ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE & THE PERFORMING ARTS CONFERENCE

21 - 23 September, 2012
CONFERENCE PROGRAM

DAY 1: FRIDAY 21 SEPTEMBER, 2012

Morning Session

9.30AM - 10.30AM  Registration, Morning Tea
10.30AM - 11.30AM  Welcome and opening address
11.30AM - 1AM  An Introduction to the Alexander Technique: Dancers and Theatre Performers (Workshop - Dance and Theatre)

Presenter: Cathy Madden, USA

Performing with Ease: An Introduction to the Alexander Technique for Musicians (Workshop/Master Class/Auditors - Music)

Presenter: Michael Stenning, AUS

11.30AM - 12.15PM  Psychophysical Acting (Presentation - Theatre)

Presenter: Rose Whyman, UK

12.15PM - 1PM  Collaborative Teaching in the Dance Studio (Presentation - Dance)

Presenter: Dr Natalie Garrett Brown, UK

LUNCH

Afternoon Session

2PM - 3.30PM  The Art of Breathing (Workshop - Dance, Music, Theatre)

Presenter: Greg Seel, USA

3.30PM - 4.00PM  BREAK

4.00PM - 5.30PM  Sing Out Loud (Workshop - Dance, Music, Theatre)

4.00PM - 4.45PM  Deweyan pragmatism: Barstow, Madden and the Alexander Technique (Presentation - Music)

Presenter: Amanda Cole, USA

DAY 1 CLOSE

7.30PM - 10.30PM  Conference Dinner

Keynote Address: Cathy Madden
DAY 2: SATURDAY 22 SEPTEMBER, 2012

Morning Session

9.30AM - 10.00AM  
Registration, Morning Tea

10.00AM - 11.30AM  
A Psychophysical Re-Education on the Use of the Self  
(Workshop/Masterclass/Auditors - Musicians)  
Presenter: Diana Devitt-Dawson, AUS & Robert Schubert, AUS

Theatrical Biomechanics (Workshop – Theatre and Dance)  
Presenter: Kathleen Baum, USA

11.30AM - 11.45AM  
BREAK

11.45AM - 1.15PM  
Orchestral Performance (Workshop/Master Class/Auditors – Music)  
Presenter: Peter Grunwald NZ

A Mirror, a Mask and an Actor  
Integrating the Alexander Technique into Early Actor Training  
(Master Class/Auditors– Theatre)  
Presenter: Julianne Everleigh, AUS & Paul Hampton, AUS

LUNCH

Afternoon Session

2.15PM - 3.45PM  
Image Rehabilitation for the Electronically Raised Performer  
(Workshop/Master Class/Auditors - Dance, Theatre)  
Presenter: Cathy Madden USA

3.45PM - 4.00PM  
BREAK

4.00PM - 5.30PM  
Dynamic Tools for Audition Technique  
(Workshop/Master Class/Auditors– Theatre)  
Presenter: Jennifer Mackerras UK

4.00PM - 4.45PM  
A Curriculum in Alexander Technique for Orchestral Musicians  
(Presentation – Music)  
Presenter: Janet Davies AUS

DAY 2 CLOSE

8.00PM  
Special Event - Concert

DAY 3: SUNDAY 23 SEPTEMBER, 2012

Morning Session

9.30AM - 10.00AM  
Registration, Morning Tea

10.00AM - 11.30AM  
Essential Movement Practices (Workshop – Dance)  
Presenter: Timothy Gordon NZ

Performing with Ease  
(Colloquia for participants from previous workshop - Music)  
Presenter: Michael Stenning AUS

10.45AM - 11.30AM  
Playing-related Musculoskeletal Disorders in Tertiary Orchestral Music Students: Rates, Risk Factors and Presentation  
(Presentation – Music)  
Presenter: Ann Shoebridge AUS, Robert Schubert AUS

11.30AM - 11.45AM  
BREAK

11.45AM - 1.15PM  
Moving into Imagination  
(Workshop/Master Class/Auditors – Dance, Theatre)  
Presenter: Nimah Dowling UK

LUNCH

Afternoon Session

2.15PM - 3.45PM  
Investigation into Common Problems in Singing  
(Workshop/Master Class – Music)  
Presenter: Jenny Thirtle AUS

Chekhov Scene Study  
(Master Class – Theatre)  
Presenter: Greg Seel USA

3.45PM - 4.00PM  
BREAK

4.00PM - 5.30PM  
Dynamic Tools for Audition Technique  
(Workshop/Master Class/Auditors– Theatre)  
Presenter: Jennifer Mackerras UK

4.00PM - 4.45PM  
A Curriculum in Alexander Technique for Orchestral Musicians  
(Presentation – Music)  
Presenter: Janet Davies AUS

CONFERENCE CLOSE

8.00PM  
Special Event - Concert
KATHLEEN BAUM is an actress, movement coach, and theatre teacher, is on the faculties of Syracuse University and the Eugene O’Neill Theatre Centre. She holds an MFA in physical theatre from Syracuse University. In 2011 Kathleen completed her teacher training at Alexander Technique of Syracuse to qualify for certification with the American Society for the Alexander Technique (AmSAT) www.amsatonline.org. From 1993 to 2002 Kathleen travelled extensively in both the US and Europe, performing for and studying with director Gennady Bogdanov, the leading Russian exponent of the living tradition of Meyerhold. As a teacher and a coach, she has offered movement technique and Biomechanics at a long list of American theatre programs and at theatres in the US, Canada, and Europe. Kathleen generated the translation for the English language version of the video collaboration between Mr. Bogdanov and the Berlin Mime Centre, Meyerhold’s Theatre and Biomechanics. Her article on the relationship between the Alexander Technique and actor training—and Meyerhold's Biomechanics—will appear in the next edition of The AmSAT Journal.

Kathleen works in the Department of Drama Syracuse University, New York

JANE COKER is an Alexander Technique teacher (Graduated Melbourne 2010), a group facilitator, musician, singer and community music leader with 30 years experience. She has devised and led training in community singing and music leadership skills for Community Music Victoria since 2002.

AMANDA COLE, originally from Melbourne, born in the US, has lived in Dunedin, New Zealand for the past six years. She is due to complete her PhD at the University of Otago in early 2013. Her research focuses on Alexander, critical pragmatism, Cathy Madden and the teaching of music performance. She has taught at the University of Otago, the University of Melbourne and the VCA. Amanda has a master's degree in music performance, several language qualifications, and an honours degree in medical research. She studied at Monash, Melbourne and the VCA. She has performed in small ensembles with some of Australia’s leading orchestras, including the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Amanda’s more intimate performances have included Australian, New Zealand and world premieres, and she is active in promoting new music by collaborating with local composers and premiering works written for her. In 2011 she received a Creative New Zealand grant for a commission of a song cycle by Dame Gillian Whitehead. Amanda has won many awards and scholarships, including a Churchill Fellowship in 2000, during which she resided at the Welsh National Opera, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Les Arts Florissants, and the Bayerische Staatsoper, and studied in Paris, Munich and Urbana. She was a recent prize-winner in Melbourne’s Mietta Song Recital Award.

As Artist in Residence at Jack Straw Productions in Seattle, USA, Cole recorded a CD of rarely heard Portuguese art songs, released in April 2009. In the prestigious international Journal of Singing, Gregory Berg claimed that anyone who cares about art song needs to own this wonderful recording. “The songs themselves are fascinating and they are given exemplary performances, but it is the comprehensive attention to detail in other matters of presentation that makes this recording so uncommonly satisfying.”

JANET DAVIES studied violin and piano at Sydney Conservatorium and was a member of the Australian Chamber Orchestra. She trained as an Alexander Teacher in Sydney 1983-85, and has since specialised in the application of the Technique to music performance. Over the last 25 years Janet has been teaching violin, string pedagogy and chamber music at Sydney Conservatorium as well as taking Alexander Technique classes for Conservatorium tertiary and High School students. Privately she works with professional players on concert and audition preparation, technique modification and injury rehabilitation. In 2002 she published research on the predictors of musculoskeletal symptoms among professional instrumental musicians. In 2008 she received a Churchill fellowship to visit leading international exponents of both Alexander Technique and violin teaching.
DIANA DEVITT-DAWSON (RM(NdMf, M.STAT, M.AUSTAT, M.AS PAH, M, AIMA) is a health care professional and Head of Training at the Alexander Technique Institute Teacher Training School in North Sydney. Diana has 28 years teaching experience. She studied the Alexander Technique (AT) in London and New York in 1984. While living in London and teaching at the Alexander Teacher Training School in Central London Diana began to see a number of performers, instrumentalists and singers who were seeking the Alexander Technique in order to address a number of difficulties from functional disorders, stress, poor breathing habits to performance anxiety. In 1996 Diana returned to Sydney and set up the Alexander Technique Institute. In 2002 she became Head of Training. In 2004 Diana presented at the International Alexander Congress in Oxford, England. She travels regularly to London and New York to attend conferences and conduct workshops. Since 2008 Diana has presented master classes for music/ theatre students at the Australian Institute of Music, Sydney. She also conducts PD workshops for teachers of the Performing Arts at the Southern Cross Catholic Vocational College, Sydney. In 2011 on a teaching visit to New York, Diana assisted Alex Farkas, the Alexander teacher, at Bard College Conservatory of Music in upstate New York. Diana maintains a busy private practice in North Sydney where she also conducts the Teacher Training School and the Alexander Post Graduate Study Centre. Diana enjoys playing harp and is a member of the Harp Society of NSW. She was a founding member of ASPAH, the Australian Society for Performing Arts Healthcare.

NIAMH DOWLING is Head of School of Theatre at Manchester Metropolitan University and has worked extensively internationally as a Movement Director, leading workshops in UK, Europe, USA, Asia, South and Central America and Russia. Niamh trained as a teacher of The Alexander Technique with Don Burton in Fellside Alexander School in UK and has trained in movement for theatre with Ann Bogart in New York, with Monika Pageux in Paris and currently works closely with Tzvet Posen Kozla in Poland. She has a holistic approach to training with emphasis on interconnectedness of movement, voice and acting. Niamh and Lucia Walker have recently set up an MA Movement Practice for Theatre in the UK to train movement teachers and movement directors for theatre underpinned by the principles of the Alexander Technique which includes study in Poland and USA. See article on Alexander Technique and Actor Training on http://www.stat.org.uk/pages/performers

JULIANNE EVELEIGH Originally trained as an actor in the UK where she worked both in theatre and television before a teaching role in Australia and specialising as a vocal coach. She has spent the past 20 years working with performers, students, teachers, business professionals and anyone interested in exploring their voices. Her work focuses on the dynamic relationship between vocal and physical expression. She believes that the voice does not operate in isolation from the mind and body and she is particularly interested in investigating and developing these subtle connections with her students. Before joining the Arts Academy at the University of Ballarat in 2008, Julianne taught voice at the National Theatre Drama School and at the Victorian College of the Arts on the Acting and Musical Theatre programs. Her interest in working with the embodied voice led her to embark on a three-year Alexander Technique Training course. In 2005, Julianne qualified as an Alexander Technique teacher from the School for F M Alexander Studies in Melbourne. She currently lectures in Voice at the Arts Academy, School of Education and Arts, University of Ballarat.

DR NATALIE GARRETT BROWN currently lectures in Dance at Coventry University where she is the Associate Head for Performing Arts and contributes to undergraduate and postgraduate courses while also supervising doctorate students. She is associate editor for the Journal of Dance and Somatic Practices and she is on the editorial board for the DanceLines section in Research in Dance Education. She has just completed her Somatic Movement Educators Training in Body-Mind Centering with Embody Move Association. Her research interests are theoretically situated within Feminist understandings of embodied subjectivity and she is currently investigating the ways in which somatic practice inform performance making, creativity and writing. She recently co-ordinated the Dance & Somatics Conference at Coventry University with Professor Sarah Whatley http://汲dp.coventry.ac.uk/dsp2011.html Forthcoming publications include a chapter contribution to 2nd Edition of Nine Ways of Seeing A Body, Editor Sandra Reeve, publishers Triarchy Press November 2012 entitled The inter-subjective body or emergent body. Natalie is currently Associate Press, Department of Performing Arts, Coventry University, United Kingdom.

TIMOTHY GORDON (PROF.DIP. SVL-STAT-1998) has had a varied and international career in dance. He has been a dancer with The Australian Ballet Company, Nederlands Dans Theater and Ballet Frankfurt and has taught in some of the world's foremost Ballet companies including The Australian Ballet, The Stuttgart Ballet, Ballet Frankfurt, The Vienna Staatsoper Ballet, The Royal Danish Ballet, The Tokyo Ballet and for five years was a regular guest teacher for the Bejart Ballet - Lausanne, Switzerland. From 1987 - 1990, he was a senior tutor at the Australian Ballet School, Australia's foremost dance institution and has choreographed for both Ballet and Opera. His interest in the work of F. M. Alexander has developed along side his work in dance. Having completed his Alexander training in Fribourg, Switzerland, Timothy has given workshops, seminars and private sessions and has written about the influence of the Alexander Technique on Dance and Ballet in particular.

PETER GRUNWALD (M.STAT, Austat, NZATTS) trained in the Alexander Technique between 1984-1987 in Sydney. He worked extensively with American master teacher Marjory Barstow between 1985-1990. During his training he was able to stammer lifelong by applying the Alexander Technique principles to his speech. For a lapsed stutter Peter was drawn working in small to large group settings as well as using TV and radio media. He engaged in an apprenticeship with Bill and Rosemary Brenner using NLP and the Alexander Technique, especially working in groups. He partook in a series of Powerful Presentation workshops and spontaneous acting classes. In the late 1980s he was beginning on a path to apply the Alexander Technique principles to the process of seeing, along letting go of the need of wearing glasses which he was using wearing from age 3 onwards.

For the past 20 years Peter developed and refined the process of Inhibition and Direction to brain function affecting the entire visual system and the body respectively. His research and process-oriented method based on F.M. Alexander's principles is known worldwide as Eybody-Method. His first book Eybody-The art of integrating eye, brain and body (first published in 2004) has been translated into several languages. He works generally and specified with performing artists on coordinating brain, eyes and body in relation to the environment such as in stage performance of singing, dancing speaking and reading as well as in orchestral music playing. He lives with his family in Auckland, New Zealand.

PAUL HAMPTON worked as an actor and director with the Australian Performing Group at the Pram Factory in the 1980s and later as a freelance director and teacher. He taught at the VCA between 1992 and 1995. He trained as a teacher of the Alexander Technique at Duncan Woodcock's school in Melbourne and graduated in 2000. He currently teaches acting in the Performing Arts course at the University of Ballarat and is the secretary of AUSTAT

JENNIFER MACKERRAS teaches Alexander Technique at Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Cardiff, working with 16 - 20 year olds who are on the first steps towards a professional acting career. Jennifer studied Theatre at the University of New England, Armidale, and went on to complete a PhD in Drama at the University of Bristol (UK). She worked as an Education Officer and freelancer in Theatre in Education before training to be an Alexander Technique teacher with the Interactive Teaching Method (ITM). She now teaches Alexander Technique privately in Bristol, and has run classes for Bristol City Council, Southpunt NHS Trust, and Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. She is about to publish a short eBook called Four Words to Conquer Stage Fright.
School of Performing Arts

CATHY MADDEN is a world-renowned teacher, academic and theatre director. She is Principal Lecturer for the University of Washington's Professional Actor Training Program, Director of the Alexander Technique Training and Performance Studio in Seattle, and Associate Director/Research Director for Bond University's undergraduate acting & directing degree. Madden has been a regular guest teacher for Alexander Technique training schools and Arts organisations in Australia, Europe, Asia, and the U.S.A. She was a founding member, and a former Chair, of Alexander Technique International. Madden studied the Alexander Technique with Marjorie Barstow for nearly 20 years and assisted Barstow in workshops in the U.S.A. and Europe. She has a B.A. in Theatre Arts from Penn State, and an M.A. from Washington University in St. Louis in Drama and Literature, and did additional graduate study at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her articles on Alexander Technique pedagogy appear in Congress Papers, Direction Magazine, and Theatre Topics. Cathy's abiding fascination with the Alexander Technique is with its practicality, efficiency and efficacy. As both a teacher and theatre director, she has been constantly engaged in researching the application of the Alexander Technique for actors in both training and performance. Her work successfully elicits vocal and physical freedom and increases creativity and spontaneity with students and performing artists alike. Her specialty is directly integrating the Alexander Technique into the acting process. Cathy is a sought-after international performance coach and workshop facilitator.

GREG SEEL first studied Alexander with Mary Holland and Walter Carrington while training as an actor at the Drama Studio, London (1976). In 1983 Judith Leibowitz at ACAT certified him to teach the Alexander Technique. In 1983 he was STAT certified by Tom Lemens and Rivka Cohen and continued his Alexander training with Thomas Lemans, Rivka Cohen, Shoshana Kaminitz and Mr. Patrick McDonald. Greg was on faculty at the Matthew's School of the Alexander Technique from 1987 to 1991, the Institute for the Alexander Technique from 1988 to 1991. He has extensive experience with Meisner and the late Objective/Action of Stanislavsky. He is a faculty member at the MFA Acting Program-Mason Gross School of the Arts-Rutgers University, NYU's Classical Studio & Meisner Studio and the NY Conservatory for the Dramatic Arts. He also teaches Chekov Scene Study and Alexander Technique and Voice/Shakespeare class at the NY Conservatory for the Dramatic Arts (SFTV). He is a founding Associate Director and resident Alexander/Voice Teacher of The Mint Theatre Co. where he directed three plays and appeared in several others. Greg has worked in conjunction with Ray Yeates, founding the Alexander Technique Centre in Australia. In 1983 he was appointed Principal Clarinet with the Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa, Japan, under Hiyoshi Ikawi, a position he held until his return to Australia in 1996. During this period, he also performed as guest clarinet with the NHK Orchestra in Tokyo and the Hiroshima Symphony Orchestra. In 1995 he was a finalist in the Tokyo International Clarinet Competition. An active chamber musician and soloist, he appeared frequently as soloist with Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa and in chamber music performances with the Ebony Ensemble, which he formed in 1993. He has given recitals in Australia, Japan and the USA, including premiere performances of new works, performs regularly with the Melbourne Symphony and Orchestra Victoria and has appeared at the Melbourne International Festival, the Australasian Clarinet & Saxophone Conference and in live broadcasts for the ABC.

Robert Schubert is a regular guest teacher for Alexander Technique training schools and arts organisations in Australia, Europe, Asia, and the U.S.A. He was a founding member, and a former Chair, of Alexander Technique International. Schubert studied the Alexander Technique with Marjorie Barstow for nearly 20 years and assisted Barstow in workshops in the U.S.A. and Europe. He has a B.A. in Theatre Arts from Penn State, and an M.A. from Washington University in St. Louis in Drama and Literature, and did additional graduate study at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. His articles on Alexander Technique pedagogy appear in Congress Papers, Direction Magazine, and Theatre Topics. Cathy's abiding fascination with the Alexander Technique is with its practicality, efficiency and efficacy. As both a teacher and theatre director, she has been constantly engaged in researching the application of the Alexander Technique for actors in both training and performance. Her work successfully elicits vocal and physical freedom and increases creativity and spontaneity with students and performing artists alike. Her specialty is directly integrating the Alexander Technique into the acting process. Cathy is a sought-after international performance coach and workshop facilitator.

ROSE WHYMAN is a senior teacher of the Alexander Technique and Assistant Director of The School for F.M. Alexander Studies. She was a soloist in the National Opera of New Zealand. Jenny has performed and taught singing in London and Birmingham and has taught at the Victorian College of the Arts and Monash University. Jenny began her career studying clarinet at Wellington Polytechnic NZ. She then went on to study towards a Bachelor of Music (performance) in singing, at Victoria University (Wellington) before being accepted as part of the promising young performers programme to join The National Opera Company of New Zealand as a soloist. In 1984 she won a major study grant and went to London. During her time in London, Jenny studied singing with David Harper, worked with various other voice coaches and studied the Alexander Technique for use with her singing.

Michael Stenning is a Canberra-based Alexander Technique teacher, of nearly 30 years' experience who trained in England. He is a musician who used the Alexander Technique to rehabilitate himself and resume playing after his playing career as a trombonist was interrupted through tension and the effects of stress. Michael studied music in Sydney and Stuttgart and played in orchestras and other ensembles in Australia and Germany. He incorporates a sophisticated and well-tested approach to postural support, breathing, balance and performance. He seeks to help performers understand how they can direct their energy into the performance, communicate with their audience and avoid wasting energy in misplaced effort or tension, which can lead to problems later. Michael has worked extensively with musicians and has helped many professional and student instrumentalists and singers find greater ease and power in their performance and to overcome considerable problems.

Jenny Thirtle is a senior teacher of the Alexander Technique in Australia. She has a BA in Drama and English from the University of New South Wales and an MA in Drama and Theatre Arts from Penn State, and an M.A. from Washington University in St. Louis in Drama and Literature, and did additional graduate study at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her research interests are situated in the qualitative paradigm exploring patients', therapists' and students' perceptions of treatment and educational experiences. She has been a reviewer for the journals 'Physiotherapy' and 'Qualitative Health Research'.

Ann Shoebridge is researching playing-related musculoskeletal disorders in musicians as part of a postgraduate degree in physiotherapy at La Trobe University in Melbourne. She completed her undergraduates physiotherapy degree in Melbourne in 1980 and Alexander Technique teacher training with John Hicks in 1989. She has private Alexander Technique practice, in Melbourne. Ann has worked on Alexander teacher training courses teaching both anatomy and Alexander Technique and currently teaches at the School of Contemporary Music at the VCA and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. In her capacity as an Alexander Technique teacher, she has taught the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Australian Young Artists Orchestra, Melbourne Youth Music and in secondary school VCE music programmes. The number of playing-related injuries and the lack of understanding of good personal use Ann encountered in musicians at all levels of experience led her into researching playing-related problems, with the aim of improving musical health and playing performance. She is a faculty member at the MFA Acting Program-Mason Gross School for the Alexander Technique from 1988 to 1991, the Institute for the Alexander Technique from 1988 to 1991. She has extensive experience with Meisner and the late Michael Stenning. In 1983 he was STAT certified by Tom Lemens and Rivka Cohen and continued his Alexander training with Thomas Lemans, Rivka Cohen, Shoshana Kaminitz and Mr. Patrick McDonald. Greg was on faculty at the Matthew's School of the Alexander Technique from 1987 to 1991, the Institute for the Alexander Technique from 1988 to 1991. He has extensive experience with Meisner and the late Objective/Action of Stanislavsky. He is a faculty member at the MFA Acting Program-Mason Gross School of the Arts-Rutgers University, NYU's Classical Studio & Meisner Studio and the NY Conservatory for the Dramatic Arts. He also teaches Chekov Scene Study and Alexander Technique and Voice/Shakespeare class at the NY Conservatory for the Dramatic Arts (SFTV). He is a founding Associate Director and resident Alexander/Voice Teacher of The Mint Theatre Co. where he directed three plays and appeared in several others. Greg has worked in conjunction with Ray Yeates, founding the Alexander Technique Centre in Australia. In 1983 he was appointed Principal Clarinet with the Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa, Japan, under Hiyoshi Ikawi, a position he held until his return to Australia in 1996. During this period, he also performed as guest clarinet with the NHK Orchestra in Tokyo and the Hiroshima Symphony Orchestra. In 1995 he was a finalist in the Tokyo International Clarinet Competition. An active chamber musician and soloist, he appeared frequently as soloist with Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa and in chamber music performances with the Ebony Ensemble, which he formed in 1993. He has given recitals in Australia, Japan and the USA, including premiere performances of new works, performs regularly with the Melbourne Symphony and Orchestra Victoria and has appeared at the Melbourne International Festival, the Australasian Clarinet & Saxophone Conference and in live broadcasts for the ABC.

In 1997 he formed Ensembli, which aims to promote closer ties with Asia by commissioning new works from composers in China, Japan, Australia and South East Asia. Ensembli's inaugural concert, held in 1997 at Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, Melbourne University where he teaches Alexander Technique for performing artists of all levels and disciplines. He regularly gives workshops in Secondary & Tertiary institutions and private organisations around Australia.

In 1979, she received a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from the University of Washington. Her research focused on the development and functional basis of the actor training methods of Stanislavsky and compares the system with the methods of Meyerhold and Mikhail Chekhov. She is developing this research in actor training, focusing on contemporary approaches to movement and voice in actor-training, particularly the Alexander Technique.
SESSION DETAILS:
WORKSHOPS
MASTERCLASSES
PRESENTATIONS

DAY 1: FRIDAY 21 SEPTEMBER

11.30AM – 1.00AM
An Introduction to the Alexander Technique: Dancers and Theatre Performers
Workshop – Dance and Theatre: participants only
Presenter: Cathy Madden, USA

This workshop will provide an introduction to the Alexander Technique and is suitable for those experiencing the technique for the first time or those who wish to undertake a refresher. Participants will learn the basic principles of the Alexander Technique and be able to explore the freedom, ease and performance enhancements offered by the technique.

11.30AM – 1.00AM
Performing with Ease: An Introduction to the Alexander Technique for Musicians
Workshop/Master Class - Music: may be audited
Presenter: Michael Stenning AUS

This practical workshop is for instrumental musicians who are interested in how the Alexander Technique can support and enhance their skills. The workshop/master class will introduce the basic ideas of the Alexander Technique through some practical procedures involving all participants. Stenning will guide participants through an investigation into how freedom of breath, movement and maximum dexterity can be obtained while playing an instrument. In this process the anatomy of free, upright posture; how to stay comfortable in your body and avoid injury; the relationship between being economically upright and breathing and, holding an instrument while remaining free to play it will be touched upon. Three or four players will have the opportunity to deepen their understanding through a master class and short performance in front of all participants. Alexander Technique teachers attending are invited attend the following colloquium session.

11.30AM -12.15AM
Psychophysical Acting
Presentation - Theatre
Presenter: Rose Whyman, UK

This paper aims to identify what actor trainers mean by the term ‘psychophysical acting¹’ and what problems they are trying to solve. ‘Psychophysical acting ’ was a term first used by Konstantin Stanislavski, who wrote and worked in the same period as F.M. Alexander. Stanislavski is considered to have been an innovator in considering acting in these terms. The idea of psychophysical acting¹ and the psychophysical actor¹ has currency in contemporary discussions of acting. e.g. Merlin’s (2001) ‘Beyond Stanislavsky: The Psycho-Physical Approach to Actor Training’ and Zarrilli’s (2009) ‘Psychophysical Acting: an intercultural approach after Stanislavski¹’. Whyman suggests the training systems proposed often perpetuate the idea of a separation between mind and body rather than resolving it. Alexander, in developing a technique initially to overcome his problems as a performer, saw that no human activity can be said to be wholly physical² or wholly ‘mental’,² but all human activity, in whatever sphere, is psycho-physical activity¹ (Constructive Conscious Control p.21). His insight resulted in the development of a technique, which, Whyman will argue, offers a basis of training for performance resolving the problems defined by Stanislavski and others propounding a psychophysical approach¹. The application of the Alexander Technique also sheds light on a related acting problem, the generation of emotion in performance will also be discussed within this paper.
DAY 1: FRIDAY 21 SEPTEMBER  Continued

12.15PM - 1.00PM
Collaborative Teaching in the Dance Studio
Presentation - Dance
Presenter: Dr. Natalie Garrett Brown UK

Reflecting on a three-year development and a collaborative delivery process this paper outlines and discusses the inclusion of the Alexander Technique in the form of the Interactive Teaching Method (ITM) into the Dance Making and Performance MA at Coventry University. In doing so the paper provides a two-fold theorization, considering the interrelated significances for both students and teachers. With a specific interest in the benefits of the ITM group approach to Alexander Technique teaching for dance provision in higher education, Garret Brown argues that it can promote self agency and reflexivity for dance students while enhancing the acquisition of dance technique and general coordination. In making this argument the paper outlines the significance of the Alexander Technique to the dance students’ creative development as artist and maker and includes students’ reflections on the ways in which this enriched experience has informed the development of a creative voice. In outlining these benefits for the student the paper also considers how this case study can be seen to have informed the teachers’ own practice and pedagogical frame, noting the specificity of the collaboration which rested upon an Alexander Technique specialist without any dance training. Drawing examples from the setting of the dance studio, Garret Brown will outline how the ITM work enabled a reconfiguration of the dance teacher’s own use thereby affecting her approach to the structuring of class movement delivery and facilitation for the students.

Acknowledging Coventry University’s established practice in integrating somatic practices to the teaching of dance within its undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum this paper situates the discussion the wider socio-cultural context of the case study and offers a reflective dialogue with existing research on the application of the Alexander Technique to dance education and training (Batson, Eddy, Fortin, Huxley, Leach, Stevens and Nesti-Fiol).

2.00PM – 3.30PM
The Art of Breathing
Workshop – Dance, Music, Theatre: participants only
Presenter: Greg Seal, USA

The Art of Breathing is a phrase coined by F.M Alexander, the founder of the Alexander Technique. This workshop will give participants an opportunity to experience the Alexander Technique in combination with the breathing coordination work of Carl Stough.

4.00PM – 4.45PM
Deweyan pragmatism: Barstow, Madden and the Alexander Technique
Presentation – Music
Presenter: Amanda Cole, USA

This paper examines the approach of Cathy Madden and her teacher, Marjorie Barstow [1] John Dewey was a pragmatist and saw inquiry as a self-corrective process whose procedures and norms must be evaluated and revised in the light of subsequent experience.

Deweyan pragmatism is important and relevant to the Alexander Technique world for two reasons. First, while it is widely known that Alexander taught Dewey and that Alexander influenced Dewey’s ideas, it is less well known that Dewey gave substantial help to Alexander in his writing. He also described Alexander’s work as being scientific in the strictest sense of the word and as satisfying the most exacting demands of scientific method. In his introduction to Alexander’s book, Constructive Conscious Control (1923), Dewey observed that as long as Alexander used the method, it would be a process tending continually toward perfection, a method that would no more arrive at a stage of finished perfection than does any genuine experimental scientific procedure. There are striking parallels between the philosophies of Dewey and Alexander.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, pragmatism has once again become a philosophical tradition to be reckoned with, particularly in the field of educational research. With this, Dewey’s work has especially attracted renewed interest (Biesta and Burbules, 2003).

Since critical pragmatism has the capacity to challenge the unexamined assumptions that keep in place traditional systems and discourses, it is a perfect framework through which to evaluate an interpretation on the Alexander Technique that is occasionally labelled as controversial. Cole will demonstrate how Barstow’s approach kept the technique evolving after Alexander’s death, and how Madden’s performance coaching for musicians is a critically pragmatic outgrowth of the technique, indispensable to music performers and their teachers and coaches. It is with these evolutions that Cole argues that the Alexander Technique has retained its original essence.

4.45PM – 5.30PM
Sing Out Loud
Workshop – Dance, Music, Theatre
Presenter: Jane Coker, AUS

Enjoy this group singing exploration of the Alexander Technique in a supportive and non-judgemental environment. No singing experience required!
Day 2: Saturday 22 September

10.00AM – 11.30AM
A Psychophysical Re-education on the Use of The Self
Workshop/Master Class - Musicians: may be audited
Presenter: Dana Devitt-Dawson AUS, Robert Schubert AUS

Working with musicians, this workshop/master class will look at the integration of the Alexander Technique into music practice. As a psychophysical re-education, teachers of Alexander Technique cultivate conscious awareness so that the musician can become aware of, then learn how to stop his/her potentially harmful habits that interfere with a balanced head, neck and torso relationship necessary for balance, freedom and natural breathing. Alexander Technique lessons refine one’s sensory awareness which heightens one’s general awareness of self, instrument and of others. Participant musicians will begin to learn how to apply Alexander’s ‘means whereby’ so that an act or action may be carried out mindfully, allowing poised moment by moment. “Thinking in activity” is how Professor John Dewey described this ability. As Devitt-Dawson and Schubert will experientially convey, a light, upright, awareness that allows conscious spontaneity, ease and freedom rather than relaxation or a heavy concentration, introspection or concern for the ‘right’ posture or ‘position’.

10.00AM – 11.30AM
Theatrical Biomechanics
Workshop – Theatre and Dance: may be audited
Presenter: Kathleen Baum USA

Theatrical Biomechanics, the system of actor training and approach to theatre developed by the great Russian actor, director, and teacher, Vsevolod Meyerhold, provides a rigorous and systematic path for the development of the actor’s psycho-physical instrument. It offers unsurpassed physical training, developing capabilities such as balance, strength, coordination, agility, and flexibility and teaching a broad range of skills including tumbling, acrobatics, partner work, and work with objects. On first glance, the Alexander Technique and Meyerhold’s Biomechanics seem to be about as diametrically opposed as two ways of working could be. Physical and mental rigor is one of the hallmarks of training in Biomechanics and is one of its strengths. The actor is challenged to translate rigor into freedom and ease. But these two approaches share fundamental concerns. The Alexander Technique concepts of awareness, inhibition, and direction all have correlates in Meyerhold’s system. Kathleen Baum has been investigating this symbiosis between the Alexander Technique and Meyerhold’s Biomechanics for over ten years. The integration of Meyerhold’s Biomechanics with the Alexander Technique can offer an approach to the principles of acting and the ways in which these two approaches can support and enrich each other will be explored.

11.45AM – 1.15PM
Orchestral Performance
Workshop/Master class – Music: may be audited
Presenter: Peter Grunwald NZ

Orchestral musicians know first hand that juggling the demands of rehearsing, playing and performing can result in fatigue, physical pain, anxiety and bad performance. Often times the musician has little awareness of just how such a state has occurred. This workshop/master class is geared toward orchestral musicians and will support participants in the process of applying the Alexander Technique alongside Eye-body Method in order to refine awareness, increase conscious coordination and neuromuscular balance. With this foundation participants will learn how simultaneous tasks can be integrated with ease – tasks such as holding and playing the instrument, singing while breathing effortlessly, reading the score, watching the conductor, including the surrounding musicians in one’s orbit and simultaneously connecting with the audience.

11.45AM – 1.15PM
A Mirror, a Mask and an Actor: Integrating the Alexander Technique into Early Actor Training
Master class – Theatre: may be audited
Presenter: Julianne Eveleigh AUS & Paul Hampton AUS

This master class demonstrates how actors in training can use the Alexander Technique with Neutral Mask to perceive habituated patterns and tensions that interrupt and prevent creative play. Eveleigh and Hampton both use the Alexander Technique in their teaching practice as a way to help unify the actors’ experience in the first year of training. Actors are required to enter the process by responding to what they need in the moment. A lively use of imagination, movement, voice and coordination is required, but often restricted by undue stress or the strain of trying too hard and can be further impeded by a common misperception of relaxation (or collapse) that is associated with naturalistic performance. Eveleigh and Hampton will demonstrate how the incorporation of Neutral Mask and the mirror into the studio work, enables a young actor to become aware of the reality of embodied habit.

2.15PM – 3.45PM
Image Rehabilitation for the Electronically Raised Performer
Workshop/Master class – Dance, Theatre: participants only
Presenter: Cathy Madden USA

An Alexander Technique informed approach designed to teach embodied imagination skills to adult actors. In her experience on the faculty of a drama school, Madden noticed her students were able to coordinate themselves well as long as they were interacting with real people and objects, but if asked to engage imaginatively, they went out of coordination in unusual ways. This lack of coordination manifested both physically and mentally, affecting thought and creative processes. Her startling discovery was that technology and electronic media has profoundly influenced the imaginative processes of young actors. This revelation has significant implications in the teaching of all of the “electronically-raised” generation. Madden has successfully developed tools for retraining coordination and imagination to benefit all performing artists in theatre, music and dance. This practical workshop will introduce participants to the steps involved in Madden’s research and the teaching of the principals of Image Rehabilitation using specifically created exercises.

4.00PM – 5.30PM
Dynamic Tools for Audition Technique
Workshop/Master class – Theatre: may be audited
Presenter: Jennifer Mackerras UK

One of the great hurdles for an aspiring performer is getting into college. One of the great hurdles for any performer is getting the job. To do it, you have to have a good audition - but what does that mean in practice? How do you perform at your best under challenging circumstances? Learning to deal effectively with auditions is a must for any young actor. This workshop will address the difficulties that can beset performers, and describe how the principles and tools of the Alexander Technique can be of benefit in all stages of the audition process, from preparation through to presentation, feedback and evaluation. In this workshop Mackerras will explore how best to deal with pre-audition nervousness, how to prepare oneself, how to prepare the audition piece, how to be at your best in the audition and how to handle rejection and the fear of rejection.
DAY 2: SATURDAY 22 SEPTEMBER Continued

4.00PM – 4.45PM
A Curriculum in Alexander Technique for Orchestral Musicians
Workshop – Dance: participants only
Presenter: Janet Davies AUS

In 2010, as part of Sydney University’s Sound Practice Posture Trial (SPPT) Janet Davies was asked to devise a series of 16 x 35 minute classes in the Alexander Technique for players in Australia’s major orchestras. The SPPT was conducted by physiotherapists Bronwen Ackerman and Clifton Chan who also tested the efficacy of a series of core-strengthening exercise classes based on Pilates. For the purpose of research validity Dave’s brief was to standardise the Alexander Technique course ‘as much as humanly possible’ so it could be reproduced by other Alexander Technique teachers and compared with the exercise intervention. To Davies’ knowledge this is the first time that the Alexander Technique has been delivered in such a structured and standardised format, and the SPPT course is the first devised specifically for orchestral musicians. In this presentation Davies will expand on the rationale for the course structure and content.

DAY 3: SUNDAY 23 SEPTEMBER

10.00AM – 11.30AM
Essential Movement Practices
Workshop/Master class – Dance, Theatre: may be audited
Presenter: Michael Stenning AUS

This workshop aims to illuminate the processes that occurred during the earlier “Playing with Ease” workshop including some of the teaching and communicative approaches engaged.

10.45AM – 11.30AM
Playing-related Musculoskeletal Disorders in Tertiary Orchestral Music Students: Rates, Risk Factors and Presentation
Presentation – Music
Presenter: Ann Shoebridge AUS, Robert Schubert AUS

Prevalence figures for playing-related injuries in musicians indicate that despite a thirty-year history of research in the field, playing-related injuries remain common. There have been few prospective studies to investigate causative relationships between risk factors and injury, and to the knowledge of the researcher there has been no previous longitudinal study of tertiary orchestral music students. In this presentation Shoebridge and Schubert will discuss results from a prospective longitudinal study of 224 orchestral music students from three tertiary music faculties in Victoria, Australia conducted throughout the 2010 academic year. Data on the prevalence and incidence of PRMDs will be outlined, together with a discussion of risk factors and injury prevention strategies. Risk factors for playing-related disorders present in music students and how the Alexander Technique might address these will also be discussed.

11.45AM – 1.15PM
Moving into Imagination
Workshop/Master class – Dance, Theatre: may be audited
Presenter: Nimah Dowling UK

This movement workshop will explore ways in which the principles of the Alexander Technique set up the conditions to release the imagination. These principles provide a framework within which spontaneity and discipline are aligned in a physically, emotionally and imaginatively connected performer. According to Dowling, imagination is not a faculty which is worked on separately from the rest of the performer. Her workshop will begin by identifying individual habitual physical patterns and noticing the ways these patterns interfere with performance. Through movement and imagery, participants will explore ways in which the principles of the Alexander Technique can eliminate those blocks and expand the performer’s physical and vocal range. The ultimate stage of this process is the release and embodiment of the imagination, which acts as an interpretative and creative source of inspiration for the artist. Dowling will thus work to identify the moment that illustrates how, when we have taken the performers blocks out of the way, the imaginative content of the text is revealed.

2.15PM – 3.45PM
Investigation into Common Problems in Singing
Workshop/Master class – Music: may be audited
Presenter: Jenny Thrille AUS

This workshop is an experimentation in the application of the principles of the Alexander Technique to some common concepts and problems encountered in singing. Participants will be guided by Thrille as they experientially examine and discuss tight jaw and tongue, what it means for the larynx to be ‘down’, support and breathing, projection, ‘singing into the mask’ and, anchoring to the floor. The investigation will look at how these ideas can be influenced by the Alexander Technique, either to facilitate a more useful practice, or to identify and eliminate undesirable habits.

2.15PM – 3.45PM
Chekhov Scene Study
Master class – Theatre: may be audited
Presenter: Greg Seel USA

A performance master class with selected acting students integrating the Alexander Technique into a Chekhov Scene Study.
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