

Dramatic Philosophy: Imagine a World

Space, Silent Dialogue Sensibility and Serenity

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ABSTRACT

Dramatic representations have long been conceived as provocations for philosophical engagement. From Plato and Hypatia through Brecht and Sartre, Beauvoir and Duras, they have provided fertile ground for considerations about what it means to live a moral life, what it means to engage the moral imagination and how dramatic dialogue impacts on the realization of reasonable connections between humanity's participants. In this paper I explore the notion that space, silent dialogue, sensibility and serenity are vital components towards a thinking drama that has at its heart notions of compassion, empathy and peace. Carefully constructed dramatic and philosophical encounters enlivened with these elements have the capacity to positively transform prevailing social distortions such as hatred, and fear of the Other, and develop amongst people a new reality of social consciousness and justice that repels ambivalence, finding instead breath in action and kindness: a space where dramatic representations as provocations for philosophical inquiry combine with social conditions to become an active social process involving radical innovative projections that are guided but never dominated. Furthermore, the mechanism of the *Just Story* is outlined as a tool for communication with others about essential qualities necessary for a reasonable life. Creative intrusions throughout the paper serve as links to the metaphor implicit in the notion of silent dialogue. Key Words: space, silent dialogue, sensibility, serenity, provocations, moral imagination, empathy, compassion, ethical, transformation, the Other, a *Just Story*.

Barriers to Freedom

She took a step into the abyss, well stumbled really. It was slippery there, a slippery slope only seconds from pure anarchy. She knew. She must hold on, someone had to guard the ethical standards. Why change anything? How could there be life without borders? Be reasonable. Who would be in charge? Would it be the pragmatists? Would it be the continentals, or perhaps the exotics? And what of literature that lofty lord of the salon; would it be forced onto the same park bench as 'popular fiction'. Would she have to wait constantly, vigilantly for Godot? How could Shakespeare's great Macbeth be considered along side The Very Hungry Caterpillar, or Pixie for that matter? Actors and vagabonds as philosophers, absurd, plying their trade imagination, and sleeping rough with a moral compass nowhere to be seen. And as for the idea of seeking to walk in the shoes of the Other, she was quite comfortable in the shoes of the expert thank you. Stuff and nonsense this talk of borderless harmony in the clutch of philosophy, it wouldn't be proper to let just anyone engage in this high-end pursuit. And, Philosophy with Children, don't be ridiculous.

PREAMBLE

For over twenty years I have been developing a particular performance character as a stimulus for philosophical inquiry, my purpose being to provide an 'as real' experience for those who interacted with her. I was quite clear about what I wanted to achieve with this character, and that was to provide communities with the opportunity to meet first hand someone whom otherwise they would not have contact because of her marginalized position in society. My quest was to enroll members of the community of inquiry in an 'as real' experience that had the power to elicit empathy

and thereby compassion. It was not my intention to create a '*walk in my shoes*' scenario. She is a manifestation of my own life but in a different temporal space. Her name is May. When I began the creation of May, I drew on my own autobiography, grounded in metaphor, projected into the future and imagined into various outcomes that could logical and reasonably impact on my own life if we shared the same temporal space. *There but for the grace of time go I*; was my guiding light, shining on the reality of the transformation.

During the time of May's existence many people have interacted with her, they have wept with compassion at her lot and been charmed by her wicked sense of humor. Children and adults alike instantly find her humanity and their kindness is deep and abiding. Communities of Inquiries throughout the world have been provoked (in the most positive way) to take on complex philosophical questions about fairness, respect, love, kindness, equity, transformation, happiness, loss and beauty to name but a few of the deep concepts explored.

The story of May is a *Just Story* as it arises in the facilitator as a direct result of the internal experience of the facilitator. However, at no time if this overt or literal nor does it grow through the appropriation of the stories of another or the Other. Drinking from the well of autobiography ensures ethical implementation. As does heeding the words of Iris Marion Young: "...we must be open to learning about the person's perspective, since we cannot take the other person's standpoint and imagine that standpoint as our own."¹

¹ Young, Iris Marion. *Asymmetrical Reciprocity: On Moral Respect, Wonder and*

DRAMATIC PHILOSOPHY AND SPACE

Dramatic Philosophy is an engagement with the Other that seeks space for philosophical exploration of the Other alongside oneself as the Other. The space arises and expands as the breeze of silent dialogue cools the need for chatter. Like the sweetest art house film the space of silence is exquisite, expanding its inhabitants in reflection and wonder; in the philosophical, creative and imaginative encounter. It is a space that engages with authenticity and courage; it is an embrace: it is the sum of all these elements. Dramatic Philosophy creates with communities through the co-construction of the story, and distances itself from hierarchical shadows and the darkness of shrinking space. Grotowski writes in *Towards a Poor Theatre*: “art is a ripening, an evolution, an uplifting which enables us to emerge from the darkness into a blaze of light.”² The sensibility this requires is that which it takes to sacrifice ego and work together to provide sustenance for society by harnessing the moral imagination in the walk toward empathy. It is a long walk to far off distant lands and borderless space and requires determination and stamina and sacrifice. Grotowski puts the question: “Why do we sacrifice so much energy to our art? Not in order to teach others but to learn with them what our existence, our organism, our personal and unrepeatable experience have to give us; to learn to break down the barriers which surround us and to free ourselves from the breaks which hold us back, from the lies about ourselves which we manufacture daily for ourselves and for others; to destroy the limitations caused by our ignorance and lack of courage...”³

At an implementation level it must be said that, just as the most moving art house film relies on a skilled director, so to a facilitator of Dramatic Philosophy does not

² Grotowski, J. 1968 ed. *Towards a Poor Theatre*. Simon and Schuster. USA.

³ *Ibid.* p.11.

abrogate responsibility for the quality of the film but works deftly with cast and crew to create a work of beauty and insight. The facilitator will communicate the strength of silence and the power of resting in space. A drama that relies on hyper manic chaotic and stereotyped predispositions has no place in my world of drama. Dramatic Philosophy has everything to do with patience and the slow reveal, mystery and wonder. It is a form of communication not necessarily restricted by words; questions and responses may be simply through a furtive smile, a simple gesture; a caring nod an admonishing frown. It is in this space of silence that sensibility grows, independently arising from reflection and the power of silent dialogue.

Dramatic Philosophy provides a space in which to investigate and clarify important philosophical concepts such as rights and virtue through communal engagement with characters and scenarios within a theatrical environment. Philosophical positions reached may not have longevity and will, ideally, transform through time in response to the needs of community, rather than remain steadfast and unwavering. That is not to say relativists lurk in the Woods of Drama, simply that the 'Art' of philosophy is in its ability to respond as a river to rain, moving, replenishing, giving and at times delivering danger. In the interim the philosophy creates an environmental reality for its inhabitants, a set of attitudes and needs, wants and desires, a 'moving philosophy' to contribute to. People will vary in their response to a stated philosophy; the response is personal though the basis is social. Follow too closely and you will be branded a fanatic and a danger to society, like Hypatia; diverge too far and you will, like Giordano Bruno, be branded a deviant; a heretic. Rorty writes "Philosophers who attempt to articulate principles for social justice are

seen as threatening the established order.”⁴ Dramatic Philosophy is informed by a commitment to ‘threatening the established order’, and to doing so in an open space for all to see; to experimentation and borderless lands; to provoking and philosophizing around and in between issues of social justice whilst directing the ‘film’ toward the development of a better citizen. By ‘better’ I mean citizens with a heightened sense of compassion, creativity, imagination, desire, authenticity and freedom. Rorty again: “Different as they all were, radically critical philosophical figures like Nietzsche, Marx and Sartre thought it necessary to present their attacks on superstition and tyranny as ushering in a freer, more exuberant, more honest mode of life.”⁵

DRAMATIC PHILOSOPHY AND SENSIBILITY

Dramatic Philosophy is political, arising as it does from the moral imaginings of what it means to live a good life and what it means to be a good member of the community. In this context ‘good’ is taken to mean that quality that is the cause of compassion within that space called ‘community’ and that causes a state where sensibility to the Other, is evidenced by care and respect. In stretching the space open to sensibility Dramatic Philosophy considers and questions. What thoughts lie beyond the abyss? How can the moral imagination be ignited for and by the good of human kind? What is the relationship between creativity and philosophy? How can these notions be explored with sensitivity within the context of philosophical rigor?

⁴ Rorty, Amelie. The Dramatic Sources of Philosophy, *Philosophy and Literature* © 2008, 32: 11-30.

⁵ Ibid. p.12

These are the questions that Dramatic Philosophy embraces with the reverence of the autobiography of Marguerite Duras, *The Lover* creating as it does such powerful images of light and shadow, lively rivers and verdant vegetation and the want of humanity to create desire unparalleled. The imagery of Duras creates a powerful and reflective space, holding as it does the wand of the philosophical and the magic of authenticity informed by the power of autobiography. I return to the relationship between autobiography and ethical character development later in the paper when appropriation is discussed. Dramatic Philosophy responds to basic need areas of community such as justice and transformation; beauty and happiness, and in so doing explores a totality of experience necessary for the individual to function and flourish ethically within society and enliven their relationships with freedom. Whilst the community determines the ‘needs’ from within the community, this is not a case of forfeiture on the part of the facilitator; in fact the facilitator must extend herself to a degree that creates believable and convincing scenarios through which issues of social justice can be observed and ‘as real’ responses interpreted. The ultimate goal of such inquiry is not to *impart* knowledge, but to contribute, through rich imaginative thinking, creative reflection and symbolic sustenance to a new kind of person ‘better’ and more effective than the present day citizen. Michelè Le Doeuff questions the personalization of knowledge: “But to what extent is knowledge personalized - that is, bears the mark of the person - and to what extent is it not? Or, which stages of the inquiry are influenced by the person and which are not?”⁶

⁶ Le Doeuff, Michelè. “Women Reason Etc.” in *Difference: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, (2.3 1990).

This new kind of person is cognizant of the past, kinesthetically bonded with the present and, with the clarity of Galileo's telescope, directed into the future and towards hope. It is this hope that enlivens a reasonable life. The project that is Dramatic Philosophy does not seek the *acquisition* of knowledge; but instead, through the embrace of authenticity, facilitates opportunities for engagement with past and present social conditions in order that the relationship becomes an active social process involving radical innovative projections, such as strategies for peace, through imaginative discourse, which is guided skillfully but never dominated. Simone de Beauvoir supports this process: "There is only one way to employ her liberty authentically, and that is to project it through positive action in human society."⁷

For the drama/philosophy project to be a truly authentic experience, the design must operate in theory and in practice. That is to say, if the community is exploring the notion of fairness, for example, the structural workings of the Community of Inquiry will actually embody fairness as well as the dialogue that arises in direct response to stimulus that seeks understandings about fairness. "And if-whether at a philosophy conference or in a kindergarten-the doing of philosophy is creative then the philosophy that has been done well will necessarily manifest creativity."⁸

In this form Dramatic Philosophy can be regarded as a force for change in society and will have the capacity to enter into conflict with other social processes, where necessary, in pursuit of worthwhile goals such as liberty. Through refined drama instillations prevailing social norms will be analyzed, criticized and reconstructed

⁷ Beauvoir, Simone de. 1956 ed. *The Second Sex*. Trans. H.M. Parshley. Jonathan Cape. London. p. 640

⁸ Lipman, Matthew. 1988 ed. *Philosophy Goes to School*. Temple University Press. Philadelphia.

according to communitarian values. The work must be crafted with skill and mindfulness for the space of the Other, in order to create an interface which manifests an ethical framework towards social justice, sensibility and the agency of each participant. “Indeed, along with the ethical urge of each individual to affirm his subjective existence, there is also a temptation to forgo liberty and become a thing. This is an inauspicious road, for he who takes it - passive, lost, ruined - becomes henceforth the creature of another’s will, frustrated in his transcendence and deprived of every value. But it is an easy road; on it one avoids the strain involved in undertaking an authentic experience.”⁹

Troubadours and Experts

The words came flinging from the nostrils of the expert beast, “You’re type aren’t welcome here.” She, the Other, who was that because she was a troubadour, let out a whimper, a sad sound resplendent in its incardination, her tongue cut out and not yet stitched: she wanted to say, would have said t’was not for this; that things were more complex. But the ‘expert’ had flounced. The troubadour left alone with her lonely mind, that mind which inhabited her foreign body; wondered through fields of dramatic sustenance, over hills of philosophical peaks. She walked in lanes of literature and threaded through a theatre of clouds. Then, just as she started to settle on the Sun, a mighty roar, and “You don’t belong here” it was the ‘expert’ again. How had it come to this? Her instrument, tongue and seeing vessels plundered for her path, then cast aside: Always to be the Other.

⁹ Beauvoir, Simone de. 1956 ed. *The Second Sex*. p. 20.

DRAMATIC PHILOSOPHY AND SERENITY

Dramatic representations as provocations for philosophical engagement will, in seeking authenticity, not forfeit creativity or imagination, instead it will applaud the power of serenity. This device is not unlike Brecht's idea of 'a play within a play' in that the ideology (through the text and approach) and the practice (through the delivery and service) combine to create forms that exist without borders and are legitimate partners in the business of making philosophical progress. Of communities Michelè Le Doeuff stresses the depth of their contribution to understandings: "It is very important to stress the fact that today areas of knowledge or various learnings are produced in communities. We should get rid of the old question on 'who is producing the theory?' which is old fashioned anyway, irrelevant to the understanding of the theoretical."¹⁰ Just as Brecht's approach calls to mind Grotowski's, blaze of light: so too does Dramatic Philosophy in that it moves from the shadows of formula and the glare of the 'expert' and asks, in fact commands, critique from the green thumbs of thinking. The new environment provides nourishment for the philosophical process; People with Philosophy plant together with the Other, producing sustenance for a thinking community that grows rich because of its social and political nature grounded in communitarian principles and care with the Other. This form of communitarianism is not the space of the relativist. It is a space for growth, an idea for a reasonable life. It is philosophy with people and sets aside the dualism that sets children apart from others, which in so doing makes children the Other.

¹⁰ Le Doeuff, Michelè. "Ants and Women, or Women without Borders." *Contemporary French Philosophy*, A. Phillips Griffith ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). P53.

A JUST STORY

For the purposes of this paper the form of provocations is limited to interactions with *authentic character* in the context of group role drama/theatre, as a glimpse to reality. Of course there are many other instruments in the kit bag of the troubadour such as those interactions that are literature based and include plays, prose, poetry, picture books and stories, props, photographs and visual art forms that are just as valid. Indeed applying breadth and generosity to the limits of provocations and the idea of one hundred languages¹¹, assists in ensuring that there are many and varied possibilities available that will maximize opportunities for response for a range of learning styles and modes of engagement, ages and environmental factors and levels of experience and projected experience that embrace freedom and positive transformation. “We need a type of theatre which not only releases the feelings, insights and impulses possible within the particular historical field of human relations in which the action takes place, but employs and encourages those thoughts and feelings which help transform the field itself.”¹²

In order to create *authentic characters* some very basic performance techniques are required which is not to say that those engaging with Dramatic Philosophy need be trained actors or anything approaching that, however techniques such as breath control, vocal quality, fluidity, and developing and maintaining character will help.

¹¹ Malguzzi, Loris. In 2nd ed. *The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach-Advanced Reflections*. Editors. C. Edwards. L. Gandini. G. Forman. Ablex Publishing, London.

¹² Brecht, Bertolt. 1964 ed. *In Brecht on Theatre; The Development of an Aesthetic*. ed. and trans. J. Willet. Hill and Wang. New York. p.35

More importantly however, are the ethics of character development. Creating and sharing a *Just Story* is literature and thought in action; a temporal space for open dialogue that allows for the sensibilities of the individual. For a story (like the story of May) to be justified it will enlighten and enliven the narrative of the session whilst representing personal power in action, exploring never dominating. In this context the facilitator (in character), in concert with the community, will explore elements of a *Just Story* that are necessary in the pursuit of freedom: for example for a story to be '*just*' its content must apportion no blame to others or the Other. The facilitator (in character) engages with the community in deep inquiry around the links between freedom and the expression of freedom that is authenticity and reflects with them on various manifestations of the question: How can the existent best ensure a life that is a project illustrative of, but not dependent on, these factors?

What is of paramount importance is the motivation of the facilitator and the character she inhabits with the drama. Her embodied character will manifest her own freedom and not restrict the freedom of others as she engages the community of inquiry. Motivation is vital here because it exists without the help or hindrance of methodology, translation or talent, and allows for a less than perfectly or overtly expressed intention to be understood as authentic. Explicitly, I am thinking about the depth and passion of motivation of asylum seekers with whom I am greatly honored to have worked, who flee their homelands in the most desperate of circumstances. Occasionally they may not have the skills to read and/or write in their first language, nor speak in the language of the 'ruling class' but there is no mistaking their intentions with regards to their application of and commitment to freedom and authenticity.

Dramatic Philosophy does not capriciously restrict exploration but, in both theory and practice, provides an environment of freedom whose only constraint is philosophical rigor. I put, therefore, that the “experts” should treat the drama/philosophy alliance more graciously. It is the immediacy and embodiment which one is able to achieve through the drama/philosophy partnership that creates profound opportunities for participants in the community of inquiry. That is not to say that I go so far as to propose that one can ever put oneself in the position of the other, only that one might, through dramatic interactions of the Other, generate greater understanding, and it is this greater understanding that feeds the communitarian ideal. Mackenzie and Scully put it this way: “Imagination, including the moral imagination, is conventionally considered to be a purely mental capacity. This reflects those conceptualizations of the mind that view it as something like pure intelligence or rationality, isolated from its physical and social surroundings. We want to suggest, however, that imagination is fundamentally an embodied capacity of the mind; and further that because of this, being/having a specific form of embodiment places real constraints on our capacity both to imagine ourselves otherwise and to imaginatively put ourselves in the place of others.”¹³

Although I put great store in the value and ability of the moral imagination to understand the Other, I stop short of claiming that one can ever truly walk in the shoes of the Other because from whatever experiential realm a “story” comes it will, necessarily, suffer from observational constriction due to the impossibility of universal coverage of the subject of existence. However, while I find much of interest

¹³ Mackenzie and Scully. Moral Imagination, Disability and Embodiment. *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, Vol. 24, No. 4, 2007.p. 324

in the work of Mackenzie and Scully on this matter, I put the theory that because of the kinesthetic nature of drama and subsequent possibilities for embodiment the drama/philosophy project takes some steps towards realizing the moral imagination even if not to the extent of creating empathy.

A Just Story is a device, which *should* be used when communities engage with drama/philosophy as it ensures that characters do not fall into caricature; that characters are not the appropriations of the stories of others, or the Other; and that authenticity of characterization is realized. It *should* be based around ones autobiography and the infusing of this material into characters being enacted. What is *vital* to note here is that the use of autobiography as a device towards authentic character development is not at all overt; it is not about sharing ones own personal story or stories with a group as one might do at a support group meeting. It is about the inner translation of autobiographical material in order to develop an authentic character that is founded in reality but devoid of ego. It has everything to do with making reasonable connections with others and the Other, through the commonality of humanity. It is not about acting but about being. *A Just Story* is recognizable by the quality it has to move others in a real and present sense. It will be sensitive to the philosophy of Dramatic Philosophy as expressed previously and hold the ethics of non-appropriation at its core. It is ones own story that gives authenticity to situations and manifestations that develop in role drama and characters. Each person is a storyteller in this situation and it is of paramount importance that the storyteller has a positive motivation; that is to manifest their own freedom and not restrict that of others. Motivation is a very important element here because it exists without the help or hindrance of methodology, translation or talent, and allows for a less than perfectly executed *role* to still be understood as authentic. And that is to be applauded. It is about creating inventive,

imaginative discourses with the Other, in ways that are sensitive, compassionate and compelling for all members of the community and are not copied from others or the Other and are not exploitative. Lipman says of the copyist: “ But performance is not just a matter of skill, or even the skill of orchestrating a set of skills. The *interpretation* of the performer is based on her *conception* of the work to be performed, and this provides the creative element missing in the performance of the copyist.”¹⁴

Very often dramas as provocation for the philosophical project are developed and actualized in such a way as to underestimate their full potential. The art form becomes self-indulgent and denies the true purpose of the project, which is to serve the community. It becomes a process that, like sunscreen, is simply applied to the surface thus *preventing* something from occurring. Whereas a *Just Story* is like dancing, communities move together, at times following set moves and at other times experimenting; sometimes together and sometimes solo. All members have their own internal music, which still finds chords within the community.

It is of paramount importance when creating, and engaging in drama as provocation, that facilitators operate from within the inquiry, not as soothsayers or snake oil sellers skirting skeptically on the edge and applying the tinctures of egocentric control. Facilitators must possess a well-developed conception of the ethics of appropriation, as they approach or enact the Other within the community of inquiry. For, just as plagiarism is unethical because it appropriates the writing of others, so too is the appropriation of the stories of the Other unethical in that it

¹⁴ Lipman, Matthew. 1988 ed. *Philosophy Goes to School*. Temple University Press. Philadelphia. p.176.

restricts the personal freedom of the Other. “ Now that the notion of thinking in images has come to acquire a degree of cultural respectability it is no longer feasible to go on ignoring the importance of imagery in philosophy, but this does not mean that its theorization becomes an easy task.”¹⁵

Borders and Gobstoppers

She wanted others to know what it was like to live a life of hardship charred by the contempt of others; a life of deprivation; of fear for oneself, ones family, ones community. A fear that was chill, dark and ever present as it wandered all around, trod on her eggs, sat on her shoulder and spat, crept under her skin and over her clothes eating her skin; fear that laughed, mocked, squirmed and circled; a fear that ruled only by its power; its constriction of freedom and appropriation of self. But she would never know the lives of others, those with lofty ideas of Brecht and the Bauhaus. Those whose mirror musings reflected their own glory and like gobstoppers silenced their own wailing of inconvenience She would have to make do with imagining. She was the Other..... the borders were closed. Her story yet to unfold....

A *moving inquiry* is one that is ignited by the moral imagination and fertilized by connection with others and the Other; it has a communitarian value without relativism, a vitality necessary for a reasonable life, a commitment to the exploration of empathy, and a disposition towards lighting pathways towards reasonable connections. A *moving inquiry* is moved by a *Just Story*, it is a community that is

¹⁵ Le Doeuff, Michelè. “Women Reason Etc.” in *Difference: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, (2.3 1990). p.2.

moved by the humanity of engagement; a community that is given, at least to some degree, the opportunity to enter into an *'as real'* relationship with the Other.

To ensure, as far as is possible, that character interactions are mindful and sensitive authenticity must be valued as the sufficient condition for the creation of drama provocations, authenticity that draws one to the Other and seeks understanding through engagement with the Other. It demands that the facilitator and other participants, as they take on roles within a drama, draw on their own understandings and are industrious in the rejection of ego and a desire to 'act'. Children do this with some ease, as they inhabit characters together with classmates and friends in order to make sense of their world. It's called play. Vansieleghem puts the challenge: "So, the challenge for education is to create a space where children can encounter the other and where they can start the quest to find out what this encounter means? A space where the collective search for the question 'What happens to me, why does it happen, and what do I have to do with it?' can start."¹⁶ It is not the role of drama to interfere with this process, but rather to identify genuine points of engagement, which provoke interest. The philosophical juncture occurs when the child inhabits the question (not necessarily asks a question) and in so doing proffers a range of reasons.

Adults for the most part must dig a little deeper than children in order to find something true, a place where the imagination is fueled from within as well as from external sources, a place that values reflection on humanity as its core where there is room for adults and children to meet as people with philosophy. A *moving inquiry* allows for the loosening of the static support in favor of a less definite path. That is

¹⁶ Vansieleghem, Nancy. Philosophy for Children as the Wind of Thinking. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 39, No.1 2005. p. 29.

not to say that this form of philosophical engagement is one of forfeiture, indeed it demands much of the facilitator who must be prepared at all times to respond to the nuances of the imaginative project.

For a *Moving Inquiry* to be established in a way that realizes maximum benefit for the inhabitants of the process, drama/philosophy intersections should encourage co-operation alongside Dewey's "optimum level of discomfort."¹⁷ Inhabitants in this process will feel the full humanity of the Other and, in so doing, will be provoked into philosophical reflection about the Other. The tension compels participants to move into an inquiry, which is both physical and philosophical. The project supports new forms of discourse within communities connecting with others, and the Other about what it means to be human and what values may be essential for a reasonable life.

Ideally the relationship between drama and philosophy which engages participants to 'move' into an inquiry, to use their bodies in space and to have at its core the rejection of personal ambition. That is not to say that one should not strive for excellence but simply that room should always be made for a 'moving' interaction with situations and for the growth of the dramatic/philosophical project. Credibility of motivation and an ability to let the process be observed in the light, as a *pas de deux*, is essential in order to ensure that true philosophical progress is made. A *moving inquiry* enables choreographers and dancers to move with grace and to push their gifts to the limits of their bodies. A *moving inquiry* allows for the philosophical to be physicalized and inhabited in the quest for authenticity.

¹⁷ Dewey, John. 1966 ed. *Democracy and Education*. Collier-Macmillan. Canada, Ltd., Toronto, Ontario.

IN CONCLUSION

The power of employing dramatic representations as provocations towards philosophical engagement relies on building opportunities for interaction through social activity with the Other, thus ensuring the process functions at a practical level, thereby creating open environments for developing ‘real’ conversations that support thinking through deep understanding. Through a variety of (as if real) interactions with the Other, communities are compelled to inquire together as well as individually about what it means to live a reasonable life. This differs from other kinds of stimulus as they propel the community to enter into some sort of relationship with the Other. It is not a matter of imagining oneself in the place of the Other, but an attempt to gain greater understanding of the Other. Such projects allow for interaction with the Other in a way that enables reasonable connections and supports creative engagements. Fluidity, not forfeiture, replaces restrictive structures, and partnerships are created within a truly imaginative and compassionate environment that fosters authentic comprehension. In so doing the project supports new forms of discourse within communities, connecting with others and the Other about what it means to be human and what values may be essential for a reasonable life. While it is not necessarily the case that an active moral imagination leads to an increased ability to empathize it may be that imagination when tempered with the reflective quality of right intention at least puts oneself in the mindset of moral engagement and thus allows for more legitimate interaction with the Other and a understanding of the Other. And from Plato: “The imitator or maker of the image knows nothing of true existence; he knows appearances only. Am I not right?”¹⁸

¹⁸ Plato. *Extracts from the Republic, 10; para. 601. The Works of Plato.* Trans. B. Jowett. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1881.

