eddy, 2009). When a dancer is more comfortable and aware of her body as an integrated whole, she can be focussed on the interpretation of the movements and therefore have greater stage presence (Koner, 1993).

In an exercise based on Body Mind Centering (BMC), participant Ten was instructed to improvise with the intention of letting her inner organs lead her movements, starting off with very small motions so as to allow the movements to be initiated from the space

within her body where the organs are. This type of exercise is intended to release tension and allow the mover to explore mobility in a different way, creating more effective movement patterns (Cohen, 1993). When unnecessary tension is released, the body can move with more ease, and the dancer can be more focussed and therefore their stage presence can potentially be enhanced (Koner, 1993).

The release of body tension to enhance mobility is one of the aims of somatics and this theme often emerged from participants' feedback as one of the benefits of the somatics interventions. To provide another example, during the second session with participant Eight (see Appendix 1), the researcher facilitated the movements of the dancers' body, again based on Skinner Releasing Technique (SRT). After this work, the participant performed her choreography and was asked how it felt. *"I felt peace when I was doing it, it probably looked better as there was no unnecessary tensions."* Participant Eight's experience and observation of her reaction to the SRT releasing exercise felt positive to her, as the release of tension meant for her that her movement looked better from the outside. This goes in accordance with the panellists' perceptions of participant Eight's performance as they indicated improvement in her stage presence in the post-intervention evaluation session. Since this participant's choreography was technically challenging, much of her focus had initially been on the correct execution of the movements. However, once the tension was released and the movements performed with more ease, the participant could begin to enjoy her performance of the choreography, having become more present and 'in the moment', and hence conveyed a greater stage presence (Csikzentmihalyi, 1990; Hefferon & Ollis, 2006; Bradley, 2008; Koner, 1993).

4.1.4 Imagery

Imagery was one of the tools that was used by the researcher on the study for all four participants. Throughout the study, this tool was found to be beneficial and productive in exploring and extending participants' interpretations of their choreographies and the intentions in their movements and performance.

In the case of participant Eight, the choreography that she came prepared with for this study required her to impersonate a 'dark' character. To assist in this interpretation, the

researcher and participant worked together on creating an ‘image’ of the character, of how the character moved, lived and breathed. Imagery is an efficient tool that is often used by actors to have a good presence on stage or to allow them to impersonate a role or a character. This tool is widely used in theatre workshops and can also bring benefits to dance training (Jones, 2008).

Participant Eight ultimately chose ‘Golem’ as a representation for impersonation, and together with the researcher worked on how she could incorporate this persona into the already existing movements set for her choreography. One technique was to slow down the choreography and for participant Eight to do each movement with Golem in mind and as if she had Golem's mobility. She found this task interesting because by going into her imagination, she discovered new dynamics to her movements. Another technique used by the researcher to instigate participant Eight's imagination was to invite her to spend some time on a sand mattress improvising as Golem. She found the work on imaginary improvisation helpful and stated: *“I feel more Golem than before, this really works well!”*.

Participant Eight was then enthusiastic to continue the work within the entire choreography and, from that point on, when she would perform the piece during the intervention sessions, her body would retain the information that was garnered during the Golem improvisation task. Later sessions went on to incorporate work with ‘environment’ images as much as with ‘character’ images. By the last session, participant Eight claimed: *“I feel like I am so much more of a dancer with this work.”*

4.1.5 Breath

Breath is an important principle across the field of somatics and a principle that was explored with all participants in the study through a variety of exercises. The exercises chosen by the researcher aimed at enabling participants to consider and work with how their breathing could facilitate their movements.

While everyone is aware of their need to breathe, people sometimes need to be reminded of how to breathe properly (Johnson, 1995). In reference to working with the researcher on efficient use of breath, participant Three stated: *“It helps a lot. Its*

something I really need to work on, as when I dance I often forget to breath. It's silly as we know we need to breath."

Once breath is well integrated into dancers' movements, into their dance practice generally and into choreographies specifically, dancers can then concentrate on other aspects of their performance, and movement can become easier (Cohen, 1993; Koner, 1993). By the fifth session with participant Eight, her breathing patterns had become fully integrated into her choreography and she started to feel more comfortable with the piece as well. *"I noticed my breathing was there all the way through, naturally, I was breathing."* By this time she had started to become more aware of her breath and of how her breathing patterns has gradually improved over the course of this work. For participant Three, greater awareness and control of her breathing translated into the increased enjoyment of performing her piece over time: *"By enjoying some parts of the choreography, I made it more alive. The time before I was more aware of the breathing. The last time, I was able to use the breathing, but still enjoy it and it made it more alive."* By taking the time to focus on the breath, and allowing it to flow throughout the piece, this participant experienced the choreography in a different way. Proper and efficient use of breath cannot be assumed to have any direct connection to the enhancement of stage presence. However, if the awareness and integration of breathing patterns can allow the dancers to take pleasure in their performances, to be 'in the moment' and 'in the flow', then such an avenue is worth pursuing in future research (Koner, 1993; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

4.1.6 Touch

Although touch can be used as a corrective tool, in this study the researcher used touch as an informative tool that allowed the body to experience sensations that awakened movement. Touch has been shown to enhance proprioception, stimulating the sensory nervous system into informing the body of where it is and where it can go (Batson, 2009).

During the intervention sessions, participants' responses to the effects of touch proved positive. This was particularly the case for participant Eleven for whom the benefits of touch with regards to the assimilation of information were positive and lasting: *"My*

body responds so much better to touch. It learns so much faster... Every time I receive touch my body receives information that it retains without me having to think about it all the time.” The researcher, in her role as practitioner in the interventions sessions, did herself observe participant Eight’s markedly positive responses to the exercises that included touch. Specifically, these positive responses were evidenced through technical improvements in her alignments, as well as through improvements in elements of performance such as her enhanced connectivity to her body, her ‘reaching out’ to the audience and using her gaze more efficiently.

4.1.7 Time

The participants in this study each partook in a series of one-to-one intervention sessions with the researcher, sessions that catered to each of them personally as dancers and as humans. The opportunity to enjoy the undivided attention of a dance teacher or practitioner is a rarity for dance students, and even rarer for professional dancers. Moreover, limited are the circumstances in which dance students and professionals are allotted the time to concentrate on their individual dance practice, and particularly on work that may not be of direct relevance to the improvement of technical elements or the rehearsal of choreography. Interestingly, a theme that emerged in this study, and one that was touched upon by every participant, was the notion of ‘time’, or more specifically, of the lack of time dancers spend on exploring the potential benefits of somatics.

Although ‘time’ was not a theme directly related to the enquiry of this research study, all participants reported that they found it helpful and valuable to take the time to explore movements in novel ways, to reconnect with their breath, and to engage in body awareness exercises. As one participant put it: *“It’s nice to take the time to slowly move and nice to think how the organs move and if it moves that way, the muscles move that way. It’s nice to think of movement from the inside out, rather than outside in.”*

Some participants reported that they were already familiar with some of the somatic principles incorporated into the intervention sessions, but that, despite being aware of the benefits that such principles can bring to their practice, they recognised and admitted that they did not take the time to work on them on their own.

Taking the time to explore movement in a different way allows for deeper connections in a dancer's body, and raises awareness not only of the movements but of where the movements come from (Cohen, 1993). Giving an intention to the movement, rather than doing movement for the sake of movement, contributes to a dancer's stage presence (Koner, 1993). Yet dancers are not typically given the time in rehearsals or technique classes to explore the use of techniques such as those based on somatic principles. Therefore, taking and being allowed the time as dancers to explore principles that can potentially enhance their performance is an important consideration for dance training programmes, dance companies and in ongoing dance science research.

4.2 Results from panellists after completion of all components of the study

Stage presence is an element of performance that is perceived by the audience. In this study the panellists were charged with this role but with the difference that they were also charged with the role of evaluating the participants' performances.

All three panel members reported observing differences, and particularly improvements of certain types, between the pre- and post-intervention performances of the two participants who were evaluated live. For example, one panel member noted that participant Ten had improved in areas such as eye contact with the audience, comfort in her body and her movement, and her ability to express an overall understanding of the performance (i.e. the choreography). One panellist stated: *“I certainly noticed a difference in the stage presence of the first performer. She made eye contact with the audience, she seemed much more comfortable in her body and in her movement.... Her ability to express with her body as I said was much improved and I think that in the overall understanding of her performance, I think, yes, she did improve her stage presence.”*

For the researcher, it was interesting to note that the performance elements that this panellist saw improvement in participant Ten were also the ones that the researcher had worked with her on through somatics during the interventions. Since somatic principles were found to enhance body awareness and ease of movement (Johnson, 1995), participant Ten's body awareness was improved through the intervention sessions and therefore so was her comfort level with her choreography. She was thinking less of the technique because she was 'in her body' and able to focus on elements of performance such as stage presence (Koner, 1993).

Discussing pre-intervention and post-intervention differences specifically addressing stage presence, all three panellists found that for participant Eight, there was a clear difference in her intention and in the clarity in her work. Panellists reported that her stage presence had improved because the clarity of intention of her movements was apparent and therefore supported the choreography. As one of the panellists remarked of participant Eight's stage presence: *“I think that she definitely had more presence in the sense she was aware that there was an audience... There was more an uplift. ...I felt like maybe more space was opened up cause she's also looking out more which makes me look at the space differently and not just at her.”* Literature supports the importance of

intention as an element of performance and stage presence (Koner, 1993). What motivates a dancer to move, the choices that she makes, if the choreography is supported by a clear intention on the part of the performer--if these notions are kept considered throughout the performance, it is suggested that a dancer's stage presence can be positively affected (Koner, 1993). Likewise, panel members expressed similar viewpoints of stage presence having to do with purpose, choices, intention and being.

4.3 Conclusion of the findings

The study investigated the effects of somatic principles on stage presence through triangulation, employing a number of methods of data collection and several checks for reliability in these methods, to ensure that the research was conducted as thoroughly as possible and so that data analysis could proceed without the researcher having pre-determined her findings. (Ely et al., 1991). The study's findings highlighted the different viewpoints from which stage presence can be understood and perceived as an element of dance performance: the viewpoints of the participants as dancers working during interventions and performing for a panel, those of the panel members themselves observing and evaluating the performances, and even that of the researcher as practitioner during the intervention sessions.

The panel members perceptions indicated that there were improvements in some aspects of performance for the two participants that were evaluated in both pre- and post- intervention performances. All panel members agreed that participant Eight's stage presence had enhanced at the post-intervention evaluation, while two out of three panellists assessed that participant Ten's stage presence had improved. From the perspectives of the four participants that volunteered to partake the intervention process, all of them had positive responses to the somatics-based interventions with regards to the enhancement of certain elements of their performance abilities and they all reported that the use of somatic techniques related breath, touch, imagery and rest were all appropriate for work on elements of performance such as stage presence.

Stage presence is still an understudied aspect of performance in contemporary dance, and although the panellists opinions on the subject varied somewhat, they nevertheless had similar views as to what aspects of a dancer or a performance makes for good stage presence. The aspects of intention, purpose, clarity in movement, and focus or attention were found to be of importance by panellists in their understandings of strong stage presence and these are the aspects that they perceived as enhanced in their evaluations of the participants' post-intervention performances.

All participants found the intervention sessions helpful for them in personal ways. They reported that their stage presence was enhanced by the somatic work done with the researcher during these sessions and that the sessions had enabled them to acquire new

and useful tools to work with on future performance pieces. Time also emerged as an interesting theme and may point to a need for teachers and institutions to both provide and allow dancers and students with the time to explore and apply somatic principles in their training.

5.0 DISCUSSION

5.1 Stage presence and somatics

The rationale behind investigating somatics as a potential means of enhancing elements of performance such as stage presence was mainly to provide dancers with tools that would permit their movements to be more efficient and comfortable, allow them to explore their movements in different ways, and guide them in finding the purpose in their movements rather than only executing their movements technically.

While the primary aim of the intervention sessions was to enhance participants' stage presence, the incorporation of somatics principles promoted the exploration of various aspects of participants' dance performance. Likewise, although the aim of the research study was to investigate the potential benefits of somatics on this aspect of performance, the researcher was aware that somatic practices have been shown to be beneficial for motor learning skills, and in enhancing mobility and body awareness (Batson, 2009).

The interventions undertaken in the study worked with principles such as breath, imagery, touch and rest, and the study found that these somatic principles had positive effects on artistic components, including stage presence, for the participants involved. For example, by concentrating on, and giving participants the time, to explore how their breath could help them make their movements more efficient (e.g. inhaling when in suspension, exhaling when in contraction), their movements became easier to perform, allowing them to perform interpretively and beyond just the technique (Cohen, 1993). Using imagery also allowed participants to give intention to their movements, not only facilitating movement efficacy but also allowing the creative exploration of characters, of environment, of space, and so on (Jones, 2008).

The inclusion of somatic principles within dance training programmes has been highly debated amongst educational institutions (Fortin, Long & Lord, 2002). From these debates, a number of studies have emerged in order to explore the effects of somatics on dancers and the benefits of including such principles in curricula. Fortin et al.'s (2002) study is one of the few that have tackled the issue of how to incorporate somatic techniques within dance training, and concludes that such techniques are indeed effective in improving students' performance. Fortin et al. (2002) found that, for a

somatic technique to be successful in dance training, there must be a transfer of what is taught through somatics to the dance technique itself. If a student cannot grasp the relationship between the two, then the somatic practice in itself has not been successful (Fortin et al., 2002). For the present study, the researcher integrated somatic principles to improve dancers' stage presence, while working with them directly on their choreographies. These sessions were proven to be effective for the participants' stage presence, but also implies that further analysis is necessary on how somatics could be viably integrated within dance training programmes and within dancers' individual practice.

For this study, interventions were devised to incorporate somatic principles with the goal of enhancing dancers' stage presence. Using the appropriate and relevant intervention tools and techniques for the respective participant was key for the researcher as practitioner, who took the time to engage in careful observation of her participants and to get to know each of them on a personal level in order to best tailor the somatic work undertaken with them.

5.2 The evaluation method

The study incorporated Chatfield's (2009) Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance, an evaluation method that has only recently been developed and that has not been intended for use in the assessment of live performances. Although the quantitative data obtained from the application of the Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance was not statistically useful for this study, the incorporation of this evaluation method into the research design and procedure allowed for the gathering of insightful qualitative data that further informed the research enquiry.

Though none of the interview questions directly addressed the use of the Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance, panellists nevertheless offered their comments on having to use this method of evaluation. Their feedback supported the idea that assessing dance performance is a difficult task and that it is an area that requires further investigation and development. One of the panel member's comments summarised well what was reported by all three panellists: *"I really felt that the marking criteria was a little unwieldy, I think that we're still obviously as scientists still trying to figure out the best way to talk about what a successful performance is and I think that it would be very helpful to continue in that dialogue, because I think the more we investigate the more we talk about, the more we actually experiment with it the more we'll learn about what's lacking and what's already there."*

The researcher found that the main challenge with using Chatfield's (2009) Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance as an evaluation method in her study was that it was not created for the assessment of live performance (Chatfield, 2009). Instead, it has been developed for use by trained panel members evaluating recorded video footage (2D). While searching for the best evaluation method for this study, the researcher found that the majority of performance evaluation methods in dance science use video (2D) (e.g. Angioi et al., (2009); Chatfields, (2009); Bradley, (2009)).

A second challenge arose with the difference in the abilities of the study's participants, which highlighted the potential for disparity in how the panel members applied Chatfield's (2009) Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance criteria. One of the two participants who performed in front of the panel is an electric wheelchair dancer and has a very different quality of movement from what is conventionally seen in dancers in

contemporary dance classes. This difference made it difficult to compare the results of the panel members because there were greater discrepancies across the three panellists in their evaluation results of the disabled dancer while the panellists' evaluation results were more in agreement on the conventional contemporary dancer. This corroborates Chatfield's (2009) claim that the Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance was developed to assess dancers who are trained in conventionally recognised dance styles that have specific techniques and modes of expression such as contemporary dancers and ballet dancers. This discrepancies in the evaluation results can be assumed to lie in the expectations of the judges of what contemporary dance is and what it should look like. Their ability to evaluate a style of dance that is more familiar to them is more accurate than their assessment of a style that they are seeing for the first time (Stevens et al. 2010).

6.0 LIMITATIONS

Firstly, as the participants in this study came from different dance backgrounds, this made it difficult for the panel members to assess their technical levels on the Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance (Chatfield, 2009). This was a particular challenge for the assessment of one of the participants who dances in a wheelchair and not all of the Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance criteria were relevant to her physicality.

Secondly, as a number of different tools were used during each somatic intervention session, it is difficult to isolate any particular variables or to know if one tool or aspect of one worked better than another on the element of performance being investigated in the study, that of stage presence. For instance, while the the body work that was performed by the researcher on the participants was reported by them to have facilitated their movements, it cannot be inferred that such work had a direct positive impact on their stage presence. Furthermore, it is debatable as to whether body work should be performed before, after or during sessions for better efficacy in facilitating movement.

As a final point, since the researcher on the study was also the practitioner performing the interventions, this created a potential for bias in her perception of participants' responses to her somatic work with them. It would have been more appropriate to have another researcher on site to take notes of the intervention processes and collect any comments of both the practitioner and the participants. Nevertheless, the researcher did account for this limitation and has establish the trustworthiness of her study through incorporating into her research the triangulation of methods, the peer review of the data, the review by participants and panellists of the transcripts of their own interviews, along with the researcher keeping cognisant of the fact that she had duals roles to commit to in the research process.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It has been evidenced that more research is needed in relation to stage presence as an element of performance in dance. Further research is also needed to elaborate on how somatics could effect the improvement of artistic components of dance such as stage presence. Dance as an art form demands of a performance to excel not only technically but artistically as well. Through the exploration and practice of principles, techniques and tools to enhance the artistic elements of dance, dance teachers and rehearsal directors could enable dance students and professional dancers to achieve greater results in performances and auditions.

The *presence* component of the Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance (Chatfield, 2009) was adequate, but not detailed enough for panellists to use it efficiently or insightfully. More research is needed into the development of evaluation methods for performance in dance that incorporate criteria that thoroughly define and meaningfully measure artistic as well as technical components. Borrowing from the literature on stage presence, additional criteria for artistic elements that could be considered are *gaze*, *focus*, *confidence*, and *energy and dynamics*, to name just a few (Koner, 1993).

A trend emerged from the study that all participants' confidence levels improved after the intervention sessions. More rigorous research is needed to determine the specific ways in which somatic principles positively affect self-confidence. The field of dance would furthermore benefit from investigations into measurable 'links' between self-confidence and stage presence.

In conclusion, these recommendations call for greater research efforts into the field of somatics and its potential benefits to dance practice and dancers' well being, not only in assessing components such as technique, posture and motor learning, but importantly in assessing what renders dance an art form through elements of performance such as stage presence.

8.0 CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to investigate the effects of somatic principles on stage presence as an element of performance in contemporary. The research incorporated a range of methods in the collection of data and played a dual role as somatic practitioner and researcher into its effects..

As an intervention study employing principles of the field of somatics tools and techniques that worked with breath, imagery, touch and rest were explored with participants. The intervention sessions were adapted to the needs of each of the four participants, taking into account their dance training, their personalities and the choreographies they chose to work on. The main findings from the intervention indicate that the integration of somatic principles into dance practice was overall beneficial to all the participants in the study.

After the post-intervention performance evaluations, positive responses were noted of the panellists' perceptions of the participants' enhanced performance and stage presence. Moreover, participants themselves reported positively on the effects of the somatic interventions on their dance practice and performance; they furthermore indicated that they acquired useful tools to continue to apply to their training. The study found that somatic interventions enhanced dancers' confidence, body awareness, movement dynamics, and the clear intention in their movements when performing their choreographies, elements of performance that all participants considered of importance to their stage presence.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Detailed table of the intervention sessions for all participants

P1

P2

P3

P4

P5

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Appendix 2: Participants' dance backgrounds

Participant Eight

She is 23 years old, has just finished her BA1 at Laban, a third level vocational contemporary dance training institution. She started to dance at the age of 9. From 9 to 14, she did a variety of dance styles going from Street dances to ballroom exploring everything she could find in Finland. After that period she concentrated on Contemporary dance and Classical ballet as her main training in dance. She started dancing full time in 2006 and has not stopped since. Being a curious and always wanting to learn new things and enhance her dance, she decided to take part on this study. She has some basic knowledge of Feldenkrais and Experimental anatomy as she took part in workshops in these somatic techniques.

Participant Three

She is a 38 years old dancer and dance teacher. Started dancing at the age of five in classical ballet and until the age of fourteen continued with ballet and explored other dances such as Jazz and tap dance. She stopped dancing for two years and started again to train in ballet and contemporary dance from age 16 to 22, as well as dancing brazilian popular dances. From 1993 to 2000 she was part of two dance companies in Brazil, one in contemporary dance and the other in Brazilian popular dances. From 2002 to 2004 she started working on her own as an independent dancer in Brazil, she moved to London in March 2004 where she continued mainly to teach dance, and did not have much time to train as a dancer. She still does her own work within inclusive dance, as this is what brought her to London. Since 1993, she has been exploring a lot of different somatic techniques starting with Feldenkrais, she also trained in Alexander Technique, Authentic Movement, and other somatic work and partner work through Contact Improvisation. She often uses principles such as working from the organs as a movement initiator as part of her own training and when she teaches as well. She was interested in the project to see how Somatics can be integrated within choreography work and stage presence as, according to her, it is an important and inherit artistic feature of dance.

Participant Eleven

She is a 22 years old independent dancer and dance teacher for the Candoco Youth Company. She mainly dances in independent projects with other fellow dancers, performing her own work. She trained in the Foundation course of Candoco a vocational dance programme for able and disabled dancers. She has been diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy and dances mainly in a manual chair. She just received a new lighter chair made specifically for dance and sports, she is slowly adapting to this new dance partner. Her Knowledge of Somatics, comes mainly from having done a lot of Contact Improvisation (CI) through the years. This type of dance does a lot of body awareness work to warm up and connect with ones body as well as with partners. She mentioned that she reacts well to touch and that is the method that works best for her body to learn new patterns and movements.

(Participant Eleven did not perform in front of the panel for the quantitative evaluation)

Participant Ten

The participant is a 41 year old painter and independent dancer, she started dancing as part of an acting course with Grey Eye Theatre. In 2007 she did the foundation course at Candoco, a one year vocational dance programme for abled and disabled dancers. She uses an electric wheelchair in her day to day life as well as in performance settings, she has a reduced mobility since birth. Her experience in somatics comes from participating in Skinner Release classes once a week for the past two years.

Appendix 3: Transcripts of the interviews – participants & panel members

Interview with participant Eight

July 19th, after the second performance in front of panel members.

Researcher: Did you find the interventions helpful or not?

Participant 8: Yes, very helpful.

Researcher: in what way and why do you think it helped you?

Participant 8: I don't know, I think it was it was really helpful as a whole, like all the methods we used, were really helpful, I don't know why, but because, because, because, I look so much better after. And it feels so much better to dance the piece and I know that I have improved in such many ways.

Researcher: What is stage presence for you, how do you define it?

Participant 8: You have hard questions! Ok let me think. It's everything else except the movement, when you go to stage. Its how you present yourself on stage and how you are engaged with what you do, its about credibility. Can I say it in finish?

Researcher: Or key elements of stage presence? When you see a performance and you say wow this is good stage presence, why do you say that?

Participant 8: Because the person is in the moment and he knows what he's doing and he knows what it is about and you can see from what he's doing. I don't know! It looks good!

Researcher: How did you feel about your stage presence during the first and second performance of the piece in this project?

Participant 8: Well, I concentrated on my stage presence much more on the second one, when I performed the first time, I kinda didn't think of it at all, I was just thinking about the movement and the technique kinda. And now with the movement we did it so many times that the movement was kinda there already so I could concentrate on the feeling, the atmosphere and like environment and the character. I felt a lot better doing it the second time. I definitely feel a difference between the first and the second performance.

Researcher: Do you think that the interventions that we did together affected your stage presence specifically, whether positively or negatively?

Participant 8: definitely positively

Researcher: How do you know or feel that you have good stage presence?

Participant 8: I don't know, I guess the performance feels much fuller, you are much more engaged with the movement, you know where it comes from and where you are

going in your mind and why you are doing it.

Researcher: Do you have anything to add?

Participant 8: no, I think it was brilliant, but I said that! I just felt that I improved in such many ways, like technique wise and stage presence wise although obviously I didn't even think about what stage presence was during this process. I will do it now when I go home. And I felt so much better doing it and as I said earlier it was like even though I have been doing the choreography for so long, it felt so much more interesting now to do it, then earlier even though I have done it for so long, but its like a big layer I've added with this project.

Researcher: Would you redo the process? And do you think you will be able to use the tools in the future?

Participant 8: yes definitely, I think I got quite a lot of tools for myself but at the same time I feel if I sometimes have a solo work or whatever I need to improve I could really use you.

Interview with participant Ten
July 19th, after the second performance in front of panel members.

Researcher: Did you find the interventions helpful in any way?

Participant 10: yes I did, yes.

Researcher: In what way?

Participant 10: For me it's kind of being going back to the basics in a way. So it's been looking at the body, inside the body, and awakening up different parts of the body that may have been to sleep e.g. my bottom-half, waist downwards. And it's been really good to do that and to think about my self as a whole.

Researcher: What is stage presence for you?

Participant 10: Stage presence to me I would say, its 99% part of the performance. Stage presence is so important, its important for getting the audience on the side, its about challenging the audience, its about feeling strong inside, its about feeling confident. To me it's very important.

Researcher: And what is it that makes stage presence?

Participant 10: I think for me it's confidence. It's being able to take, being able to look at people in the eye as the audience, and not being scared of it. Its being able to interact with the audience.

Researcher: And how did you feel about your presence on stage during the first and second performance on this project?

Participant 10: The first performance, I could have done better. I feel as if, because I have done the piece over and over and over again I felt like I was lacking enthusiasm, I needed to look at the piece in a fresh way I think. And the second time I feel as if I did look at the piece in a fresh way. I felt as if I was again looking at my self outwards and was able to interact with the audience.

Researcher: So you felt differences between the first and the second performance.

Participant 10: Definitely.

Researcher: Do you feel that the interventions affected stage presence specifically, in a positive or negative way?

Participant 10: yes and in a very positive way.

Researcher: What actually helped in the interventions for stage presence do you think?

Participant 10: I think it's the grounding and the believing that movement comes from strength which is within. And then everything else it's like the tree, the little tree with the branches. You know the trunk is within and comes out in the branches, and the

branches go out to the audience. But I think it all starts from within, in the floor or starts in my chair, or starts at the tip of my toe, ya.

Researcher: How do you feel or know that you have good stage presence?

Participant 10: By reaction, I think reaction of the audience. I think you can feel, you can feel when you are doing something and its not going down very well, and I think that vice versa, you know when something is going well. So I think its a lot about gut feeling as well and going with that

Researcher: When does this happen the most often that you feel you have good stage presence? In what situation?

Participant 10: I think when I know the piece that I am doing really well, I think when I have had time to, not so much warm up, because physically warming up for me its kind of I don't warm up for a long period of time because then I'll be tired for the performance. I think its more mental for me, once I grounded my self and things and having some rubs and some patting, that's warm up for me I think.

Researcher: Do you have anything to add?

Participant 10: It's been wonderful, I've loved it, and I really notice the difference and I am definitely going to take it on to what I do next.

Researcher: So you are going to use the material and those tools are going to be useful?

Participant 10: definitely, definitely, thank you very much.

*Interview with participant Eleven
July 13th, 2010 at 18.30*

The interview followed the last performance, after all the interventions.

Researcher: Did you find the interventions helpful or not?

Participant 11: definitely. It helped me by ways that I could access my body better, which I think I forget sometime 'cause I say things like I got to do this, you actually forget that you are working with an instrument almost, that you need to find a way of working with it.

Researcher: In what way and why do you think it helped?

Participant 11: Because I think it gave me the time, and I think that's probably it, it gave me the time to know my body how it moves, which I think that were things that definitely I knew already, but its that reminder for my self. For example, I know that I forget to breath when I perform, so its good to have the reminder that I do this, and have the time to purely concentrate on that and then being able to shift it to thinking of one thing at a time and building it up again, and making it a whole thing, then it becomes clearer for my body to know what to do.

Researcher: For you what is stage presence?

Participant 11: It's changed slightly since before I started, when I am actually thought of stage presence before hand, I thought of something that the audience perceive. Now I think I changed slightly where I think that you cannot show the audience something without you believing you have it yourself. So whether for me, that something that belief, I think within myself it translates into belief and that is conveyed outwards to the audience as stage presence.

Researcher: How did you feel about your stage presence during the first performance, and now after the second performance that followed the interventions?

Participant 11: I felt right at the beginning before the interventions, I was trying to find it and I kinda would have moments where it was ok, but I did not really know, I knew what I was striving for but I was trying to make my body do it and to be that performer. Where as now, I'm not trying to make my body do something, I'm trying to find ways that it does it, but I am not making it, and I think for myself, I feel that I feel that I am inhabiting more what I do and I understand what I am doing and what my body is doing, and that's what I hope that translates to the audience.

Researcher: Would you say that you felt a difference between the first and second performance?

Participant 11: definitely

Researcher: Do you feel the interventions affected stage presence specifically, either positively or negatively?

Participant 11: Yes, it definitely affected from the point of, it affected me, and therefore it affected my stage presence as well.

Researcher: How do know/feel that you have a good stage presence?

Participant 11: Within what I am doing; and I think hopefully that translates to me as a dancer, and I think it does, I believe in myself more. Because I feel I have been given the time to work with different things, it gives you permission to find what works for you.

Researcher: When does good presence happen for you the most often, in what situation you feel you have good stage presence?

Participant 11: Personally, I think it comes from enjoying what you are doing, for me, but then it also comes, and I realise this now, you can't just enjoy it, you have to believe in what you are doing. Its like a light, and the minute you doubt what you are doing, even if its for a second, that light fades and you have to try whatever way it is you have to find that tool that will lift it back up again.

Researcher: Do you have anything to add about the work we did together, the interventions?

Participant 11: No, just that it has been incredibly helpful, so thank you.

Researcher: Would you redo it if you were asked to?

Participant 11: Absolutely

Interview with panel 5 Monday 19th of July 2010
Right after the second showing of the dancer's (post-intervention)

Researcher: Did you see any difference between the first and this performance for each dancer?

Panel 5: yes, I thought that there was a notable difference in the first performers' (Participant 10) intention and that intention stayed throughout the entire performance. There were sorta hum, concentration shifts and changes that hadn't been there before. So much more nuanced character that she portrayed compared to the first time that I had seen it. And the second performer (participant 8), I thought it was quite interesting because, almost the opposite happened, there was so much less surface character to her but so much more, physicality and expression of using movement. So I thought it was quite interesting that they shifted in that way.

Researcher: Did you see any difference in their stage presence between the first and second performance?

Panel 5: I certainly noticed a difference in the stage presence of the first performer, she made eye contact with the audience, she seemed much more comfortable in her body and in her movement. The second performer, I felt was perhaps less present in her focus, then the first performance, but her ability to express with her body as I said was much improved and I think that in the overall understanding of her performance, I think yes she did improve her stage presence.

Researcher: What is stage presence for you?

Panel 5: Its kinda universally undefinable. For me, I think that stage presence has to do with how I feel affected by the performer. I would equate almost with feeling an affinity for a person when you meet them. You either feel connected with the performer or you don't and I think that that can happen for a variety of different reasons, whether it is the performers' intention, whether it is just sort of a matter of coincidence, or you know situation that the performer has no control over. Or whether you just happen to be very interested in whatever subject matter the performer has chosen. So ya, I would say it's fairly undefinable, but I would call it an affinity for a performer.

Researcher: Do you have anything to add?

Panel 5: I really felt that the marking criteria was a little unwieldy, I think that we're still obviously as scientist still trying to figure out the best way to talk about what a successful performance is and I think that it would be very helpful to continue in that dialogue, because I think the more we investigate the more we talk about, the more we actually experiment with it the more we'll learn about what's lacking and what's there already. So I felt that the marking criteria was unwieldy and the process was fascinating to me. I had never thought about approaching stage presence in this manner and I think that it would have been really nice to have a few more dancers, a few more examples to look at, but ya, I thought it was wonderful I really enjoyed the process very much.

Interview with panel 12 Monday 19th of July 2010
Right after the second showing of the dancer's (post-intervention)

Researcher: Was there a difference between the first performance and this one? For each dancer.

Panel 12: Obviously you must have worked on it, cause it seems different from what I have seen last time, not just because I am in a different perspective cause I have seen it for the second time. I wanted to mention, that one thing that was different from the first... is that really the same sheet that you gave me?

Researcher: yes it is.

Panel 12: That's so interesting. Because I've seen different things, different elements about it especially about the non-dancer. Cause the first one, you know the notion of what is to be a dancer is obviously challenged, and I was thinking about that last time, and hummm, then I thought that I have to not think about what I think is a dancer or non-dancer, but what it says here (on the evaluation sheets) and then its clear that she's not a non-dancer, cause she has a clear intention, she's very much into what she's doing, she's connection motion with emotion, so its a performance. And I think last time I got stuck with the non-dancer, can I say she's a dancer, what is dancer? Where is the definition for it, so I was stuck with that one last time. Now this time it was much clearer for me, but I also think the performance was different she was pushing the limits a little bit more. But maybe it's because I saw it the second time, so it's really hard to say what exactly was different. And now with the third dancer, which is now the second dancer (participant 8), I think her material changed.

Researcher: it was the same material.

Panel 12: So you didn't change anything in the material it self.

Researcher: The only thing that has been worked on is their stage presence, and not the material it self, and that's what I would like to have an impression on. So did you find any different between the first and last performance in regards to their stage presence?

Panel 12: I guess especially with the first dancer (participant 10) because she awoke something in me which in the first place, I looked at it more oh she's doing this, she can do it really well, or I was oh yah she really goes for it, but now it was there was more emotions, in it. So for me it was easier to perceive it because I wasn't so concerned about what I have to look out for because it was so clear. With the second one (participant 8), I felt I could see the difference maybe but for me the presence its a difficult issue but, what is presence.

Researcher: What is presence for you?

Panel 12: I think its not just projecting, cause sometimes I think with dancers they get confused or they think that they have to look out. And sometimes its a presence, or I am drawn to look at someone who's just so involved with what they are doing and that draws my attention to them, because they're so present in the moment, in their body, connected to the space to the floor to everything else that is going on, and that creates a

presence. So it's so many different layers, to access those different layers in that moment, I think that creates a presence. And I just think that with the third dancer (participant 8), she definitely had more presence in the sense, she was aware that there was an audience. I think the last time it was more she was moving around and now she was really also looking out. Maybe that's what changed the material for me a little, because there was more an up lift. Cause last time it was more just on the floor but now I felt like maybe some space opened up cause she's also looking out more which makes me look at the space differently and not just at her.

Researcher: Do you have anything to add?

Panel 12: I was just thinking, there is an element that I realised, for example transitions, if you stop, because it happened once with the third performance (participant 8), because obviously its challenging the material more challenging then the first performance that is. So if you don't, if you break at some point, there is a small gap with presence, because in that gap she wasn't attentive, to the body, and then that has an effect to the presence. So I can see that that would be you know a criteria to measure presence, but I have also written that she is heartedly in it, which I didn't write the last time, so that is something I can see as well, she's much more involved in it.

Interview with panel 13 Monday 19th of July 2010
Right after the second showing of the dancer's (post-intervention)

Researcher: First I would like to know if you have notice any difference between the first and this performance for each dancer?

Panel 13: yes

Researcher: In what way?

Panel 13: The first performance is much more physicality and varied movement language, in a sense its a different sense of focus in it. In the second one, the performance felt much more mature to me, there's a lot of the mannerism that had gone. Just the things that I remember, like the black make up, for me it felt more like an affectation in the first one, sort of, like the trappings has gone and it was just about using the more purer movement, and elements of that, that got across the sense of it.

Researcher: Did you see any difference on their stage presence?

Panel 13: Yes, but in the first one (participant 10), I thought that the presence had gone the other way. It was something I looked at the first time, and it had something really subtle to it, there are so many things that happened now that were so much more intense. Maybe it didn't feel like it was quite as controlled as the other one. Its hard to compare with what it was. I've remembered so well from the time before, its difficult to say, its like you see something again and it seems like a different thing that I remembered it was. Maybe in a sense this is more present and a bit more powerful, but what I liked the last time was it felt more like something you were invited in to see something rather than being, you should see this. Where the second one (participant 8) it sort of went a little bit the other way, it was so much intensity in it and now you got a chance to see it. And there was a moment where you didn't see her face and suddenly she could have looked and that became more visible this time. She felt a bit more relaxed and controlled and its when there things happen that they have much more impact.

Researcher: What is stage presence for you?

Panel 13: It has to do with euhh... I think it has to do with purpose, about choices, and being... (thinking). You know I think its the ability for someone to say watch me and keep on watching me if that's what they are trying to do. Or you know sometimes, its about the intention of not, but if you are trying to be seen and kind of keeping the people interested in the material and to seeing you rather than looking away. Cause you can have huge stage presence and do very little. And it's not about the "look at me" kind of thing, its I think it has to do with confidence in what you are doing and that sort of thing. Belief in what you are doing.

Researcher: Do you have anything to add?

Panel 13: yes, I think what it was about first performance I saw something that was very, you know, comfortable with what they were doing and was really considerate and then I saw it again, I think it was that they started to do something else and it hadn't

quite got to the point where it was. You know when you learn something new, and you add something else, it takes just a little bit of time before it becomes something else. It felt like it was changing and it hadn't changed to a point where it had become fully embodied and sort of nuanced yet. When she was driving and then changing the head first and I remember that last time she just turned the car around. And the second time I could tell that she was going to turn her head before she did. The change of the focus first was really important, but it lost it because I've been told by her and the rest of her body that she was going to turn the head. There was a few of those. And in the other one, the movement was very similar all you kind of did was seeing differently as if it was faced different ways. You just got a slightly different sense of what was happening because of how it was facing. Where the first one, seems to have lost a sense of the pacing of it, I don't know whether, because it had a beautiful rhythm to it the first time I saw it, that I did not see the second time. I think partly because, the movement's changed and there was these extra added things. And the use of the space as well, she drove a little bit further, which had something to do with that pacing as well and that was very clear, I had a very strong sense of sound score with what she did last time with the subtlety of it. There was more power and intensity in her physicality and all that, but then you are not getting back that sense of it. It's hard to describe.

Appendix 4: Chatfield's Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance

Panel's Code: _____

Participant's code: _____

LEVEL

Level scores of 1 to 5 indicate: Score _____

1. Nondancer
2. Beginner
3. Intermediate
4. Advanced
5. Professional

ITEMS

Item scores of 1 to 3 indicate:	Scores	
1. Below average for level	Skill	_____
2. Average for level	Space	_____
3. Above average for level	Time	_____
	Energy	_____
	Phrasing	_____
	Presence	_____

Chatfield, S.J. (2009). A test for evaluating proficiency in dance. *Journal of Dance Medicine & Science*. 13, 108 – 114.

The progressive proficiency table

Level	Technique	Space, time, and energy	Phrasing	Presence
Nondancer	No apparent intention to control technique	No obvious manipulation, incidental success	Unaware, repetitious	Self-conscious, extended concentration breaks
Beginner	Rudimentary technique, dance class vocabulary apparent	Attempts to control and contrast lack detail, frequent errors	Rudiments present but lacking in cohesion and transition	Work oriented, periodic concentration breaks
Intermediate	Obviously trained, vocabulary limited to moderate difficulty	Consistent control and contrast within isolated concerns	Obvious grasp of concept but phrases frequently unrealized	Work oriented, intense concentration, infrequent breaks
Advanced	Control of difficult skills sometimes separate from expressive intent	Typically well executed contrasts within incorporating multiple elements simultaneously	Consistently good phrasing with a sense of unity, variety and transition	Predominantly work oriented, no concentration breaks, a sense of performance
Experts	A full range of skills, some difficult, fluidly facilitate expressive intentions	Fluent juxtapositions of integrated contrasts	Excellent unity, variety and transition	Performance oriented, transparent concentration

Chatfield, S.J. (2009). A test for evaluating proficiency in dance. *Journal of Dance Medicine & Science*. 13, 108 – 114.

Appendix 5: Results of Chatfield's Test for Evaluating Proficiency in Dance

Appendix 6: Participant information sheet

MSc Dance Science

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

TITLE OF PROJECT

Enhancing stage presence through somatic approaches.

OBJECTIVE

The project proposes to evaluate if a somatic intervention can help enhance stage presence.

PROCEDURE

- Sign consent form
- A medical ParQ form will be filled by the participant before each intervention.
- Participants will be given a verbal summary of the testing aims and methods.
- Additional questions will be answered
- Participants will take part in a somatic intervention, and will perform live in front of judges.
- All the interventions and performances will be filmed with the consent of the participant. A short documentary will be created at the end of the project, all implicated participant will be fully credited and their personnel information will be kept confidential.

EXPECTED BENEFITS

This study's purpose is to see if Somatic approaches can help students develop a better stage presence. Through this analysis I hope to show positive findings which can inform teachers on how to prepare dancers for stage and performance in future.

PARTICIPATION

Your permission to perform these tests is strictly voluntary. You are free to deny consent and discontinue your participation at any time if you so wish.

FORMALITY

The Ethics Committee of Laban has reviewed and approved this project. Feedback will be given to all participants involved in this project as soon as possible upon completion of data analysis. All data collected will remain confidential and used only for the purposes of this research study.

ENQUIRES

Questions about the procedures used in the tests are encouraged. If you have any questions or need additional information, please ask the researcher to explain further.

PRIMARY RESEARCHER CONTACT INFORMATION

Karine Rathle: karine.rathle@gmail.com
078 5454 6460

PROGRAMME LEADER CONTACT INFORMATION

If there is an aspect of the study that concerns you, you may make a complaint via Emma Redding (MSc Programme Leader) at

020 8469 942 - e.redding@laban.org

Appendix 7: Consent forms

**MSc Dance Science
INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

Title of Project:

Enhancing stage presence through somatics approaches.

Please read the following statements carefully. Please sign only when you have agreed with the statements and when you have had any relevant questions answered

By signing this form I conform that:

- I am willing to take part in this test.
- The test and its procedures have been fully explained to me. I am clear about what will be involved and the purpose and potential benefits of the test.
- I am aware there may be possible risks involved in this test and these risks have been explained to me. I understand that every effort will be made to minimize these risks based on information that I have provided and observations carried out by the tester throughout the test.
- I have/will inform the person conducting the test about my medical condition I am currently suffering from or have suffered from which may affect or be affected by the test.
- I am free to withdraw from the test at any time without necessarily giving a reason.

Your participation in this investigation and all data collected from the above testing procedures will remain strictly confidential. Only the researchers involved in this study will have access to your information and the information will not be accessible to any other member of staff. In compliance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and the Freedom of Information (2000), you will be able to access all information collected upon the completion of the study.

I have read the Information Sheet and Consent Form and I fully understand the testing procedures. I consent to participate in these tests.

Participant Name (please print): _____ Date:

Signature:

Researcher Name (please print): _____ Date:

Signature:

MSc Dance Science
CONSENT FORM FOR FILMING THE STUDY

Please read the following statements carefully. Please sign only when you have agreed with the statements and when you have had any relevant questions answered

By signing this form I conform that:

- I am willing to be filmed for the interviews, showings and interventions for the duration of the study.
- I give my consent for the researcher on this study to use the videos taken for the study; I understand that I will be recognized in the videos.
- I give my consent for the researcher to use these videos for the presentation of her thesis study.
- I am free to withdraw from the test at any time without necessarily giving a reason.

Only the researchers involved in this study will have access to your information and the information will not be accessible to any other member of staff. In compliance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and the Freedom of Information (2000), you will be able to access all information collected upon the completion of the study.

I have read the Information Sheet and Consent Form and I fully understand the testing procedures. I consent to participate in these tests.

Participant Name (please print): _____ **Date:**

Signature:

Researcher Name (please print): _____ **Date:**

Signature:

Appendix 8: Medical Par-Q questionnaire

MODIFIED MEDICAL PAR-Q and CONSENT FORM

Please read the following carefully and answer as accurately as possible.

	Yes	No
1. Have you ever suffered from low blood pressure?
2. Have you ever been prescribed a long-term course of steroids or anything to thin your blood?
3. Has your doctor ever said you have heart trouble?
4. Do you suffer frequently from chest pains?
5. Do you often feel faint or have dizzy spells?
6. Has a doctor ever said you have epilepsy?
7. Has a doctor ever said you have high blood pressure?
8. Has a doctor ever said you have diabetes?
9. Has a doctor ever said you have asthma?
10. Do you have a bone, joint or muscular problem which may be aggravated by exercise?
11. Do you have any form of injury
12. Are you currently taking any prescription medications?
13. Have you suffered from a viral illness in the last 2 weeks?
14. Is there anything in your past medical history that you have not mentioned so far on this questionnaire (conditions, diseases)? Please give details:		

Adapted from Chisholm, D.M., Collins, M.I, Davenport, W., Gruber, N. & Kulack, L.L. 1975. PAR-Q validation report. British Columbia Journal, 17.

If you have answered YES to any of the above questions, please inform the researcher.