The life and work of Yvonne Bryceland: an arts-based investigation

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Abstract

This dissertation spotlights South African actress and theatre practitioner Yvonne Bryceland, who earned respect and admiration during her lifetime but has largely been marginalised in South African theatre history. Chapter One addresses the motivations and methods for the study, offering an explanation of my context as an artistic researcher/educator. A brief biography of Bryceland is provided followed by a description of the extensive process of gathering information from a variety of sources, including personal communications and interviews with friends, colleagues and family members, as well as archival material and documented footage of staged and filmed performances. The various approaches taken in discussing Bryceland's quality of acting are explained, and reasons for how and why new discoveries and adaptations were made during the research process.

In Chapter Two, Bryceland's life story is captured and distilled in an arts-based research artefact, *Dancing with Darkness*. The screenplay as heuristic was used to reveal Bryceland as the central character in a dramatic period of South African theatre history. From this focal point, further discussion about Bryceland is offered exploring three distinct, but overlapping, aspects, namely: the extraordinary quality of her acting work; her collaborations with well-known playwright Athol Fugard; and her establishment, with Fugard and her husband Brian Astbury, of The Space as a radically alternative theatre.

Chapter Three discusses how the quality of Bryceland's acting work often led colleagues and audiences to describe her performances in words that capture a sense of magic and awe. In attempting to describe Bryceland's acting techniques and position her as an exemplary South African actress, this chapter reveals how the discussion was broadened and deepened to incorporate metaphysical notions for which the Spanish concept of *duende* was applied and adapted as a potent symbol for Bryceland's artistry.

Together with Fugard, Bryceland contributed some outstanding plays to South Africa theatre history, which offer traces of the country's social and political evolution from the 1970s to 1990s. Chapter Three explores the intensity of the artistic symbiosis between Bryceland and Fugard, and their focus on their theatre art as a means to express truth.

Chapter Four describes what led to the establishment of The Space theatre by Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury; to what extent the theatre work being done at The Space was different; and Bryceland's determination that the theatre remain open to casts and audiences of all races. This chapter in particular reveals The Space as a veritable hothouse for new talent, providing well-known actors, writers and directors their first opportunities in theatre practice, as well as serving as a catalyst for the establishment of similar theatres in South Africa.

The concluding chapter highlights the significant impact that Bryceland has had on the nature and voice of South African theatre, by her contributions to the philosophy and practice of diverse practitioners, and as such positions Bryceland as deserving consideration as one of the key figures in South African theatre history.

Abstrak

Hierdie proefskrif plaas die Suid-Afrikaanse aktrise en teaterpraktisyn, Yvonne Bryceland, onder die soeklig. Hoewel sy respek en bewondering gedurende haar leeftyd ontvang het, is sy grotendeels in die Suid-Afrikaanse teatergeskiedenis gemarginaliseer. Hoofstuk Een fokus op die motivering en metodes vir die studie, en bied 'n verduideliking van my konteks as 'n artistieke navorser/opvoedkundige aan. 'n Kort biografie van Bryceland word verskaf, gevolg deur 'n beskrywing van die lang en moeilike proses van inligtingsinsameling vanaf 'n verskeidenheid van bronne, insluitend persoonlike kommunikasie en onderhoude met vriende, kollegas en familielede, asook argiefmateriaal en gedokumenteerde rekords van verhoog- en filmoptredes. Die verskillende benaderings om Bryceland se kwaliteit van toneelspel te beskryf, met verklarings oor hoe en waarom die navorsingsproses nuwe prosesse en aanpassings genoop het, word verduidelik.

In Hoofstuk Twee word Bryceland se biografiese besonderhede en lewensverhaal saamgevat en in 'n draaiboek as kunsgebaseerde navorsingsartefak, *Dancing with Darkness*, vasgevang. Die draaiboek is as eksploratiewe ondersoek gebruik om Bryceland as die sentrale karakter in 'n dramatiese tydperk van die Suid-Afrikaanse teatergeskiedenis te onthul. Vanaf hierdie sentrale fokuspunt word verdere bespreking oor Bryceland aangebied, wat drie onafhanklike maar oorvleuelende aspekte van haar lewe eksploreer: die uitstaande kwaliteit van haar toneelwerk; haar samewerking met die bekende toneelskrywer, Athol Fugard; en haar geselskap met Fugard, en haar man, Brian Astbury, van The Space, as radikaal-alternatiewe teater.

Hoofstuk Drie ondersoek hoe die kwaliteit van Bryceland se verhoogwerk ander kollegas en gehore dikwels geïnspireer het om haar optredes in woorde van 'magiese verwondering' te omskryf. Ten einde Bryceland se toneeltegnieke te beskryf en haar as uitstaande Suid Afrikaanse aktrise te posisioneer, onthul hierdie hoofstuk hoe die bespreking verbreed en verdiep is om metafisiese gedagtes in te sluit waarvoor die Spaanse konsep, duende, as kragtige simbool vir Bryceland se begaafdheid gebruik en aangepas is.

Bryceland het saam met Fugard van die mees uitstaande toneelstukke tot die Suid-Afrikaanse teater-geskiedenis bygedra, wat ook residu van die land se sosiale en politieke evolusie van die 1970s tot die 1990s demonstreer. Hoofstuk Vier ondersoek onder meer die intensiteit van die artistieke simbiose tussen Bryceland en Fugard, en hulle fokus op teaterkuns as 'n middel om die waarheid uit te druk.

Hoofstuk Vyf beskryf wat aanleiding gegee het in die vestiging van The Space teater deur Bryceland, Fugard en Astbury; tot watter mate die teaterwerk wat by The Space gedoen was, verskillend was; en Bryceland se verbetenheid dat die teater oop moes wees vir spelers en gehore van alle rasse. Dié hoofstuk openbaar The Space as 'n wesenlike kweekhuis vir nuwe talent, wat vir sommige bekende akteurs, skrywers en regisseurs hul eerste geleenthede in teaterpraktyk gegee het, terwyl dit ook as 'n katalisator vir die vestiging van soortgelyke teaters in Suid-Afrika gedien het.

Die slot hoofstuk aksentueer die feit dat Bryceland ‘n betekenisvolle impak op die aard en stem van Suid-Afrikaanse teater gehad het wat bygedra het tot die filosofie en praktyk van diverse spesialiste en kundiges, en as sulks dat Bryceland erkenning as een van die sleutelfigure in die Suid-Afrikaanse teatergeskiedenis verdien.

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Contents

Chapter One: Introduction

This dissertation will discuss the contribution made by South African actress Yvonne Bryceland (18 November 1925 –13 January 1992) to South African theatre history. Bryceland was born in Cape Town, South Africa, the youngest member of the modest but creative Heilbuth family. By 1978 Bryceland was based in London, and over the next fourteen years before her passing away, acted in top theatre arenas and went on to win multiple international awards and earn the informal title of the 'leading lady of South African theatre' (Thomson, 1992a).

The central hypothesis of this dissertation is that Bryceland's impact on South African theatre was so significant that it changed the profile of our theatre today. South African playwright Athol Fugard has called Bryceland the leading interpreter of his work[1], and stated that she and theatre director Barney Simon (13 April 1932 – 30 June 1995) had the biggest impact on him; and yet while Fugard and his plays have been the subjects of international study, and Simon has been well documented in South African theatre history, Bryceland has been almost forgotten.

When I began this study on Bryceland, in 2008, it was quickly apparent that there is barely anything written about her. There are no biographies or books in which she features substantially. Scant on-line information is available, and that which is, is frequently missing information or contradictory. Bryceland has been marginalized[2] in South African history books, and her role as a theatre practitioner who had a major impact on South African theatre history has been largely ignored. Fugard called it scandalous that she has not been granted more recognition as a theatre pioneer in South Africa. There is support from practitioners for recognizing and remembering Bryceland as more than an actress. In private correspondence actor Pieter Dirk Uys has stated "We must not forget!" (2011); and Fugard has written "Thank you for turning your

[1] Fugard stated this when trying to get the Actors' Equity of the United States to allow Bryceland to play Miss Helen in Fugard's *Road to Mecca* in 1985 (Freedman, 1985).

[2] This is written purposefully as Bryceland is literally mentioned in a margin of South African High School Textbooks (Ciro, Hardie, Guhrs, Sesiu, Singh & Watson, 2014:199).

attention to Yvonne" (Fugard e-mail correspondence, 2011)[3].

This dissertation offers new insight and perspectives on the person and her work, and proposes to engage practitioners and readers in consideration of the significance of an individual that has otherwise been passed over by history. Part of the challenge of this work has been to gather existing information on Bryceland, as well as to investigate and offer new information. This was done, sometimes with great difficulty, to offer a detailed discussion about this historical and enigmatic theatre figure for the first time.

One of the main reasons for granting recognition to Bryceland is the fact that she was primarily a highly respected and successful actress who won international awards for her work[4], as will be discussed further in Chapter Four. Distinguished playwright and director Edward Bond wrote a tribute for Bryceland's memorial service, in this he described her as "the greatest living actress", and said that although many actors have great stage presence he had seen "such raw, open power so mysteriously and authoritatively displayed by only one other actor...Laurence Olivier[5]" (Bond, 1992). She remains an inspiration for theatre practitioners who are operating in South Africa and abroad. Besides Fugard, who credits her with making him the writer he is (Fugard, 2011b), a few examples of the many actors and directors that have been inspired by Bryceland include: Irish playwright Geraldine Aron; actor, author and activist Pieter-Dirk Uys; Denise Newman; and Casting Director Digby Young[6] who says he is still looking for an actor who comes close to Bryceland (Young, private conversation, 2016).

Another key reason for such remembrance can be found in the fact that together with Athol Fugard and her husband Brian Astbury, Bryceland established The Space in Cape Town in 1972. This was the first non-segregated theatre to operate in South Africa, and did so in open defiance of the laws of apartheid, under

[3] The interviews conducted with Fugard for the purpose of this dissertation have been transcribed, and material that is on record will be stored at Stellenbosch University Drama Department; however, for ethical reasons, some of the material of this study must remain in sole possession of the author and will not be made available in the public domain.

[4] Examples include: South African Fleur du Cap Theatre Awards (1966, 1969 and 1973); Three Leaf Award (1967) and Vita Award. In England: The Laurence Olivier Award for Best Actress (1985) (and a nomination in 1978). In the United States: an Obie (1988) and the Theatre World Best Actress award (1988).

[5] Laurence Olivier (1907-1989) is widely regarded as one of the best stage actors of his time.

[6] Digby Young (together with Christa Schamberger-Young) auditions top actors across the country for major international Feature Films and Television series shooting in South Africa.

the National Party's regime at the time. Bryceland elected to work with actors and invite audiences from every culture and race to engage in relevant and sometimes shocking theatrical experiences. The original plays created at The Space gave voice to a common South African experience, sometimes with political anti-apartheid themes which resonated around the world for the anti-apartheid movements, and Bryceland was seen as the figurehead of the theatre. The police stopped or shut down many plays, but Bryceland went on with her work despite the dangers.

At the onset of research for this dissertation, I believed that Bryceland could stand as a role-model for other actors to follow suit. At a certain point in the research it seemed possible to examine her life and analyze her approach to acting as a means to answer certain key questions: How did Bryceland become so skilled? What techniques or methods did she employ to make her acting so extraordinary? What could contemporary actors learn from her approach? It became increasingly apparent during my research that these questions could not be answered easily because of two major aspects. Firstly, a recognition that she possessed powerful acting practices *despite never receiving formal acting training at a University Drama Department or College*. Instead, she can be ascribed with mastering her craft through practice over the length of her career. Secondly, there is a recurring presence of *a more elusive heightened quality of acting* which Bryceland demonstrated and which set her apart in the opinion of those who worked with her.

The ultimate focus of my research, therefore, increasingly turned towards what went on beyond and surpassed those elements usually considered foundational or requisite in acting, and to attempt to reveal the unquantifiable (yet tangible and visible in effect on herself and others) artistic ability that added a dimension of 'magic' to her work. In this exploration, I sought to find a way to metaphorically capture Bryceland's moments of genius in order to open discussion about this important facet of her work. I searched for a way to show and weave together the strands making up the fabric of the portrait of Bryceland in her heightened artistic experience.

As an actress I instinctively, and perhaps without conscious thought in the beginning, approached Bryceland as a character in a script. I wanted to put myself in her shoes, to imagine what drove her and how she felt. I read all I could find about her. I researched the other characters in her story: Athol Fugard, Brian Astbury, Barney Simon, her colleagues and students. I met with her family and friends. True to Stanislavski's[7] methods, I sought and found common threads between her and myself: her love of work in the theatre, her role as a mother, survivor, introvert and "truth-seeker" (Slabolepszy, personal correspondence, 2010). Like Bryceland, I feel protective over my students, and love to nurture them to readiness to fly in performance. Like Bryceland, I relish playing a Fugard character who faces impossible odds with courage. I also discovered what was different about us, and wondered how to connect to this character by sinking into the question: "what if?" I asked myself: "How would it feel if…?"; "What might make her…?" I had to find a way to understand her ambition as an actress. I drove to areas where she had lived and worked in Cape Town, and took note of the type of people who would have been around her. Finally, my instincts for research as an actress were satisfied as much as they could be with the little factual information I had available. In my role as an educator, I then grappled with how to best express what I had discovered about Bryceland.

In order to explore and attempt to provide insight about what made Bryceland such an exceptional actress, I considered and researched a wider selection of internationally renowned actors to find the common denominators between them. I studied those individuals with a background in theatre and film, and who are widely regarded as extraordinary. They have been recognized with similar awards to Bryceland, and enacted characters with similar courageous qualities and dramatic life events. Meryl Streep, Dame Judy Dench, Philip Seymour-Hoffman and many others have been credited with the same enigmatic, chameleon-like qualities associated with Bryceland. Their formal training, however, often surpassed Bryceland's, and

[7] Konstantin Stanislavski (1863-1938) was a Russian theatre practitioner who wrote books on acting methods which promoted naturalism in acting for the first time, and which are considered classics (1981, 1988).

likewise their breadth of experience. I discovered that what lies as common ground beneath the divergent techniques and knowledge of these actors is a mysterious transformative process that the actors themselves are reluctant to discuss and contemplate too deeply.

In a personal interview conducted with Fugard in 2011, various aspects of Bryceland's life and work, including her technique and excellence, were illuminated and discussed in detail. But Fugard could not provide answers to my questions on how she came to be so extraordinary, except to speak in terms of an experience of "moving out of yourself" (Fugard, 2011b). In 2010 I also asked Bryceland's husband, Brian Astbury, questions about Bryceland's process, and he told me that she never talked about it. I thought it might be possible to explain such an experience according to studies conducted on the brain, or in psychology, but despite my research I found no satisfactory answers. How could this process be discussed in a way that could help educators, actors and acting students? How could I write about it in a way that would illuminate key aspects of her approach, or paint a more complete picture of her?

It was then that I turned to the concept of *duende*, as explained by Spanish poet, playwright and theatre director Federico García Lorca in 1933, and which I had been introduced to before commencing research. As will be discussed in Chapter Three, *duende* is primarily a Spanish concept and was discussed by Lorca in a lecture in Buenos Aires titled *La Teoria y Juego del Duende* (Theory and Play of The Duende) (1933/2007:1). Lorca cites Spanish artist Manuel Torre expressing *duende* as "a mysterious force which everyone feels and no philosopher has explained" (1933/2007:1), and can be loosely defined as *having soul*, and achieving a heightened level of expression and authenticity. With the aid of *duende*, an artist can move the level of their work from excellent to extraordinary.

I researched the presence of similar phenomena in other creative arts and what others have said about receiving the help of mysterious forces, both wonderful and dangerous. Examples included explanations of angelic forces inspiring painters and musicians, and more recently, writer Elizabeth Gilbert's reference to the "conduit of your inspiration" (Gilbert, 2015:67) and what she calls the force of enchantment that is a creative power: "the supernatural, the mystical, the inexplicable, the surreal, the divine, the transcendent, the otherworldly" (Gilbert, 2015:34). This is remarkably similar to Lorca's definition of *duende*. She discusses another ancient concept of artistic inspiration worth noting: "The Romans didn't believe that an

exceptionally gifted person was a genius; they believed that an exceptionally gifted person *had* a genius" (Gilbert, 2015:67, emphasis added). It took several years of research and writing, and applying various methodologies and methods, to reach a point where my conversation about Bryceland's acting necessarily included notions such as these.

My position as the observer and the person undertaking the discussion must also be clarified. Firstly: I am a professional actor, so I understand what Bryceland was doing and I am sensitive to all the energy, skills and emotional challenges required for this. I was trained in the classical acting methods and techniques which are practised and taught worldwide as well as the latest trends, philosophies, courses and master classes on specific techniques and methods. I acknowledge my position as a student of acting skills and methods, some of which I believe in more than others, which may well influence the way I consider Bryceland's work. Any acting I view engages my critical thinking about how well the techniques and other elements of acting are implemented. Secondly: I am an acting teacher at tertiary level who also assesses actors' work, and I do this as objectively as I can. For this purpose, I have designed examination marking grids to offer student-actors feedback that is as fair and constructive as possible. For an educator such objectivity is important to provide all students with fair opportunity to improve their skills. I am mindful of the subconscious sway that personal preference can have over my assessment of an actor. I observe the process of acting with technical, educational, emotional and experienced understanding. The process of acting requires the observer to engage emotionally and cognitively, and the variables in response are immense and highly subjective.

During my time as Discipline Champion of the Performance Department at AFDA (School of Motion Picture and Performance, Johannesburg and Cape Town), I was responsible for writing curriculum and assessment material. AFDA is a private tertiary institution offering degree programmes that are fully registered and accredited by the Council on Higher Education (CHE), the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). Assessment tools based on subjective artistic evaluation are not ideal at such an Outcomes Based Institution. It was thus necessary to design marking tools as solutions for evaluating performances against reasonably objective, transparent and measurable criteria that acting students were given. These teaching and assessment tools were adapted from

similar tools that I have used at selected tertiary institutions, for example the University of Technology in Auckland, New Zealand and The Auckland Performing Arts Center (TAPAC), and were approved by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).

When I first began to consider how to discuss Bryceland's acting I accepted the challenge of attempting to analyse her work according to such objective, transparent and measurable criteria. However, when it came to examining Bryceland's acting work, the assessment tools I had previously employed could only serve as a starting point and guide, as they were designed for assessing student-actors, not a professional such as Bryceland in the height of her career. Her acting needed to be considered at an appropriate level of expertise and mastery. I therefore designed an Acting Quality Assessment System (AQAS) with more detailed and exacting criteria, which included: the application of psychological and social world effects and nuances in the character; the seamless integration of various technical acting elements; the level and depth of writing and character analysis; and the control and consistency of intensely detailed physical and vocal performance of character. This AQAS would allow me to 'mark' Bryceland's acting techniques, apply her 'scores' to the system and then create a grid to evidence the standard of her acting work.

Unlike the student-actors and other professional actors to which I might apply such a model, it is no longer possible to view Bryceland in live performance, and it was necessary to turn to film recordings of her acting. I sourced three examples of her work in film adaptations of Fugard plays - *People are Living There* (Play 1968 / Filmed play unknown), *Boesman and Lena* (Play 1969 / Film 1971) and *Road to Mecca* (Play 1984 / Film 1991) - which in itself took more than a year to do. I then selected key scenes that demonstrated a marked difference between characters she was playing and a range of performance moments. With reference to these scenes, I discussed all the AQAS elements of her acting in the smallest detail as a means to explain why she scored as highly as she did, leaving barely any room for subjectivity or doubt (refer to Appendix A: Figures 1 and 2). In the end all that this exercise demonstrated was that Bryceland was a technically expert actress. Every score was at the top end of the grid, and the few areas of weakness I found simply did not counterbalance Bryceland's acting superiority (refer to Appendix A: Figure 3).

At this point it became clear that discussion about Bryceland's work would need to encase more than just her proficiency in the basic technical elements of acting. In conversation, her colleagues consistently describe her work in terms such as: *sublime*, *unforgettable*, *extraordinary*, *magnificent* and *superb*. When asked how they thought she achieved this they were always lost for words. Even Fugard struggled to describe her acting, until I raised the idea of comparing it to *duende* at which he point he exclaimed: "That's it" (Fugard, 2011b). I therefore had to recognize that by using a system like AQAS I was cut short in being able to explain the higher enthrallment that Bryceland evoked in her audiences. It seemed beyond the scope of the system. Tertiary education systems, founded as they are on assessments and the scaffolded - incremental and systematic - learning of skills, favour such quantitative analysis tools. The AQAS is then a rather "modern or rational way of seeing things" (Gilbert, 2015:34) whereas ideas around the magical creative process are "decidedly unscientific" (Gilbert, 2015:34). Thus, it became evident to me as my research on Bryceland continued that a system like AQAS failed to explain the artistic greatness that seems to occur for selected artists (actors included) when their learnt technique, acquired skill and personal talent have been surpassed. I needed to look beyond a system of parameters in order to expand the discussion and incorporate the higher notions that Bryceland's acting had emotional impact which cannot be measured, quantified or analysed, but could be felt, experienced and deliberated upon.

Bryceland's transcendent acting skills demanded the use of another interpretive tool. My simultaneous roles as an educator, actor, trainer, writer and dramatist merged and moved towards the creation of a research artefact that could similarly transcend a purely quantitative analysis, that could stand above and beyond a chronological biography of Bryceland – and resulted in the screenplay *Dancing with Darkness* as presented in Chapter Two. I considered Babbie and Mouton's (2005) methodology on how to present a life history, which seemed to offer three options: the objective biography in which the facts are stated and tell the story; the scholarly-historical work, which relies on facts, but also places them in historical context for the reader; or the artistic-scholarly work, which depends upon facts, but re-tells them in the most interesting way.

This last option seemed to offer an approach that brought me closer to alignment with arts-based research methodology that would best apply to my dissertation: incorporating a biographical encapsulation of Bryceland's life. Barone and Eisner state that "arts-based research is a means through which we seek new portraits of people" (Barone & Eisner 2012a:5).

As a theatre practitioner, teacher, director and actor I am positioned daily to use such non-quantitative and representative tools to engage audiences and scholars. It seemed relevant for me, when considering the notion of capturing Bryceland's life history in the most thought-provoking way possible, to tightly assimilate the facts and the artistic and metaphysical discussion arising from her work into a screenplay. This also served to focus my paring down of a vast body of research material to the most pertinent points. Within this screenplay I was offered the opportunity to intertwine facts with fiction, and so offer visual clues that might allow the reader to gain insight into her emotional or psychological state. As Barone and Eisner observe, such an artistic research method would move "beyond the limiting constraints of discursive communication in order to express meanings that otherwise would be ineffable" (Barone & Eisner 2012b:1). According to Batty[8] and McAulay[9] (2016)[10] there is growing research on screenwriting as a research

[8] Craig Batty is Associate Professor at RMIT University, Australia. He is a writer and screenwriting academic and the Creative Practice Research Leader for the School of Media and Communication.

[9] Alec McAulay is a screenwriting lecturer at Yokohama National University, Japan.

[10] Available at: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14790726.2015.1135964; http://www.aawp.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Batty-et-al-2.pdf (Accessed on 3 Dec 2016); http://www.textjournal.com.au/speciss/issue29/Baker_Batty_Beattie&Davis.pdf and http://www.nawe.co.uk/DB/current-wip-edition-2/articles/the-academic-screenplay-approaching-screenwriting-as-a-research-practice.html (Accessed on13 Dec 2016).

practice, with a focus on the screenplay that is developed under academic frameworks. Baker, Batty, Beattie and Davis (2015) point out that established scholars and (Batty, Jacey, Millard, Selbo) and emerging scholars (Baker, Nash, Taylor) are focusing on screenwriting practice particularly as part of Masters and PhD work. It thus became viable to consider the writing of a screenplay as the most effective and resourceful tool to use toward the aims of the dissertation.

Most significantly, it is via this methodology that the research artefact reflects most directly the very art that it is studying. Through the portrayal of language, character, emotion and human experience, the reader can visualize, feel and empathize with the events of Bryceland's life, and 'step into her shoes', in a similar way to the very process that Bryceland was engaged in as her life's work which was embodying different characters. In this way the reader has already absorbed more than just facts from the screenplay; the mind's eye has created images from descriptions, emotions are educed and a sense of connection to the subject of Bryceland as a woman has been established.

The screenplay thus provides a tool of evocation and illumination, which is fundamental to arts-based research, as a means for acquiring meaning (Barone & Eisner, 2012a). It thus allows the reader to look into Bryceland's life and work as the focal point, with the same artistic lens that the subject was using to express herself. In that interface, between the artist seeking to express and the reader seeking to understand, discourse and new insight can occur.

The very terms 'point of view' and 'focal point', and the description of using a camera lens to bring something into sharp focus and draw the attention of the viewer, offer appropriate terminology for the purpose served by the screenplay both as a story and a core focus of an academic dissertation. Bryceland herself used the words "here is the focal point" (as cited in Herber, 1979:30) to describe her work. Barone and Eisner use the specific example of film in arts-based research to offer a potential "source of understanding" (Barone & Eisner 2012b:161), pointing out that films are created by integrating a variety of resources in a designed order to capture interest and generate an experience for the viewer and/or readers of such material.

As a teacher I focus on opening up new knowledge for students, and aim to see them engage with shifts in perspective[11]. As a theatre practitioner, especially in the field of Theatre in Education, I aim to engage an audience with learning material through storytelling. Thus the focus of arts-based research falls directly in line with my qualitative research, the outcome of which is "to raise significant questions and engender conversations rather than to proffer final meanings" (Barone & Eisner, 2012b:166).

This methodology directly supports my instinct to condense all the data about Bryceland's life and work into one poetic, emotionally engaging story. The synergy of this approach is fitting. Her life's work was about "telling stories" in the theatre and Fugard's stated work is about being a truthful storyteller (Fugard, 2011b). Together they sought to express actuality through original and authentic narratives brought to life on stage. Their purpose was to engage and challenge the audience's ideas and experiences of life in South Africa. Likewise, the aim of this dissertation is to shift the reader's perspective on Bryceland.

This creative, emotionally charged screenplay is an assimilation of all the relevant data that I gathered on the figures, biographical facts, history and politics in the earlier stages of this research when I was still contemplating a more quantitative analysis and historical recounting of Bryceland. Added to that it adheres to one of the criteria proposed for arts-based research - that the work be authentic (Barone & Eisner, 2012a). The result is an academic screenplay functioning simultaneously as a research enquiry and a research artefact which offers new knowledge on the subject of Bryceland's life and work. According to Batty and MacAulay[12] this is a new way of practicing (2016). The screenplay furthermore offered me an opportunity to express my understanding of the research material in a way that reflects not only my experience and working environment - theatre and film - but simultaneously captures Bryceland's world in terms of her culture, language and her work: a dramatic art form.

Dancing with Darkness is based on real people, places and events: it uses South African Eastern Cape dialect and accent that is a hallmark of the relevant Fugard plays, and uses the actual names of people and

[11] Pamela Smithbell (2010) supports the positive outcomes possible through working in education using arts-based research.

[12] Available at: Maurer, C. (ed.) 1998. *Federico Garcia Lorca in Search of Duende.* USA: New Directions Bibelot. Available at: http://www.tabletalk.io/post/lorcas-duendes-meet-the-press (Accessed on 25 September 2016)

places to locate the work in authenticity. I chose not to flinch at the traumas and political difficulties Bryceland faced in her life, but to capture them in an emotionally charged manner, as these directly informed her work.

In this way the screenplay adheres to the power of arts-based research to "persuade an audience to 'rethink' aspects of the social world by re-experiencing them" (Barone & Eisner, 2012a:167). As a performing arts practitioner I fully subscribe to Barone and Eisner's idea that viewers and readers can gain new ideas and insights through emotionally and cognitively re-experiencing something. Barone and Eisner state that good arts-based research has "legs", allowing you to "go someplace" (Barone & Eisner 2012a:152). But when "illumination" is added to "the quality of evocation within a vivid experience" (Barone & Eisner, 2012a:154) the work will serve both to reveal facts cognitively and prompt the reader to respond emotionally.

Screenplay *Dancing with Darkness* as a heuristic

If it is well done, arts-based research provides an opportunity to utilize a heuristic through which understanding about a particular subject can be deepened and made more complex (Barone & Eisner, 2012a:3). The three-act structure of the original screenplay created and presented for this dissertation is used to capture the complex life and work of Bryceland in a single, fluid, highly organized form. Within this system of writing, context, facts, symbols and relationships are presented as the story of the actress Bryceland living and working during apartheid South Africa. Bryceland's emotional world, the abuse she suffered, her ambition and goals are woven through the story in a condensed and focused manner. The most pertinent material is then analyzed and discussed as the focal areas of the study.

The screenplay partly addresses the challenge of the limited detailed biographical resources about Bryceland's actual working process. Fragments of information about Bryceland were available as excerpts in books in libraries but this needed to be supplemented. I used an integration and combination of sources - primary, secondary, visual, textual, general and personal. Further relevant literature was found at The Baxter Theatre archives. Bryceland's colleague and actors' agent, the late Sybil Sands provided me with the entire collection of The Space material which included programs, financial records, critiques of plays,

photographs and notes[13]. However, this consisted literally of an old cardboard box, in which were loose and random clippings from newspapers, handwritten notes and photographs. Many of these newspaper clippings had no authors, titles, dates or page numbers. Some were faded, old and brittle. They contained key information, however, and provided crucial puzzle pieces. Various historical accounts of what it was like to work at The Space were explored. I studied Bryceland's personal documents in order to gain more insight into her character. I interviewed actors and theatre practitioners who were involved at The Space to reconstruct that past as accurately as possible. I interviewed subjects on this topic extensively; some interviews were done via e-mail with family and colleagues in South Africa, England, America and Australia. This included oral history recorded during in-depth interviews with specifically focused questions. It was at times very difficult to get these interviews. Not all family members were willing to speak about her. Many colleagues are elderly, and struggled to remember details, or, like Fugard and Paul Slabolepszy do not like writing and preferred to speak to me in person; but with such subjects being situated so far away from my home base in Cape Town - in Johannesburg, California and London for example - this was not possible. Some potential subjects were deceased, others extremely busy. Through various social media platforms I managed to track down extended family and get their responses, for example Bryceland's niece, Pam Le Roux, who resides in Australia.

An extended bibliography, rather than a reference list, is offered for this dissertation since many sources informed the creation of authentic character and place in the writing of the screenplay, *Dancing with Darkness*, in Chapter Two, although these are not directly cited. Added to that, owing to nature of dissertation as part biography, additional sources, such as off-the-record interviews and communications informed understanding of the environment in which Bryceland functioned as well as her character.

Supplementary information was gathered through reviewing available literature and surveying existing publications on subjects including: a) history and traditions of world theatre (Brockett & Findlay, 1973; Brocket, 1995; Barba & Savarese, 1991; Barba, 1995); b) history of theatre theorists, movements and key figures operating between 1900 and 2016 (Stanislavski, 1981; Grotowski, 1968; Brook, 1968; Barba, 1995

[13] Refer to Addendum B for a sample of photographs of Bryceland between 1969 and 1980.

Fowlie, 1950; Hauptfleish, Viljoen & Van Greunen, 1982; Gray(ed.), 1984; Astbury, 2011); c) history of South African theatre, with special focus on Bryceland and Athol Fugard (Hauptfleish, Viljoen & Van Greunen, 1982; Gray(ed.), 1984; Fugard, 1992; Benson, 1997; Astbury, 1979; McDonald, 2006; Stephanou & Henriques, 2005; Uys, 2005; Walder, 1998; Astbury, 1979; Astbury, 2015); d) acting techniques (Astbury, 2011; Harrison, 2016; Stanislavski, 1981; Grotowski, 1968; Brook, 1968); e) the concept of *duende* in the arts (Lorca, 1933; Maurer, 1998); and f) South African political and social history (Walder, 1998; Benson, 1997; McDonald, 2006; Astbury, 1979 & 2015; Gray(ed.), 1984; Hauptfleish, Viljoen & Van Greunen, 1982; Fugard, 1992; Stephanou & Henriques, 2005; Uys, 2005; Rae, 1971).

In terms of organizing the material in this dissertation I noted the features and stated purpose of Ruth Behar's "literary style autoethnographic essay" mentioned in Barone and Eisner, in which the work is "not only incisive and concise but one may also notice the manner in which it continuously circles back on itself as the author returns to a theme that is manifested both in the storytelling and in the more 'scholarly' commentary that adds an additional dimension to the relevant themes and subthemes implicit and explicit within the piece" (Barone & Eisner, 2012a:151). This dissertation is thus structured with the screenplay preceding the scholarly discussion. The screenplay acts as a tool for integrating research material, and focusing the discussion of the subject. In effect the purpose of the chapters following the screenplay is to open discussion on a theme as it was concisely captured in the screenplay. To paint an image for the reader to hold in the mind's eye: it is as if Bryceland's personal biographical data as captured within the screenplay *Dancing with Darkness* represents the stigma of a flower (Chapter Two); and the scope of this study is captured in the surrounding 'petals' which include: Bryceland's acting and the metaphor of *duende* (Chapter Three); Bryceland's working relationship with Fugard (Chapter Four); and Bryceland's work within South African Theatre History, particularly focusing on The Space theatre (Chapter Five).

Apart from the research that was necessary in direct connection to Bryceland's biography, *Dancing with Darkness* is a distillation of skills and research gleaned over twenty-five years of my training and profession in the theatre and film industry. One crucial aspect of arts-based research, particularly when it is applied to historical events or a biography, is that the heuristic be as authentic as possible. In this process the writer's investigative and creative skills are revealed. The research a screenwriter must conduct to create an

authentic and emotionally powerful script is detailed, wide and penetrating. It is only after such penetrating research that the writer can begin to move into the poetic and symbolic spheres which speak to the emotional responses in a reader or viewer, and allow for curiosity, questions and ultimately human connections to the subject.

As will be demonstrated in Chapters Three and Four, Bryceland immersed herself in the lives of her characters; I have tried to work in a similar manner, by immersing myself in Bryceland's life to best understand, and then express, it. One question which seemed important to foreground was: What does it feel like to be an actress? What did Bryceland experience as she embodied the lives and feelings of others? If we can understand that, we can empathize with her more easily. As actors, we are required to understand our characters, to step into their world, and to experience their emotions. Bryceland pushed herself to extreme lengths to understand her characters to the deepest levels possible in order to perform them truthfully (Herber, 1979). This capacity for empathy is a specific skill, and one that is enhanced by studying acting; in a study on using Drama studies to help students develop empathy, researchers Aysel Akyol and Zeynep Hamamci (2007) found that the students' capacity for empathy increased, and that the establishment of empathy in relationship supported healthier interactions[14]. Similarly, Eisner observes, "One job that scholars increasingly want done is engendering a sense of empathy … because we have begun to realize that human feeling does not pollute understanding. In fact, understanding others and the situation they face may well require it" (as cited in Barone & Eisner, 2012a:8).

I utilized my personal experience in the theatre to capture the experience of theatre from an actor's perspective. The process of using the 'magic if' as proposed in Method acting, provides the fictional stitches required to hold together the fabric of Bryceland's life story. The performative nature and narrative-driven style of the research artefact in itself allows the reader to consider how Bryceland similarly used theatrical experiences to create new plays, and thus enable her audiences to reconsider the topics at hand, such as the social injustices of the laws in South Africa. It seems fair to say that what Bryceland did in the workshop

[14] Interestingly, Sara Konrath of University of Michigan found converse results, demonstrating that empathy levels amongst students has decreased since 2000. She hypothesizes that the change in human interaction, specifically the reliance on media communication, is partly responsible (Konrath, 2010).

processes with Fugard was to create research artefacts. Those were then presented to the audience to illuminate the social ramifications of the apartheid system. The audience could then re-consider, and through discussion arrive at new perspectives; as Bobbie Fitchen[15] observed, audiences - after watching performances directed by Fugard and starring Bryceland - would go to the hotel across the road, and gather and talk for hours about the plays (Fitchen, 2011-2016).

The screenplay allows writer and reader to travel from event to event with maximum factual and emotional transference within a focused format. The fact that this art based research process must be similar to the practice Bryceland herself was engaged in, sets this dissertation up as a mirror which reflects in style and process the subject matter under discussion: Bryceland's ability to work outside of the limitations of prescribed form and place, and her willingness to embody the stories of marginalized people for re-consideration. Through the screenplay, I was able to expose lesser known details about Bryceland, such as: her humour, her courage, her strong feelings of support for those considered 'nobodies' in the world. But most importantly the screenplay offers the reader a conduit through which new perspectives about Bryceland can occur. Using powerful imagery and symbols, rhythm, emotions and language, the screenplay demonstrates the social world that Bryceland inhabited in South Africa, and her outrage towards, and action against the apartheid system, which also motivated Fugard and Bryceland's work together. The screenplay has the potential to evoke in the audience an emotional response to the abuse she suffered, and the kind of courage it took to launch an acting career later in life as a solo mother, and to establish The Space.

It is important to note that there are screenplay conventions which curtail the depth and creativity of the writer. The screenplay is written according to the recognized professional formatting used in Final Draft. For instance: actor's notes are kept very succinct; turning points, rhythms and descriptions of action follow specific rules in order to guide the flow of a final film. The director, actors, cinematographer and score must render the scenes that are only suggested by the writer. In other words, as the screenplay writer I have

[15] Bobbie Fitchen is a Cape Town based voice coach, actress, writer and educational theatre practitioner. I interviewed Fitchen intermittently about Bryceland and the Space, and in various forms including e-mail, telephone and personal communication, over a period of several years from 2011-2016. Refer to Chapters Four and Five for more details about her involvement with Bryceland.

provided a framework in which some of my key questions about Bryceland could be answered, and then started fleshing this out by concisely hinting at certain details in the screenplay; it is the final production of the film, however, that would deliver these details in a coherent, authentic and rich manner through the integration of picture, sound and silence. This is an envisioning and projection process that is understood by an actor reading the screenplay, and each member of the film team would likewise engage in their creative work in order to imagine, design and make manifest the end film result from the suggested blue-print built into the screenplay. As this screenplay forms part of an academic dissertation, I invite the reader to allow their mind's eye to be at creative play as they meander through Bryceland's life story, to engage emotionally with the events, and to consider and reflect cognitively when the final scene concludes this actress's extraordinary life.

Chapter Two: Screenplay - Dancing with Darkness

Synopsis

During apartheid South Africa, actress Yvonne Bryceland used the theatre to take a stand against the government. Working with Athol Fugard, as his muse and confidant, they created potent plays that shocked audiences of the day, and got the world talking about the cruelty of the racist regime.

Theirs was an intense, creative relationship that was the source of misunderstanding, gossip and envy in the theatre world. Fugard said they had a highway of an electric current running between them. Bryceland pushed Fugard to write his most honest stories for the stage. And he evoked in the actress the most unforgettable performances audiences had ever seen.

Together they created plays in ways that have remained secret. Sometimes Fugard did not even write them down, allowing the audience access to a unique experience which could never be repeated.

Bryceland herself remained a secretive figure in the wings, while Fugard took the limelight and was celebrated as a playwright around the world.

Bryceland shied away from being the center of attention, and became the consummate actress-chameleon, disappearing into her characters on stage without anyone knowing who she truly was. Mysteriously, she acted on stage with a power that left audiences in awe. Two of the best playwrights and directors in the world wrote plays just for her, saying she was second to none as an actress both dangerous and mesmerizing.

For the first time, this film turns the spotlight on Bryceland, and invites audiences to learn about the woman who shook South African theatre.

Title: Dancing with Darkness
Format: Final Draft. 90 min Feature Film.
Genre: Historical biographical.
Audience: 16+
Story Outline: Set in South Africa during apartheid, this is the story of one woman's rise against impossible odds, from being an abused wife to an international actress with the theatre world at her feet.

DANCING WITH DARKNESS

Written by

A.R. Hofer

FADE IN:

EXT. SOUTH AFRICA - DAY

THE YEAR IS **1925**.

MONTAGE:

- South Africa, the land of contrasts.

- Contrasting the poor with luxurious living.

- Various cultures.

- Gorgeous landscapes.

- People dancing and singing at concerts.

- People attending classic theatre.

- Traditional family braais.

- Game Rangers and families looking at wildlife.

END OF MONTAGE.

INT. CAPE TOWN - RONDEBOSCH - 1925

Reveal the HEILBUTH family in their well lived-in lounge. We see MRS. AND MR. HEILBUTH (38), JOHN (7), COLLEEN (5), MARY (3). The house is filled with singing and laughter. A Catholic image is visible on one of the walls. There is a piano and a guitar.

MRS. HEILBUTH (33) holds a newborn baby in her arms. The baby, BABY YVONNE Yvonne gurgles softly.

MRS. HEILBUTH
Oh, she's a darling! My tiny little darling!

COLLEEN
She's a cutie-cutie-cutie.

MRS. HEILBUTH
Gently, Colleen! She's just a little flower bud, my Yvonne.

JOHN
I know! The baby can be baby Jesus in the nativity play!

MRS. HEILBUTH
Good idea! I'll ask Father Michaels. Right! Let's practice for the choir tomorrow, my ducklings!

The Heilbuth children gather, high spirited. They sing a beautiful Christmas carol. Mr. Heilbuth watches his kids with pride. Mrs. Heilbuth is 'conducting' her kids' choir with one arm. She holds baby Bud with the other. She beckons her husband. He approaches and takes the newborn. He looks at baby Yvonne and then his wife.

MR. HEILBUTH
Our bud. Our darling. Our last word.

Mrs. Heilbuth laughs. The children sing loudly, breaking into silly words and giggles.

MRS. HEILBUTH
In this house, there's no such thing.

EXT. CAPE TOWN - DUSK -- MARCH 1942 (WORLD WAR II)

Living conditions in South Africa have changed. The war is on. Irish pilots have been sent to train and bolster the South African air force, and are based at Ysterplaat Air Force Base in Maitland, Cape Town. Fighter planes fly overheard-- they are coming in to land.

Headlines on boards around Koeberg Road announce "BRITAIN AND FRANCE AT WAR WITH GERMANY. Chamberlain's declaration - "Our conscience is clear!" -- SEPTEMBER 3, 1939."

EXT. YSTERPLAAT AIRFORCE BASE - DUSK

We see a grown YVONNE BRYCELAND (17), and her friend HOLLY (17). Yvonne is shy and also full of character and adventure. She is petite, gorgeous in an exotic, strong looking way. She is dressed up. They wait on a deserted side road, off the main Koeberg road. A young pilot walks past in a hurry. Airplanes are heard flying low overhead. The atmosphere is Tense. This is not a suitable place for two teenagers looking for fun. The girls try to look nonchalant and watch the planes flying overhead. They watch the entrance of the Air Force Base. They are not allowed to enter. A guard stands at the boom next to the security gateway.

Yvonne looks up at an airplane coming in to land. It flies very low over them. They giggle.

YVONNE
That's him!

She mimics the sound of the airplane perfectly. She mimics a hand some pilot looking down and seeing her. She pretends to wave back. She flashes her leg. The girls giggle. Holly is shocked and thrilled by Yvonne's antics.

HOLLY
Yvonne, your dad will kill you! And... how do you even know it's your Irishman?

YVONNE
I can tell- I know Danny's plane- plus the way he flies. Only *he* can come in at that angle-- he told me so!

Holly studies the plane as it flies low overhead.

HOLLY
It says 'FOX... 773 Marigold Something'. Come on, we need to go. We can't wait here, our folks will kill us.

YVONNE
You can't have read that! And no, we are not leaving! Danny told me to wait here!

HOLLY
Oh, but I did! I'm not as blind as a bat! Where are your glasses?

YVONNE
I'm not wearing those tonight... I'm sex-ay! But, OH! I think that was the wrong plane.

HOLLY
"I can tell how he flies in"? You flashed your leg at him.

YVONNE
Oh, well if the pilot comes over once he's landed, *you* can have him!

The girls giggle and squeal. Suddenly a deep Irish-accented ballad is heard being sung from nearby. Yvonne stops giggling. She peers into the dim light. She cannot see a thing.

From behind her, DANNY (23) suddenly appears. He isain his pilot's uniform. He is a good looking young man of 20, with a strong Irish accent. He walks over boldly. He puts his arm around her waist. Yvonne gasps, and suddenly seems a bit nervous.

Danny sings on, and sways from side to side. Yvonne begins to sway with him. She softly sings with him. She is naive.

Danny stops. He is surprisingly stern.

DANNY
You flashed your leg at him?

Yvonne is unsure if he is joking.

YVONNE
I thought it was you. It was for you.

DANNY
Thought it was me, did you?

Yvonne is a bit shaken.

YVONNE
Danny, I did! Honest to god!

Danny suddenly softens.

DANNY
Oh, my darling. My innocent bud. What trouble you could get yourself into. Here all alone on the street. Two wisps of girls no more than 17 years old.

YVONNE
Well, we wouldn't be alone if you had been here like you said, Danny Bryceland!

DANNY
(Sings again and leads her to dance) Oh, but I was, my lovely lass. I've been watching you two from up there all along.

Holly watches them and looks about. They move off. She has little choice but to follow, but is uncomfortable.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Come on, Holly! There's a little watering hole up ahead, and I've a terribly sad thirst! How about you, my darling Bud of May?

YVONNE
Quite wilting... it's all this waiting and singing and leg flashing.

Yvonne laughs away the uncomfortable threat in Danny's domineering attitude. Holly is torn between the fear of leaving Yvonne with the older, dangerous Danny and staying on the deserted street on her own.
Holly cannot stay behind.
Finally she follows them unenthusiastically

INT. HEILBUTH HOME PASSAGE - NIGHT - JULY 1942

The atmosphere in the home is heavy. Mary (20) and COLLEEN (22) are gathered outside a door. They are trying to hear what is going on in the kitchen. They whisper. JOHN (25) arrives.

COLLEEN
What does Danny say?

MARY
He says he loves her.

JOHN
Well, is it true?

COLLEEN
I told you it was.

INT. HEILBUTH HOME KITCHEN

Parents Heilbuth sit together at a modest kitchen table opposite Yvonne and Danny. They are worried.

MRS. HEILBUTH
You have no choice now, buddy. You know that, don't you?

YVONNE
I'm so sorry, Ma.

MRS. HEILBUTH
I'll bet you are.

DANNY
I'll take such care of her, Mrs. Heilbuth...

MR. HEILBUTH
By God, you'd better-- or you'll have me to answer to for the rest of your life.

DANNY
I swear, Mr. Heilbuth, we didn't mean for this to happen.

MR. HEILBUTH
Don't take me for a fool, boy! You are a man in the military. You should have known better. Bud is only 17.

YVONNE
(breaks down) I'm so sorry, Mum, Dad... Damn you, Danny!

MRS. HEILBUTH
You should have been angry with him two months ago, Buddy. Now if you damn him, you're also damning yourself and a child.

MR. HEILBUTH
I'll phone Father Michaels to make arrangements. Danny- best you get yourself prepared for the rest of your life. You have a few weeks.

DANNY
Yes, sir. I'm...

MRS. HEILBUTH
That will do, Danny. Enough now.

INT. HEILBUTH HOME PASSAGE - NIGHT

The grown siblings are tense. They react in hushed tones to the conversation in the kitchen from outside a door.

COLLEEN
She's getting married!

JOHN
Whoa!

MARY
What will we sing?

COLLEEN
John - will you play the organ? And what will we wear?

JOHN
Poor Bud. Damn that Danny to hell.

The kitchen door opens. Mr. Heilbuth storms past them. A peak inside reveals Yvonne sobbing at the kitchen table. Danny and Mrs. Heilbuth watch her, downcast.

INT. OBSERVATORY COMMUNITY HALL - NIGHT - 1945

There is a 21st Birthday Party going on. The war is ending. People are in grand spirits. The Heilbuth siblings are providing the entertainment. We see a sign with "HEILBUTH SINGERS" on it over the modest stage. The spotlight is on them and their musical instruments.

COLLEEN
Where's Bud? She's late!

MARY
(Giggles) Danny is giving her "pointers".

JOHN
(Hops on stage) Where's Bud?

COLLEEN
With Danny the "director".

John jumps off stage and walks over to the couple. Yvonne is rocking a crying 1-year-old BABY MAVOURNEEN. Danny is at the bar. He holds Yvonne's elbow. He is giving Yvonne pointers on her performance.

DANNY
And when you sing-- for goodness sake, woman-- look happy! Look at me.

YVONNE
But Danny, I can't see anything without my glasses, and under the lights...

DANNY
(snaps and snarls) You look rubbish with those glasses on! And stop with the shy act.

Yvonne is upset. Mavourneen is now crying. John approaches, determined to get Yvonne on stage. Danny sees him. Yvonne does not. Danny changes tack. He laughs and turns his words into a limerick to make John think they are fine. John is not fooled.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Look Vonny, I just want you to shine up there - look at me my love, you are my shining star - brighter than all the others - by far!

Yvonne slowly smiles. She passes Mavourneen to Danny. John glares at Danny, takes Yvonne by the hand and goes. Danny notices A WOMAN admiring Mavourneen. He gives her the baby to hold.Then he watches Yvonne.

INT. HEILBUTH SINGERS - NIGHT

Moments later, the Heilbuth siblings are singing on stage. They are very entertaining. Yvonne takes center stage. She is Wonderful. The audience is spellbound. Danny watches her, mouthing the words.

DANNY
Come on, Yvonne! Sing! Shine! Open you eyes... dammit.

Danny is not happy. He snatches the tot back from the woman holding her. He storms out of the venue. Yvonne sings her heart out. She cannot see Danny leaving. The audience responds wildly.

EXT. OBSERVATORY COMMUNITY HALL - NIGHT - LATER

The end of the evening. From outside the hall we can hear the last notes of music playing and cheers from the crowd erupting. Danny is waiting in the carpark next to his car. He watches as the Hall doors open and people start leaving. One couple passes Danny, they are laughing, have clearly had plenty to drink. Danny indicates to them that he is watching his daughter, Mavourneen, asleep on the back seat of the car. The couple moves away. Danny turns around annoyed. He kicks the car tyre. He drinks from his hip flask.

Then Yvonne exits. She is energised and happy. She looks around for her husband and daughter. She waves when she spots Danny.

YVONNE
Where are my darlings? Hi Danny, Hi Mavie...

DANNY
Shhhht! She's asleep. She was as bored as I was.

Mavourneen wakes and begins to cry. Danny glares at Yvonne. Yvonne stops dead in her tracks. She moves to the car to lift and comfort her baby girl. Danny pushes between Yvonne and the car, and holds the car door shut. Yvonne moves slowly and calmly; she has been through this kind of thing with Danny before.

YVONNE
Danny? Give her to me, Danny.

DANNY
You had to do it, didn't you?

YVONNE
Danny, you're drunk. Give her to me.

Danny rips open the car door, snatches up Mavourneen and holds her out at arm's length, dangerously. Yvonne grabs at Mavourneen just in time before Danny can possibly drop her, and turns her back on Danny to comfort the crying child. Danny steps closer, his hand reaches for Yvonne's long curled hair. He slowly pulls her hair down. Yvonne cannot let go of the baby. Yvonne is forced to her knees, and keeps things smooth so as to not alarm her daughter.

DANNY
You ever humiliate me like that again...

Yvonne pulls her head away, ripping her hair out of Danny's fist. Yvonne rises and turns to confront him.

YVONNE
What are you talking about, Danny? I did exactly what you said. They loved me out there.

Danny reels around, he kicks the ground and a car tyre repeatedly, bellowing like an animal. Eventually he tires and falls to his knees.

Yvonne takes his hip flask from on top of the car bonnet, and passes it to him. Danny starts weeping and moaning, speaking softly.

DANNY
You're better than this Vonny, you are too good for this.

Yvonne is irritated but soothes her husband. She reaches out carefully - he doesn't react. She touches his shoulder. He grabs her hands and starts kissing it.

YVONNE
I like it, Danny- we are all together. It's great. It's all good, right? Come on, chum-- gimme a smile?

DANNY
You need more, my heart. You are mesmerizing. Don't shame yourself like this.

YVONNE
Okay, Danny. Listen... I'm going to get John to drive us home, okay? Just wait here and sober up a bit, okay? You just had a bit too much to drink - it's all going to be fine... okay?

Yvonne starts to step back, she then walks backwards carefully towards the Hall door, still holding Mavourneen tightly and safety. Yvonne slips through the door, into the Community Hall. The door closes. Danny looks up and sees that she is gone, he starts to lose his control again, howling like an animal.

DANNY
Don't you tell me what to do! You cheap... You bloody... I love you... dammit Vonny, I love you so much!

Danny stands swaying and weeping.

INT. HEILBUTH HOME - DAY - 1946

Yvonne is sitting in a lounge chair with a new baby, BABY COLLEEN, on her lap. Mavourneen is being entertained by the noisy family- all coming and going in and out of the lounge.

Yvonne's sister Colleen flops down next to Yvonne, and coos at the baby.

COLLEEN
Colleen! Oh, what a perfect name for a beautiful baby!

YVONNE
Isn’t she beautiful?

The sisters share a special bond, they get more serious, whispering.

COLLEEN
With a name like Colleen, of course! Bud... will you manage? With two?

Yvonne is glowing with love for her new baby, she would rather avoid difficult questions at this moment.

YVONNE
Oh, Colleen... I’ll be alright. You know what - there’s a new theatre club at UCT- I’m going to act in a proper play- in July! That gives me 4 months to get ready! And there’s Stage Door!

COLLEEN
Ohhh, yes- Bud in the lights! Who is doing it?

YVONNE
A bunch of Drama Students at the University. They say I don’t need training anyway, I just need to audition and be there. Maybe I can learn from them.

COLLEEN
I’m in the front row- we all are! During rehearsals I’ll babysit! Check with Danny.

YVONNE
Danny? You’re offering to babysit! He’d be free. Sorted out.

COLLEEN
Oh, Bud, don’t be offended... it’s just Danny... he’s... he may mean well... but...

YVONNE
Danny will be fine! He'll support me- he says I'm to be an actress! He'll want to drive me there! Give me "direction". And you'll babysit the girls.

COLLEEN
But if you tell him what to do... I'm not having my sister with another black eye...

Yvonne tries to make light of Colleen's serious concerns. Colleen remains unconvinced.

YVONNE
Oh, Colleen- don't you worry- I'll sock him right back!

COLLEEN
Bud- with the new baby... are you alright?

There is silence.

YVONNE
He loves me, Colleen. It's just the stress of the job, you know? Sometimes he goes out to relax. Mauvie can be a bit much for him.

COLLEEN
But Bud. Mauvie is a gorgeous, normal, bouncy girl, and so are you. My little sis. But I'm worried, if it's already too much for him... and now there's this new little one...

Mrs. Heilbuth enters, and picks up Mavourneen, and looks at Yvonne, she nods her head to indicate something is going on outside their home.

MRS. HEILBUTH
He's here, darling.

EXT. HEILBUTH HOME; DRIVEWAY - DAY

A car pulls into the driveway, tyres spinning up dust. The door opens, Danny spills out. He has been drinking. He sways in the driveway, singing Irish ballads wildly.

DANNY
My Bonny lies having a baby... My Bonny lies over the sea... My Bonny lies about having babies, and brings home more Bonnies to me... brings back, brings back... brings more Bonny mouths to feeeeed!

Danny looks at the house, bleary eyed.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Come on out then, lass. Let's get you girls home. Three girls... I now have three ladies of me very own...

INT. HEILBUTH HOME; LOUNGE - DAY

The family has grown quiet and react with concern. Yvonne looks scared but determined not to show it. The family see through it all. Her bravery is commendable but hopeless. The three women look at each other, and take a breath. Yvonne looks away, she is trapped and teary. Colleen and her mother see this.

YVONNE
Alright. Come on, Mavie.

COLLEEN
Mom- can't we say she's not ready? She needs a few more days? The birth was hard. Colleen is only a week old.

Yvonne looks at her mother hopefully. Mrs. Heilbuth is sympathetic but firm.

MRS. HEILBUTH
Buddy- it's your husband. It's time to go home. The baby is well, and so are you. Be honest.

John enters as his mother speaks. He has another solution to the problem.

JOHN
Actually, Danny's drunk. He's not fit to drive, Mom. Buddy should stay here. Let him sober up.

YVONNE
Give us an hour or two, Mom. Let's get some food and coffee into him.
(MORE)

YVONNE (CONT'D)
Before we go home with him. You know what he's like when he's been with the lads.

Mrs. Heilbuth considers, she is worried.

MRS. HEILBUTH
If your father comes home, and sees him like this... Buddy, there will be hell to pay.

YVONNE
I'll sort him out and get us home before then, Mom. I promise you. Put on the coffee...

Before Yvonne can finish speaking, Danny stumbles through the door, he is agitated and slurring.

DANNY
Evening all! Sorry I'm late, the new boys arrived with news at the pub- big political discussions. Do you all know what your National Party government is plotting? Terrible, terrible, same shite as in Ireland. Domination! One group over another. A party? They are a clump of... what's it... ridiculous, evil… Telling us what to do. Becoming like fickin' Hitler ruling here I tell you- Auschwitz in Africa- watch out... terrible...

Yvonne is annoyed and embarrassed. She speaks sharply, but with control to make it seem funny.

YVONNE
We know what is going on, Danny. We get our political information from John, who is an actual journalist at The Argus, not from the lads at the pubs.

Danny pauses. Yvonne firmly continues.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
Now, would you like to meet your new daughter?

Danny seems to actually see Yvonne and his two daughters for the first time. He immediately changes. The family look relieved. Yvonne can handle him it seems, to a point.

DANNY
Oh, my lord, right you are. Now, let's see this new little Bonny one of mine. Let me hold her... but first a kiss for my queen.

Danny lurches at Yvonne and holds her, spins her round and pulls her up and out of her chair, kisses her and rests his drunken head on her shoulder.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Lord knows Yvonne, I love you more than life itself, I breathe for my beautiful Yvonne.

Danny is hanging on Yvonne- it is hard for Yvonne to keep her balance and hold the baby, Mavourneen wants attention and pulls at Yvonne's dress. The family stare at this scene. It is fragile and explosive. It is no joke.

INT. CAPE TOWN - UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN SOCIETY FOR DRAMA 1949 - NIGHT

A modest hall, filled with young audience members watching an amateur play. Yvonne is onstage, playing a small part. In the audience we see ATHOL FUGARD as a young man. He is there to watch his new young wife SHEILA MEIRING perform. Danny is also there, standing at the back, arms folded, watching nervously. The play ends, people clap and start rising from their seats. PROF LAMBERT comments to his colleague LAURENCE as they leave. Danny overhears them.

PROFESSOR LAMBERT
Hmm. The play was good, but that little woman playing Amelia... weak. I couldn't hear a thing. No objectives, no subtext in evidence. Why was she even up there? Is she at the Drama Department?

Laurence checks in the program.

LAURENCE
Err... she's a Bryceland, Yvonne. No, I don't think she's a student, Prof, I've never seen her. Not at UCT. Name rings no bells.

PROFESSOR LAMBERT
One can tell. Amateurs. Pity - ruined it for me. Meiring was fine - a classic actress. Bit stiff, but intelligent work.

They laugh as they pass Danny who has overheard it all. He looks furious.

In the auditorium Athol waits and then meets his wife, who has changed out of her costume and now crosses the stage from backstage. She steps off and approaches Athol.

ATHOL
Splendid Sheila! Truly remarkable. A feisty performance. Inspired.

Yvonne hops off the stage, grinning madly. She obviously had a wonderful time on stage. She passes the Fugards, who greet her briefly.

YVONNE
Goodnight, Sheila - thanks so much!

SHEILA
Night, Yvonne... that's your husband?

Yvonne nods, looking towards Danny.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
Ah! This is mine - Athol!

ATHOL
Hello...

Yvonne waves hello, laughing, and trots off to Danny.

The Fugard's POV. Yvonne's back is turned to them, but they can see she is quickly becoming deflated as Danny speaks to her. The Brycelands leave the hall.

INT. DANNY'S CAR - NIGHT - LATER

Yvonne and Danny are driving back from the amateur play. Danny is furious, and drinking from a whiskey bottle. Yvonne looks miserable.

YVONNE
They said that? That I'm terrible?

DANNY
It was a professor - from the University. Yes.

YVONNE
What did I do wrong?

DANNY
He said you were clunky, and amateurish- they laughed at you. My wife. They laughed at my wife. I wanted to kill him Yvonne- you hear me.

YVONNE
I need training- it’s not fair- Sheila and all of them are all trained at the Drama School.

DANNY
That's nonsense Yvonne, we cannot afford that, and you have the girls to look after- you just have to learn- and listen to me. You've got all the talent…

YVONNE
I do need training, Danny- it’s not working- you don’t know what you’re doing, either.

DANNY
What did you say?

Yvonne gets defiant.

YVONNE
You are not trained either Danny Bryceland- I was doing what you said up there tonight.

Danny slams on the brakes of the car.

EXT. EMPTY STREET - LATER - NIGHT

Danny has stopped the car along a deserted stretch of road. Danny storms around the front of the car, he opens the passenger door, grabs at Yvonne's long hair, and yanks her out. Yvonne is screaming, defiant, angry, fed-up.

YVONNE
Oh, yes Danny! Again, Danny? This makes you such a man! Go on hit me! You war hero! You fighter pilot! You... coward!

Danny smacks her hard across the face, and sends her flying to the floor. Yvonne rises.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
Oh, Danny? That's all you've got? Mr. Pilot? Mr. Air Force? Mr. Acting Expert?

Danny hits her again. She is lying in the dust, blood pouring from her mouth. She rises, still defiant.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
Fun, Danny? You're the perfect husband, hey? Klap, klap and who's the boss?

Yvonne lashes out at him. He ducks her small fist, and kicks her to the ground again. Yvonne is hurt.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
Enough, Danny. Think of the girls...

DANNY
You can't hide behind your girls now, Yvonne. It's you and me.

Yvonne rises. She is icy calm.

YVONNE
Danny. Enough. Come on, Danny. Stop now. You just know nothing about theatre- or acting.

Danny roars and attacks her - he hits her again and again. He is raging and out of control. Danny beats her. Yvonne is losing consciousness, stumbling and falling. As he yells, he kicks her.

DANNY
It's in my blood- and you could be great - but - you - don't - listen to me.

Danny suddenly stops and looks down at Yvonne. She is knocked out, a bloodied mess. She is motionless. He collapses on the ground, starts to wail and cry.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Oh Lord, I'm sorry, Yvonne, oh shite, oh shite. Yvonne- wake up. Dammit, I'm sorry- I love you... don't make me do this... please wake up.

Yvonne's POV: Yvonne is slipping in and out of consciousness, and has entered a subconscious state, a dream like reality.

Yvonne has her eyes closed. It is utterly dark for her. Amidst the red flashes, sudden blinding white lights appear.

Yvonne relaxes as the soothing peaceful light starts to surround her.

Suddenly Yvonne hears a roaring, wailing sound growing.
It is Danny's voice.

Yvonne falls back into unconsciousness.

The swirling, dream-like chaos continues, for Yvonne it is a merging and changing flow of darkness with red flashes of pain and Danny's far off strange howling, and the soothing white light tempting her to rest and let go.

We see a strange creature, DUENDE,sitting in the shadows. Slowly it begins to crawl carefully from the darkness.

It squats next to Yvonne, and watches her with great love and concern encouraging her to wake up.

Duende goes closer to her, lying with her and tries to shift its body beneath her, to merge into her and try lift her.

Yvonne sees sparks of red as pain hits her, and slowly she begins to regain consciousness.

She gasps for breath. Her eyes fly open. She grits her teeth and begins to move.

Duende's face starts to merge with swirls of red,
black and white light, and then disappears. Yvonne rises very slowly. Reality is established again.

Danny's POV: We see Yvonne's face as she regains consciousness.

She rolls over, and in echo to Duende she crawls a few paces, then rises painfully.

She looks straight at Danny.
Her face is a beaten and bloodied mess.

Danny is scared.

INT. BRYCELAND HOME - DAY

Days later. Yvonne sits at a modest kitchen table; the girls are playing quietly on the kitchen floor. Half-empty mugs of tea sit on the table, along with some lemon cream biscuits. It is a humble house; they don't have much. But what is there is cared for well.

Yvonne is bruised and sore. Her face looks bad. Mavourneen looks at her worriedly. Yvonne pulls a funny face at her girls, and the girls laugh. Yvonne turns her attention to The Argus newspaper she is holding and reads.

Yvonne's POV: The headlines are about violence and forced removals happening under the apartheid regime. A photo on the front page shows a woman on her knees holding onto her children and screaming as bulldozers move in behind her. A headline reads "THE BIG PROTESTS" and "AWAY WITH VERWOERD" June 14 1961.

Yvonne looks at the photograph, she is absorbed in the image for a long time. She touches the face of the woman in the picture. Then Yvonne looks up. We see she is crying. After a while, Yvonne's eyes change. She becomes gritty and determined- she is angry now.

YVONNE
Enough.

INT. HOUSE OF ELOCUTION COACH - SEA POINT - DAY

Yvonne sitting with Elocution Coach RONEEN SANDERS at a table in a modest room with microphones and pages and books. Yvonne holds a page with "Ah, Eh, OH, OOH, Eeh, Aah" vocal exercises typed on it. She is sounding out the exercises. Roneen is a typical Drama coach- colourful, with a classic deep, slightly English-accented voice. She is authoritative and articulates beautifully.

RONEEN
Okay, Yvonne, ready? Let’s hear it.

Yvonne is really shy at first, but with some effort, starts to read out a page of dramatic dialogue.

YVONNE
Susanne - I said don’t do that again!

Yvonne tries a different voice, giggles and starts to enjoy it.

YVONNE (CONT’D)
Charlie - I cannot leave you - I will die... please forgive me.

Yvonne looks up from the page at her coach, she is getting carried away.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
Oh, I know how this goes! (*As Susanne)* Oh, Charlie - you didn't really mean to hit me? Your fist just slipped forwards a bit when you were trying to catch me? (*As Charlie)* That's it, love of my life- I just wanted to hold you up- because you are a drunk, and it's not my fault. (*As Susanne)* Poor darling! You want a boxing party? Okay, my love: (growls)let's go- bap! Boom! Zokit! Get out! (*As Charlie)*...but I loooove you. You're nothing without me!

By now, Roneen is amazed and laughing at Yvonne - she recognizes her as a truly gifted student.

RONEEN
Vonnie- stick to the lines!

Yvonne dramatically throws the pages up in the air - they are laughing.

YVONNE
Come- give me some news to read!

Roneen passes her some radio style news clips.

RONEEN
Start with: 'Today's headlines'.

Yvonne is suddenly serious and reads perfectly - she is superb.

YVONNE
And On Today's News: The National Party Has Announced That A New Bill Is Being Passed Which Will Encourage Their Policy of Separate Development...

RONEEN
Devel'pment, not devil-pmint, Yvonne.

Yvonne gets witty, has an opinion, and is feeling alive.

YVONNE
Devil?… But that's so apt Roneen! ... The devil has announced his devil-ipment policy on race segregation…

Roneen tries to control her funny student.

RONEEN
Yvonne!

Yvonne takes it further, improvising again, her voice is quite brilliant, though what she is saying is made up.

YVONNE
... And most rational South Africans are now living in terror of speaking out against this white devil... and his mints...

RONEEN
(wraps it up) and Yvonne Bryceland never again reads the news on South African Broadcasting Corporation channels ever again. The end.

YVONNE
And Yvonne Bryceland did not care, because she likes... drama!

Both women laugh, Yvonne throws down her pages.

RONEEN
Yvonne, truly- you can try to get work at the SABC in Sea Point. Just stay away from politics.

YVONNE
Roneen- politics doesn't stay away from us! As my brother says, 'We are immersed, but blind to it'. Now about work- will I get used to it? My voice? Like a real actress?

Yvonne starts to pack up her things, she is feeling motivated.

RONEEN
Yes, Yvonne, you have talent. Listen, they pay pretty well- radio plays and so forth. You have a good husky quality. Do you smoke?

YVONNE
Nope- it's all natural. So- what are we waiting for? Have you got contacts?

Roneen finds Yvonne delightful. They walk towards the front door.

RONEEN
I have.

INT. HEILBUTH HOME - NIGHT - 1955

All the siblings, parents, kids are gathered around the radio. There is great excitement, Yvonne's radio drama is about to air. Yvonne has her two girls sitting on and around her, and she is heavily pregnant.

COLLEEN
Shh... shh... here it comes.

The family hold their breath. The music of the drama begins. Soon the house is flooded with the sounds of radio drama, combined with the squeals of the family as they recognize Yvonne's voice.

(O.S.)

The dramatic voices of the radio play begin; the story gets swept along in the background. We hear Yvonne's voice - distinct, husky - a really good performance. The family don't hear much as they all start cheering. Some start saying "Shhh"... trying to listen. Danny hugs his wife. He is holding a drink.

DANNY
I told you- you are brilliant.

Yvonne is genuinely thrilled.

YVONNE
Danny- I can do it! And I get paid!

Danny gets emotional, takes another sip of his drink.

DANNY
We get paid! You’re just tops m’darling. The most fragrant petals in the field are my wife... I love you, Yvonne.

Yvonne quickly kisses him, but then moves away to stand amidst the family group

YVONNE
I love you, Danny boy.

The family sweep around Yvonne, joyful and proud. Yvonne is thrilled. The Heilbuth home is happy, Yvonne's girls dance about. John goes to sit at the piano, the sisters gather- song fills the room. Colleen looks at Yvonne and smiles.

The sister's bond is strong, and Yvonne winks knowingly at her. Danny sees this exchange, and his face turns grim. Making sure no-one can see, he yanks at Yvonne to sit down, as if concerned for her pregnant state. He is rough. He checks to see that no-one is looking. Colleen is watching him, and does not look away. Danny looks away from her. Yvonne is thrown slightly off-balance - she sits and then sings - but her joy is diminished. Colleen glares at Danny. Danny is caught out, to cover up he gets arrogant, takes a sip from the drink in his hand, and starts to sings out "DANNY BOY" with a beautiful voice. He raises his glass to Yvonne and blows her a kiss. The rest of the family- who did not see the brief exchange- laugh and join in the singing. Colleen and Yvonne look at one another knowingly, but remain quiet.

INT. BRYCELAND HOME - NIGHT

Mavourneen (13) and Colleen (8) are with Yvonne in the tiny kitchen. Yvonne has a new baby on her hip, BABY MELANIE. Yvonne tries hard to make what she has
attractive, little details of painted flowers on the dining table, and a vase of daisies.

Yvonne is cooking SOUP, and has another pot on with RICE She is laughing with her girls, the radio can be heard. Yvonne starts forming fishcake patties and placing them on a plate in neat round shapes ready for cooking. Mavourneen looks at the shapes, then shakes her head at her mother, Yvonne laughs and makes a heart shape for Mavourneen, and a dog shape for Colleen, then she dusts them with flour. The girls are happy.

One of Yvonne's Radio Plays comes on. She gathers the girls to sit at the table to listen. Yvonne serves her daughters soup. The girls start eating, and Yvonne sits too, and holds the baby to nurse her. Yvonne breastfeeds the baby. The rice is bubbling on the stove vigorously now. Yvonne looks at the pot, but does not want to disturb Melanie.(O.S) The front door is heard opening and shutting loudly. Danny is home. The atmosphere shifts to one of tension. The girls' faces drop. Yvonne bravely indicates they should eat up. Yvonne should get up, get to the stove to switch off the heat of the rice, and start cooking the fishcakes, but the baby is still nursing, and falling asleep so she is stuck. Danny enters the kitchen. He is too loud; he has been drinking. He heads over to kiss them all on the head.

DANNY
Darlings! Lights of my life.

Yvonne smells the alcohol on him as he leans in to kiss her head. She puns intentionally.

YVONNE
Hey, Danny. You're done for the day?

DANNY
Work? Aye. Bob's a good egg. I'm sure he'll give me another day's work this week.

YVONNE
Danny, could you please quickly turn the stove off? The rice may burn...

Danny goes over to the stove. He sees the rice is sticking and starting to burn.

DANNY
What have you done here? Why do you let the food overcook?

YVONNE
I was just feeding the baby... she's fallen asleep...

DANNY
She must sleep in her room, Yvonne. I told you. Are you so busy listening to your own voice on the radio there, to not notice that your husband's meal is turning black?

YVONNE
It's not black, Danny, I was about to...

DANNY
Don't tell me what it is- you're still sitting there- I'm standing here...

Yvonne senses trouble. She turns to the girls.

YVONNE
All finished, Mauvie? Can you take Colleen to the bathroom please? A quick bath, now!

MAVOURNEEN
Mommy, I want my doggie fishcake.

Yvonne thinks fast, and covers smoothly. She must get the girls away from Danny. She senses trouble ahead.

YVONNE
Mauvie, they are not ready. While you are in the bath, I'll cook them, and then we will all eat together, okay?

Mavourneen tries to take Colleen by the hand to lead her off, but Colleen has not finished eating her soup and stays seated. Danny is really drunk. He tries and fails to find the dial to turn off the stove, he turns it up instead of down. Yvonne continues to get the girls out of the room as calmly as she can.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
Colleen- can you finish later, love? I need you to hop in the bath.

Colleen is still reluctant. She moans about her soup. Out of nowhere Danny hits the table with his fist in front of Colleen. The soup spills onto her. Colleen cries. Danny bellows.

DANNY
Go now! Your mother spoke!

Colleen bursts into tears, wailing loudly. This wakes the baby in Yvonne's arms. Mavourneen is pulling at Colleen to go with her.

YVONNE
Danny! Don't!

Danny turns on Yvonne.

DANNY
What now? They don't listen to their own mother - I'm helping you! You stupid?

Yvonne takes the two older girls by the hand, firmly and Quickly - the two are crying loudly - and leads through the kitchen. She carries baby Melanie in the other arm. As they pass Danny, he moves back and then bumps the hot stove. He roars with anger. He hits a shelf with a fist. The girls get more upset.

The noise in the room and crying becomes louder. Yvonne tries to get the girls out of the room. Danny takes the plate with the fishcakes and hurls it at the wall. Mavourneen and Colleen scream. It is all too much for Danny. He grabs the pot of boiling rice and hurls it across the kitchen. Yvonne ducks over baby Colleen, Mavourneen and Colleen. Hot rice hits Yvonne, and some lands on the baby Melanie's face and arm. Yvonne takes all the girls and runs to the bathroom.

INT. BRYCELAND HOME; BATHROOM - NIGHT

Yvonne and the girls. Mavourneen is whimpering about her fishcake, Colleen sobs loudly, Melanie wails in pain. Yvonne holds a cold wet face-cloth on Melanie's red sore spots. Yvonne runs the bath loudly - she wants to cover the noise of Danny shouting, and distract the girls. She is also worried they will hear what is going to happen when she heads back down the stairs. She gets Mavourneen to sing a silly song, and Colleen to join in - even though they are both still upset. Yvonne turns the tap down to a small but loud trickle. She knows all the tricks, and has done this before. She works slowly and deliberately. She puts towels on the floor for Mavourneen to sit on and hold the baby safely. Mavourneen does so. She is brave, rocking the baby while looking straight at her mother.

YVONNE
Mavie. I need you to watch Colleen in the bath, while you hold the baby and sit here.

Mavourneen gets it. She nods, and shoulders the task for her mother. Colleen argues, she doesn’t understand what the problem is.

COLLEEN
But I want Mauvie to bath with me.

YVONNE
And she will. You make lots of splashing to make the baby laugh, okay? Even if the water spills over- that's okay- have lots of fun. I'll tidy later- okay? What's the number one rule? Lots of FUN!

Colleen likes the game. She splashes madly - water spills from the tub.

YVONNE (CONT’D)
Lots of splashing.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
(Under her breath to Mavourneen)
Mauvie... if Mommy is asleep when you come downstairs... if I don't want to wake up, take your sisters and go to Aunty Kelly next door. Ask Kelly to phone Granny or Aunty Colleen. Like last time - yes?

Mavourneen nods, but is frightened.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
Don't bother Daddy, okay? Daddy may not be feeling well.

Mavourneen nods.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
Big strong girl. Tomorrow we will go for an ice cream at the lighthouse, okay? Tell Colleen.

Yvonne exits the bathroom and heads downstairs. Mavourneen is telling Colleen about the ice-cream.

COLLEEN
Yay!

INT. BRYCELAND HOME; KITCHEN - NIGHT

Danny sits at the table, reads the paper, drinks from a bottle of whisky. Yvonne walks in very carefully. She starts to quietly clear the soup bowls from under Danny's paper. He does not move. Yvonne begins to wipe the fish cake mess from the walls with a cloth. Scattered rice grains cover the counter and the floor, Yvonne is working slowly and quietly to clean it all. With her back turned she bends over the rice, and scoops handfuls to put back into the pot. C/U of her hands show they are shaking.

Danny pauses - he puts the paper down a bit and looks at Yvonne.

DANNY
Waste of food. Good food. In the war, we needed that.

Yvonne freezes and stands. Danny goes on, his voice cold.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Hurry now, before it gets cold.

YVONNE
Danny, it's burned, and it's dirty now.

DANNY
Your kitchen floor dirty then, my darling wife? What have you been doing all day?

YVONNE
(Ignores the comment) Danny... the rice is no good now- I can't give that to you- or the girls.

DANNY
Och, you're right. Luckily, the girls have eaten. And so have I- down at the pub.

YVONNE
With what money, Danny?

DANNY
I worked today- and you? Oh no- the day at home- well, I guess that's your dirty, burned dinner then.

Yvonne breathes deeply.

YVONNE
Danny... That's okay, Danny, I'm not hungry.

DANNY
Not hungry? And yesterday you were on at me about our hungry girls? And look at you- bones stickin' out.

Yvonne folds her arms protectively. Danny goes on.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Is that supposed to be attractive for a husband? A man comes home and finds his bony wife, her teats hanging from feeding babies, knock-kneed and her belly flapping down... is that supposed to be a warm welcome for a working husband?

Yvonne stands frozen. Danny flicks up his newspaper.

DANNY (CONT'D)
There's more rice there... and under my chair here.

Grains of rice are everywhere. Yvonne bends down again and on all fours continues to pick up more and more rice. C/U of Yvonne's fingers gathering rice grains. Tears fall onto the rice. She grits her teeth.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Get your dinner together. Hurry up.

Yvonne uses her hands to sweep at the rice.

DANNY (CONT'D)
There's more under that chair. Are you blind? Oh, yes... she is... like a bat.

Yvonne moves to collect more rice. She scrapes the chair out of the way.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Shut up that noise. Can a man not come home to peace? I come home to wailing and food everywhere and brats and a sniveling wife... there's rice there... your dinner's there, you bat.

Yvonne freezes. Something shifts for her. She's had enough.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Look at you... dog.

Yvonne slowly rises.

YVONNE
Oh, Danny, it's enough.

DANNY
Enough?

Yvonne puts the pot down. She is calm, defiant, done.

YVONNE
I'm not scared tonight, Danny. I was. Now I'm not. I'm done. It's enough.

Danny rises from his chair. Puts down his paper. Slowly rolls up a sleeve.

Yvonne speaks slowly and clearly.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
It's enough, Danny. And God help you for what you are about to do.

Yvonne's POV. Danny moves towards her, his face red, eyes glaring and narrow. Yvonne's world turns to black.

EXT. BRYCELAND HOME; TINY BACKYARD - DAY

The next day: Yvonne is in her small back yard. Her face is again bruised and swollen. She has other bruises all over her body. Her clothes are torn. She is in obvious pain. She is standing, panting and sweating with an axe in her hand. A large tree stump is in front of her.

Yvonne's POV: The world has gone dark, she sees swirling red and shards of light, Danny's face as he beats her flashes in front of her. Her terrified girls flash in front of her.

YVONNE

Danny.

Yvonne swings the big axe at the huge stump. Splinters of wood go flying.

The axe is huge and heavy in Yvonne's small hands but she keep swinging. Her hands bleed.

Splinters cut her arms, legs, face. They get lodged in her dark curly hair.

From within the dark centre of the log, something strange is struggling to get out. We see a chameleon-like face with huge eyes. The creature, Duende, looks straight at Yvonne. It is waiting to be set free. Yvonne does not see it yet.

As she cuts to the centre, light reaches the creature, it glistens, it seems delighted as it fights to climb out. As Yvonne's axe hits dangerously close all around the creature it is unafraid, staring straight at Yvonne with pride and exhiliration as the axe smashed into the log next to it.

Yvonne howls and screams like an animal, but she does not care who hears her.

Part of the log centre breaks. Duende bursts free and leaps to the edge of the log and straightens up, proud as a matador.

Duende watches her. Yvonne pauses her chopping, with her head back she gasps for air, and exhales slowly. When she opens her eyes, she sees duende.

Duende watches her, the strange face invites her to face her darkness, it is not afraid.

Slowy Duende raises its arms, and makes the gesture of a matador waving his red flag. They look at each other. Yvonne throws her head back and laughs, then she grits her teeth and looks at the broken stump.

Yvonne attacks the stump for the last time.

Finally the stump is destroyed. Yvonne is bloodied, her body broken, her face a mess. She wipes her face with her bloodied hand. She looks up at the blazing sun, and is washed in bright light. The axe falls from her hands, her body follows and she lies on the mess of blood and shards of wood.

Her swollen eyes open a last time, she sees Duende's huge eyes looking at her, it raises its arms over its head and claps.

Yvonne smiles.

INT.HEILBUTH HOME - DAY

Yvonne lies in bed, in a dark room, battered and cut. She is asleep. Mavourneen, child Colleen, John, Mary and Mr. Heilbuth are outside the door, peaking in. They are whispering. Melanie being held by Colleen.

(O.S.) MRS HEILBUTH is heard on the phone. She walks up to the gathered family.

MRS. HEILBUTH
The doctor says we need to give her a few weeks.

The family nod and murmur.

MRS. HEILBUTH (CONT'D)
Between us, we will look after her and the girls, but she cannot go back to that Danny.

MR. HEILBUTH
We have no divorce in our family.

Yvonne opens her bruised eyes, she looks terrible. The sisters go to her. The family gathers. She is loved.

YVONNE
You do now, Dad.

The family look at Mr. Heilbuth, he turns and leaves. Mrs. Heilbuth and John enter the room. John goes over to his sister and sits on her bed. He holds her hand. Gently he lays out a plan of action. Yvonne whispers painfully through cracked lips and a sore jaw.

JOHN
Bud, when you are better, we are going to get you sorted out, okay? A job? Shall I ask if there is any job at the paper?

YVONNE
Thanks, but as what? I have no training in anything. Paper is not radio.

MRS. HEILBUTH
You will have to take whatever you can get, Buddy. Tea?

YVONNE
Please, Mom. Mom? I'm not scared. I don't care, nothing scares me now. Get it?

John playfully puts his hands into boxing mode.

JOHN
Got it, little sis. See the fire is still there.

Yvonne playfully tries to punch back in response, but her arms are too sore to lift. The family are watching from the doorway and laugh. Mrs. Heilbuth hugs her gently, and goes off to make tea. Yvonne's daughters go to her, a bit afraid.

MAVOURNEEN
Mommy you still look bad.

JOHN
You should see the other guy.

The family laugh, but everyone is sympathetic and worried about the girls.

YVONNE
Mavie, you were so very brave. You are so strong. Daddy just didn't know how to show me his love. He's muddled up. It's not okay to hit someone you love.

FADE OUT on family gathered and carefully caring for Yvonne.

INT. THE ARGUS NEWSPAPER HEAD OFFICE - CAPE TOWN - DAY -- 1960

A busy newsroom, journalists are running, typing, phoning. John is on the phone, working. A sense of apartheid South Africa is prevalent in black-and-white photos on pin boards, and snippets of overlapping conversations around the room.

INT. THE ARGUS LIBRARY - DAY

In the main area there is a silent and serious library atmosphere. But then we see a group of people gathered around a counter looking up at someone. They break out in loud laughter and seem not to be able to stop. A few very young men are flirting wildly.

We see it is Yvonne, leaning over the check-out desk, wearing her pretty stockings and skirt. Yvonne has the young men spell-bound. A very young man takes a photo of the scene. It is BRIAN ASTBURY (20), a young apprentice newspaper photographer. After he takes the pictures, he dares to approach her, turning bright red.

BRIAN
Excuse me, Miss... uh... Mrs... Ms.... Bryceland?

Yvonne turns and looks at this shy man in front of her.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
I just wanted to say- I think I got a great shot of your backsi... I mean your back... I mean not that there's anything wrong with your front... your face... it's... I just saw your legs now... err... the back of... the ribbon on your...

Brian pauses, she waits bemused, then he rambles on.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
... your legs... I mean... YOU... it's just your legs were in... I... the light and I mean… your stockings… they have a ribbon… I'm sorry… I just…

Yvonne bursts out laughing. So do the journalists around her. Brian is mortified.

YVONNE
Sounds good.

Brian breathes a sigh of relief that she is not offended.

YVONNE
Will you show it to me when it's developed?

Brian is very shy, but wide-eyed as though he were looking at an idol

BRIAN
Yes. I'll take it to the dark room today...

YVONNE
There's no rush. When you are ready, I'll just be here... at my counter.

Brian nods, looking down. Yvonne smiles at him and eases the tension.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
You're a photographer?

BRIAN
I am... learning.

YVONNE
Have you been taking pictures of what's happening out there... in the townships?

BRIAN
I know what is happening, but no - so far I've been taking shots of theatre performances.

Yvonne is impressed.

YVONNE
(Suddenly shy) Theatre? I'd like to see your pictures of that sometime. I'm an actress... well, I call myself one... I do it- when I can.

BRIAN
I know... I know who you are, my family and I listen to you on the radio.

YVONNE
Really? You know who I am?

BRIAN
Of course, doesn't everybody? You're on the radio.

Yvonne absorbs this. She begins to glow. Then to flirt.

YVONNE
Sjoe. That's three connections between us already. What's your name?

BRIAN
Brian. Astbury... Brian.

Yvonne looks at him. A shout from behind them calls her attention away. He is left staring at her, red in the face. He is smitten. He looks at his camera, and then back at her.

Yvonne turns back to her 'crowd'. The people are still looking at her and she picks up her story where she left off. She is magnetic.

Others that are working in the library and not part of the fun look up and frown at the crowd, mouthing 'Shhh'.

INT. ARGUS LIBRARY - DAY

John arrives at the library. He sees Yvonne, and takes it all in. This is doing her good. Yvonne has now hopped onto the counter - and is lying horizontal among the books, eyes closed.

YVONNE
Okay, folks- I'm exhausted- I need a nap.

People are either roaring with laughter or tut-tutting. Suddenly a stern Head librarian, MARGARET, marches over. She stares unbelieving at the scene. John is too late to warn Yvonne.

LIBRARIAN
YVONNE! What are you even thinking?

Yvonne stays right where she is, and speaks with her eyes closed. She is convincing and upbeat.

YVONNE
Ag, Margaret- listen bokkie- I was doing a radio play last night, got home, fetched the girls, fed them, we all collapsed into bed after 10... I'm poegaai, man.

Margaret's anger is building.

MARGARET
YVONNE! This is a library. A place of order and support where our journalists, some of the best in the world, come in with urgency and high levels of stress.

There is no response from Yvonne, it is as if she has fallen asleep.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
Do you even know what is going on out there in our country? What our boys are facing out there?

Yvonne frowns, then turns her head, opening an eye.

YVONNE
Yes, I know- I know very well. I work here- I see it all every day. I know exactly how hideous things are out there. I am reading it all, when I am not working.

MARGARET
Working? Chatting- entertaining - is more like it. Listen Yvonne, if you are working another job- your plays or whatever- then maybe you don't need this one. I gave you a chance because of your brother…

John steps in. Charming and light.

JOHN
Margaret! Morning. Buddy! On your feet, soldier!

Yvonne hops off the table - rubbing her eyes - she actually does look exhausted.

MARGARET
John, I have no time for this- get your sister in line, or she is out of my library.

John nods politely, he is respectful. Margaret stomps off. He turns to Yvonne. He adores his sister, but she needs this job.

JOHN
Bliksem, Buddy. Another day, another drama.

YVONNE
Ag John- ra ra ra... come on! It's all fine. I like this job, and I'm grateful. I won't chat so much anymore.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
(Changes the subject) Did you hear the episode last night- it was so great - my character got hit by a tractor on the farm, and crawled her way back to the farmhouse. And then a leopard...

JOHN
Good! Sounds great. Bud, listen- I have to interview someone about a theatre thing. Do you want to come? I thought you might be able to help me a bit because you know this stuff. I have to go see the play tonight, talk to the director tomorrow.

YVONNE
Please, please, please!

JOHN
It's just a small local production- you might know them from the UCT amateur group you performed with once.

Brian has come back to ask Yvonne something. It takes supreme effort, and he is terribly nervous.

BRIAN
Yvonne, I was just wondering if you might like to... er...

Yvonne smiles at Brian. She spares him any further difficulty.

YVONNE
(To John) Can I bring someone?

JOHN
I only have two seats.

YVONNE
Might be a good idea though- to bring a theatre photographer?

JOHN
Makes sense, ja that's fine.

INT. OBSERVATORY - NIGHT

A hall in Orange Street Synagogue, Cape Town. People of all races are headed in. Some appear nervous. Legally people of various races may not watch theatre together under apartheid laws. The play could be raided by the special branch of the police. Yvonne, John and Brian take their seats. Brian is clearly shy in Yvonne's presence, but once in the hall, and when he sees what is going on, and the minimalist set of the play, he focuses intently and starts shooting pictures.

John greets various people. There is tension in the air. It is very hot, and there are technical failures. They have just one light.

JOHN
Risky stuff.

YVONNE
Ja, jissie.

The house lights are suddenly shut off, the performance starts. We see, and hear, South African characters on stage. Their dialogue references content about local realities and the impact of apartheid laws. Yvonne, John and Brian become increasingly amazed. Yvonne has tears streaming down her face. Brian has left his seat and is squatting at the corners of the stage discreetly, shooting picture after picture. He is stunned. The play ends. The audience stand and cheer. After the actors have left the stage, Yvonne, John and Brian collapse back in their seats, stunned. Yvonne voices all their thoughts.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
THAT is theatre. THAT! That's our lives and words on stage. THAT!

EXT. OUTSIDE HALL; UPPER ORANGE STREET - NIGHT

Yvonne, John and Brian are watching the crowd throng around the playwright. It is Athol. His wife, Sheila, is next to him, as are the actors from the play. We catch glimpses of them. Brian takes pictures discretely.

YVONNE
(To John and Brian) Fugard?!
Sheila! I've got to talk to them.
That was the most brilliant thing I
have ever seen.

JOHN
You won't get close to them now,
everyone is trying to talk to them.
But we have them for an interview
tomorrow- remember?

YVONNE
Thank God for that. John, how am I
going to sleep?

The crowd suddenly starts to disperse in a hurry. Athol and Shiela are nowhere to be seen.

JOHN
Something is up. Let's get out of
here.

The same spot, where the crowd had been, is almost deserted already. Brian sees a crudely written flyer of the play "The Blood Knot" on the street, and takes a photo of it with the streetlight and synagogue in the background.

John and Yvonne are hurrying to the car. Brian follows.

YVONNE
Might be the police. Come on Brian-
get in.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THEATRE - NIGHT

The street outside the theatre is absolutely quiet - no-one remains. It is as though nothing ever happened here. A single street lamp glows. The flyer blows along on the street. Blue and red police lights suddenly make the scene glow. C/U: We see a heavy pair of boots getting out of a police vehicle. Voices and sounds can be heard over the vehicle's 2-way radio. We follow the boots to the scene. The person stops - is obviously looking for some kind of evidence that illegal activities were going on at this place that night. A hand reaches down and picks up the flyer. On the back of the paper, in handwritten felt-tip pen, it reads:

"Blood Knot at 9, bring the others".

The boots move back to car. Radio signal heard. The person, who is clearly a policeman, speaks into the vehicle's radio.

POLICEMAN'S POV: the dashboard, with the turning blue lights reflecting on it, beyond that the empty street and streetlight and synagogue.

POLICEMAN
Nee, niks hier nie. Net 'n papier met iets oor bloed. Niemand hier nie, maar dit lyk als of daar was. Oor en uit.

(English translation: No, nothing here. No-one. Just a paper with something about blood. No-one is here, but it looks like there was. Over and out.)

EXT. CITY CENTER; HOTEL COURTYARD - DAY

Athol and Sheila are having tea. Enter Yvonne. She is holding a small notebook, and is nervous.

YVONNE
Hi, I'm Yvonne, from The Argus, to talk about The Blood Knot.

Athol rises politely to shake her hand.

ATHOL
Yvonne. But I know you- you were... at UCT? You are an actress?

YVONNE
I was in the play Sheila acted in- the Amdram group...

Sheila smiles as she recognizes Yvonne, she nods. Athol thinks intensely, then affirms.

ATHOL
That's right, I'm casting my mind back... that's right... shy little thing... till you got on stage... then BOOM!

They laugh. It is true of Yvonne and she knows it. But those comments of the Professor left her doubting her true worth.

YVONNE
And now, I'm here to talk about what I saw last night.

ATHOL
You saw it. Good, good.

YVONNE
I think it has changed my life.

Sheila is jaded and cynical, not swayed by Yvonne's enthusiasm.

SHEILA
Oh... of course it has. Come on- that's a bit extreme.

YVONNE
(Presses on, regardless) I'm serious.

ATHOL
Let's talk. Yvonne, some tea?

She sits, intense conversation follows. Time goes by. We hear bits of conversation, Yvonne and Athol talk of theatre, truth, empty spaces, risks, suffering under apartheid and so forth. They talk fast, they gesture and exclaim. They laugh. The drinking of tea changes to drinking of wine as dusk descends.

YVONNE
... Never before. NEVER. Those are South African people- those characters. They are talking about OUR problems, in our voices, with our feelings. They are us. It's nothing like I have ever seen or read.

ATHOL
Of course. I don't want to do plays like CAPAB. I want to tell our stories. In South Africa you can open your front door and start falling over stories. Let's tell them. They matter- they explode.

YVONNE
Exactly- but the way you do it- brutal, cut down to its bare essence. It's brilliant. I want to be part of what you are doing. I commit to it!

SHEILA
Yvonne, sorry to pull on your reins mid-gallop dear, but are you still acting?

Yvonne looks at Sheila, Athol snaps at her.

ATHOL
Sheila! Yes- she's doing theatre...

YVONNE
At CAPAB. But it's classic and European theatre, and I feel like I am shriveling in my dreams.

ATHOL
European.

YVONNE
Euro-centric - that's the...

Athol overlaps with Yvonne.

ATHOL
... that's the word.

ATHOL;YVONNE
The word.

They pause - look at each other.

YVONNE
Yes.

ATHOL
We agree.

It is obvious that there is an intense connection between them.

YVONNE
Strongly.

Sheila interrupts their staring.

SHEILA
May I remind you, we ALL do. Agree, that is.

ATHOL
Sheila means that we, she and I, are living this. We do. We have these conversations for breakfast, lunch and dinner. This is what we are doing at Dorkay House, Yvonne.

YVONNE
Dorkay House? In Johannesburg- I heard about you working there. The rough place? The old building? But how? With what money?

Athol and Sheila laugh. Sheila looks at Yvonne in disbelief.

SHEILA
Money? Money. Now there's a subject.

Athol explains. He and Sheila are tired and frustrated by the situation.

ATHOL
Let's see... in the last week in Jo'burg I presented The Blood Knot in a friend's backyard in Parktown, the neighbours watched over the fence. That didn't cost anything to do. In Port Elizabeth we are working in an abandoned Snake Pit at night when the actors finish their day jobs, they are cleaners, teachers, factory workers. We can be arrested any time. We work wherever we can. There's never much money, Yvonne. Sheila, our daughter and I slept on a pile of our coats in the corner of an empty flat. It's Barney's flat - we're using it while he is in Belgium, listening to lectures by Brook.

Yvonne knows about the English theatre director.

YVONNE
Peter Brook. Theatre in an empty space.

SHEILA
Brook, Grotowski and Brecht- we've been thinking a lot about their ideas, their... words.

ATHOL
I was sickened by what I saw working at the pass Office in Jo'burg. These people thrown in jail for not having a stupid passbook... Those who never bloody get to say anything, who are thrown to the side because of the colour of their skin, but can tell stories that rip your guts from your belly.

YVONNE
(Very quietly- seeing the light)
And that's where you come in.

ATHOL
(Breaking the silence) I have to give all South Africans a voice, Yvonne. I write the stories; I gather the actors. We hide in garages, backyards, in the impossibly noisy Dorkay House rooms - with the gumboot dancers competing at the hostels and the factories running their machines next door. Hell, me and Barney collected old egg cartons and stuck them onto the walls with our stapler (he mimics this action)- biff, biff, tak tak...

SHEILA
My stapler?

ATHOL
(Is caught out, but laughs) Oh, caught out! Ag, sorry Sheila man, I'll buy you a new one.

Pause - they look at Yvonne.

YVONNE
I have to be part of this.

Sheila laughs at Yvonne, she is getting tired.

SHEILA
How, Yvonne? You have three girls, a job as a librarian.

ATHOL
Sheila has a point, Yvonne. We have the police watching us, they'll arrest anyone caught doing theatre together. We have no money.

YVONNE
I don’t know.

ATHOL
A librarian with passion... Yvonne.

They stare at each other - processing many insights and inspirations.

ATHOL (CONT'D)
We are going to London. To see what's going on. You should try join us.

Yvonne stares long and hard at Athol.

YVONNE
I have no idea how to find the money- but I will do it. I mean it. This is the future. And I am with you all the way.

EXT. SEA POINT - 1968 - DAY

We see two teenagers and a younger girl running down a flight of stairs which leads almost all the way to a rocky shore. They stop at a door, the last corridor of flats, and turn in. This is Mavourneen and Colleen arriving home from school.

INT. YVONNE'S FLAT - DAY

Yvonne's flat is a humble space, but with attention to detail: beaded lamps, old wooden furniture with flowers painted on it. Things are worn, hand-me-down. A large window in the lounge overlooks the rocks outside, waves crashing.
It is a very dramatic view. The voices of Brian and Yvonne are heard. Little Melanie is at home with them. Mavourneen and Colleen enter the flat to overhear laughter – screaming, joyous, loud laughter.

BRIAN (O.S.)
I love you, Y.

The teenage girls express freaked out faces to each other, rolling eyes, a slight rebellious overtone to them both. Yvonne's response is husky. She is enjoying herself, laughing heartily.

YVONNE
I know! You tell me all the time. It's marvelous. Especially because I love you, too.

Mavourneen boldly enters the room where Melanie, Brian and Yvonne are.

MAVOURNEEN
That's enough of that!

Yvonne and Brian are only half embarrassed - we realize this relationship has been going on for a while.

YVONNE
There's nothing wrong with love, madam. It's better than the alternative.

MAVOURNEEN
Ja, Ma. I know... I know...

YVONNE
I have almost scratched the pennies together to go to London.

MAVOURNEEN
Mom! That's amazing- are you going to go? With Athol and his wife?

YVONNE
I am. I must- this is it, my darling- this is the work I've dreamed of. I'm not stopping now. I need to see what is going on- there is so much out there- we haven't got a clue down here.

MAVOURNEEN
Am I looking after the brats?

YVONNE
You can stay with Granny if you like? Or she can come here.

COLLEEN
Here!!!

YVONNE
I'll ask her. I'm sure she will. I'm sure the whole family will come look after you, my petals.

BRIAN
I might be going, too. But first there's something to discuss.

They all look at him.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
I love your Mom.

The teenagers squirm visibly. He chuckles, but soldiers on.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
I want to be with her forever.

MAVOURNEEN
No!! Not as a...

YVONNE
What?

BRIAN
I know, I know, I'm so much younger- but I love you, Y, and your girls. And we want the same things- the same fight for the same cause...

YVONNE
As long as we are facing outward for the fights!

MAVOURNEEN
Mom! You can't!

YVONNE
Why not?

COLLEEN
What will people say?

YVONNE
People? What people? Why do I need to worry about people? Think I'm scared of 'people'? Where were people when our lives were in shreds? Did they pay my rent for the last 10 years? Did they care about you girls when you slept under my make-up table every night during my performances? Or about how much rice and beans we've had to eat? YOU, you three in this room- and now Brian, and my family... you are my people, you know what we have been through. You know we deserve some blerrie laughter around here.

Yvonne speaks softly to the girls.

YVONNE (CONT'D)

Girls... Brian is a good man, gentle and sweet, and smart, and he loves me, and he cares very much about you. Plus, together we will donner him if he misbehaves, hey?

Laughter, crazy falling together - a surreal but sweet moment.

EXT. LONDON - NIGHT - 1969

Yvonne, Brian, Athol and Sheila walking down a London Street, approaching The Open Space Theatre. There are restaurants and a lot of people. Yvonne is excited at all the new sights and sounds. They are inspired and giggle as they see all that is new to them. They enter the theatre.

INT. THE OPEN SPACE THEATRE - NIGHT - LONDON 1969

Yvonne, Brian, Athol and Sheila enter the Open Space theatre. They find their seats. Yvonne is barely breathing. Brian takes it all in, thinking deeply.

Brian's POV: The Open Space is simple, with an open floor area, a few lighting bars and rows of benches - raked and with cushions on them.

BRIAN
This couldn't have cost much. There's just a few lighting bars, a few seats…

A play starts. The four watch riveted, excited, inspired.

INT. LONDON PUB - NIGHT

Athol, Sheila, Brian and Yvonne are having drinks. Judging by the number of glasses and bottles, it has been a long and exciting night for them.

YVONNE
We have nothing like this in SA- theatre that's not about glitz and costumes, it’s raw, harsh, true.

ATHOL
Glad you came?

YVONNE
It's changing my whole perspective. The Empty Space- brilliant- even the name! It's just an empty space. That's Grotowski's point, isn't it? And Brook?

ATHOL
True. Theatre- pared down to its essence.

BRIAN
Surely we can do this in Cape Town?

YVONNE
A new theatre! Offering work that is ours- South African- we need to speak- to give our stories- to bloody shock people to realize what is going on because of apartheid.

SHEILA
We will get no funding. The government will never allow it.

YVONNE
We don't want their money. We will do it on our own. Independent theatre!

Athol is intense, fired up and quite mesmerizing. Sheila looks too tired to sit through it all again.

ATHOL
To tell our stories we have to speak out about our lives- and we will have to tell the dark stories, the shameful, despicable things that go on around us that we are not allowed to talk about. Apartheid is evil. And the suffering going on is despicable. But I see this as our work, that's our job- to tell these stories.

Sheila lives with this, and is more practical than the newcomers. Her husband will be at the pub drinking and discussing for a long time.

SHEILA
Athol, I'm off to bed. You two- see he gets back to our room later, okay?

BRIAN
Will do, Sheila. Wait, I'll walk you out.

Brian and Sheila exit.

YVONNE
Stuff CAPAB- we need to do more of your work, Athol. You are a genius.

ATHOL
What? No man- I'm just a drunk with a high level of irritability about injustice... and a fierce affair with words.

YVONNE
You don't have a choice- you are gifted. You have to do this- and I want to do this with you.

ATHOL
With me, Y. Yes, that sounds very good. Very good. I'm very excited to work with you. But it has been hard, do you understand? But I want to work with you, you get me, Y. You...

Brian returns.

YVONNE
We need something like that in Cape Town, hey?

BRIAN
That's all anyone talks about, at every party.

ATHOL
Ja, that's right. We have nowhere to do our kind of work- the stuff we live for.

BRIAN
Athol, the theatre wouldn't be illegal...

ATHOL
There are ways around the laws. For the living experience, for theatre we really just need stories, courageous actors, and audience members. Like you, Y. I want to do an experiment.

Brian is proud, and smiling at his wife.

YVONNE
I'm committed. This is what I want to do.

Yvonne, Athol and Brian sit, deep in thought.

INT. LABIA THEATRE - CAPE TOWN 1968 - DAY

The Labia theatre is upstairs in a city central art deco building. It is large and spacious, but not lavish. Yvonne, Athol and actors WINSTON DUNSTER and VAL DONALD are rehearsing a new, devised play in an empty room. Athol is sitting on a chair, talking intensely and engaging the actors.

ATHOL
... And the bomb went off. An explosion, man. Sickening - hurting, killing innocent people. That's what I want to capture with you guys. The hell that it was.

WINSTON
But we will have no script?

ATHOL
This is an experiment. Yvonne- you have never done anything like it.

WINSTON
None of us have.

ATHOL
No script. No set, no particular costumes, no fancy lights- just the actor and the audience. Pure theatre. Theatre in its essence. You will have to trust me.

YVONNE
I do... we do.

In the back corner Duende sits watching, tense.

INT. LABIA - EVENING

Yvonne, Athol, Winston and Val work on. Same location, time has passed. They work on, exhausted, in the empty room. They sweat, roll, jump, laugh, improvising under the guidance of Athol who paces intensely up and down, whispering direction, watching every moment like a hawk. Winston has a briefcase, and a newspaper under his arm.

ATHOL
Brilliant, Yes!... Winston... make the bomb... out of what you have... what do you have? Newspaper. A briefcase. Yes. Use them.
(MORE)

ATHOL (CONT'D)
Anything, try something, let me see.
Yes. Yes. Good. Keep going!

Athol urges Winston into action with Yvonne alongside. Winston tears pieces of newspaper.

ATHOL (CONT'D)
Winston, challenge her!

Yvonne sits on a wooden bench. Winston stands far behind her, crumpling pieces of newspaper to make bombs, he puts them into his briefcase. Then he puts the briefcase next to Yvonne, her character is unaware of the danger. Yvonne is lost in her own world, time slows down. Athol is mesmerized.

Yvonne's POV: The light gets dim around her, darkening quickly. Yvonne can see a pool of light, her character is at a train station, her child nearby. There are sounds of crowds, trains, and screeching of brakes. The sound of her heartbeat gets faster, the screeching louder. In the corner of the darkness, Duende squats and looks at her. Yvonne breathes faster. As if from far away she can vaguely hear Athol talking to her, directing her quietly, incessantly.

ATHOL (CONT'D)
Explosion- blood- anger- I'm going
to count down until the explosion,
Yvonne- five, four, three...

Duende and Yvonne are in silent union, Duende nods at Yvonne and encourages her to go with, deeper and deeper into the character. Athol notices something is wrong, Yvonne is too far in, going into another, even more dangerous place. He knows he must do something to bring her back.

ATHOL (CONT'D)
Yvonne! Yvonne.

Athol runs, snatches the briefcase, and throws it through a nearby window. Glass shards scatter everywhere. The noise is crashing, but the action is effective. Yvonne's POV: Duende vanishes, her breathing stops, her heartbeat slows, then she sees the lights are normal, sounds are normal again. Yvonne seems to 'come to'. Athol collapses onto his knees in front of her. She stares blankly ahead. She is looking for what was, for Duende. Yvonne looks confused. She is upset and frustrated.

ATHOL (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry. I pushed you too far.
I'm so sorry, Y...

On hearing Athol's voice, she looks at Athol angry at first, but then sees his distress, and her compassion rises. Her expression suddenly softens.

YVONNE
You should have pushed harder.

ATHOL
What?

YVONNE
Actors are much tougher than you think.

INT. LABIA - DAY

Yvonne, Athol, Winston and Val are at work, tension runs high. Winston and Val watch from their various positions on stage as Athol and Yvonne hold a hushed discussion out of the acting area. Athol seems terrified of what he is asking of Yvonne, but Yvonne pushes onward.

YVONNE
Take me there, Athol. I want to tell the truth.

ATHOL
Y. It’s dangerous.

Yvonne throws her head back and laughs. Then she looks straight at Athol. She trusts him. Athol walks to her and leans towards her. They rest their foreheads together.

ATHOL (CONT’D)
You trust me?

YVONNE
I do.

ATHOL
I'm here. You come back when you've reached the edge.

YVONNE
Let’s go...

ATHOL
You know my hunger for this. You know where I want this to go. Truth.

YVONNE
I know, Athol.

Yvonne walks backward to her place in the performance area holding Athol's focus. She slowly sinks to her knees and looks down, entirely tuning in to listen to Athol's directions. Athol takes a breath. Then focuses on her, and begins to speak. Yvonne breathes.

Yvonne's POV: An echo of breath is heard. It gets dim again. There is a pool of light, like a spotlight. *Duende* appears near her. Her fingers twitch - she is happy, and a bit scared. He moves towards her. She is back at the train station; her child plays nearby. Train sounds, a crowd, announcements about arrivals and departures are heard. As if from far away, she hears Athol's voice, it is the only other thing she can hear.

ATHOL
Y, I want you to show me how she feels. Her child will be killed by, blown to... pieces... here, meters away. By... him. Bodies of your children are in bits, their blood all over you- he did this…

Yvonne's POV: Only *Duende* is in focus, it now rises. It looks straight at her. Invites her to dance like a matador. Stretches out its arms to embrace her.

ATHOL (CONT'D)
Yvonne- you are in pain, you have been pushed beyond human endurance... have you any idea how that feels?

Yvonne's voice is a growl.

YVONNE
Yes, I know how that feels. Don't ask me how that feels... I KNOW!

Yvonne rises as if in a trance. She reaches for the wooden chair she was sitting on; she starts to slam it against the floor. She cries out. She smashes the chair against the floor, splinters of wood go flying.

Yvonne's POV: It is reminiscent of the stump she chopped when she could not take any more of Danny. She sees flashes of Danny in the chair. *Duende* moves and rises from the chair, in electric energy.

Yvonne smashes the chair, it goes on and on. Bits of wood cut her - one splinter cuts a gash in her face, she does not stop. All the other actors are gathered, Athol watches dumbfounded. He is immobile. Yvonne's eyes are aflame.

Yvonne's POV: *Duende* rises, dancing swirling, eyes locked on Yvonne. Light floods the scene…

INT. LABIA THEATRE - NIGHT

A flood of light. Suddenly there is an audience in the auditorium, the actors are all on stage. Athol watches from the side. The performance ends. There is stunned, shocked silence. Some audience members are crying. Others are breathless. They stand up in an explosion of cheering and applauding. Yvonne, breathing hard, looks up - she connects with the audience, her eyes are full of joy. The audience are standing, shouting in a way that is out of themselves. A theatre critic looks around at the commotion, then leans to another.

THEATRE CRITIC
There has never ever been anything like this in South African theatre. Dammit- this is the new era we needed. This woman, if she works with Fugard, is going to change things.

INT. LABIA - NIGHT

The actors are clearing up the performance space. Athol finishes reading the crit that has now been published in the newspaper to the actors.

ATHOL
... This is the rage that South Africans living under apartheid feel- this captures the zeitgeist.

They all smile modestly - actually, they are utterly spent and exhausted. Athol looks quite stunned and vindicated. Winston picks up shards of wood.

WINSTON
How many chairs have we gone through now, Yvonne?

They all laugh. The actors start leaving.

ATHOL
Goodnight, Winston, goodnight. Thanks, boet.

YVONNE
Goodnight, Winston - thank you for today.

WINSTON
Yvonne- you have no idea... how good... you are scary!

Athol and Yvonne are then alone. They look at each other - amazed smiles and huge trust between them.

ATHOL
Yvonne. You were magnificent, dangerous and brilliant.

YVONNE
Athol, it felt so extremely good. It's happening.

Athol, almost shy, reaches for a small box in his pocket.

ATHOL
Y, I am very sorry... about your face. I bought you this... to say sorry. I feel terrible.

Yvonne opens the box - in it is a beautiful but modest ring. Yvonne hugs him.

YVONNE
Athol. That wasn't necessary- but thank you.

They embrace slowly and tenderly, but with respect.

ATHOL
You understand me, Y. What I am trying to say in all my work. There's no-one else who understands my soul like you do.

YVONNE
Athol, you don't see your own genius... you are electric as a director, a writer…

ATHOL
Y, no-one has ever believed in me like you do...

Brian enters. They step apart, but as though they have nothing to hide. Brian smiles at both - he sees nothing unusual. Yvonne shows Brian the ring. He is genuinely happy for her.

YVONNE
Brian- look at this- isn't it beautiful?

BRIAN
My word. Athol - that is beautiful.

YVONNE
To say sorry for my face.

They all laugh, tough love. Brian hugs his wife, she hugs back - they really love each other. Brian gently kisses the cut. Yvonne is very shy. Athol cannot take his eyes off Yvonne.

EXT. STORMS RIVER MOUTH - NIGHT -- 1968

A holiday home on the Garden Route. Athol, Sheila, Yvonne and Brian are relaxing in chairs in the garden. Wine is flowing, conversation is intense, and a braai is on the go.

ATHOL
Jislaaik, how was the reaction to Orestes?

YVONNE
The whole of Cape Town is still talking about it. It's a game-changer, isn't it Athol?

BRIAN
Orestes... superb, Athol- the whole production. Heartbreaking and brilliant.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
You never wrote a script for it?

ATHOL
It's all about the actors- their communion with the story, the director, the audience. It's a magical alchemy. It worked. It's changed my whole outlook, man.

YVONNE
For me, too- all of us agree.

BRIAN
This kind of work HAS to continue- it has to.

ATHOL
Like we've been saying. We need a space. I've got so many ideas, man- brilliant stuff.

YVONNE
There must be a space we could use in Cape Town. If Brian and I find a place, would you guys move there?

SHEILA
No.

ATHOL
We have to continue this work.

A look between Sheila and Athol.

BRIAN
Absolutely.

SHEILA
It's illegal. Even if you find a space to work in- the kind of work we are doing with mixed race casts, and audiences watching is illegal. The government will raid us, throw our actors in jail on Robben Island, exile us, ban us, shut the theatre...

Silence as they think on this. Athol gets up and physically acts it out. They laugh - it is ridiculous, desperate, brilliant. Suddenly Brian speaks up.

BRIAN
A gallery.

Yvonne looks at him, then suddenly realizes what he means.

YVONNE
Gallery? Oh my God, Brian- you are brilliant.

ATHOL
Gallery?

BRIAN
People of all races are allowed to gather to look at art. I know this from photographer friends who have had exhibitions.

YVONNE
The newspaper photographers exhibit their work... it's true!

ATHOL
To look at art?

SHEILA
Theatre is art- but we get shut down.

BRIAN
No, theatre doesn't fall into that category. But a photography exhibition would.

YVONNE
So- I know where you are going with this- we would set up a gallery- and your photographer friends could exhibit there?

BRIAN
Exactly. I'm still a newspaper photographer. I need a studio anyway. We could set up a small exhibition space. And when the visitors are not looking at the photographs- there will just happen to be a play going on in another section... at night. But the photos will always be on display there. They can't stop that.

ATHOL
A photographic gallery.

YVONNE
You are brilliant. I should marry you- oh look- I already did!

Laughter all around. This idea is catching flame.

ATHOL
Can you look into it, Brian?

YVONNE
Let's do this.

Athol is very worked up.

ATHOL
(Takes a clipping from his wallet)
Yes! Listen to these ideas for stories... I found them in the newspaper… in this one a coloured headmaster and a white librarian were caught by the police having an affair in the library at night. They are both under arrest.

BRIAN
On what grounds?

ATHOL
Under the Immorality Act. They have to make their statements to the police.

YVONNE
Imagine- what can you say? I'm in love? I like being with my lover.

SHEILA
Who is not white...

YVONNE
That's so sad.

Athol is on fire now, inspired. Brian, Yvonne and Athol look at each other with wild excitement. Sheila just stares at them.

BRIAN
We will find a way to raise funds to get a building... a space in a building. I promise you all- I'm taking this on. I'm doing it.

ATHOL
A new theatre for South Africa- where the truth gets told- where it explodes onto stage!

EXT. CAPE TOWN - NIGHT - 1970

MONTAGE

-South Africa is in the throes of Apartheid.

-Brian going to see buildings that he is considering for a theatre space. He goes from building to building.

-We see news clips of forced removals.

-sign of 'whites only'.

-headlines in newspapers about pass laws.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. CAPE TOWN ARCHITECT MACIEK MISZEWSKI'S OFFICE - DAY

Brian and MACIEK sit in a meeting, with plans on the table in front of them.

MACIEK
I can do it, Brian- but you don't have the funds, boet.

BRIAN
I only have R250 a month for rent, Maciek.

EXT. CAPE TOWN - 1971 - DAY

Brian is still inspecting sites and viewing financial records with Yvonne. We see his excitement over a building, only to be followed by meetings in which people shake their heads that it is not viable. He gets disappointed and frustrated but keeps going.

EXT. THE SPACE – 1971 - DAY

Brian and Yvonne are standing outside a rough Buiten Street building.
Brian looks victorious, they hug and smile looking up at a building in Buiten Street. It is a lovely but neglected Art Deco Building in the heart of Cape Town city.

YVONNE
Can we afford this? Are we signing?

BRIAN
Y, it's twice what I budgeted for. But I think we can make it work. Come have a look inside- then we need to make a final call.

INT. THE SPACE - DAY

The building is neglected, stripped, dirty and chaotic. Brian and Yvonne look at it without concern - and seem to see only potential. Brian and Yvonne walk up some creaking steps in a dark stairway towards the back of the building. They enter an open space. Some building rubble and broken chairs lie on the floor. Pigeons fly across the empty room.

BRIAN
What do you think?

YVONNE
This can be like the Open Space in London.

BRIAN
Yep, Y. A few benches, a few lighting bars, and we are up.

YVONNE
We need to paint...

BRIAN
Sure...

YVONNE
Athol needs to see this.

BRIAN
We can't wait for him, Y. You and I need to decide.

YVONNE
He's one of us, Brian... but yes... (she decides) I love it, Brian. Let's do it. I'll phone Athol and let him know his dream is about to come true.

Brian is delighted. They look around. Yvonne sits on a broken chair on the floor and pretends to be riveted by a performance in the space in front of her.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
Brilliant work... by the pigeon! Deep and heartfelt. And look, he has black and white feathers- together- on the same fowl!

BRIAN
Shocking! I must jail the bird straight away.

They both laugh, but grow serious- a sincere look is exchanged between them.

YVONNE
Ignore your fears, Brian. Let's do this right under the nose of this government.

BRIAN
Indeed, my Y.

YVONNE
Let's make a change.

They laugh, and leave.

INT. YVONNE'S SEA POINT FLAT - 1971 - NIGHT

Yvonne is alone, and is on the phone to Athol (O.S.)

YVONNE
It's perfect Athol... well, it's rough, but it's all we can afford.

There is a pause. Athol is speaking, asking questions.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
(Very disappointed) Sorry? I don't know- a few weeks- maybe a month to get it cleaned up.

ATHOL (O.S.)
Listen, I've started working on a new play here.

YVONNE
Aren't you going to come work here?

ATHOL (O.S.)
Ag, I can't right now- but this work is going to be great. Guess where we are rehearsing?

YVONNE
Where?

ATHOL (O.S.)
The abandoned snake pit! At the old local PE Zoo.

Athol finds this very funny.

YVONNE
You don't need to do that- soon we will have our own theatre to work in... when are you moving to Cape Town?

ATHOL (O.S.)
What?

YVONNE
When are you coming to Cape Town? We have signed, we are committed.

ATHOL (O.S.)
Ag, Yvonne- I don't know, man... Sheila is not keen. And she's - you know... the stress gets to her. I have to look after her, man.

YVONNE
What? Her stress? What about our stress?

ATHOL (O.S.)
I don't know how that can work. In my soul... I'm an Eastern Cape writer, Y.

YVONNE
Athol... we have started this- you said you were in. I thought you were moving down- this was our big start. We're trying to build a theatre here, Athol.

ATHOL (O.S.)
Y- I'll bring work okay? You must see the actors I'm working with- complete newcomers- you must see them tell a story, Y- John Kani, and a guy named Winston Ntshona, they are storytellers to their marrow. Brilliant, we are workshopping...

YVONNE
Athol... we said we would workshop here...

Brian enters the room. He sees Yvonne is looking angry and upset. Athol is silent.

ATHOL (O.S.)
Y? What's it?

Yvonne looks up to see Brian watching her sympathetically.

YVONNE
Nothing... I must tell Brian.

ATHOL (O.S.)
Keep going, see? I'll come down soon and we will work together.

YVONNE
Okay... yes. We will.

Yvonne hangs up the phone, looks at Brian.

BRIAN
Must tell me what?

YVONNE
Now he is not sure about moving to Cape Town.

BRIAN
What?

Silence.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
We carry on, Y. You and I. Let's carry on. He will come. He won't let us down.

INT. THE SPACE - OCT 1971 - DAY

Yvonne and Brian work hard. Yvonne paints the walls. Brian fundraises, runs around with architectural plans. People of all sorts help out - they bring food and coffee in flasks, or do odd fixing jobs. Young and old, and people of all races, pitch in to work. Brian's mother walks around with a petty cash box, shaking hands with builders and volunteers.

INT. THE SPACE - DAY

Brian stands beside an overflowing toilet. His mother stands next to him.

BRIAN
Well, it has to get fixed.

MRS. ASTBURY
It's this or a front door, Brian.

Brian looks at her. Yvonne enters and overhears.

YVONNE
This place has people coming and going 24/7 at the moment anyway. Fix the loo!

Brian and Yvonne laugh hysterically - Mrs. Astbury shakes her head and stomps off.

INT. THE SPACE - NOVEMBER 1971 - DAY

MONTAGE

- Yvonne fetches the girls from school.

- They all paint the walls of The Space together.

- Brian photographs the process.

- He sticks the photos up on the newly painted walls: this is the first 'exhibition'.

- Slowly The Space is coming together.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. THE SPACE OFFICE – 1972 - DAY

A tiny cramped office. In the center is a desk piled high with bills, paint tins, a petty cash tin, other bits and pieces. Brainstormed ideas and images are on a pin board behind the desk. A single naked light bulb illuminates the dark. Around a table, Mrs. Astbury, Brian, Yvonne, Mavourneen, Colleen and Melanie sit. They are eating soup and bread. They look exhausted, and talk honestly and to the point.

BRIAN
Thanks, Y- great soup.

Everyone murmurs in agreement.

MRS. ASTBURY
Brian, you want to open in a month?

BRIAN
We have to- we've announced it to the Ackermans and to Jane Raphaely and other fundraisers...

YVONNE
The press know- my brother and his mates know.

BRIAN
Plus, we have to start bringing money in.

Mrs. Astbury looks down at her books and lists expenses.

MRS. ASTBURY
You have that right, my boy. A little black paint for the studio turned into R145. A little white paint for the exhibition wall has added up to R93. Toilet: done for free by James.

Mrs. Astbury looks at Yvonne. Yvonne is delighted.

YVONNE
Good old James.

Brian giggles. Mrs. Astbury looks somewhat exasperated.

MRS. ASTBURY
Opening date?

BRIAN
21 March... it's what we said.

Suddenly Yvonne gets very serious.

YVONNE
Opening show? Athol?

BRIAN
It has to sell seats, Y. You have to be in it. Let's do “People are Living There”.

YVONNE
It has to be one of Athol's. “People” is always popular. Cast would not take long to rehearse. We did it last year.

They all look at Yvonne.

BRIAN
Persuade Athol. We need a high impact, explosive play. What is he doing?

YVONNE
He'll do it, I'm sure.

MRS. ASTBURY
Well, he's done bugger all else so far.

There is silence. She has a point.

INT. YVONNE'S SEA POINT FLAT - 1972 - NIGHT

Yvonne on the phone, talking to Athol in hushed tones. In her voice there is secrecy, longing, anger, upset - something has gone on between her and Athol.

YVONNE
Athol?

ATHOL (O.S.)
Y?

Yvonne sits in silence.

YVONNE
I miss you.

ATHOL (O.S.)
I miss you too, Y.

YVONNE
When are you coming?

Silence.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
You said you would come, Athol.

ATHOL (O.S.)
Y, you have to understand. My work is here. Sheila doesn't...

YVONNE
Sheila.

ATHOL (O.S.)
She's my wife, Y.

YVONNE
Oh, I'm very aware of that, Athol.

Silence.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
Let's talk about the theatre, Athol. You said you were part of this, now we need to open. The best thing for us would be to use one of your plays. Brian and the others suggest "People Are Living There"... we know it, it's got a definite audience...

ATHOL (O.S.)
No.

YVONNE
What?

ATHOL (O.S.)
No. I just don’t like it.

Yvonne feels a rising panic.

YVONNE
Athol- you need to do this- we've been working night and day... we need to open... this is our dream...

ATHOL (O.S.)
Y. Stop. Listen, I have a lot of other work going on. And Sheila hasn't been feeling well. I can't just dump everything and run to Cape Town.

YVONNE
I'm not asking you to dump anything. You said you would move down. I found a perfect house for you to rent. Then you will be here and we can work- in our theatre.

Silence.

YVONNE (CONT’D)
Athol.

ATHOL (O.S.)
Y.

YVONNE
Please be here.

ATHOL (O.S.)
God, woman...

YVONNE
It's you people want to see- all I have done is for us, for our dream.

There is a long silence.

ATHOL (O.S.)
Y... I want to help but... don't put this all on me.

YVONNE
Athol- you are forgetting that it is you. It's you who are the genius, you who are creating the work this country needs. We need you to do this - to direct your work... to direct me... I'm here- I'm waiting for you. I'm aching to be back working with you- please come to me, let's do this. I live for this.

INT. THE SPACE OFFICE - NIGHT

Brian is busy with paperwork. When Yvonne enters he looks up tired but expectant.

BRIAN
And?

YVONNE
He's coming. We have him from next week.

BRIAN
Superb. Well done! What are we opening with? “People”?

YVONNE
Nope, he still refuses to let us do that.

Silence. Brian starts to get frustrated.

BRIAN
Then what?

YVONNE
That I don't know.

Brian looks aghast.

EXT. BLOEM STREET, CAPE TOWN; THE SPACE THEATRE - 1972 - DAY

People of all races are walking past the building, some stop to look in. People of all races are seen walking in and out. Some are bringing things like tools, materials, furniture. Other leave wiping their brow, laughing or looking very tired. Brian trots across the road, we follow him into the building, as he enters.

INT. THE SPACE THEATRE - DAY

Inside is a buzz of electric-like activity. People of all ages and backgrounds are working, laughing, shouting. People are standing on ladders hanging lights, or carrying equipment. Mrs. Astbury is overseeing everyone.

A photographer, THOMAS, is hanging his photographs of apartheid up on the wall - images of riots, police brutality, women on their knees crying, white supremacy.

Brian stops at the wall and takes down his snaps of the family and The Space in development.

THOMAS
(To Brian) I'm so chuffed to have this wall to exhibit on, man Brian- thanks, boet.

BRIAN
You can leave them here, replace as you want. Tell your mates to bring great photos- this wall must have pictures exhibited at all times. The theatre depends on it.

A plumber comes up to the group, to say goodbye.

PLUMBER
Okay, Brian- all sorted- audience can wash their hands now, running water in all the taps.

Brian looks over at his mother, who will pay for the work.

BRIAN
Thanks man, Taliep. How much do we owe you?

TALIEP
No, man - my contribution. You guys have got guts, man. This one is on me.

They shake hands. Brian scratches his head. His mother comes over.

MRS. ASTBURY
I've never seen anything like it. Plumbers, electricians, carpet companies- people just keep donating their things and their time. Brian, isn't it something?

BRIAN
How do I ever thank them?

THOMAS
Boet- they're thanking you, man- we need a place like this. Very exciting.

INT. THE SPACE; STAIRCASE - DAY

Brian and Mrs. Astbury move off, heading up a narrow dark staircase, past a closed door.

MRS. ASTBURY
What are they up to in there?

BRIAN
Athol and Yvonne? Workshopping our opening play, Mom.

INT. MRS ASTBURY AND BRIAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Mrs. Astbury and Brian enter the cramped office space.

MRS ASTBURY
... And Athol stood here last week saying nothing is working- we have three days before opening, Brian!

BRIAN
I know, Mom. It wasn't working- I saw it. They are starting over.

MRS ASTBURY
Brian, this is madness- the police are already watching us…

Suddenly Athol and Yvonne burst into the room, flushed with excitement.

YVONNE
Brian- an announcement!

ATHOL
I've got it. Our opening play!

Brian looks at them expectantly.

ATHOL (CONT'D)
Do you remember I spoke about that snippet in the newspaper- the one about the white librarian and the coloured headmaster who got caught having an affair in the library at night?

BRIAN
I do.

ATHOL
So this is it- our new play.

BRIAN
Title?

YVONNE
Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act.

The two look at Brian with excitement. Brian looks stunned, and mouths the long complex title.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
And another announcement: Brian, Athol agrees with us... the theatre shall be christened The Space. In recognition of Brook and The Open Space that inspired us.

BRIAN
Oh, I'm so pleased. That's great. I'll get the word out.

ATHOL
Right, Y. Business done... Off to work... after you…

Yvonne and Athol exit. Brian turns to Mrs. Astbury.

BRIAN
Statements after an arrest…

MRS. ASTBURY
Business done? He has no clue. You people are insane. You'll be closed down by the police before the second show.

INT. THE SPACE; STAIRCASE - DAY

Athol and Yvonne fly down the stairs. They are breathless with excitement. Athol dramatically holds the door open for her.

ATHOL
After you, my lady, Frieda, my librarian.

Yvonne steps through the door, turns, and then reaches for his hand. The door gets closed, and we hear the key turn.

INT. THE SPACE; REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY

Athol and Yvonne are rehearsing. Athol is in charge. He talks with a deep voice, slowly and steadily. One stage light illuminates them.

ATHOL
The police will interrupt them. They are naked, they are sweating, they have been on the floor. They only have two blankets that she brought from home for this night.

YVONNE
Librarian - I understand that.

ATHOL
I know, Y. Obviously, my dear. Now we need to be most vulnerable.

YVONNE
Naked.

ATHOL
That's the crime - their vulnerability, their love. They are exposed and shamed for loving each other.

YVONNE
The police torch shines onto her body, the police take sick pleasure from seeing her.

ATHOL
Do you trust me, Y?

YVONNE
Athol...

Athol speaks softly.

ATHOL
Take off your shirt... look, I'll do the same.

They remove their shirts slowly. Athol is very gentle, very slow.

ATHOL (CONT'D)
Touch me.

Yvonne touches his chest. Both breathe fast.

ATHOL (CONT'D)
They love, they know each other's bodies. They lust. Can you smell me, Y?

Yvonne leans forward - her nose touches his chest, she breathes in, she rests her cheek on his chest.

YVONNE
I smell you. I breathe you in, Athol...

Athol speaks to Yvonne personally.

ATHOL
They touch. You read my soul, Y.

Athol touches her back very gently, very slowly as he directs.

ATHOL (CONT'D)
He is coloured. This touch is forbidden, Y. And this touch. How does it feel? It's not allowed, my love. You and I, we understand forbidden. You and I - this would be forbidden. This is forbidden... everything you want... forbidden, it is right here, but I am not allowed to be here, forbidden, for no reason, forbidden, a law, punishable... we may not...

Duende appears and watches, moves closer, moves around Yvonne.

YVONNE
Athol, she touches a coloured man. The lonely librarian with white fingertips... touches the contours of his coloured body.

ATHOL
He gets swept.

YVONNE
The sea pulls them in...

Athol unbraids Yvonne's hair.

ATHOL
He loosens her hair...

Yvonne shakes her hair loose- she looks very different- wilder, unstoppable.

ATHOL (CONT'D)
He removes her glasses...

Yvonne laughs lightly.

YVONNE
The she can't see anymore, she's blind.

Athol is very serious and speaks with insight.

ATHOL
No, you are wrong. She sees the truth. With her soul, Yvonne. With her hands, her mind, her heart. She sees everything- she sees all that is important- the truth of a man she loves, and wants to love, a man who loves her, but is forbidden because of his skin colour- in the darkness that colour is invisible. (pause) He's going to take off her skirt.

YVONNE
My body- don't look- it's terrible…

Athol moves her to stand out of the single light. Duende is there waiting.

ATHOL
It's dark. You are safe.

They breathe.

YVONNE
Drop the blankets.

He drops the blankets. Duende swirls around them.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
This is dangerous. So dangerous.
But they love.

Their hands clasp as their bodies entwine. Duende shoots up between them, they fall to the ground. A bright light fills the screen. Duende breathes, closes its eyes, enters a state of ecstasy. The bright light reduces to a searching torch light. The torch light illuminates a foot, a shoulder, a breast, hands scrambling for the grey cheap blankets. We see Yvonne, head down but eyes looking up, panting, embarrassed, angry. Athol is shining the torch at her. Now he is acting the part of the policeman - Special Branch - who will interrogate the couple. He yells at her.

ATHOL
Sies. Wat dink jy?

Yvonne is blending self with character - bewildered, angry. Duende is flaring with red eyes.

YVONNE
Moenie! Los ons uit! Fok jou!

POLICE
Is dit? Ek ook nog? Jou hoer!

This is pushing Yvonne to the edge.

YVONNE
Get the torch off me, Athol. Stop.

ATHOL
No, Y. This is what it feels like.
The cruelty. But you can't argue,
you must be very quiet. Your lover
is the one going to jail. To be
beaten. To be judged... you are
just dirty- how could you do this-
with a coloured man?

Yvonne screams and cries.

YVONNE
Stop. Please. No.

Yvonne falls to the floor, huddles the blanket around her. She reaches for her lover, she cries in pain - at the humiliation, the injustice.

She 'sees' her lover being dragged off and beaten. Duende screams. Yvonne looks up - her eyes reveal tortured agony. The lights get brighter and brighter. Duende rises, Yvonne keeps her face up, watching. Light engulfs them.

Stage POV: we see the audience is watching the show. They are utterly engaged; some are crying.

Suddenly there is a black-out. Duende breathes and disappears into Yvonne. The house lights go on. The audience are standing screaming, applauding - it is riotous. It has almost blown the roof off the building. Yvonne and Athol stand slowly, then bow. They are breathless. They are delighted. It has worked. The audience is wild. Brian hugs his mother. Athol looks at Yvonne, and he claps for her. He mouths: "We did it". The audience is shouting "Yvonne!"

EXT. CAPE TOWN STREETS - DAY

The atmosphere is growing about the cool new theatre, The Space.

MONTAGE

-A Collage of activity shows newspaper critics headlines "Damnably Dull", others say "Mesmerizing" and "Revolutionary theatre".

-In the streets reveals a flurry of activity after ”Statements” has opened.

-Statements posters are taken down from walls by YOUNGSTERS who laugh and run off with the 'cool' poster. SHOP OWNERS nod and SPACE VOLUNTEERS put the posters up in the shop windows. But as soon as the volunteers have left, the shop owners quickly and nervously take the posters down again, checking to see if any policemen have noticed.

Sizwe Banzi posters also get put up by volunteers. Once more we see youngsters go up, and steal the posters, saying 'Cool', 'Groovy', 'Let's go see it'.

EXT. THE SPACE - DAY

Outside The Space, a multi-racial CROWD gathers. They enter the gallery. Yvonne, Mavourneen, Colleen and Melanie arrive with a huge pot of soup. Several people buy bowls of soup. Others mingle and move about in the gallery. Several pairs of eyes are on the Special Forces men also present.

Two plain clothes policemen: KOENIE and SMIT, look around the gallery and view the pictures with irritation, then we see them enquiring something of MRS ASTBURY. Mrs. Astbury looks very nervous, and nods reluctantly at Koenie and Smit.

INT. THE SPACE; BRIAN'S OFFICE UPSTAIRS - DAY

Koenie and Smit enter.

KOENIE
We are from the security department. We believe you have an illegal gathering going on here.

Enter Yvonne.

YVONNE
Can I help you?

KOENIE
... Illegal activities.

YVONNE
No sir, we are a photographic gallery. Under section 3.2.1 of the Group Areas Act, people of all races are allowed to view art together. What you see downstairs is an artistic exhibition.

As for the soup- that's not illegal is it? I had left-overs from home. Soup keeps our exhibition guests happy. Would you like some? I made it myself.

Brian is amused and impressed with his wife, and adds to the light-humoured tone.

BRIAN
She's a very good cook.

YVONNE
Why thank you, honey.

EXT. THE SPACE - DAY

A bit later, and we see Koenie and Smit leave The Space.

SMIT
Dis weird kak, hierdie. Arty farty mense.

KOENIE
Maar die soup was blerrie lekker.

INT. THE SPACE - DAY

Yvonne watches them leave from an upstairs window. She has turned very serious. It is no joke that they are being watched by the security police.

YVONNE
That was close.

EXT. THE SPACE - NIGHT

Koenie pulls a Sizwe Banzi poster off a wall outside The Space as they walk up to it to enter.

KOENIE
Evidence, nê?

EXT. THE SPACE - NIGHT

Koenie and Smit enter The Space. Mrs. Astbury is selling tickets, young assistant Bobbie is helping her as usher. Mrs. Astbury is working in the box office. The men ask to buy tickets. She looks at them, they look different to the usual The Space audience, they are dressed conservatively, and behave in a tense manner. The other AUDIENCE MEMBERS milling around are chatting, having a drink and laughing. Koenie and Smit get strange looks from audience members. She whispers to Bobbie, who runs off towards backstage area to inform Yvonne and Brian. Koenie and Smit enter the theatre and take their seats.

INT. THE SPACE; BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Yvonne, Brian and Athol are backstage - an unconventional hiding place rather than a traditional backstage or dressing room. It is cramped and cold, no carpet. A bare lightbulb has been covered with a shawl to dim the light.

Bobbie runs in, agitated.

BOBBIE
They're here- I recognize them-
sticking out like a sore thumb.

Yvonne remains very, very calm.

YVONNE
Okay, thanks. Go check if the audience is all inside. Do they have soup?

BOBBIE
Soup? Err... yes. It's cold so everyone bought some.

YVONNE
That's good- hurry now... but act casual. Don't run. Don't look at them.

Bobbie leaves backstage area.

ATHOL
Do we go on?

BRIAN
They could shut us down.

Yvonne continues to put on her make-up, but slowly, thinking deeply. The silence is tense. Bobbie returns.

BOBBIE
The audience are in.

Yvonne takes a breath. The men look at her. She stands up.

INT. THE SPACE; PERFORMANCE SPACE - NIGHT

Audience POV: Yvonne walks out onto the 'stage'. The audience loves her and applaud wildly. She laughs, acknowledges them and waits for quiet. The audience gathers something unusual is going on, subtly they steal glances at Koenie and Smit. Yvonne speaks, indicating the two.

YVONNE
Good afternoon, dear friends of art exhibitions. And a special welcome to our special guests. I hope you all enjoyed your soup. It’s fresh, I made it this afternoon for you, lots of veggies…

The audience laugh. They ‘get it’.

YVONNE (CONT’D)
And enjoy the photographic exhibit that you all came to see. Very beautiful new photographs there.

YVONNE (CONT'D)
So please enjoy your soup - and the gallery - and thanks for coming.

The audience laugh. Koenie and Smit sit, feeling awkward, but can do nothing. Eventually, they leave.

INT. THE SPACE; BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Yvonne comes back in. It has been stressful but she smiles triumphantly.

ATHOL
It worked?

YVONNE
For tonight. They will be work.

INT. THE SPACE LIGHTNING BOX - NIGHT

The Space is presenting its second production, "Sizwe Banzi is Dead". Athol, Brian and Yvonne are watching from the lighting box. Winston and John are performing - the opening minutes are all improvised. This is interspersed with Athol cursing and muttering under his breath. Brian is amused and impressed.

ATHOL
Come on, dammit- how long are you going to run commentary on today's paper? Come on! How long has it been? Dammit!

The audience keep laughing and whistling. John is improvising brilliantly, sitting on stage with the daily newspape - making jokes about apartheid.

BRIAN
20 minutes- not a word of your script has been spoken yet, Athol. Toughest, most committed audience ever- our space crowd.

YVONNE
They are brilliant. Athol- this is brilliant.

BRIAN
It's unbelievable...

John suddenly launches into the scripted text of the play.

ATHOL
At last - now you start?

He turns and speaks to Yvonne and Brian.

ATHOL (CONT'D)
First time actors- jislaaik. But there it is - on stage. Happening. Can you believe it, man? We rehearsed this in a blerrie snake pit.

Brian is listening carefully to the text.

BRIAN
It's dangerous material, Athol. This could get us shut down- or worse, them arrested.

YVONNE
We will keep going, until they do, and even if they arrest all of us. Dammit - look at the audience - they respond to this - these are our stories, our struggles. If only the world could see this.

BRIAN
Ja- this in London! Imagine- from The Space to the Open Space.

YVONNE
It's true- if we could show what is actually going on here there would be an outcry.

Athol is very focused on the actors, but also part of the whispered conversation.

ATHOL
I'm going to talk to them... Listen, these guys want to stay here in Cape Town but they have no money. But then the show could run a bit longer.

YVONNE
They stay here- they can sleep here.

BRIAN
Yes. Just don't let anyone find out. We will all get locked up.

ATHOL
They've taken my passport before. Exiled my friends. Y, be careful.

YVONNE
You know what? No. I'm saying it. No. Flat out. We stand for something here. Here we don't care what colour your skin is... here WE eat together, think together, laugh together, breathe, look at art, watch theatre and experience life together. Here at our theatre. That's what we stand for. Winston and John are going to stay here. It's cold, bare and there's nothing here. But they are welcome. Right now that is what we CAN do. Let those special branch men come. I'm not afraid of a damn thing.

Brian and Athol stare at her. Slowly they nod and drop their heads. Yvonne has spoken. Athol leaves to go backstage.

BRIAN
Did he just say he'll talk to the Open Space people?

YVONNE
I think he did. My God, Brian.

INT. THE SPACE; BRIAN'S OFFICE - DAY -- 1974

Brian is in his office. In front of him are piles of scripts. Across the desk sits a young actor, BILL. BRIAN shakes his head at the reviews he is sorting through - clipped from various newspapers.

BRIAN
One critic loves everything we do- especially Yvonne. Here's a guy who says she didn't suit a role at all. The problem is our audience wants to see her, and she is a workhorse- if I ask her to step in and take a role- she does it. And brilliantly. Well, that's my- biased- view. This guy, Scheepers, thinks she must be a smoker because her voice is "like a bucket dragged across gravel". Bill- she's never smoked a cigarette.

The men laugh.

BILL
I just popped in to say... I wanted to say thanks, and tell Yvonne how grateful I am for the opportunity, Brian.

BRIAN
You can tell her when she gets back, young Mr. Flynn. She's proud of you, Bill. She's been mentoring you for a while now and she thinks you are ready for a big role.

BILL
Opposite her- no pressure.

They are interrupted by another young actor, Pieter.

PIETER
Okay, Brian- so we nearly finished painting the set, but I just wanted to pop in and tell you that I'm creating a new angle for this thing, nê? Is dit reg? You've got the outline there in front of you- but I'm going to make some changes.

BRIAN
What's new around here- every time! We open on Friday, Pieter!

PIETER
Ja man, so I'll just carry on- because shit there's a lot to say about our politics, nê? And I'm thinking I may as well spit it out.

Brian nods exasperated - then remembers to introduce Bill.

BRIAN
You may as well, Pieter- hell the cops are coming anyway... Listen, meet our young UCT graduate- Bill Flynn- another brilliant actor Yvonne has been hiding under her wing.

PIETER
Well, hello Billy. Welcome aboard the Spaceship!

BILL
Thanks, man. Doing this show with Yvonne later, then I don't know what's next.

He looks at Brian mischievously.

PIETER
Billy- this place is where the mad people in charge let you do new stuff. That's the magic. New, original, political, outcry, whisper, sexual... whatever- you can try it. If you have an ounce of creative blood- this is your happy plek. Got it? Nowhere else are you going to get a Brian who says go for it. How did you put it, Brian? "May as well", and Yvonne who will get on stage with you, and the special branch breathing down your neck to make you sweat. Here you must make the work worth risking the sheer terror of disappearing into our police cells, because once you are in there, boetie- you might only come out from the 10th storey window, like our anti-apartheid comrades, nê?

BRIAN
I hadn't thought of it like that…

PIETER
Ooh, but you must think skattie- or your audiences will be bored to death. You must help them think- these audiences are mos not the Nat skaapies, hoor? These okes are revolutionaries and underground. Keep THEM happy, see?

A young Richard pops his head around the corner, and speaks to Pieter.

RICHARD
Come on Pieter- we are waiting for you in the theatre- we are finished painting the flats- come see.

Richard leaves. Pieter speaks to Bill.

PIETER
Talented boytjie... Richard E Grant... watch this space. Now Billiejie-pieletjie, listen boetie- you are at The Space now so, you can POP out from under that downy lady wing mister. Okay, lekker- now Work calls. Come see my play, tell me what you think- goobaai mense.

Pieter leaves.

BILL
What play is he doing?

BRIAN
His own- a new work- set in South Africa. Local and new has become our 'thing'. And Fugard can't write them all. Pieter's doing a slightly insane but provocative piece- Yvonne has a hell of a nose for a good scripts and talent and ideas- she trusts him. That means I trust him- same as with you.

BILL
Where is she?

BRIAN
They are in Grahamstown- she and Athol have a new play opening.

BILL
What's it about?

BRIAN
Two coloured lost and forgotten Eastern Cape people whose shack- and all they have got- gets flattened by forced removals. Alcoholic, violent, hopeless. Yvonne is... phenomenal in it, but they are worried...

BILL
Why?

BRIAN
Other than the usual- special branch watching? This time there have been rumours of a backlash- because now they haven't used a multi-racial cast...
(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)
she and Athol are both in 'coloured make-up'. But who the hell else could play it better than them?

EXT. GRAHAMSTOWN - RHODES UNIVERSITY THEATRE - NIGHT

PEOPLE walking towards the Rhodes University theatre building purposefully. A poster on a wall shows the words "BOESMAN AND LENA by ATHOL FUGARD. With YVONNE BRYCELAND".

INT. RHODES UNIVERSITY THEATRE - STAGE - NIGHT

On stage, Yvonne is barely recognizable. Her skin is darkened, she wears torn old clothes, and is hunched. Her character, Lena, challenges Athol's character, Boesman after he has hit her. She cackles, spits, dances...

LENA
Is that all you've got, Boesman? Come on - hit! Klap! Let's go... why do you have to hit, Boesman? Why?

We understand she is echoing events in her own life, bringing her own past pain to the role -as she dances, laughs and speaks in a strange, unfamiliar voice. Duende approaches Yvonne in liquid, steady movements - there is no longer any hesitation. Duende seamlessly merges into Yvonne, quicker and easier than before, and almost naturally and the two perform together.

INT. RHODES UNIVERSITY THEATRE - STAGE - NIGHT

POV: The audience watching Yvonne as Lena, are slack-jawed. It is a tour de force.

INT. RHODES THEATRE - AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

INDIVIDUALS in the CROWD still hold drinks, and there is tinkling excitement about the play. In the corner some JOURNALISTS have gathered around Yvonne and Athol to interview them. Yvonne is uncomfortable - she does not want the spotlight on her. But she grits her teeth and does the interviews.

JOURNALIST
But why cast a white woman?

ATHOL
Who can perform it better than Yvonne?

JOURNALIST
A coloured person would love the chance to play the role.

Athol and Yvonne look at each other. Athol is furious.

ATHOL
You seriously think any person, coloured or not, can just get up and achieve the level of acting that Yvonne does? You don't understand that Yvonne is an actress of the highest caliber, and the kind of skill you need to play a role like that?

JOURNALIST
Okay- maybe you need some skills.

ATHOL
Maybe? What paper are you from?

JOURNALIST
Grocotts, Grahamstown. But look, the point is that it should be a coloured person playing Lena. How can a white lady from Cape Town understand life as a hobo, as a beaten up destitute nobody?

Yvonne has had enough. In the most polite and gentle way possible, she speaks up. Her anger and life experience are under her calm explanations to this young journalist.

YVONNE
I understand the story of a human who is cast aside. The destitute - they are everywhere in our country. Rough, funny, angry, their dignity taken by force from them. But they have so much courage to keep going...

ATHOL
Exactly. To hold onto a shred of hope for life...

YVONNE
Courageous in the face of hopelessness…

OLDER JOURNALIST
But that theme is not really new - we've seen that before in *Waiting for Godot.*

YVONNE
All art dances together - we get influenced, we influence - it's a flow - it's good. But this is our reality - this is South African in spirit.

ATHOL
That resonates around the world.

THIRD JOURNALIST
I have heard you are taking this and a few other of your plays to London.

YVONNE
To the Open Space. Where it all began.

Yvonne and Athol smile at each other. The journalists furiously take notes.

ATHOL
Yes, they've invited us to do a South African season. We are going to take our message there. But don't print that yet- we'll get arrested before we even get there.

Laughter.

JOURNALIST
Athol, will you be acting in them?

ATHOL
I don't think so- Yvonne acts me under the table.

Yvonne laughs.

OLDER JOURNALIST
Who else could play Boesman?

ATHOL
There's a young chap called Ben Kingsley over there. I'm considering him- going to see if he's any good.

OLDER JOURNALIST
Yvonne- you may be a star in South Africa- but aren't you scared you will be a nothing and no-body in London, or New York?

YVONNE
Of course, but I like the nobodies and the forgotten in the world. We fight harder. And I give them a voice.

Yvonne walks away, leaving Athol to keep talking to the journalists.

INT. LONDON - OPEN SPACE THEATRE - NIGHT - 1978

Reveal: Yvonne working on stage, in Boesman and Lena. Her performance is riveting.

An almost seamless merging is happening between herself and Duende by now. They work in harmony, locked in a tense duel-like dance. Duende challenges her, beckons her, and believes in her. Yvonne responds to each gesture and challenge from *Duende*, and she throws herself into her performance without hesitation. The moment of Lena's dance arrives, Yvonne starts in the edges of darkness, then Duende calls her to be in the spotlight. Yvonne moves forward. She is flooded in light. Duende is with her. They dance. Unstoppable. There comes a moment when she lifts her eyes up to the spotlights. We see the AUDIENCE: they are spellbound, slack jawed and wide-eyed.

Yvonne's POV: She sees the audience, she looks at them, we hear her breath as she ends her dance, the audience exhale in unison. Duende seems to fly out between Yvonne and the audience swirling and dancing, they are united in the experience. The spotlight is bright on Yvonne, she feels the light and lifts her face to it, she seems to rise up to the light. Duende is holding onto her shoulder. Light floods the shot. We hear applause erupt, the audience leap to their feet. The play is over.

INT. OPEN SPACE THEATRE; FOYER - NIGHT

Theatre foyer. BEN stands next to Yvonne and Athol. Crowds mingle and drink, staring at the three. Some audience members try to greet them. Journalists ask questions, photographers' flashes go off. Yvonne smiles and answers politely for a while.

JOURNALIST
How do you feel about apartheid, Ms. Bryceland?

Yvonne instantly recognizes this journalist has no idea of The Space or her work. But she answers patiently.

YVONNE
Well, we established a theatre to do work that is truthful about South African lives under apartheid - so I guess you could say I have a few things to say about the system.

Journalists shout out more questions.

JOURNALIST
Where is your husband? Or are you and Athol together, or you and Ben?

Anger flashes in her eyes.

YVONNE
My husband is at home in Cape Town, running our theatre.

THEATRE CRITIC
Ben, what was it like working with South Africa's leading lady of the theatre?

Ben steps forward.

BEN
It's a young actor's dream working with Ms. Bryceland.

The questions and answers continue. Athol also engages with the journalists. Yvonne sinks back. She feels shy, but there is something else going on. She works her way through the crowd. She finds a small stool in a corner and sits.

WAITER
Are you alright, Ms. Bryceland?

YVONNE
I am. Just a bit tired.

INT. THE SPACE - DAY - 1985

Brian's office at The Space, he empties an envelope from Yvonne in London. From it spill newspaper clippings.

Headlines praise Athol's work, excerpts from Entertainment sections show photos of Athol and Yvonne.

BRIAN
Look at this, Mom. She is doing it. Ten years of sweat - paying off.

MRS. ASTBURY
You all are, dear. It has worked. You should be very proud. When can Yvonne come home for a visit?

BRIAN
She's too busy. I'm going back over to be with her soon, Mom.

MRS. ASTBURY
My boy, you two will have to make a choice. This place needs you here. We are losing money. Y comes over, does a play or two, people come streaming in to see her, we do well. But then she goes again, and you are struggling to keep it all going alone.

BRIAN
I know, Mom. I know.

There is a long pause. Brian puts his head down on his desk. When he lifts it, there are tears in his eyes.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
We have worked so hard to build this. The actors, the training school, the new work.

MRS. ASTBURY
You have done brilliantly.

BRIAN
We can't just stop.

MRS. ASTBURY
Y needs you Brian. She is doing superbly well. She cannot leave London now. You are going to get torn in two.

There is silence. Brian is hurting. He has choices to make.

MRS. ASTBURY (CONT'D)
Talk to her Brian. When can you go to London, to her?

BRIAN
I'll go soon. I'll bring her here for a break after New York. She's exhausted- she's working in three plays at the moment, playing different roles on different nights. She needs rest. Hopefully after New York, after Road to Mecca. Spielberg is going to watch it.

MRS. ASTBURY
Steven Spielberg?

Brian becomes vague - he is reading a letter from his wife.

BRIAN
Yes - he knows Athol. He'll see Yvonne in Mecca in New York. She's won so many awards, he has noticed apparently. And look here - she says she's been nominated for an Olivier Award. An Olivier...

Mrs. Astbury watches him. She is worried.

INT. NEW YORK; BROADWAY - NIGHT - 1985

Yvonne and Athol are on stage. They are mid-scene in Road to Mecca. Yvonne is playing the role of Miss Helen.

Athol is working up to a grand speech

There is absolute silence.

Yvonne’s face is soft, but she does not move.

Athol stares at her. The audience is staring. Athol indicates for Yvonne to say her lines. Yvonne does not. Nothing. The audience gets restless. Athol's eyes bulge with panic. Duende crouches next to Yvonne. Time slows down. Yvonne never looks at Duende, but they are one and the same. Duende looks at Yvonne for a long time. Yvonne moves her little finger - her energy is not there. She looks exhausted. Duende is sympathetic. It crawls over to her and rests its head on her lap. In her mind she strokes its head. They breathe together.

Yvonne smiles down at Duende. There is silence. Yvonne looks at Athol. Suddenly she seems to 'come to'. She is concerned, but only in a sympathetic way because Athol seems ready to explode. The audience starts moving around in their seats. Athol whispers to Yvonne...

ATHOL
Yvonne- speak.

YVONNE
Athol. I can't.

Athol is silently screaming.

ATHOL
Yvonne- do it.

There is a long silence, tense, timeless. Duende sighs and smiles. Yvonne breathes. They are at peace.

YVONNE
It's enough. It's over.

The crowd gets more restless. Athol straightens up, turns and addresses them directly.

ATHOL
Ladies and Gentlemen, I'm so sorry- we have a medical emergency. Please bear with us- we will be back with you shortly.

Lights flood the stage. Curtain falls.

THE END

POST-SCRIPT:

Yvonne Bryceland went on to win both the Lawrence Olivier Award and BAFA award for her acting work. Receiving the Olivier she dedicated it to "All the nobodies out there".

Her last film was Road to Mecca shot in South Africa.

She died of cancer in 1992, at 66 years old.

Glossary of terms

p1

Braai	South African term for a barbeque
Game Ranger	Wildlife expert and guide
Rondebosch	Middle class suburb in Cape Town

p2

Ysterplaat	Airforce Base in Cape Town
Maitland	Modest suburb in Cape Town

p5

watering hole	Colloquial term for a bar or pub

p7

Observatory	Suburb in Cape Town

p11

UCT	University of Cape Town
Stage door	Bryceland made her *theatre* debut in *Stage Door* by George S. Kaufman in 1947

P12

sock him	Colloquial term meaning to strike him

p14

The Argus	Daily newspaper distributed in Cape Town

p18

Klap	Afrikaans term for strike or hit

p20

Verwoerd	Hendrik Verwoerd (1901-1966), known as the "Architect of Apartheid", was the Prime Minister of South Africa from 1958-1966
Sea Point	Suburb in Cape Town between Signal Hill and the Atlantic Ocean

p22

SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation

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Apartheid	Policy of separate development implemented in South Africa between 1948 and 1992

p35

developed (photo)	Photographs were developed through a series of chemical baths on special photographic light sensitive paper
Dark room	Pitch black room in which photos developed from negatives were processed

p36

Bokkie	Afrikaans term of endearment meaning 'small buck'
Poegaai	Afrikaans colloquial speech for 'exhausted'

p38

Bliksem	Afrikaans colloquial speech for strike or hit
Amateur	Theatre in which actors are considered non-professional and non-paid

p39

Minimalist set	Stage design using the least amount of props, decór and lighting
House lights	Lights in the auditorium of a theatre

p40

The Blood Knot	Play by Athol Fugard (1961)

p42

CAPAB	Cape Performing Arts Board, a government subsidised regional theatre company

p43

Dorkay House	Rough industrial city building in Johannesburg

p44

Parktown	Middle class suburb in Johannesburg known for its large gardens
Barney	Barney Simon, theatre director and colleague of Fugard
Brook	Peter Brook, English theatre director who wrote *The Empty Space* (1968)
Grotowksi	Jerzy Grotowski (1933-1999), Polish theatre director and theorist who wrote *Towards a Poor Theatre* (1968)
Brecht	Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956), German poet, playwright, and theatre director
Passbook	Legal document carried by black people over the age of sixteen during apartheid whenever they were in designated ‘white areas’

p45

Gumboot dance	Traditional dance (called *isicathulo*) developed on the gold mines in South Africa, in which gumboot or Wellington Boots, adorned with bottle tops on a wire encircling the ankles, are worn

Hostels	Shared accommodation for miners, often sites of conflict during the apartheid struggles because of the different cultures to which miners belonged

p48

Y	Nickname for Yvonne Bryceland
Blerrie	Afrikaans slang word meaning 'bloody'

p49

The Open Space	Established in London in 1968
Lighting bars	Metal rods on which stage lights are hung
Glitz	Over the top glamour, ostentatious showiness

p51

Man	Afrikaans colloquial speech for fellow, friend or 'mate'

p52

Labia	Originally a theatre venue, now a film house
Devised play	Created through collaborative contributions made by actors, director and writer
Improvising	Type of performance which is unscripted/unrehearsed and relies on spontaneity

p58

Storms River Mouth	Picturesque holiday area on the scenic Garden Route of the Western Cape
Garden Route	Scenic drive along the Western Cape of South Africa stretching from Mossel Bay to the Storms River
Braai	Barbeque
Jisklaaik	Afrikaans exclamation, similar in expression to 'gee'
Orestes	Fugard's experimental work performed at The Labia theatre in 1971

p59

Robben Island	Small island situated 6,9 kilometres out to sea from Cape Town, and used to house/imprison political prisoners such as Nelson Mandela.

p62

Boet	Afrikaans term of endearment meaning 'brother'.

p66

Loo	Toilet

p67

Ackermans	Successful South African business family
Jane Raphaely	South African media and business expert

p68

People are Living There	Play by Fugard (1968)
Cast	Group of actors in a play, film or television series

p70

dump	Slang term used to describe the act of 'dropping everything'

p72

necklacing	Murder by a group of self-appointed citizens or vigilantes of someone considered guilty of a crime by having a rubber tyre, filled with petrol, placed around their necks and set on fire
Chuffed	Colloquial speech for 'pleased'

p78

Sies	Afrikaans term of disgust
Wat dink jy?	(Afr.) 'What are you thinking?'
Moenie	(Afr.) 'Don't'
Los ons uit	(Afr.) 'Leave us alone'
Fok jou	(Afr.) 'Fuck you'
Is dit?	(Afr.) 'Is it?' or 'Really?'
Ek ook nog	(Afr.) 'Me too'
Jou hoer	(Afr.) 'You prostitute (whore)'

p80

Kak	Afrikaans term for 'defecate' or 'faeces'
Mense	(Afr.) 'People'

p81

blerry lekker	Afrikaans colloquial term meaning 'very nice'

p83

Sizwe Banzi is Dead	Play by Fugard (1972)

p84

Jislaaik	Afrikaans exclamation, similar in expression to 'wow', 'gee'

p86

Painting the set	Decorating the staging items used to create a scene in the theatre
Pop in	Colloquial speech for 'impromptu visit'
Né?	Afrikaans exclamation meaning 'not so?' or 'really?'
Is dit reg?	(Afr.) 'Is that right?'

p87

Boetie	Afrikaans term of endearment meaning ‘little brother’
Out from the 10th storey window	During apartheid, prisoners were said to have been tortured to the point where they either jumped, or were thrown, from the highest windows of police buildings
Skattie	Afrikaans term of endearment meaning ‘little treasure’
Mos not the Nat skaapies, hoor?	(Afr.) ‘Not the National party sheep, you hear?’
Okes	South African slang terms for ‘fellows’
Painting the flats	Decorating the versatile solid framed screens which serve as wings or a backdrop in theatre

p88

Billietjie-pieletjie	A diminutive wordplay on the name ‘Bill’ and the rhyming Afrikaans term for ‘little foreskin’, usually used for mocking English people
Goobaai mense	Afrikaans colloquial speech meaning ‘Goodbye people’
Coloured	Cultural group of South Africans of mixed-race descent
Shack	Rough structures used for housing in townships, and other poor [or temporary] areas, in South Africa
Forced removal	Involuntary removal of people from their homes during apartheid, sometimes by use of bulldozers which razed houses to the ground

p89

Coloured make up	Also called ‘black-face’, used by paler skinned people to play darker skinned characters
Rhodes University	Situated in Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape of South Africa
Boesman and Lena	Fugard play (1969)

Klap	(Afr.) ‘strike’ or ‘hit’
p90	
Grocotts	The local newspaper of Grahamstown
Hobo	Homeless person
p91	
Waiting for Godot	Play by Samuel Becket (1953)
p95	
Road to Mecca	Play by Fugard (1984)
Steven Spielberg	Famous American Film director and producer
Olivier Awards	The Society of London Theatre recognises excellence in professional theatre in London by annually awarding The Laurence Olivier Award
Broadway	New York theatre area comprising of 41 professional theatres located in the Theatre District
Mid-scene	In the middle of a scene

Chapter Three: Acting technique and duende - Yvonne Bryceland's dance with darkness

In a tribute[16] prepared for Bryceland's memorial service in Cape Town, Edward Bond, one of England's most distinguished playwrights and directors, tried to capture her acting prowess by describing an audition he had witnessed. He had wanted her cast in his play *The Woman* at the National Theatre in 1978, and asked a reluctant director to audition her. They sat at the back of the huge Olivier Theatre. Bond describes Bryceland appearing suddenly, walking forward and then sitting down, with her back bolt upright and legs stretched out. He says she seemed a like a tiny doll in a long black dress. What is significant is his description of what next happened:

> At that moment the theatre was filled - the stage accomplished. There were only three people in the whole space but she filled every inch of it with a strange, brilliant power. It excited me and made me afraid. It was an unforgettable lesson in drama, a challenge. (She got the part of course.) (Bond, 1992)

Bond is one of many of Bryceland's colleagues who use such emotive and poetic turns of phrase to describe the dramatic power that she had. It is not improbable to consider that her popularity with audiences was a result of the same mesmerizing quality which was also seen and felt by them. During the biographical research I conducted, many similar descriptions of Bryceland working in her most commanding state emerged. This includes an extensive interview held with Fugard on this specific topic in 2011.

As will be discussed in Chapter Four, the relationship between Fugard and Bryceland was intimate and intense. Bryceland performed in more than twenty of Fugard's productions. He referred to her as his 'soul mate', yet struggled to define what made her work so exceptional:

> …only a performing talent of the most formidable courage, and emotional…what is the word you would use to move yourself out of yourself and be something else […] it's happened once

[16] This tribute was supplied to me by both Keith Grenville and Ross Devenish via e-mail correspondence. It consists of a typed page without Bond's signature. The authenticity of it cannot be verified, however the two sent to me are identical in writing, and therefore for the purpose of this dissertation I accept that it is a genuine document. It is attached as Addendum F.

> or twice to me while I was in performance [...] but with Yvonne it was a reality I saw many times. (Fugard, 2011b)

As part of my earlier attempts to capture or demonstrate Bryceland's skill and proficiency as an actress, I developed the AQAS - an Acting Quality Analysis System that I have since worked with as an acting coach and drama educator at tertiary institutions. It offers assessors a rubric upon which they can score a student actor's ability according to: Voice and Speech; Physicalisation; Emotional Application; Cognitive Engagement; and Synthesis. The purpose of the system is to focus on measurable skills, and allow for objective and unbiased assessments (refer to Addendum A). However, as this chapter will demonstrate, such a model could not fully capture how Bryceland came to be so inspirational, and what allowed her to enter into such states of heightened power and emotional intensity as witnessed by so many.

Positioning Bryceland's acting within the domains of acting theories and philosophies

Finding a theoretical frame within which to position the more mysterious dimension of Bryceland's acting proved as elusive as the matter at hand. I had to ask myself: Why could quantifiable acting techniques, or concepts of 'greatness' such as those found in psychology, history or religion not fully explain this phenomenon? Firstly, generic, verifiable scientific facts about the experience of actors in a heightened state during a performance proved to be rare, if at all existent. Some neurological studies of the actor's brain whilst in performance have been conducted[17]. The most interesting results are that many areas of the brain are activated simultaneously, similar to musicians, and this has been attributed to the fact that many physical, emotional, memory-based and creative tasks are being performed at the same time. But it seems scientists have not begun to explore what happens for actors at the heightened moments I am referring to.

[17] Researchers at University of Montreal, Canada, scanned the brains of professional actors using an fMRI to see brain activity during self-induced states of sadness and happiness. Results suggest that sadness and happiness may be associated with similar brain regions but operate in distinct sub-regions and with separate neural circuits for primary emotions (Pelletier, Pelletier, Lévesque, Carrier, Breault, Paquette, Mensour, Jean-Maxime Leroux, Gilles Beaudoin & Mario Beauregard, 2003). And in 2009, actress Fiona Shaw had a brain scan conducted by London University's psychology department, while reciting poetry inside a brain scanner at a hospital, the results of which were then analysed by cognitive neuroscientists and researcher Carolyn McGettigan. The study found that all the parts of the brain dealing with motor skills such as moving the tongue or lips – the *infra parietal sulkus* - were firing, as was the area of the brain that deals with analysing or doing mentally complex transformation of a visual image (Jeffries, 2009).

Similarly limited are the medical and psychological studies on transcendental experiences which are often rooted in psychotic or drug induced states, rather than artistic experience.

It is possible to refer to the guiding ideas offered by theatre theorists Konstantin Stanislavski, Peter Brook[18], Jerzy Grotowski[19], Federico García Lorca and others who have grappled with the elucidation of this experience. Of particular importance are: Grotowski's theories of 'holy theatre' in which theatre has the potential to provide transcendent, even spiritual and communal, experiences of ritual and mystery (1968); Stanislavski's 'Magic If', a performative tool that requires actors to stimulate personal memories and associations by imagining they are in the character's circumstance (1981); and Brook's ideas about theatre being a place where the invisible can become visible (1968). However, it was the concept of *duende* particularly, as defined by Lorca (1933/2007), which offered a suitable framework for the discussion of Bryceland's heightened acting experiences. It was also possible to contextualise this performance power that seemed to extend beyond learnt techniques and skill, by creating a metaphor of *duende* within the screenplay *Dancing with Darkness.* The employment of *duende* as a visible, tangible being that could temporarily inhabit an actor was aimed at expanding consideration of, and opening conversation about, the level of dramatic intensity that some actors manage to attain.

Bryceland received no academic learning and very little practical training as an actress. In contemporary South Africa, theatre and performance training - in the form of a degree or diploma - can be obtained from Universities or Tertiary Colleges. Courses usually run for an average of three years during which time a student gains a deep understanding of the history and practice of Drama. Students can elect to focus on acting as they progress through the years, training in a wide range of skills, including but not limited to: voice and speech; movement; specific techniques, such as Stanislavski's Method or Alba Emoting; and

[18] English theatre and film director Peter Brook wrote *The Empty Space* (1968) which focused on theatre as reliant on the connection between audience and actor.

[19] Polish theatre practitioner Jerzy Grotowski (1933-1999) proposed theatre philosophies that included Poor Theatre - where all theatre excesses were stripped away; and 'paratheatre' which focused on the experience that occurred 'beyond theatre'. Working with Eugenio Barba and Odin Teatret, he revolutionized theatre, and is considered a father of modern experimental theatre. In his book *Towards a Poor Theatre* (1968) Grotowski wrote that the root of theatre was actors co-creating the event with spectators. In this regard he influenced Fugard.

Script Analysis.

The exact reasons as to why Bryceland did not study acting are unknown. She fell pregnant and married Daniel Bryceland at a very young age (17 years old), and there did not seem to be much financial freedom offered by their relationship. According to her daughter, Colleen King, Bryceland took elocution lessons (King, 2012). I thus surmise that she never had the chance to embark on full-time, focused acting studies as a young woman. She had three daughters; after her divorce, she worked as a librarian, an entertainment columnist for The Argus and did radio plays, while expanding her experience as an onstage actress by playing smaller roles in amateur productions (King, 2012). This lack of formal training seemed to have created challenges for Bryceland in the early stages of her career. Keith Grenville[20] remembers that she appeared in a restoration play "in which she had not performed well, which was presumably not her style and obviously it was no help not having had any training for period pieces of that ilk" (Grenville, 2011).

For an actress to be compared to Laurence Olivier (Bond, 1992) by the end of her career, without undergoing basic training, or spending the successive years working at theatre companies like the Royal Shakespeare Company[21] in England which many top actors do, is remarkable. Fugard claims that in his work with Bryceland they did not consciously try to utilize any specific theorist's ideas (Fugard, 2011b). When in interview with Fugard I asked whether he and Bryceland had ever applied Stanislavski's methods, he burst out laughing and answered: "No" (2011b). And yet, Fugard acknowledges Bryceland as a highly influential actor and credits her with having a direct impact on recognized South African theatre actors such as Paul Slabolepszy, Sean Taylor, and the late Bill Flynn[22].

Bryceland evidently learned and developed her acting skills through practice. She may have initially been criticized for her lack of technique, but she ended her career with solid acting skills in place. Her well-developed voice and physical expression of character, for example, are evident in filmed versions of *Boesman and Lena* (1974) and *The Road to Mecca* (1991) that I viewed. Bryceland captured the character

[20] Keith Grenville is an actor who worked with Bryceland in radio and at The Space.

[21] Many internationally renowned actors received their initial training and experience by performing classical plays at the Royal Shakespeare Company, such as Dame Judy Dench, Sir Ben Kingsley and Sir Ian McKellen.

[22] Refer to Chapter Four for more detail on these well-respected South African actors.

of Lena so effectively, for example, that it led film director Ross Devenish[23] to observe: "I didn't think I could find someone who would really equal that performance" (Devenish, 2011b). Grenville describes her portrayal of Lena as "a completely authentic creature of the earth desperately fighting to survive"; he observes further that "no 'English rose' actress could ever have played that role" (Devenish, 2011b).

Top actors, theorists and acting teachers have demonstrated that while an actor's techniques may evolve over time, at the core of successful performance remains the need for basic skills. This is explained by Sanford Meisner[24] (Meisner & Longwell, 1987) who states that actors first need decent diction, voice and physical control, and only thereafter can Bernard Shaw's[25] notion of allowing the actor to reveal to the audience the most private and secret parts of their hearts and minds be applied (as cited in Meisner & Longwell, 1987: xviii).

This idea of the actor working with technique is not new: substantial theories on the prerequisite skills of voice and physicality were laid out in the last century by theorists like Stanislavski (1981), Grotowski (1968) and Brook (1968). Acting continues to be an area of study and practice where participants seek to acquire techniques and skills, as well as to push beyond those in order to achieve heightened and meaningful performances. Practitioner Simon Callow has described the actor's journey as moving towards being totally present in the performance moment (1984:204). Astbury, now an acting coach at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts, describes a process of working with actors by helping them to move beyond basic acting skills to access their creativity and break down inhibitions towards truthful performance (Astbury, 2011b).

About Bryceland's acting, Grenville observed: "There were no specific techniques – just go out there and

[23] I interviewed Ross Devenish in 2011 as he was a colleague of Bryceland's and the director of the filmed version of *Boesman and Lena*.

[24] Sanford Meisner (1905 –1997) was an American acting teacher who developed methods including the Meisner technique. The methods are based on exercises involving improvisation and repetition of action and words. Though initially inspired by Stanislavski methods, Meisner tends to work from outside the actor first to find emotional truth paying attention to environment and objects, whereas Stanislavski worked primarily with deep emotional connections and emotional recall. (Meisner & Longwell, 1987).

[25] George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) was an Irish playwright and critic.

ACT! BE! This is what Yvonne rightly did. […] I don't think she was influenced by any particular theatre philosophies" (Grenville, 2011). An observation such as this makes it possible to interpret Bryceland's acting as lacking in technique, or based primarily on intuitive and spontaneous, even haphazard, impulses. Closer inspection reveals a more balanced and methodical approach: "Her personal technique was to get into the shoes of the character and under the skin, *understand the scene* and allow her instinct to take over" (Grenville, 2011, emphasis added).

Bryceland wished to be an honest conduit for the expression of character and story from writer to audience (refer to Chapter Four for further detail). Here she is in alignment with practitioners like Stanislavski, Brook and Grotowski who operated with the belief that theatre should be a profound experience for an audience, with actors being the channel through which this can occur. This type of actor is willing to delve deep within themselves to achieve truthful performances with the aim to truly connect with an audience: "the theatre is a vehicle, a means of self-study, self-exploration, a possibility of salvation. The actor has himself as his field of work. […] To explore he needs to call on every aspect of himself" (Brook, 1968:66).

Despite Fugard dismissing the idea that he and Bryceland were influenced by the likes of Brook or Grotowski (2011), Fugard's colleague Mary Benson observes that she and Barney Simon attended at least one Brook lecture in New York, and shared the notes and recordings they made with Fugard (Benson, 1997:61). She argues that these ideas became an important influence on him, and remembers Fugard stating that Grotowski had made him aware of the actor as a creator, not only an instrument to be used by a director (Benson,1997:63).

Beyond technique: psychological risks and processes during exceptional performance

Based on both Fugard and Bryceland's aim to expose the truth in their theatre practice, it would seem they at the very least, respected the ideals of the theatre practitioners mentioned above. Most significant for this dissertation is Grotowski's description of actors needing to allow the role to 'penetrate' them in a process he called 'auto-penetration' (as cited in Brook, 1968:66). Bryceland seems to have unwittingly or intuitively engaged in this process of 'auto-penetration' in which, according to Grotowski, the actor had a duty to expose their inner selves to truly honour the secrets of the role they will play: "the actor invokes, lays bare

what lies in every man – what daily life covers up" (as cited in Brook, 1968:67). This approach can be extremely challenging, even overwhelming, to the psychology of the actor, but has the potential to lead to highly charged emotional performances. It seems that Bryceland was operating at this intense level of involvement and exposure, and this may be why Fugard described Bryceland as being very courageous in her approach (Fugard, 2011b).

Although this acting approach demands operating on a deeper level of engagement, it does not replace the need for basic physical and vocal skills to be in place. Stanislavski stated that it was a waste of time if the actor was indulgently "squeezing out private feelings" when technical matters were not in place; he insisted that the "physical embodiment of the part" should be preserved before the inner life could be given expression (1981:vi). Grotowski held a similar position, saying that it was technical mastery that allowed the actor to drop his barriers of self-protection so that truth in character could be revealed (1968).

Other contemporary theories that offer some insight into transcendent performance include those of Matthew Harrison[26], which are loosely based on his research into science, music and psychology, and are rooted in his training in music theory and screenwriting (2016). Although Richard Hougham's work is focused on drama therapy[27], he too makes reference to the magical realm that performance may take actors into (2013). In discussing actors training and drama therapy, Hougham refers to Grotowski's *via negativa*, a process of 'stripping away the masks' to reveal hidden vulnerabilities so that the actor can move 'into the light'. The idea is that this prepares the ground for actors to reach a higher level of performance, to move out of daily life, and be liberated in the area of creativity to "generate new forms" (Hougham, 2013:102).

This process of reaching for a neutral state of being in the actor, cleansed of culturally taught and psychologically shaped behaviour and habits, can be likened to a visual artist preparing a blank canvas on which to begin creating his vision. Similarly, acting methods seek to bring the actor to pre-conscious aspects of personality. Hougham also makes reference to Eugenio Barba[28], the Italian theatre anthropologist and

[26] Matthew Harrison is an American acting coach, now based in Vancouver, Canada. Further details are available at: https://www.actorsfoundry.com/ (24 September 2016).

[27] Drama therapy is the use of principles and practices of drama to achieve therapeutic goals.

[28] Eugenio Barba refers to his work as 'theatre anthropology', which looks at the biological study of human behaviour in

director and who continued Grotowski's work of getting to the essence of the actor. In particular, Hougham explores Barba's ideas on accessing what is "lying in potentia" in the actor's underlying unconscious state and the "magnetic presence" of skilled actors (Barba as cited in Hougham, 2013:103).

What such these theories and practices highlight is that this is an exceptionally delicate, and undoubtedly psychologically dangerous process, full of ethical concerns and potential poor practice. As will be highlighted in Chapter Four, Bryceland was almost literally trusting Fugard with her emotional and psychological life in rehearsals and process. The unaware actor can easily walk into an emotionally and psychologically thorny maze, and not find a way back to their personal well-being and balance (Konijn, 1997; Goldstein, 2009; Hamden, 2014; Ohikuare, 2014). One does not need to search far to find examples of actors who have collapsed or committed suicide. Fugard has stated that he knows 'burn-out'[29] can happen to actors. In 1990, Bryceland told Fugard that she could no longer play Miss Helen from *Road to Mecca*, no matter what the stakes, because the character had 'devoured' her (Fugard, 2011b).

Bryceland expressed her awareness of these risks, saying that she saw it as an occupational hazard: "In such profound works you must confront areas that may have caused great hurt in your life" (as cited in Simpson, 1986: par.13). However, the lengths to which Bryceland was prepared to go to portray the truth of characters like Lena in *Boesman and Lena* (1969), and Miss Helen in *Road to Mecca* (1984) attest to Bryceland's determination: "If you are not careful it can do terrible things to your psyche, but in order to give validity to a certain kind of role actors must be prepared to re-experience and expose their own emotional hardships" (as cited in Simpson, 1986: par.14).

Synthesis of skill and purpose: examples of Bryceland's preparation and performances

I considered such statements by Bryceland when I closely examined the two filmed performances in which the characters she had the opportunity to play are extremely different. In *Boesman and Lena* (1974) she

performance situations (Barba & Savarese, 1991; Barba, 1995).

[29] 'Burn-out' is defined in the online Oxford Dictionary as a physical or mental collapse caused by overwork or stress, and is associated with high levels of professionalism. *Burned-out* [Online]. Available: http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/american_english/burned-out [27 August 2016].

plays a fictional mixed-race woman from Port Elizabeth who has been pushed out of her shack by the bulldozers sent in by the apartheid regime during a forced removal operation. The character, Lena, is dependent on her abusive husband, Boesman. Similarly, Bryceland as a young bride of seventeen years old, was apparently abused by her first husband, Daniel Bryceland. During the play we see the characters arriving at a spot in the middle of the miserable mudflats and settling in for the night, and during this time we learn about their life together.

In *Road to Mecca* (1984/1991) Bryceland plays real-life artist Helen Martins, who created cement and glass sculptures in her garden in Nieu-Bethesda, a small Karoo village in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. In the play she confronts the impending end of her life. It is worth noting that Bryceland was already ill[30] when she decided to play the role in the filmed version; and so, like her character Miss Helen, was an artist facing the end of her life. Her personal connection to the subject matter and character in this performance are significant: when she speaks of the slipping away of the light, Bryceland does so with a powerful sense of emotional recall.

Bryceland also had to embody features that were not similar to her own reality. For instance: Bryceland first started playing the character of Miss Helen at the age of 59. The filmed version was done when Bryceland was 65 years old. In reality then, Bryceland was always younger than the character, who is 77 years old. Bryceland would have needed to make many cognitive, physical and emotional choices to embody the look of old age and fragility required for the character. One prime example is in the use of her hands, which show exacting detail in Bryceland's performance. Every curled and arthritic finger is a reminder of the character's struggle with her aging body which is letting her down, and the artist's increasing inability to create her visions of cement sculptures.

Another skill Bryceland uses effectively in her enactment of Miss Helen is her voice and speech. As a young woman Bryceland had worked in radio drama at the South African Broadcasting Corporation, but with microphones that are used in radio studios where work is recorded for broadcast, little or no vocal projection would have been required of her. The vocal training that Bryceland did receive was primarily in elocution

[30] Bryceland was receiving dialysis treatment during the filming of *Road to Mecca* in 1991. She would pass away in 1992.

(King, 2012). Grenville recalls that Bryceland "was always sucking Strepsils [throat lozenges] for her throat and voice" but affirms that "she gave it all on stage and had quite a vocal range, from in the early years" (Grenville, 2011). He notes further that she could manipulate her vocal range so that a "lighter voice […] could become powerfully grating, throaty" and when necessary also be "placed in the middle range - similar to a mezzo-soprano" (Grenville, 2011). It would seem that Bryceland's vocal range was one of her most powerful tools: her skill in this area is discussed in a dissertation by Amelda K. Rae (1971) who interviewed Bryceland about her work and processes in *People are Living There* (1968) and *Boesman and Lena* (1969).

In the film version of *Boesman and Lena* (1974), Bryceland's vocal portrayal of Lena's harsh scraping sounds made sense of a character that was dealing with poverty, regularly beaten and living on the prickly mudflats of Swartkops in the Eastern Cape. Vocally, Bryceland portrayal of Lena is harsh, crude, unrefined and strongly accented in stark contrast with her portrayal of Miss Helen who speaks much more softly and slowly, even though her Eastern Cape accent is also pronounced. There is plenty of evidence to show that she had the ability to bend and shape her voice as appropriate for various characters and situations, including the sounds that her characters referred to, such as the shrill squawking sounds made by Lena as she mimics a seagull towards the end of the of the play and film[31]. The mocking laugh of the character is an evocative cackle that is almost alarmingly incongruous coming out of Bryceland's tiny frame. It would have been through ongoing practice and paying attention to such technical details, that Bryceland over the years would have developed her vocal skills to eventually 'fill' a theatre such as The Olivier Theatre[32] in London, which she did later in her career.

Also evident in the filmed version, is Bryceland's remarkable ability to embody the incongruous aspects of Lena's physicality. Worth noting are the dancing scene, where Lena is without grace, but filled with exhausted joy; and in the scene where Lena scrapes the clay-like mud off the soles of her bare feet with a finger. It is a crude gesture, a wordless lesson in humility, earth-bound and so utterly without ego that Lorca's description of *duende* as rising from the soles of the performer's feet (1933/2007:1) seems quite

[31] *Boesman and Lena* director Ross Devenish says that she used her voice in this way in both the play and the film versions (Devenish, 2011).

[32] The National Theatre's Olivier Theatre seats 1,150 people.

apt. (Refer to Addendum B: Figures 4 & 5).

Another essential skill that Bryceland must have employed was to cognitively engage with the qualities of the character through deep analysis of the play text. Sources on this aspect of her acting approach are very limited. One such source is Rae's (1971) dissertation which provides insight by capturing first-hand accounts of this process from Bryceland herself. For example, in preparation for playing Millie in *People are Living There* (1968), Bryceland interpreted several key characteristics:

> Millie most probably went [to school] up to about Standard 7[33]. […] I think that she had quite a religious upbringing, not a strong one, you know church on Sunday and things like that. She has a very strong puritanical streak in her nature, which is what brings about quite a lot of these funny little prejudices that she has got…This played an important part in her early childhood and her upbringing. (Bryceland as cited in Rae, 1971:83)

There are further examples that demonstrate how Bryceland, despite not having formal actor training or education, approached the enactment of her characters through text analysis and the careful embodiment of significant details (Rae, 1971:41). Despite Fugard's certainty that they did not base their work on Stanislavski's techniques, there is evidence to suggest that discovering, connecting to and expressing a character on an emotional level was clearly something Bryceland paid attention to and was able to do as successfully as any contemporary actor trained in techniques like The Method or Meisner Technique might do. A further example worth mentioning reflects Bryceland's ability to find and honestly express a deeply personal connection to Lena:

> I have been able to relate everything in some way to my own life even though Lena is a million miles away from my own life - she is a million miles away from any white person's life. Obviously in the beginning there was a very real love between Boesman and Lena which went sour. Well, I have had this in my life; I couldn't have reached the age I've reached without having had that. […] Everybody has had a love whether an intense love or even a teenage love which has gone sour. […] I've had a mature love which has gone sour. I've had children and I know maternal feelings. So these things operate quite easily in my own life and I can relate to them. (Bryceland as cited in Rae, 1971:42)

[33] In 1971, when this interview with Bryceland took place, Standard 7 in South African High Schools was the equivalent of Grade 9 in today's Secondary Schools; in general, scholars are around the age of fifteen at that level.

We therefore have some evidence that her moments of heightened presence in rehearsal and in performance must at the very least have been grounded in well considered character analysis and methodical acting skills.

Grenville observes that Bryceland's best performances occurred at The Space Theatre (refer to Chapter Five for further details) since for an actor to cope "with the audience close enough to look up your nostrils, you had to be real - understand the role completely, respond to the situation with total reality and just be that person, that character" (Grenville, 2011). Both Fugard (2011b) and Slabolepszy (2011) agree that what distinguished Bryceland from other actors was that she was a real 'truth seeker'. Grenville again affirms that Bryceland's work at The Space encouraged a certain approach to acting: "With such intimate contact with the audience there had to be a living reality created and it was a case of total immersion in the work and this is what Yvonne did" (Grenville, 2011).

The result was that Bryceland gave performances that earned her much respect, including that of fellow actors, many of whom, like Grenville, are well-trained and experienced[34]. Grenville describes Bryceland in the staging of *Statements after an Arrest under the Immorality Act* (1972) at The Space Theatre as "an actress whose compelling presence on that intimate stage illustrated the fear, agony and passion so entirely convincingly that I still recall the haunted look on her face when caught in the torchlight of the policeman. It was apparent to me that this was acting of a high order" (Grenville, 2011). At this point, with an understanding that Bryceland was methodical and disciplined in her use of acting techniques, and despite not having complete knowledge of exactly how she acquired these disciplines, I would like to focus on two descriptions of her work as offered by her professional co-workers to advance the discussion: Grenville's reference to acting 'of a high order'; and references by Fugard and Slabolepszy to her acting as 'truth seeking'.

Considering the philosophical realm of acting: applying the concept of Lorca's *duende* to Bryceland's work

One of the ways in which authenticity in acting can be achieved, is by the actor drawing on their inner

[34] Grenville is an accomplished English Shakespearean actor who resettled in South Africa.

reality to expose an emotional experience of a character. It is in this area - in the creative and mysterious interface between actor and character - that the dangerous work of identification, and sometimes over-identification, happens. I use the word 'danger' mindful of how it is applied in psychological contexts; for example, psychologist Raymond Hamden[35] (2013, as cited in Kildow) views the purpose of method acting as offering the actor a way of compartmentalizing their own emotions during a performance. Hamden cautions that if not dealt with correctly, these liberated emotional states could disrupt an actor's psyche. The danger thus seems to lie in moments when emotional matters which have not been dealt with by the actor are brought out of the subconscious and used by the actor for the purpose of bringing a character to life (2013, as cited in Rodger and Steel).

It is not within the scope of this dissertation to offer an analysis of, or extended discussion on, the psychology of heightened performance. In keeping with the methodology of artistic research, I have rather used the screenplay as a research artefact to capture my interpretation and understanding of Bryceland's life and work. More specifically, the screenplay employs the visual metaphor of *duende* to express moments of Bryceland's heightened performance, using Spanish poet and playwright Federico García Lorca's explanation of the essential qualities and definitions of the term - given at a 1933 lecture in Buenos Aires, titled *La Teoria y Juego del Duende* (Theory and Play of the *Duende*) (1933/2007)[36] - as a pivotal point. Specifically, I have woven together factual strands of Bryceland's life story, my own visual references about her work and life, and then the emotional impact she had on others. These I anchored within the baseline of her artistic virtuoso, and allowed the metaphor of *duende* to be incorporated into Bryceland's specific background, her motivations, fears and goals, to explain her artistic identity and create a symbolic reference point for the contributions made by the actress to South Africa's theatre history and acting practice.

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[35] Raymond Hamden is a Forensic psychologist.

[36] Lorca's preparation and speech is discussed by Christopher Maurer. [Online]. 1998. *Federico Garcia Lorca in Search of Duende.* Available at: http://www.tabletalk.io/post/lorcas-duendes-meet-the-press [25 September 2016].

For the purposes of this dissertation, I propose *duende* as a supra-personal force that arose in Bryceland at moments of deeply significant personal or artistic surrender. In the screenplay this force is encapsulated in the visibly rendered figure of *duende* that arrives, without being called, to elevate Bryceland to the heightened levels of performance (pp. 19, 31, 54, 90 and 96). Bryceland grows increasingly comfortable with the arrival and effects of *duende* as her career progresses, and is at peace with the process towards the final stages of her life, as they are depicted in the final scenes of the screenplay (pp. 90 and 96).

This chapter then proposes the metaphor of *duende* as a phenomenological tool for facilitating discussion around this highly charged area where performances arise which can be described as *mesmerizing*, *giving gooseflesh* or *out of this world*, and are later remembered with wonder. (Maurer (ed.), 1998) Modern colloquial speech might rather thinly describe such intensity and flow in performance as 'in the moment', 'in the zone' or 'logged on'. These phrases, however, do not capture the depth, or the philosophical and artistic nuances that Lorca's references to the ancient concept of *duende* contain. His *duende* elicits multiple layers of meaning and possesses a mercurial quality that invites consideration of acting in a phenomenological domain beyond the confines of other linguistic or psychological models for expressing outstanding performances; it even seems to surpass metaphysical concepts captured in phrases such as 'liberation', 'release' or 'inspiration'.

Lorca's concept of *duende* was arrived at by looking at three sources of creativity: First: the Spanish Andalusian Gypsy's *cante jondo* (a.k.a. *canto-hondo* or deep song); Second: muses, angels, and the *duende*; and Third: personal experience: his own experiences of being victimized and tormented (Rodeiro, 2013)[37]. In some Latin cultures *tener duende* (having *duende*) can be loosely defined as *having soul* - a heightened state of emotion, expression and authenticity. Debates about the form and purpose of the concept, and interpretations of the notion of *duende*, are ongoing. It is equally applied to dancers, singers, painters, and sometimes poets (Rodeiro, 2013) discusses *duende* in particular relationship to painters). Furthermore, as a metaphor, *duende* contains dramatic paradoxes. On one hand it is sometimes described as a demonic, dark

[37] A former Professor of Art and Art History, José Rodeiro was at the Art Department, New Jersey City University, United States of America and has a special interest in *duende* in art.

and dangerous figure; on the other it is used to express beauty, liberation and heavenliness. In general, the term is used to describe the mysterious force that moves an artist from an excellent to an extraordinary level of expression, and when this occurs, audiences or witnesses of such artistry, respond instinctively and intensely.

Variations in the interpretations of *duende* are vast: a goblin; a creature of mischief; a demon-like figure made of darkness; a mysterious force; a creature that leads lost travelers safely home; or a mischievous imp, like Puck in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, who causes all the trouble. Lorca identified two major sources for the concept, namely: the northern Spanish idea of *duendes* as goblin-like creatures, which is Galician in origin; and the southern Spanish view of *duende* where it is seen as synonymous with death, and is described as skeleton-like, usually red. Lorca views these embodiments as a reflection of the culture in which the figure exists. Lorca himself was from the North, and leaned toward the interpretation of *duende* associated with gypsies, and invoked by the mysteries in dancing and performance, which incorporate the "irrational, the earthiness, a heightened awareness of death; and a dash of the diabolical" (1933/2007:8).

Lorca distinguishes between the concepts of muse and *duende*, observing that only *duende* works with unpredictable force through the artist. Similarly, he dismisses angelic inspiration, regarding these as beacons of inspirations for the future. Lorca's *duende* functions in the present, in the moment of performance. He likens it to the heightened moment present in the bullfighting tradition of Spain, where the matador is ever in danger, dancing with death as the bull threatens to kill him at any moment and despite the risk, the bullfighter continues to 'throw his heart' at the horns of the bull (Lorca, 1933/2007:8). Audiences cry out '*Olé*' when a near miss or good victory is achieved in a bullfight, recognizing the danger in the moments of the infinitesimally narrow distance between horns, silver blade and flesh, and the dance between death and life for both man and bull. Within this type of heightened experience, Spaniards believe, lives the force of *duende*. The bullfight will be discussed as a highly relevant concept in understanding Bryceland's acting later in this chapter.

Lorca also offers examples of the presence of *duende* in performance events: he recalls a flamenco dance competition, where against the lithe and liquid shapes of the beautiful young women and men dancing beautifully and correctly, an elderly lady stood up, stamped her feet and threw open her arms; and she

outshone the others as *duende* arrived and lifted her performance to an entirely exalted level (1933/2007: 3). Lorca states that the arrival of *duende* cannot be predicted or commanded. What happens when *duende* arrives is equally mysterious: it can be beautiful or diabolical, mad or exquisite. But whichever experience occurs, Lorca says, audiences know *duende* has arrived, and they celebrate that.

Based on Lorca's descriptions, it seems clear that *duende* can be felt, sensed and witnessed in the body of a performer: "Naturally when this escape is perfected, everyone feels the effects" (1933/2007:4). Astbury, describes watching a performance in which actor Nigel Hawthorne[38] had such an effect on him, drawing him into a "tunnel vision in which everything vanished but the person speaking and the visions he was creating in my head" (Astbury 2011b: 286). Astbury observes that when he first experienced this effect it was "disturbing but exhilarating" and he now recognizes the kind of semi-trance state "that good actors are in when they perform, and into which they draw the audience" (Astbury 2011b: 287). This description seems to fall directly in line with Lorca's descriptions of a great artist being called upon by *duende*, which arrives "sweeping the earth with its wings made of rusty knives" (1933/2007:4), and allowing for the performer's transcendence into 'disturbing but exhilarating' artistic heights.

For Lorca, *duende* represents the complex intangible concept of inspired artistic genius. He makes clear, however, that when the force of *duende* flares within a performance, it is not a matter of an uncontrolled outburst of emotion or energy. Intensity of effort does not necessarily signify the presence of *duende*, which seems to emerge from within artists working at an already highly skilled level, and who then appear able to rise above technique, into a spiritual or metaphysical realm where their artistry becomes increasingly potent. Lorca states that *duende* "rejects all the sweet geometry we understand"; it rises above orderly techniques (1933/2007:2). This is the level of performance that Grenville calls "total immersion" and in which he observed Bryceland would "just BE that person" (Grenville, 2011). Matthew Harrison, acting coach and founder of the Acting Foundry in Vancouver, Canada, has stated that the moment of surrender to the character is everything (2016). It is in this enigmatic zone of an actor's total vulnerability, that the poetic 'danger' of *duende* that Lorca speaks of, may be seen most clearly.

[38] Sir Nigel Barnard Hawthorne CBE (1929 -2001) was an English actor.

Lorca points out that although *duende* is "a power, not a work", the artist does not simply surrender to *duende*: "he or she has to battle it skillfully", "on the rim of the well", in "hand-to-hand combat" (1933/2007:6). It is here, in the 'battle on the rim of the well', that *duende* becomes an interesting representation of that aspect of acting that can become either brilliant or painful, disturbing or dangerous. Lorca's central concept of *duende* is that of a dangerous primal force, a force that inhabits the performer (1933/2007:1). Fugard observes: "You see, one thing I think I knew…and I think Yvonne [Bryceland] knew, and sensed either consciously or […] instinctively…was how dangerous a human being she was" (Fugard, 2011b). In *Dancing with Darkness,* Bryceland is shown chopping a log to splinters (p. 32); this scene is based on a real event, related to me by Fugard, as the moment when Bryceland 'snapped' and decided to leave her abusive husband. Astbury offers further insight into Bryceland's view of risk in his recounting of when he and Bryceland lived in London, and he was working as an acting coach. He remembers having a student he was nervous to push too far, worrying "for the actor's sanity" (Astbury, 2011b: 696). Bryceland was apparently unimpressed, asserting to Astbury: "You should have pushed harder…actors are much tougher than you think they are" (Astbury, 2011b: 696). As a survivor of abuse, perhaps Bryceland believed that nothing, even on stage, could be that dangerous. We cannot ever know exactly how or why Bryceland seemed willing to go beyond what others might consider too far. Suffice to say that Fugard described her as working at the edge, whilst all other actors remained safely at the center.

> A couple of times during our work she […] made a rehearsal room the most dangerous place I have ever been in. She was like a […] bomb […] ticking away, ready to blow up, herself, the room, me, the future audience - everything! – to pieces. It was scary […]. You see…we forged an understanding, a bond of trust that made it possible for me to ask her to do anything, go anywhere with her performance…and she did. And she never argued - not once! Just show her the way…that's all she asked for. I had to be so […] careful I didn't play games with her, that I knew what I was doing and that I was doing it for the right reason. Because if I didn't … (Fugard, 2011b)

This element of danger, combined with what Lorca termed a 'dash of the diabolical', is perhaps what makes performances from such artists so spellbinding. Lorca speaks of the necessity of the artist, in preparation for *duende*, "to rob herself of skill and safety: that is to say…and be helpless, so her *duende* might come, and deign to struggle with her at close quarters" (1933/2007:6). This transcending of technical and

conventional boundaries is what Lorca seems to describe when he says, "the arrival of *duende* presupposes a radical change to all the old kinds of form, brings totally unknown and fresh sensations, with the qualities of a newly created rose, miraculous, generating an almost religious enthusiasm" (1933/2007:6).

Except for the interview with Rae (1971), Bryceland is not on record as revealing anything more about *how* she worked; nor did she discuss it with her husband, Brian Astbury. When I asked Fugard whether she discussed her process with anyone, even himself as her director and confidante, he said: "No, of course she wouldn't, one doesn't" (Fugard, 2011b). This secrecy is not uncommon amongst professional actors. Actress Judy Dench[39], who was married to actor Michael Williams (1935 - 2001), said: "We never talked about our theatre work when we came home…I don't like to talk about a part outside rehearsal" (Dench, 2010:92). Similarly, Meryl Streep observes: "I've cultivated a deliberate reluctance to investigate my own method of working because I'm afraid of killing the goose. I'm afraid if I parse it I won't be able to do it anymore" (Streep as cited in Altmann, 2009: par.3). She offers some explanation for the emotionally complex territory in which an actress such as Bryceland worked:

> People who want to act […] can access all kinds of horrible things…[Audiences] want them to channel murderers because we have murderous feelings and…and we want to see that played out…the ritual aspects of drama, there is a need for people to embody the unspeakables and unimaginables. So that's the actors job […] where they can open you up to the hidden world of the character, to the stuff that is never explained but always layers your appreciation of the story. (Streep as cited in Altmann, 2009: par.3)

English actor Jeremy Irons elaborates on possible methods by which Streep herself navigates this territory: "I suppose it's what puzzles everyone about acting […]. That ability [Streep] has to get inside the role, and make it completely real, and it's completely not her" (as cited in Reumüller, 2006: par.9). He highlights the paradoxical nature of such an experience in which "[Streep] locks into this other reality, without apparent pain but with complete concentration, a febrile imagination, and a joy in playing"; he observes further that this is the point where "talking about acting is beyond words" (as cited in Reumüller, 2006: par. 9), where this mysterious element - the 'unspeakable', the 'unmentionable' - locks the actor into a new reality in

[39] Dame Judith Olivia "Judi" Dench, is an English actress and author.

which something larger than themselves is at play.

When I asked Fugard in interview whether he thought Bryceland had worked with *duende*, he said he was not familiar with the term (Fugard, 2011b). I showed Fugard a copy of Lorca's speech, and together we pinpointed the words and phrases which he thought most closely described Bryceland in her most elevated performance moments. These he identified as: *irrationality, earthiness, heightened awareness of death,* and *a dash of the diabolical*. Fugard feels there is no doubt that Bryceland was connected to something that not every performing artist has access to. He offered the example of Bryceland's invocation of a *duende*-like power when she played the role of Clytemnestra in his interpretation of *Orestes* (1971*)*. He based the production on an idea he had in which the tragedy of Clytemnestra[40] was combined with the violence that was going on in South Africa at the time. For this highly experimental production, Fugard wrote no script. He wanted to create a different theatre experience and did so by gathering first-rate actors, including Bryceland, and using improvisations to express the experiences surrounding the bomb exploding. The pivotal real-life event Fugard used was when a young man, John Harris[41], placed a suitcase full of dynamite and petrol next to a bench in the Johannesburg Railway Station. The bomb went off, severely burning a small child and killing an old lady. Fugard recalls the rehearsal process as dangerous and intense (2011b). It seems Bryceland had the courage to enter the state of being open to *duende* repeatedly.

A truly significant excerpt from my interview with Fugard captures what the absolutely focused and intense rehearsal period of *Orestes* must have been like. Fugard describes one incident where Bryceland, he sensed, *was* going too far during the rehearsals:

> She and Val, were sitting on what was the bench…in the Johannesburg Central Station. Wilson Dunster[42] […] had left a suitcase…just full of South African newspapers…news of the day…news of what apartheid was doing…you understand? We had South Africa in a suitcase…and then I said to Wilson, 'Blow up the Bench…with your suitcase'. And he was

[40] In the Greek legend, Clytemnestra is the wife of Agamemnon, ruler of an Ancient Greek kingdom. In the *Oresteia* by Aeschylus, she murders Agamemnon out of jealousy.

[41] John Harris (1937-1965) was a member of the anti-apartheid African Resistance Movement (ARM) and was detained and banned for his activities as Chairman of SANROC (the South African Non Racial Olympic Committee). In 1964 he placed a bomb in the 'whites-only' section of the Johannesburg train station, killing one and injuring 23. He was later hung for murder.

[42] Wilson Dunster is a well-respected South African actor who worked with both Fugard and Bryceland.

> brilliant…he opened his suitcase…tore off the front page of one…and he made a round crumpled up ball…put in one side…tore off the front of another newspaper, made another round crumpled up little ball…his bombs…and at a certain stage he just took them and threw them at Yvonne. Just threw them at Yvonne like that…and Yvonne with an extraordinary commitment to the moment and what it was…she connected with what was most probably the real event and felt this bomb going off and exploding, and there came a point when, in preparing Yvonne for that specific moment, I did an exercise with her. 'Now you sit on the bench…' and I said 'there is going to be a suitcase next to you, and that suitcase has got a bomb…and when you have settled down, and I want you to think yourself into that situation, of an old woman called Iris…' because I could always see with Yvonne '…when I can see that you are committed…and you had arrived at your commitment, I am going to count from ten down, and when I get to zero, the bomb is going to explode'. Yvonne sat there, hands on her lap, and started going…to the place where I wanted her to go to…and she got to that place…and she was… I could see that she was ready, and I said, 'Ten, nine, eight…' and I started the countdown. By the time I reached six, I began to get a very uneasy feeling about what was happening with Yvonne. 'Five, four…'. By the time I reached 'three' I knew I had to stop. And I said, 'Okay Yvonne we won't go any further' (claps his hands). No response from Yvonne, none, none, none. And I knew I had to do something because she had the rhythm of the countdown going on, I had to do something immediately. What I did was…I grabbed that suitcase, I smashed the window of the Labia Theatre Rehearsal room, and I threw it out. And Yvonne came back out of that. I don't want to think about what would have happened… (Fugard, 2011b)

Bryceland was powerful in her role, and Fugard remembers that she smashed up a wooden chair in each performance. This event is echoed by the scene in *Dancing with Darkness* (p. 32) where Bryceland chops the log she has called by her first husband's name to splinters. This refers to both the screenplay, and what Fugard has said was a real event in her life. During one performance, Bryceland's face was badly cut by a sharp piece of the broken chair. She continued through the performance, which as remembered by Fugard, only made the play even more breath-taking. When Fugard expressed concern for Bryceland after the performance, he recalls that she laughed and did not seem bothered by the cut at all. Bryceland was so far inside the character she was playing that she could ignore the pain of a cut to her face. This seems to be what Fugard meant when he says Bryceland could make a rehearsal room the most dangerous place on earth (2011b). He concurs that Bryceland was able to achieve such transcendental states as referenced by Lorca's *duende*, and believes that because of their close relationship he was instinctively able to "move in on her and get those performances" (Fugard, 2011b).

It seems clear that as an actress Bryceland, even with techniques in place, entered an area of high risk, or

the *dance with duende*, as an actress. In the final scene of *Dancing with Darkness* (p. 96), Bryceland is shown stopping suddenly, mid-performance, no longer able dance with the character of *duende*; they are at peace with each other, but she is totally disconnected from the work at hand. All the power, energy, motivation is gone. This is an actor's worst nightmare: forgetting lines, a total dropping out of character, the play coming to a halt due to your incompetence. Bryceland called this experience "the terrors" (Astbury, 2011b: locations 1911, 1920, 1953). At the end of her life, Bryceland was determined to find a way to keep actors safe from "the terrors". Bryceland described those terrors to her husband, Astbury, and I consider these to be referring to the truly dark and frightening aspect of *duende*, which instead of helping an artist rise to sublime heights, cuts the actor off from everything they need to perform: heart, mind, body, some might even say soul - and the performance does, indeed, die. As Lorca states, *duende* is a dance with death (1933/2007). For the actor, this death is of their own identity sacrificed towards the cause of giving life to the character; but during a moment like that experienced by Bryceland, the life that the actor has invested in the character has also totally departed and they are left feeling spent.

In his ideas of *duende*, Lorca comfortably embraced this paradox of life and death, exhilaration and danger, by saying: "A dead man in Spain is more alive when dead than anywhere else on earth…Tales of death and the silent contemplation of it are familiar to Spaniards" (1933/2007:8). This falls in line with what he saw as the dangerous request made of artists by *duende* to look into the face of death.

The Matador and Bull's dance with death: working within the pivotal and dangerous actor and character interface

To further elucidate this detail, I will draw a parallel between the dangerous interface where actor and character dance, and what Lorca refers to as the danger zone in Spanish bullfighting where the matador stands as the bull charges into him, and contact is risked and/or made. Lorca describes this as the danger point, the "vertex where (…) terrible play exists" (1933/2007:7). Taken into the domain of acting, this is the dangerous, but crucial, area where the actor steps into the life of the character. Lorca explains that when the orbit of the bull, and the orbit of the matador, overlap it is possible for either the bull or the matador to die. Similarly, when the orbit of the actor's true self overlaps with the orbit of the character's life, the actor

enters into the danger zone; if the actor collapses and loses his/her connection to self, the character is truly lost and dead. This overlapping zone is precisely where the matador's dance with death plays out. Lorca sees the matador as playing with his life more than playing with the life of the bull, and uses the lyrical words "throwing his heart at the horns" (1933/2007:11). In many ways, this is similar to what an actor in search of the truth of a character is doing.

As Hamden explains, actors make themselves emotionally vulnerable to the anguish and trauma of another (2010, Swan interview). In essence, the actor loosens his/her connection to their self, they effectively vanish as the character takes over; therefore, in a way the actor's persona dies, albeit temporarily. Lorca says this is necessary, as *duende* will not appear if it cannot sense a chance of death; *duende* delights in the battle between life and death, on the very edge of this dangerous psychological or spiritual precipice. The performance becomes the site where this battle with death on the 'rim of the well' occurs, and should the actor fall, it will be into their own deeply sunk and dark source of trauma. In acting it may be just this kind of self-annihilation that is applicable. I consider this to be the very dangerous intersection between person and character where Bryceland may have operated, without restraint or understanding, too often. It may be the reason she achieved her exceptional performances - her metaphoric dancing with *duende* - but many of her colleagues shook their heads and stated how she 'over-identified' with her characters (Newman, 2016; Fitchen, 2011-2016). Actors such as Newman and Fitchen depend more strongly on their acquired techniques and emotional fitness[43] as way of engaging with a character, and when necessary will disconnect by choice and with control.

The question this raises then is: Why would an actor wish to do this, to place themselves at such risk? In Bryceland's case, it seems it was partly because of her ambition as an actress, even though her family say it was a quietly held ambition (Le Roux, 2013). She committed her working life to creating and performing with Fugard. She acted in over twenty of his productions, as well as many other plays directed by others.

[43] Emotional Fitness is a term actor and director Aileen O'Sullivan used in her acting teaching in Wellington, New Zealand. It describes the actor's emotional ability to connect and disconnect from the emotional world of the character at will. The faster and deeper the connection, and the faster the recovery, the more emotionally fit the actor is. O'Sullivan sees this as crucial to mental health (personal conversations at Wellington Film School, New Zealand, September: 2004).

She strove to give a voice to the nobodies in the world. This is what drove her, these were her underlying objectives in her art.

But perhaps the purpose and higher experience of the art of drama lie beneath this question. As an actress one strives to achieve great heights. One holds in the mind's eye an ultimate level of achievement. A character who bursts into life affects the audience, and bringing the story of the play to a rich and detailed fruition is a satisfying outcome. Proven by my own experience as actress and educator, one is willing and prepared to push the body, mind, heart and soul beyond the boundaries of what was done before. One hopes to hold an audience enthralled to the point where all rational and mundane experience is momentarily forgotten.

Acting as a form of metaphysical communication: seeking human understanding and truth

Drama is an ancient ritual and experience for humans. Over two thousand years ago the Greeks created the ultimate dichotomy between Dionysian's free and indulgent rebellion, and all that Apollo represented as reasonable, steady and structured. This parallels Lorca's description of *duende* as rejecting "all the sweet geometry we understand" (1933/2007:2). These thematic clashes were thunderous and primal, and gave birth to stories - such as Oedipus[44] - that still disturb the psyche of modern audiences. Up until today, cultural boundaries have been shattered in this ancient tradition of theatre; the primal arises, and causes the battles between all we know and should do, and all we feel and are shocked by in ourselves. Heaven and hell are invoked, and powers from beyond our worldly existence arise for confrontation. It is in such events that humans call for help from omnipotent powers beyond our understanding – God, gods or superheroes; in the moments when heaven and earth must be shaken by a mere mortal human to remedy a wrong; or when death is confronted and stared down, and the hero or heroine rises, though bleeding and broken, that an audience feels a connection with their own power.

J.L. Styan states that imagination is released through theatre (1980). It can become dreamlike and magical as plays are stories, rich with metaphor, lessons and warnings. Theatre seeks to thrill and delight, as does

[44] Oedipus, a tragic hero of Greek mythology, accidentally fulfils the prophecy that he would kill his father and marry his mother, bringing devastation to his city and family.

music, art or great writing. The task of the actor is to embody the words, to fill them with life, and to lift the audience into a communion with the issues at hand. American writer and professor of literature, Wallace Fowlie offers an explanation of why the actor lives for the experience to change themselves, to go through a process of metamorphosis, proposing that the actor is realizing secrets, hidden even from his/herself (1950). Here there is an echo of what Hougham (2013) is driving at: the accessing of the deepest, primal part of the self; this is work psychologists do with individuals to help them understand themselves. What the actor does further is attempt to understand their character, in other words, to understand someone other than him/herself just as intensely. This, states Fowlie, is "a rite so ancient, and so sacred that [the actor] moves outside of a timed existence into one reminiscent of a sacrificial and hierarchical order" (1950:5).

Romanian director George Tudor[45] (2005) states that an actor must always defend and love one's character. There is far reaching wisdom in this. On a technical level, this key allows the actor to put aside judgement, and experience total immersion in the character. It is only by having sympathy and understanding for a character that an actor can honestly express their emotional world, and thereby allow the audience to care about the character, no matter how hideous the character's actions may be. It seems important to demonstrate this with a detailed example: when playing an antagonist, such as a violent and loathsome character, the actor may feel repelled and unwilling to truly enact such a disturbing persona. Once an actor understands how and why their character became so evil, so angry, so villainous, they may have the opportunity to understand that these terrible actions were borne, perhaps, out of great upset and hurt. On a more refined level of acting, the actor is then freed from the weight of his/her own opinion, and the process of deepened understanding of, and empathy for, the character can occur. In this empathetic transition the actor cares for the character, as Bryceland evidently did. (This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4). The actor can then play the character with sympathy and love, and is willing to defend the character. This in turn feeds the very pain and anger the character represents. And at this point the performance becomes nuanced and truthful. It is a difficult, and often frightening, task for the actor, but results in truthful

[45] George Tudor directed Fugard's *Hello and Goodbye* in 2005, in Auckland, New Zealand, with Mike Louw cast as Johnny and myself cast as Hester.

character representation to which audiences respond instinctively. This affects an audience so that open and honest communication between actor and audience begins. In this process a significant event takes place, a deep and meaningful communication, and we arrive back at the 'holy communion' proposed by Grotowski (Grotowski, 1968)

These notions touch on various phenomenological aspects of theatre and performance that center on an experience - both for the actor allowing it and the audience watching it - that exists beyond the confines of language and logic. Art, like spiritual experience, requires a release from logic, from analysis, from rigid technique. It rises above these restrictions. The actor becomes a vessel to be Everyman. The actor permits full immersion and allows him/herself to feel the experience of another human being, be it monstrous or exquisite. The actor does not judge or condemn, they merely embody the truth that it is within human capability to understand another if one visits deepest aspects of the human experience. The actor enters the realm of the angelic in that he or she can fly above the daily self and visit any human's experience. They can be anyone, understand anyone, empathize and express any aspect of being human. It is an extraordinary task, and audiences recognize the risk and power, and allow the actor to show, explain and evoke sympathy.

As Fowlie states, the actor gives up his life to gain another (1950:7). It is thus the actor who is central to the experience between actor, text and audience. He or she literally breathes life into the characters, and embodies them. Touching on this life-giving power has seen the actor and theatre at odds with the church over millennia. Yet, as Fowlie observes, the church has also at times used and encouraged theatre practice, and it remains a unifying force of civilization (1950:8). In mediaeval times, theatre was used as a form of education on biblical matters for their often-illiterate congregations. Today, Easter and Christmas (Nativity) plays are an acceptable part of Christian rituals, as are other ceremonies in other faiths and cultures.

This religious aspect is relevant to Bryceland, and forms part of the specific metaphor shaped around her in the screenplay. While I did not discover any fervent aspects to Bryceland's spirituality in my research on her, I did learn that she was Catholic. She attended Ednam Convent, a Catholic School in Rondebosch, Cape Town and continued to offer her services to churches in Cape Town later in her life, assisting the priests and sisters with caring for the children and directing their plays (King, 2012). I do not suggest that Bryceland experienced Catholic or any other religious enthrallment during performance, and there is no

evidence to suggest this may have been the case. The Catholic aspect was a rich strand of consideration that revealed itself as my research and work developed. Theatre practitioners (Grotowski for example) have likened the ritual and higher purpose and experience of theatre to 'holy'. Spain (where Lorca is from) has a strong Catholic heritage. And Bryceland consistently made mention of her Catholicism, and references appear consistently in the fragments of her life history that I sourced, for example: her funeral was at a Catholic church. It thus became an obvious and interesting connection to explore.

Being Catholic myself, I understand that Bryceland's sense of community and being of service to others was firmly entrenched in her work ethic, as seen by her desire to make sacrifices, teach acting, and allow people of all races to be part of The Space theatre even though this was illegal at the time. Bryceland clearly had an ethical and moral side to her. What is significant about this for the purpose of this dissertation is the connection between Bryceland, her Catholicism and the theatre. The experience of a member of a specifically Catholic congregation is one of community interacting on a spiritual level. Leading the mass is a guiding figure, an ordained priest, who uses ancient rituals such candle lighting, music, evocative language, and the involvement of the congregation who know the ritual pattern, to open their minds and hearts to the expectation of spiritual experience. Bryceland would have grown up experiencing this with her family. Similarly, in theatre, a community gathers, lights are lit, there are times of deep silence and disciplined ritual.

In the Catholic Church, the priest bases his sermon on a reading of the bible, the lessons arising from the text. The priest guides his congregation through meditative contemplation of these teachings, about purpose, life and God. Then, beyond the ritual, a spiritual experience happens that is commonly called divine. Participants experience the comfort of inspiration, insight, peace or healing. Part of this religious process is offering people the space, time and support to contemplate lessons, engage in higher thoughts, understand others and live with them whilst refraining from judgement. This, as discussed earlier in this chapter, is an experience that is similar to theatre at its best: the most moving, more elucidatory aspect of the human experience. Astbury recognizes this healing aspect in theatre stating that "the actor stands before us, spiritually naked, every nerve-end exposed, a marvelous alchemy takes place and we see not the actor or the character - we see ourselves" (Astbury, 1992:2).

Certainly, not all theatre offers such a spiritual or uplifting experience; much theatre is entirely devoid of any special experience whatsoever. Few of the theatre practitioners that I know operate with any decidedly religious experience in mind. There is no evidence to suggest that Bryceland overtly tried to use theatre as a spiritual experience, either. But I see a common denominator between theatre and church where both can ideally support the human being's search for a deepened understanding of the meaning of life, and of human experience. Theatre, and the actor as a primary contributor to theatre, enables the audience to experience empathy for others. This steps into territories of philosophical and religious thinking in which 'we are all one'. And this is a return to the observation that the actor has an extraordinary task: to embody many characters without judgement, and to show that under different circumstances it is possible that we might behave the same as any character. The actor, then, demonstrates total empathy, understanding and the notion of unity.

Bryceland stood right in the center of this domain. In fact, she spent her career fighting for the right of all people to experience theatre, and for the right to communication between them; she challenged people to re-consider the experience of all individuals, and in the South African context, to accept human beings of all races as 'one'. In his discussion on the mysteries of actors the point Fowlie emphasizes is that the theatre still serves as a unifying force in the world today (1950). And it is interesting to note that that there are similarities between the religious experience Bryceland grew up with, what Grotowski saw as the highly powerful communion between actor and audience in holy theatre, and what Fugard saw as the coming together of the three essential theatre elements to create 'magic' (as discussed further in Chapter Four).

Many artists talk about their own suffering giving rise to powerful expression. In my experience, actors in rehearsal sometimes share their emotional journey through psychologically harrowing experiences, their personal descent into Hades, or the darkness of their souls. In *Dancing with Darkness*, the battle between light and dark is important. The darkness represents the psychological murkiness, the actor's blindness to the danger they are putting themselves in; it echoes and symbolizes Streep's 'unmentionables' and the demonic suggested by Lorca, the hellish questions about self-worth, the pain of existence, and the annihilation of the self - the banishing of the actor's self to a darkened corner where they almost seem to be in paused position. In the screenplay, *duende* always arrives from a dark place - the inside of a log, the

shadows surrounding Fugard and Bryceland in rehearsal - and approaches Bryceland slowly and carefully, before merging and dancing with her. It is only when the darkness has arrived and surrounded the artist, invited the artist to step to the edge of the well, that *duende* may arise fully. The screenplay proposes that *duende* is an uplifting and positive force, it is only dark and complex in that it is not afraid to visit the depth of the well with the artist because it is only from there that the actor can draw on the absolute truth of his or her being. The 'unmentionables' must be visited and used, drawn up by the actor who hauls forth the bucket of the well on which *duende* rides triumphant. Once in the light, we see that the bucket does not contain pitch blackness as it seemed from the top of the well looking down, but water - life giving water. The actor can take this truth, this water, and nourish her character, bringing it to authentic life. Once sated, the character is free to walk away, and exists forever in the heart of the actor and in the minds of the audience. The actor can elect to drink from the psychological waters of the soul, and deal with their own 'unresolved trauma' as Hougham (2013) states, or return the bucket to its depths, slightly lighter and somewhat purged, but probably not healed through the act of performance.

What is important in the screenplay is the experience of 'rising into the light' that the character of Bryceland undergoes during her heightened performances. I have depicted this experience as one where time stands still, where the actor experiences ultimate joy and freedom, where the performance is effortless and inspired, where the struggle to bring the character to the light has ended, and the experience takes flight. For myself as an actor, this is how I have experienced heightened performance moments - as guided, peaceful and easy, powerful and other-worldly. In these moments I remember seeing white light, as if from the spotlights; and I have been told afterward by onlookers that I seemed surrounded by light.

The darkness also represents the theme of apartheid politics in the screenplay, and the fear and oppression brought about by the apartheid regime to so many South African people. Bryceland made it possible, by establishing The Space theatre, for both light- and dark-skinned people to experience drama together, and she helped literally 'to shed light' on the evil and hell that apartheid was inflicting on innocent people. She helped to illuminate the feelings and experience of marginalized and disregarded 'nobodies', like Lena in *Boesman and Lena* (1969), who were removed from the humble home they had, and forced to wander the mudflats in search of comfort and hope.

As Bryceland was Catholic, and, based on all accounts, at heart a very kind and loving person, I elected to adapt Lorca's interpretation of *duende* to incorporate such experience as spiritual and angelic. In this I disagree with Lorca's 'banishing' of the angel because he thought it too soft, too focused on the future. Lorca's position that his ideas of *duende* did not include the 'angel/muse' was considered at length and in much detail. I also considered it in terms of how to represent a visual metaphor in a screenplay/film. At its essence, and after close reading and consideration of other literature which captures multi-cultural descriptions of similar notions around 'muse'; 'genius' and other sources of inspiration, it remains a notion, a concept, a feeling. This has been represented visually by artists, but the range of interpretations is enormous. Some are more gargoyle like, some more saccharine, indeed almost sanitized. In creating my arts-based research artifact, I elected to draw together elements of Lorca's description of *duende*, but also incorporate a reflection of what I see as Bryceland's character, which was: her compassion, volatility, kindness, courage, humility. I also considered the base battle we deal with in drama: the conflict between the Greek concepts of the orderly Apollo and the chaotic Dionysus; the fight between 'good' and 'evil' throughout history; storytelling and literature; and the tumultuous battles unleashed when a hero confronts a villain in film. Thus, the visual representation that was created[46] reflected many aspects of this metaphysical idea. My references to the angelic incorporate the potent, formidable aspects discussed above, and included the concept that Lucifer was an angel sent to do the worst work, and now represents all that is dark, terrifying and frightening, in order to test and teach. Interestingly even ancient Catholic churches across Europe have frightening gargoyles and demons depicted in their very structure, usually outside the building (what we face in the world), whereas within the church, the angelic, saintly and light filled windows and icons surround people (representing peace of the soul - within a person). This world-wide and on-going dramatic battle between right/wrong binaries seemed to me to call for a *duende*-like representation that supported the work Bryceland did. This often required visiting the darkest, most dangerous places of her soul, and her characters', and through this 'act' (pun intended) raise these parts of humanity up for discussion and consideration. This in itself allowed for the triumph of her characters, and *duende* thus

[46] Refer to artist's rendition of *duende* created to support this description, and the associated concept development pages, in Addendum D.

needed to represent a figure (artist's guide) dangerous and courageous enough to battle the dark, but for good and healing purposes, if not for the artist Bryceland, then for her audience.

I thus take the stance that the angelic realm recognizes and understands human suffering and is unafraid of it. My approach is that the process of visiting the darkest parts of the 'well', soul or the psyche requires the ability, strength and courage (most apt for Bryceland who was so often described in this way) to face the overwhelmingly frightening, dark and dangerous parts of the human psyche which must be done in the pursuit of duende-like art: the dance with darkness. For Catholics, angels exist as powerful forces for good, and have tremendous strength. Far from wispy and fragile, as Lorca seems to see them, they have enormous power to assist a person when asked. They also represent lightness, beauty and playfulness, while paradoxically are insuperable in battle. For these reasons, the *duende* figure as it is represented in the screenplay incorporates an angelic aspect in that it is unafraid of the dark, celebrates Bryceland's descent into her own 'death' and darkness in the process of bringing the truth of her characters to the light. The battle is between two potent opponents, not one wispy fairy like angel against a demon. The angelic realm is thus seen as more potent than any dark aspect, and can defeat evil in battle. Bryceland's faith included this belief in angels and saints that would have seen and understood her own suffering, and offered her comfort and spiritual support as she attempted to navigate her way through hellish emotional pain in order to try find for herself, and offer audiences, some level of understanding and healing.

I see this *duende* as a sprite containing an angelic quality combined with fearlessness and compassion. The *duende* should look like a blend of chameleon, representing the abilities of the actor to change disguises, camouflage and disappear, with wide roving eyes, and a slightly unnerving but utterly loveable and charming quality, a goblin as described by Lorca, and an actor-matador with his/her heart thrust forward at the horns of the bull thundering towards it[47].

Based on personal conversations and interviews with friends and family members, there is no doubt that Bryceland experienced abuse and trauma at the hands of her first husband. What damage this did to her can

[47] Refer to artist's rendition of *duende* created to support this description, and the associated concept development pages, in Addendum D.

probably never be known, but she certainly was able, at the most powerful level, to represent the suffering of people who had been socially or emotionally marginalized, especially women in South Africa. This act of mirroring, reflecting or giving voice and expression to another's experience is where Bryceland excelled.

And so we return to the question: was it *duende* with which Bryceland was working? Did it come, as Lorca says is typical, to a 'virtuoso', a master actor? As discussed Bryceland was technically an excellent actor: her voice, her mannerisms and gestures, her understanding, her emotional engagement were all at play in her work. Bond observed that perhaps "her place of birth, her unconventional training, her experience at The Space and her own gifts may have made it possible for her to combine thought, emotion, body in a profound representation and analysis of our wrenching, explosive times" (Bond, 1992.). Actor Ben Kingsley said that Bryceland was a revelation to work with because she had 'no rules' about theatre; or, if she had them, she broke them (Fugard, Kumalo, Suzman, Dee, Kingsley, Kani, Ntshona & Bryceland, 1977:86). He describes her as being totally real, committed to her character and to Fugard's work (Fugard *et al.*, 1977). Looking at the depth and authenticity that Fugard and Bryceland strove towards, it is understandable that Bryceland saw their work as the search for the universal and timeless truth of humanity. She seemed to view her task as aiding Fugard to speak about such themes, and would stop at nothing to get to this point.

A problem that arises from Bryceland being willing to face death, darkness, danger and the diabolical, was that she seemed to have paid that ultimate price: burn-out. The dreaded nights when her "terrors" came and where she had to stare the end of her work - and in *Road to Mecca,* even her life - in the eye. Fugard and Bryceland were mid-performance of *Road to Mecca* in New York in 1991, when Bryceland suddenly told him she could not continue with the performance. Fugard describes the event:

> So I took her out of the theatre, and we sat on the fire escape, and I said 'What's happening, why?' And she said 'Helen is eating away my life, she's taking everything'. She said, 'I want a life back, I can't go on, she's taking everything, she's sucking me dry…she's…I've got no life left.' (Fugard, 2011b)

Fugard agrees there was an intangible - but "exciting and creative" - force at play in Bryceland's work: "She was extraordinary, her courage, her preparedness to take on anything that I suggested…as one of the

most formidable talents I have ever worked with…formidable and dangerous…dangerous" (2011b). Of their collaborative work together, which is discussed at length in Chapter Four, Bryceland seemed to agree with its combustible nature, saying it was a baptism of fire and that they lost themselves completely in the roles (as cited in Fugard *et al.*, 1977). As Lorca asserts, it is *duende* which will help the artist "drive home the nail of artistic truth" (1933/2007:11). Was Bryceland dancing with *duende* on our stages? In Fugard's final analysis: "Ja, definitely - *duende*!" (Fugard, 2011b).

Chapter Four: The Working Relationship of Bryceland and Fugard

The focus of this chapter is to offer a discussion of the working relationship between Yvonne Bryceland and Athol Fugard between the years 1969 and 1992. Both Bryceland and Fugard have said that meeting the other changed their lives. Their artistic symbiosis activated both of them to reach their fullest potential and produce some of South Africa's finest theatre, but this required making sacrifices and facing personal challenges. This chapter will elucidate Bryceland's transition into what she termed the second stage of her life - her life as a professional actress - and explore what motivated her to work at such an intense level that she would win international acting awards and be called "The first lady of South African Theatre" (The Presidency, 2006:27 September).

Fugard has stated that the two people who had the largest impact on him were Bryceland and Barney Simon[48] (as cited in Shelley, 2009:29). This is perhaps what led Fugard to write *The Birdwatchers*[49] (2011c), in which the character of Lenny (based on Barney Simon) says to the Playwright (representing Fugard) in reference to his relationship with the actress Rosalyn (based on Bryceland): "In Japan your partnership would be consecrated – declared a living treasure" (p.15). In this, Fugard gives voice to his recognition of their relationship as an extraordinary and unique partnership which gave rise to great art.

Bryceland worked in over twenty of Fugard's productions - more than any other actress. This led Fugard to call her the leading interpreter of his work[50]. The roles Bryceland played for him include: Hester in *Hello and Goodbye* (1965); Milly in *People are Living There* (1968); Lena in *Boesman and Lena* (1969) and the

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[48] As a lighting designer Barney Simon was perhaps more concerned with the mechanics of theatre, assisting Fugard with lighting and producing; whereas Yvonne stood at the heart of Fugard's artistic development, assisting him with the scripting of words in the rehearsal room, and their interpretation on stage. An example is *Orestes*: Fugard described Bryceland's enactment of Lena as awesome in its range and authenticity, in the blunted bewilderment which she used is as the dominant tone (as cited in Shelley, 2009:30).

[49] *The Birdwatchers* opened at the Fugard Theatre (Cape Town) on 10 May 2011. Fugard dedicated the play to Yvonne Bryceland and Barney Simon. In it, a playwright, a director and an actress talk about their work in the theatre in the shade of an *umGwenya* tree at the playwright's home in the Eastern Cape. Although inspired by real life characters and places, Fugard said the work itself is fictional.

[50] Fugard and Lloyd Richards argued this when trying to get the Actors' Equity of the United States to allow Bryceland to play Miss Helen in Fugard's *Road to Mecca* in 1985 (Freedman, 1985).

film version (1974); Clytemnestra in *Orestes* (1971); Freida Joubert in *Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act* (1972); Sophia in *Dimetos* (1975); and Miss Helen in *Road to Mecca* (1985) and the film version (1992). The chapter proposes that the compulsive nature of both Bryceland and Fugard, when working in collaboration, led to more risk-taking than when they worked alone or with others. The discussion will highlight their common vision for theatre, Fugard's perspective of Bryceland as an actress, and Bryceland's view of Fugard as a director. Fugard's directing style will be foregrounded, and specifically how he worked to evoke truthful, bold and courageous performances in the actors he worked with, but the discussion will be limited to where it provides particular insight into Bryceland's acting process, since Fugard is already the topic of much international study (Rae, 1971; Roberts, 1980; Hauptfleish, Viljoen & Van Greunen, 1982; Swart, 1983; Gray, 1984; Walder, 1984; Vandenbroucke, 1986; Fischer, 1991; Hauptfleisch, 1997; Blumberg, 1998; Kulenkampff, 2002; McDonald 2006 and 2012; Shelley, 2009). Fugard's overall directing style will be illuminated as a way to illustrate how unique his bond with Bryceland was.

My use of Lorca's concept of the heightened performance expression of *duende* in relation to Bryceland's acting work is discussed in detail in Chapter Three. However, it proves revealing when considered in relation to the connection between Bryceland and Fugard. In the interview material sourced on Bryceland and Fugard, I found a through-line from beginning to end in their words, attitudes and philosophies that mirrors the ideas underpinning *duende.* Both consistently use phrases when they discuss their working process that echo those of Lorca in his explanation of *duende*, such as: 'search for truth'; 'miracles' and 'magic'; 'courage'; 'danger'; of being 'alive' and 'half-dead'; and of an actor needing to 'have soul'. Therefore, *duende* will serve as the central vein in this chapter as I offer an historical account of their working relationship as director and actress. Several arteries may branch off from this central vein, to allow the reader to sojourn briefly in other areas of significance, when it serves to offer enriching insight into a particular aspect. For example: the brief discussion of Bryceland's life before she worked with Fugard does not warrant a consideration of *duende*, since it simply offers an explanation of how Bryceland might have become an empathetic and courageous woman; whereas the exposition of Fugard and Bryceland's deep and psychologically dangerous working process repeatedly touches on this ancient artists' concept.

While the dominant narrative of their relationship is one of extraordinary theatrical achievements, I am mindful that it was a challenging relationship built on years of sacrifice, trust, disappointment and a deep care for one another. Bryceland and Fugard worked consistently for many years together, committing an enormous amount of their time and energy to their collaborative projects, sometimes under politically risky conditions, and mostly with limited financial resources. Added to that there was an obvious obsessive quality to their work. Bryceland used words like "terrible compulsion", "absolute obsession", "real pain and misery", "failure" and "torment" (as cited in Herber, 1979:28-29) to describe what drove her in her work. She also asserted that Fugard would "starve for his work" and that they were "mad about theatre" (as cited in Fugard *et al.*, 1977:86). This dissertation therefore, does not suggest that theirs was a simple or problem-free relationship that led to 'greatness' only, and acknowledges the complexity in their association. This chapter exposes this complex working relationship by asking penetrating questions, one leading on from the other to allow a deepening and widening narrative about their work to emerge. What were Bryceland and Fugard trying to achieve? How did they describe their work? How did they rehearse and practice the art of acting? What personal demands and challenges were asked of Bryceland? How did Bryceland contribute to the development Fugard's plays?

It is important to acknowledge that this discussion of Bryceland and Fugard's relationship will unfurl from the factual foundation that both Bryceland and Fugard were married, to Brian Astbury and Sheila Meiring respectively, and they remained committed to living with their spouses and families throughout their developing relationship. Any reference made to their relationship in this chapter - even where this appears highly personal or intimate - is to their professional, working association. This is overtly stated now because the intimate nature of the relationship between actors and directors can be misunderstood by those unfamiliar with the deep personal process involved in creating truthful characters for performance. Any personal details of their relationship above and beyond those necessary for the discussion here, will not be revealed for ethical reasons and sensitivity to their families.

Actors must, by the nature of their work, make themselves emotionally available and vulnerable to their fellow actors and director during the process of rehearsal and performance in a way that is highly personal and requires immense trust. Bryceland herself stated: "Through acting, it's discovering me, essentially…it

starts basically with the self, then it must be personal" (as cited in Herber, 1979:30). Good working relationships in theatre and performance may thus require emotional intimacy and physical proximity. This is understood by professionals when training and working in this field, and it is ideal and normal that the boundaries between personal and professional are clearly established. Fugard himself acknowledges that entering the private world of the actor is dangerous territory, and he has stated that as a director he has to be very careful that preparatory work does not "degenerate into a dangerous game" (Fugard *et al.*, 1977:84). Professional actors and directors work with an understanding of, and great respect for, the delicacy of the emotionally porous nature of these boundaries. Bryceland seemed very aware of this aspect of her vocation and said: "It does come out of a very private center…I suppose, you can't keep it private forever" (as cited in Herber, 1979:31).

This chapter furthermore grounds itself on the fact that Fugard had detailed knowledge of Bryceland's personal life (as suggested to me in interviews conducted during 2011) and acknowledges that this kind of information may help a director to bring an actress to an understanding about any character she is playing. Fugard recalls, for example, being told by Bryceland of how she chopped a log to pieces in her personal anguish as she faced the end of her marriage. This incident is captured in *Dancing with Darkness* (p.32) and discussed in more detail in Chapter Three. Fugard confirms that he used this detail in rehearsal to encourage Bryceland to similarly destroy wooden chairs in his adaptation of *Orestes* (1971), in which she played the lead role of Clytemnestra. In the rehearsal space, actors and directors may discuss such intimate and personal details as they search for ways to connect with, and truthfully represent, characters and contexts. This method is used to maximize the authenticity of a character for performance.

During the research process I came to realize that the words and phrases that both Fugard and Bryceland used were vastly important. Fugard is well known for his love of language, but it was a revelation to learn that Bryceland, too, was able to offer profound insight into her characters and her work through her descriptions, and that she expressed her ideas beautifully through carefully selected words. It is clear from interviews that they both used language in potent ways to express the deep consideration and respect for their work. In fact, Wakefield observed that while Bryceland had always been a "totally intuitive actress", she became increasingly articulate in defining her acting process (1992:22).

An interview with Bryceland by Avril Herber in 1979[51] offers a rare glimpse into the thoughts and motivation that lay beneath the successful reputation of the actress. In her own words, she echoes notions that most professional actors would agree with: the challenge of remaining 'open' and malleable as an actor, and of maintaining a position of non-judgement about people in order to understand and ultimately embody them as characters: "I think simply the process of being an actor is an opening one/I just hope I'll always remain wide open/All people in the arts share that process of keeping themselves that way/Sure…we don't even know to what!/ But just to everything/I am as open, I hope /To joy, as to anything else" (1979:31). Bryceland described the *Orestes* rehearsal process as the "singly most important experience of my life" and further acknowledged that in the collaborative process they "explored areas I never knew existed in myself - really quite frightening and very difficult to explain" (as cited in Herber, 1979:30).

It seemed typical of Bryceland's humility that even when she showed her ability to express herself thus, she would quickly give all credit for her progress or achievements to her husband or Fugard. Her chameleon-like quality for disappearing in service of her work, noble as it may be, was a trial for me in the research process. She was so seldom interviewed about her acting processes, and when she was it seemed she would give all credit for brilliance to Fugard, adding only that he needed strong actors to honour his work (Herber, 1979). However, Bryceland elucidated some compelling mysteries about herself in the few captured interviews, to reveal a person of fine intelligence and very strong character, and who was of significant support to Fugard.

Historical Background: Bryceland before her work with Fugard

The focus of this chapter is on the specific period of Bryceland's life from 1966 onward. Her life experience up to 1966 could be seen as preparation for her working life with Fugard. Details of Bryceland's biography, before meeting Athol Fugard and before she became successful in her acting career - her childhood, her family life, and her early marriage to Daniel Bryceland which gave her three daughters - have been expressed through the first part of *Dancing with Darkness* in Chapter Two. The screenplay demonstrated

[51] This text by Bryceland appears in Herber's book in a type of free-flow of thoughts, possibly intended to be read as a poem. The punctuation is written as it was published. A sample of the text is attached as Addendum E.

how Bryceland's early life and emotional journey - including the abuse she suffered at the hands of her first husband - gave her the empathetic capacity to truly understand the characters she would play on stage, and how the metaphoric figure of *duende* called her to dance with her psychological darkness and fear in performance, until she transcended into the light. In this way I illuminated the idea that her early suffering served her in a profound way in her acting work, so that she earned a reputation for understanding complex characters and for extraordinarily fearless acting.

In interview with Herber in 1979, Bryceland speaks of having lived a long time, and her life having had two distinct parts: the former giving her the experiences and 'grounding' which she would use in the latter. According to Bryceland, her early life unfolded in a normal family environment until something went "dramatically wrong" (1979:26) - a reference, no doubt, to her marriage to Daniel Bryceland. The ending of this first phase would have been marked by the ending of her violent marriage. After this, she says, "out of my personal unhappiness, pain and misery,/it was like suddenly seeing in different colours./Everything seemed to grow and change at the same time./This wanting to change what I was doing" (as cited in Herber, 1979:26). Around this time, it seemed that Bryceland also realized how other people in South Africa were living, and some suffering.

The second phase of her life is marked by the start of her life with Brian Astbury. He encouraged her to begin acting professionally. As stated previously, Bryceland is consistently quick to credit others with many of her good choices or achievements. Typically, she credited Astbury with giving her the confidence to begin working as a professional actor at CAPAB[52]. And although she became highly respected by CAPAB (some evidence for this is detailed in Chapter Three), she seemed to lack self-assurance and stated that she had no confidence in what she was doing. More to the point, perhaps, is that Bryceland started feeling frustrated by the CAPAB work she was doing (Astbury, 2015, 16 February). She felt it was like having to pull tricks out of a magician's hat, but instead of rabbits and ruses, she was pulling out attitudes and "things that are not connected to me"; she summed up her experience of this as "half way of living" (as cited in

[52] CAPAB, the Cape Performing Arts Board, was a state funded performing arts council existing from 1962 to 1994. More detail about the Performing Arts Boards is offered in Footnote 79.

Herber, 1979:28). Here it is possible to see how Bryceland used words to describe her process as an artist, and how the concept of *duende* is perceptible in a sense of other-worldliness and the dance between life and death.

Bryceland says that she met Fugard again at exactly the right time, during this period in her life (Herber, 1979). As discussed in Chapter Three, she had met Fugard before. In her words:

> Athol was stage-managing and I was acting, along with his wife Sheila, in an amateur production…then I didn't think of him until 1960 when I saw a play called 'The Blood Knot,' and I really went off my head. Nobody had written a play like that in South Africa about South Africa. And suddenly I knew that somebody was writing the kind of theater I wanted desperately to do. (Bryceland as cited in Winer, 1988)

Bryceland later interviewed Fugard in 1966 for The Argus newspaper column that she was writing, after seeing his play *Hello and Goodbye* (1965) in Cape Town. That interview turned into a conversation that went on for an entire afternoon, and was the catalyst that would change the course of their working lives. Bryceland said that during the interview she had not been aware that she should "say this, or do that" (as cited in Herber, 1979:28), but later realized that Fugard was probably observing her carefully to see if he could work with her in the future. She knew later that "Athol never auditions people, he just talks to them" (as cited in Fugard *et al.*, 1977:84). In more recent conversations with Fugard, he confirms that he engages actors in conversation to discover what they may have experienced in their life, and to find out whether they have a "greed for the role" (as cited in McDonald, 2006:211). He insists on meeting actors alone and looks for potential evidence of any emotional understanding of the character for which they are being cast. Most significantly, Fugard knows that his characters are "on the edge", and so it is vital that the actors he selects are able to work within that concept (as cited in McDonald, 2006:211). The exchange between Bryceland and Fugard in 1966 clearly made Fugard decide to work with her. He recognized in Bryceland "the pilgrim soul" and saw that she was an interpretive artist who had a vision of life much like his own (Wakefield, 1992:21). One year after their first meeting, Fugard arrived at Bryceland's humble Sea Point flat with director Barney Simon, and offered her the role of Milly in *People Are Living There* which would be produced in 1968 (Astbury, 2015, 16 February).

For Bryceland, the decision to work with Fugard seems to have offered her a chance to move away from

what she saw as her uninspiring work at CAPAB. She later acknowledged that after meeting Fugard and discussing the possibility of future work, she felt impelled: "It's just that I had to. It's actually a part of being alive" (as cited in Herber, 1979:28). Bryceland stated that when she was working with Fugard she felt more alive in her work, and concerned herself with searching for truthful answers. Ten years after first meeting Fugard, she was able to recognize that as a director Fugard could show her how to reach this understanding, and uncover the truth: "You need someone to show you how and where…to talk to you and explain things to you. Fugard seems to do it for me and with me" (as cited in Herber, 1979:29). Wakefield describes Bryceland and Fugard as metaphorically walking hand in hand with their shared vision; through theatre they were giving ultimate expression to their "understanding and veneration of life" (1992:22). To this end she dedicated her work, as long and as far as she could, to him saying: "My work is specifically here and with Athol" (as cited in Herber 1979:30). This dedication led to Bryceland giving over twenty-five years' worth of energy to her collaboration with Fugard, and making many personal sacrifices for her work.

Despite this dedicated focus, Bryceland saw the relationship between playwright and actor is interdependent. Fugard saw himself at times like a midwife, helping the actor to give birth to their performances (McDonald, 2006:208). And in a thought that mirrors Fugard's, Bryceland describes her work as aiding the writer to bring his characters to life: "The best playwright on earth needs actors/Who are prepared to strip, discard, throw absolutely everything away/In search of the same sort of truth, without vanity/That Athol is prepared to show in his writing" (as cited in Herber, 1979:30). Taking as firm a stance as one ever sees Bryceland take, on the importance of her role as an actor, Bryceland states: "I don't think even he Fugard could do it without the right actors, quite frankly/I think a playwright needs an actor, like an actor needs a playwright" (as cited in Herber, 1979:31).

The symbiotic relationship of friendship and support between Fugard and Bryceland warrants discussion. It was an extraordinary partnership and resulted in plays that helped South African theatre earn world-wide respect. Bryceland's acting work was deeply nurtured and extended by Fugard and the resultant international recognition Bryceland received can be seen in the awards she received over two decades: in South Africa, the Fleur du Cap Theatre award (1966, 1969 and 1973), Three Leaf award (1967) and a Vita

award; in London, the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Actress for *Road to Mecca* (1985) (she was also nominated in 1978); and in New York, an Obie award (1988) and the Theatre World Best Actress award (1988). She won many other awards such as: Best Supporting Actress for Emilia in *Othello* from Drama Magazine, and the Best Actress Award for Lena in the radio production of *Boesman and Lena* from PYE/Society of Authors.

While Fugard pushed and encouraged Bryceland, she provided crucial support for him. Fugard said that she buoyed him, and believed in him more than anyone else (Fugard, 2011b). This is difficult to comprehend as Fugard has enjoyed respect from around the world in theatre circles, was married to writer Sheila Fugard (neé Meiring), and has had friendships with some of the most inspiring people and fine minds, such as activist Mary Benson (1919-2000), theatre director Barney Simon (1932-1995), theatre producer and lighting director Mannie Manim, and actor John Kani. However, Fugard says that Bryceland had believed in him as a man, and supported him as a person (Fugard, 2011b). Indeed, one can see how braced he must have felt by Bryceland when she is on record as saying he is "the best playwright on earth" (as cited in Herber, 1979:30), and the greatest director she ever worked with. Beyond that, Bryceland and Astbury so believed in the work Fugard wanted to do with Bryceland, that they established The Space in 1972 so they could continue such work (as discussed in Chapter Five).

Bryceland's reasons for acting

This chapter now turns its focus more specifically to Bryceland and her personal motivations as an actress. For a brief moment, I would like to put Bryceland as a person, not the actress, center-stage, without allowing her to hide behind her work and her characters, as many great actors are wont to do with their chameleon-like ways. As a person Bryceland was extremely shy as confirmed by both Fugard and Astbury. Her paradoxical combination of ambition and humility is evident in an interview with magazine writer John Mitchel. He describes how after she made the statement: "I love the Greek ladies and want to play them all", Bryceland gave a modest giggle and seemed, when speaking about herself, to "almost stutter […] with nervousness when searching for the right word" (Mitchel, 1991:47). Bryceland also exposed her vulnerabilities, in statements such as: "I suffer the same insecurities that every actor suffers, I'm afraid of

making a fool of myself" (as cited in Daniel, 1984:5).

An obvious question to ask is why did Bryceland feel the need to act? The answer, gleaned from selected interviews with her that I sourced, demonstrates that beneath everything lay an urgent, almost obsessive, desire to understand herself and the world around her: "Through acting,/it's discovering me, essentially - as a woman,/I think that's first. It's myself./I would have thought it would be essentially South African…/but if it starts basically with the self,/Then it must be personal./Although my processes remain the same-/here is the focal point" (as cited in Herber, 1979:30).

Bryceland needed to have strong motivations to start her professional career relatively late in life: she was in her thirties when she began acting at CAPAB, a good decade after most other actors have completed their training and launched a professional career. Her work in London commenced even later, when she moved there in 1978 and was already fifty-three years old. Added to that, Bryceland was a wife and mother, and did not have the luxury of single-minded focus on her work.

A key to understanding her motivation can be found in her own words: "The way in which I can articulate/And make anybody else know and understand/Is by the work that I do on stage/Maybe, because I can't write, paint or dance it/This is the only way I can show it/The only way I can explain it" (as cited in Herber, 1979:31). Bryceland claims she could not give expression to her understanding of a character's experience in a written way, even though she was very eloquent. She also states here that she is not a visual artist, and could not paint[53] or draw her experience; nor could she express it through dance. For Bryceland the art form through which she could communicate most truthfully was to *show* to an audience, using the actor's tools: the body, the feelings, the voice. She perceived this as the only way she could demonstrate what she had learned and understood about a character, and beyond that what she was discovering deep within about herself (Herber, 1979). With remarkable echoes of the concept of *duende,* and its requirement that the artist surrender to a metaphoric dance between life and death, Bryceland describes this experience of delving ever further into her character as a compulsion toward the experience of being truly alive, of

[53] Although Bryceland said she could not paint pictures, her husband (Astbury, 2011b: location 1923) and her niece Pam Le Roux (2013) stated that when Bryceland was not occupied with acting work, she turned to painting furniture and beading items, and she was also an excellent cook; therefore, it seems she always needed and found a creative outlet.

having a "heightened awareness" (as cited in Herber, 1979:32). Bryceland was driven towards "learning, discovering and rediscovering" (as cited in Herber, 1979:31) as a way of transcending what she described as the torment of not understanding, and therefore failing her characters. Bryceland felt a "terrible compulsion/to go, to keep going on, to go further and further…/to discover more and more. And perform it" (as cited in Herber, 1979:28). Bryceland said she could not possibly have "put the lid on it nine-tenths of the way"; she had to see it through, and do so by going into all the areas of her psyche, whether they were painful or not (as cited in Herber, 1979:28-29). Bryceland put herself under enormous pressure to honour her characters, and as my research evidenced, Fugard contributed towards this pressure.

Bryceland's vision for theatre as shared by Fugard, and their work as truth

Bryceland's goals for her acting merged with those of Fugard for his writing, and the point of interface was where their work became truly exceptional. Bryceland had observed early on in her working relationship with Fugard that "the best playwright on earth needs actors/who are prepared to strip, discard, throw absolutely everything away/in search of the same sort of truth, without vanity" (as cited in Herber, 1979:30). Fugard stated later on about working with Bryceland that: "over and above other qualities we both shared an instinctive humility, recognizing that finally we were working because there was something bigger than our personal vanities and conceits. The best word we could find for that bigger 'something' was the Truth" (as cited in Wakefield, 1992:22).

In Bryceland, Fugard saw an interpretive artist with whom he shared a vision of life. Fugard called their relationship a spiritual comradeship and said he could get Bryceland to "put her soul into a moment on stage" because they saw the same "pain, […] the same darkness" (as cited in Wakefield, 1992:21). Similarly, Bryceland said they had a "reciprocal understanding of each other's process" and that no other director could coax her into understanding a part as well as Fugard could (as cited in Daniel, 1984:5).

The vision of life that Bryceland and Fugard shared would be repeatedly explored and demonstrated for the following quarter of a century of their working together. Bryceland would become Fugard's decisive actress and spend much of her career performing his 'on the edge' characters. Their dream was to create theatre as a "living experience" (as cited in Wakefield, 1992:22) and they believed in plays that could have an

emotional impact on audience members. Fugard believed that these experiences could only be transmitted through direct expression, through the body and voice of the actor (Wakefield, 1992).

What made their working relationship remarkable was that as intensely as Bryceland wanted to access her characters' truths, Fugard demanded his actors search for the same and understand why his characters are "on the edge" (McDonald, 2006:211). Fugard's work of analysis with his actors was vast and intensive (as explored by Amelda Rae (1971) and discussed in Chapter Three) and required from Bryceland: firstly, a willingness to engage in the work; and secondly, an intensity of emotional, physical and cognitive application. In fact, McDonald states that no actor exemplified Fugard's idea of actors' courage as much as Bryceland did (2006:209). Bryceland allowed Fugard to guide her through her own feelings of exposure and vulnerability. They did this on the stated agreement that they wanted, again almost compulsively, to reach the level of absolute truth at any cost. Bryceland was willing to work within the scope of Fugard's demand that for the actor living dangerously was a necessary virtue. Fugard himself was amazed by Bryceland's willingness to work at this level, and there were times that it scared him. With reference back to *The Birdwatchers* (Fugard, 2011c) mentioned at the start of this chapter, the Playwright says of the Actress Rosalyn: "A couple of times during our work she has made a rehearsal room the most dangerous place I've ever been in" (p.17). This may be why, at times, Bryceland became so lost in her search for the character's truth, that Fugard felt it necessary to 'bring her back' to reality, as he did when he threw a briefcase through the window of the Labia theatre rehearsal venue during the *Orestes* rehearsals in 1971.

Why would Bryceland want to put herself through such challenges? Bryceland states that when she was engaged in this work, and searching for answers to the character's mysteries, she felt inspired and renewed: "When I am working/ I'm just so much more alive – in so many ways./It's then that I feel I'm really looking,/really, really searching and trying to find answers…/when I feel in this earth" (as cited in Herber, 1979:28). Bryceland's descriptions of her drive to attain this level of performance are filled with words and images that again are distinctly *duende*-like: "there is nothing I wouldn't do/or give of myself to show the truth" (as cited in Herber, 1979:30). She describes her pursuit of truth as "enough to drive me to the edge of a precipice and fall over without knowing" (as cited in Herber, 1979:30).

When Bryceland could not truly understand a character, she thought that this was because she had not pushed herself deeply enough into the emotional and psychological world of the character. She took it personally when she did not give her character everything she felt that they deserved, and felt "desperate" if this happened (as cited in Herber 1979:29). This fear of failure would have been a driving force in her work. It also explains why she appreciated Fugard explaining and analyzing characters and script with her intensely, as he does with his actors (Fugard *et al.*, 1977).

Fugard's view of actors, and how he works with them

According to McDonald, Fugard tells actors that the play is not only for the actor, but that they must work together to create a valuable experience for themselves and their audience (2006:218). By doing this, Fugard believes the actor "marries the text with their own inner truth" and, according to Fugard, "good work" can only occur when the actors are willing to "subordinate themselves" to this "three-part ensemble" (as cited in McDonald, 2006:218). In Fugard's practice, the actor is called on to articulate the writing/text through use of their body and sense of self, so that the point of truth then arises from the triadic tension of space, silence and actor (McDonald, 2012). In his theory about 'the pure theatre experience' formulated in 1961, Fugard says that if there is to be a worthy experience, even a miracle, it is dependent on the ability of the actor to transmit this truth (as cited in Wakefield, 1992). For this the actor needs soul, and when the actor has a lack of soul, no external theatrical devices - props, costumes, music or lighting - can ever result in a magical play.

Fugard has acted often in his own plays, and also acted in other projects, for example the film *Ghandi* (Richard Attenborough, 1982); so he has a good idea of what is required of a great actor. He admitted that Bryceland was the better actor[54], and credited her with having all the courage and determination to play his female roles to the zenith of expectation. Fugard acknowledged he agreed with the proposal made by theatre practitioner Antonin Artaud[55] that that the actor should "burn himself alive and wave at the audience

[54] Although Bryceland defended Fugard as an actor, a review of the film *Road to Mecca* described Fugard's performance as "perfectly ghastly", while stating that Bryceland was an "unparalleled tragedienne who triumphed" (On the local scene, 1991:22).

[55] Antonin Artaud (1896-1948) was a French dramatist best known for his ideas on a 'Theatre of Cruelty' where he aimed to shatter what he saw as 'false reality' through a type of theatre that he saw as a force of liberation for the subconscious (1974).

through the flames" (Fugard *et al.*, 1977:84). As already discussed, Bryceland certainly danced in that dangerous psychological zone. Fugard considered himself fortunate to have actors who do this in service of their work, and of all the actors who had this conviction, he says it was Bryceland whose level of courage at times frightened him (Fugard *et al.*, 1977:84).

It is possible to see how Bryceland was perceived, through the eyes of Fugard, as an actress who read his soul, or his fellow pilgrim. Actress Dame Janet Suzman[56] has observed that Fugard "absolutely adores actors", and is thrilled by the way actors disappear inside themselves and come out as something else (as cited in Fugard *et al.*, 1977:84). How did Fugard enable Bryceland to work so intensely with the personal, and portray characters in the most stripped down, delicate and truthful way? A good starting point for this discussion is to use the analogy offered by Fugard himself of the actor as a living instrument. He has stated that actors are as precious to him as a Stradivarius[57] and describes the actor as totally carnal in their ability to use their body, voice and self to "get at you" (Fugard *et al.*, 1977:83). Fugard perceives the actor as a crucial point for the lived experience of theatre in his actor-space-silence theory. The actors are professional and volunteer to work in this way. Bryceland wished to do this kind of work, and found herself feeling 'alive' when acting in this way. As previously mentioned Bryceland completely trusted Fugard; and Fugard is on record as being well aware of the fragility of the personal areas in the actor that he was operating within, and the potential volatility of the process should he ever fail to take it seriously. "It's dangerous ground because you have to go into the actor…and you have to be so…careful…" (Fugard *et al.*, 1977:83). In the same way that an excellent musician respects, and is dependent on, their fine instrument, so Fugard seems to have respected and depended on his actors to bring his characters alive in the space and silence of performance.

Music has been an important thread elsewhere in the fabric of Fugard's work. He guides the actors through his plays by references to tempo, rhythms, silences and suspense. Actor Ben Kingsley[58] observes that the

[56] Dame Janet Suzman, DBE is a South African/British actress who has worked at the Royal Shakespeare Company.

[57] A Stradivarius refers to string instruments built by the Italian family Stradivari during the 17th and 18th centuries. These instruments are associated with excellence and to be referred to as "the Stradivari" in any field is to be deemed the very best.

[58] Sir Ben Kingsley is an English actor who played the title role in the film *Ghandi* (1982), in which Fugard also starred.

rhythm of Fugard's writing[59] is so effective that even when spoken in a neutral, unaccented voice, the particular accent of Port Elizabeth[60] is present because of the way in which Fugard used verbs, nouns and expletives in the text. Kingsley recalls a description of *Hello and Goodbye* as a duet for two percussionists, with the clashes between the two actors - each holding a cymbal[61] - made possible because "the text supported the joining of those two forces" (Fugard *et al.*, 1977:85). Bryceland grew up in a home where playing musical instruments, singing and performing onstage with her sisters was common. It seems probable that Bryceland would have understood at least a sense of musicality in Fugard's direction.

Fugard describes the relationship with his professional actors as work unending; that the work continues even when rehearsals break and they start talking, and continues on into "the pub"[62] (Fugard *et al.*, 1977: 83). Kingsley, commenting about his first experience with Fugard as director, said he found this way of working most unusual - he had never worked that way before. Nor had he been asked, as Fugard did, to 'pick open' his emotional wounds; and yet Fugard kept him feeling safe, observes Kingsley, as "Athol would always be able to pick up those severed limbs on the rehearsal-room floor and put them together again" (Fugard *et al.*, 1977:86). Fugard asserts that he demands this kind of process, and only keeps company with actors who will work totally without inhibition. If he challenges them with an image or idea, these kinds of actors will "throw all of themselves" into a response (Fugard *et al.*, 1977:84). Fugard acknowledges that this very dangerous work, like asking actors to walk out onto a mine field. It follows that Fugard could only work with actors who possessed remarkable courage, without which "the actor cannot 'stake' his personal truth" (Fugard *et al.*, 1977:84). Without this exposure, Fugard believes the actor is hiding behind pretense and deception, which for him are utterly fatal in the quest for a truthful performance.

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[59] In interviews Bryceland also makes reference to the use of rhythm in Fugard's writing, and this is discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

[60] Port Elizabeth is Fugard's home town. The characters in *Hello and Goodbye*, Johnny and Hester, were born and raised there, and thus are written to have the specific regional accent of the Eastern Cape in South Africa. Ben Kingsley acted in the play directed by Peter Stevenson and performed in London 1973.

[61] A cymbal is a musical instrument consisting of concave round brass plates which are struck together to produce a clanging sound.

[62] A pub is a tavern or bar. Fugard is a self-admitted alcoholic, and officially gave up drinking in 1991.

From the actor's point of view, Bryceland concurred with Fugard's approach. She observed that Fugard directed *through* the actor, that he sought to find points in the actor which were vulnerable, which Bryceland referred to as "pressure points" (as cited in Wakefield, 1992:22), and through which the actor's psyche or soul could be "penetrated". By using the word 'penetrate' I am referring to Wakefield's description of the process of playwright and actor opening themselves not only to life around them (1992), but also to the difficult mental and emotional journeys of understanding themselves in order to reveal deep personal truths.

In Fugard's writing, he describes the sounds, smells and textures that exist in the characters' worlds. He brings the same sense of texture and use of the senses into the rehearsal room. Kingsley describes how, in the rehearsals for *Statements*, Bryceland and Fugard would describe for the actors "the smells of that room", the type of people who live in the area, use symbolic words like 'dogs' and 'snakes', and evocative descriptions such as "the smell of the dust and the quality of the light" (Fugard *et al.*, 1977:86). Another significant example of Fugard's use of evocative imagery is when working on the stage play *Road to Mecca* at The Market Theatre in 1984 with Bryceland and actress Elize Cawood[63]. Fugard explained to both actors that like the sculpting process of the real sculptress, Helen Martins[64], their rehearsal progress could be compared to filling out the wire frame already in place by adding cement and glass before the play would be ready (McDonald, 2006). These images and senses are truly important triggers for the actor to enable him/her to create the social world of the character and intensely imagine their psychological state and motivations, thereby deeply connecting them to the characters they will play.

Fugard is proud of the fact that he takes actors to places they never thought they could go (McDonald, 2006). Fugard often used images as trigger points to truly connect actor to character. For instance, he described to me in an interview how he made a particular, somewhat shocking, suggestion to Bryceland for her enactment of the lonely Millie in *People are Living There* (1968), which was to say that Millie has spider-webs growing across her vagina. This is a powerful image that evokes a sense of neglect, a lack of affection, and decay. He recognizes that it was a ruthless, almost cruel, image to offer Bryceland, but that

[63] Eliza Cawood is an award-winning South African actress and is married to actor Winston Dunster.

[64] Helen Martins (1897-1976), who inspired Fugard to write *Road to Mecca*, lived in Nieu-Bethesda and created a sculpture garden.

it worked for her (Fugard, 2011b). Bryceland described this process as so powerful for the actor that if they were to return to the performance a decade later, the feelings and triggers would still be present (as cited in Wakefield, 1992). In a similar way, Fugard triggered Bryceland when playing Clytemnestra in *Orestes* (1971) to the point where he feared she might suffer a complete breakdown (McDonald, 2006). A glimpse of how he might have done this is offered in *The Birdwatchers* (Fugard, 2011c), where the Playwright works the actress Roslyn to an explosive point (p. 21-23). In reality, Bryceland responded to this experience by saying, "working on *Orestes*, an improvised drama/dealing with the violence of politics and protest in classical terms/and relating it to the John Harris/Johannesburg concourse bombing - was probably one of the most singly important experiences in my life./We explored areas I never knew existed in myself (as cited in Herber, 1979:30). In these words, she demonstrates the actors' perspective, and one can see that she recognized it as a vital moment of her working life, as it affected her both personally and professionally. One can also note how personally invested she was as an actress. This is what Fugard required, and it is an extreme measure in terms of acting. A performance could be excellent without this, but as Fugard says, without risks the actor cannot achieve greatness (as cited in McDonald, 2006:209).

At times, Bryceland did not seem to know how to travel in and out of the deep-seated psychic inner world of her characters, and to explore their connections to herself. In the performance of *Boesman and Lena* (1969), however, Bryceland felt she understood some of Lena's story in relation to her own history: "Playing Lena […] was a terribly important experience in my life…I discovered so much which I hadn't consciously thought about before…Really quite frightening experiences...But totally psychic ones" (as cited in Herber, 1979:30). Fugard knew that Bryceland had been physically abused by her first alcoholic husband and that Bryceland could thus relate to Lena, who gets beaten by Boesman in his drunken rages. However, Bryceland stated that she had not consciously thought about such things before (as cited in Herber, 1979:30), and therefore it seems Fugard found a way to connect Bryceland to this deep-seated trauma. No wonder then that for Bryceland it was a frightening experience. The word *truth* is most significant in Fugard's descriptions of the purpose of theatre; for him, truth is the ultimate quest of the actor. This is a word to which Bryceland constantly returned in her descriptions of her goal for her acting: "To me, my work is truth" (as cited in Wakefield 1992:22). She put enormous pressure on herself, and was grateful to

Fugard for helping her reach this ultimate point of empathy with her characters, at any and every cost to herself.

Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act (1972) as an example of Bryceland workshopping a play with Fugard

In early 1972, Bryceland's husband Astbury was very busy with the physical and financial practicalities of preparing The Space for opening (refer to Chapter Five). Bryceland and Astbury had wanted to open The Space with Fugard's *People are Living There*, but Fugard had refused to direct that play. Instead he offered to develop one of his new ideas, which became *Statement*s (1972). Bryceland's character in *Statements*, Frieda Joubert, is a librarian who meets her lover, Errol Philander, a coloured headmaster played then by Fugard, in the library where she works. There they are caught by the police, with nothing but a blanket around their naked selves, and forced to make statements.

Fugard wanted to workshop the play, especially after his *Orestes* (1971) experiment, in which he had allowed his actors to contribute ideas during rehearsals while he had served as a scribe, and had then constructed the work into a scripted play. Fugard and Bryceland started work on the play in January 1972. They were joined by actor Percy Sieff, who would play the police detective, and Chris Prophet, who played a policeman typing out the statements made by Sieff's character. Astbury recalls that the statements the characters made in the play were based on the original court records from the story that had appeared in the newspaper and first inspired Fugard (Astbury, 2015, 28 February).

According to Fugard, he and Bryceland worked alone at times in the rehearsal room upstairs at The Space. There, according to Fugard's directorial process as discussed earlier in this chapter, Fugard asked Bryceland to explore every angle of her character's experience. He says he asked her to imagine the smells of a new lover, and to emotionally connect to the feelings of intimacy and vulnerability of the budding relationship between them (Fugard, 2011b).

Once again, Bryceland was asked to undergo the process of being the actress prepared to "strip, discard, throw absolutely everything away" (as cited in Herber, 1979:30). In this case Bryceland needed to also

physically strip off her clothes. Astbury told me that Bryceland was particularly shy about her body[65] (2010), therefore this request from Fugard would have been very challenging for Bryceland to honor. However, the character's total vulnerability is the heart of the play. And as Bryceland said, "I must/go into all areas/whether painful or not" (as cited in Herber, 1979:29) A central theme in this play is how private vulnerability and love are ruthlessly exposed in a harsh spotlight, represented by how the lovers are made to feel sordid by being forced to explain themselves. The images that Fugard and Bryceland created by standing miserably under the glare of photo flashes and torch lights, naked but for grey cheap blankets held around themselves while the policemen shame them, epitomize the play. Fugard would have required Bryceland as the actress to understand how Frieda Joubert would have felt at this moment.

Bryceland herself worked as a librarian[66], so she would have at the very least understood the character's job. But there are many aspects to a character like Frieda that Bryceland, with Fugard, would have had to imagine, figure out or create. They might have asked questions like: why was the character prepared to risk this affair? How did the character feel about meeting her lover in her place of work that night? How did the character feel about being a lover who had to hide her affair? Finding viable answers for such questions are part of an actor's preparation.

Astbury recalls that Bryceland and Fugard went to see the defense lawyer who appeared at the real trial - and who was a friend of Bryceland's - and were shown actual photographs of the couple. These photographs, Astbury says, were in reality at the center of the trial and caused public outrage at the violation of a couple who simply loved one another. He recalls that the entire process was very disturbing for Bryceland (Astbury, 2015, 28 February).

What occurred during the workshop process is deeply revealing about the level of contribution Bryceland made to the play, and for which she received no special credit from Fugard. Astbury states that Bryceland wrote several of her character's speeches and recalls her sitting up through the night, perspiring as she

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[65] Astbury echoes this in his blog of The Space: "She was one of the shyest people on the planet" (2015, 28 February); and "Yvonne was a shy, modest person" (2011b: location 429).

[66] Bryceland was a librarian at The Argus and The Cape Times newspaper in Cape Town before she began working as a professional actress at CAPAB (refer to Chapter Three).

honored Fugard's task to write Frieda's speeches. These included the character's responses to the questions being asked by the detective. Fugard asked Bryceland to imagine the worst questions she could possibly have been asked, and then write her responses. Asbury says it was a nightmarish sequence, and in a "cloud of embarrassment (she was one of the shyest people on the planet – paradoxically for an actor…) she had to write a speech in which she described her own body" (Astbury, 2015, 28 February). Years later Bryceland would watch an actress in London deliver the same speech. Bryceland approached her after the performance and, according to Astbury, told her to rewrite the speech: "'Otherwise you are describing my body, which doesn't look at all like yours'" (Astbury, 2015, 28 February). He recalls the actress being relieved by this suggestion, as she had been struggling to connect with the material. Bryceland offered the actress many details to consider, only one of which Astbury speaks of; the actress had then said to Bryceland: "'Among other things, I have slightly knock-knees, and your description says she's bandy legged'" (Astbury, 2015, 28 February). This offers strong evidence that Bryceland was the author of speeches such as the following:

> Ugly feet. The soles have got hard patches. My legs are bandy. Good calf muscles…probably got them riding to school on my bicycle up a very steep hill every day. Skin around my knees is just starting to get a little slack. I enjoy making the muscles in my thighs move. Hair is very mousy…very sparse…I think the area around my waist is quite nice. Few soft and feminine contours around my hips. My breasts are slacker than I would like them to be. My neck is unattractive. My face is quite interesting but can be very plain sometimes. Lines around my mouth are starting to worry me. Hair causes me concern. I think it's going off. Ashamed of my hands… (Frieda in *Statements*, Fugard, 1974:102)

Another speech that Astbury says was written "from the blood dripping on Yvonne's brow" (Astbury, 2015, 28 February) was the one beginning with "I don't understand…You can't. Don't even try…" (Frieda in *Statements*, Fugard, 1974:100). To understand the personal depth at which Bryceland worked with Fugard, I also considered another speech which Astbury says was contributed by Bryceland, where the character describes the pain she will need to live with now that she must face losing her lover.

> The pain is going to be me…I must be my hands again, my eyes, my ears…all of me but now without you. All of me that found you must now lose you. My hands still have the sweat of your body on them, but I'll have to wash them…sometime. If I don't they will. Nothing can stop me losing that little bit of you. In every corner of being myself there is a little of you left and now I must start to lose it… (Frieda in *Statements*, Fugard, 1974:105)

Bryceland thus contributed enormously to Fugard's plays, particularly in the workshop process, and a problem encountered early on in my research was that she has never received any credit for this[67] contribution - and there is no apparent remedy for this shortfall.

Bryceland's challenges in working with Fugard

Like Bryceland, actors John Kani and Winston Ntshona contributed to many of Fugard's plays, but they negotiated with Fugard to have their contribution to texts - such as *The Island* (1973) and *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* (1972)[68] - recognized, and received writing credit for these. As shown, Astbury recalls Bryceland writing parts of the dialogue for *Statements* (Astbury, 2015, 28 February), and her work being incorporated into the play, but Fugard has never given her writer's credit for that.[69] When asked, Fugard dismissed the question of recognition saying only that he is the one who takes all the ideas and merges them into a play (2011b). Astbury informed me that Bryceland was too modest to seek glory for this contribution, and that when he mentioned to Bryceland how Kani and Ntshona had been given writing credit by Fugard, she laughed at the idea as trivial (2011a). That may be so, and I respect Bryceland's humility, but for the purpose of allowing Bryceland to take center stage in this dissertation, her writing contribution has been briefly, but definitively, focused on so that it is on record that she aided Fugard's work in this way.

Another disappointment for Bryceland with regard to her working relationship with Fugard, was that he did not base himself at The Space after it was launched in 1972 and move to Cape Town as she had hoped. One can understand Fugard's position, made reference to in some detail in *The Birdwatchers* (Fugard, 2011c), where the Playwright explains how he could not just leave Port Elizabeth (p.40). However, as disappointed as Bryceland must have been, it may have ultimately been to her benefit. Not all the roles Bryceland enacted were in Fugard's plays. The theatre needed to produce many plays over its eight-year existence to remain financially sustainable, and there would not have been enough Fugard plays to fill such a schedule, nor

[67] Bryceland seems to have made other contributions to Fugard's plays. See footnote 73 on page 172.

[68] These were plays workshopped by Fugard with cast members, and presented at The Space in Cape Town (refer to Chapter Five for more detail).

[69] In an interview with Ross Devenish (2011), Bryceland's writing contribution to Fugard's play *Dimetos* (1975) was also discussed. Fugard himself admits she gave him a "verbatim recall" during rehearsals for *Dimetos* (as cited in Hacksley, 1993:7).

enough female roles in his plays to have kept Bryceland permanently busy. Bryceland thus helped in the selection of other plays and worked with other directors. And, as discussed in Chapter Five, it seems she developed enormously both as an actress and in reputation at The Space, becoming the actress that audiences wanted to see, whether she was in a Fugard play or not.

Another matter that seems to have remained unresolved in the relationship between Bryceland and Fugard is observed by Bryceland's family and friends, who felt that Fugard should have fought harder for Bryceland when she was turned down by the American Equity to play in *Road to Mecca* in the United States in 1985 because she was not an "international star" (Freedman, 1985). Issues around Bryceland touring to the United States with Fugard's plays had occurred before[70]. Fugard wrote the role of Miss Helen for Bryceland, and when he could not stage it in America, he staged it with Bryceland in South Africa and at England's National Theatre in 1984. He admitted he might give up fighting with American Actors Equity over the issue and was eased by seeing her play the role in South Africa and London. Bryceland, however, was not prepared to give up, saying, "I'm quite desperate to do it…it's so much part of my life and my profession…quite frankly, I'm never going to give up on it" (as cited in Freedman, 1985). In an open letter to Fugard published in *The Star*, South African actress and colleague of Bryceland, Dawn Lindberg wrote:

> Yvonne was by your side all the way. She helped you give birth to all your best plays. You wrote 'A Lesson from Aloes'[71] for her…. You owe it to her and to your conscience to refuse to allow them to produce 'Aloes' without her. She is a very special actress and your very special friend. No. Without Bryceland, No Fugard. Please Athol! (Lindberg, 1985:20).

When Bryceland became ill during her season in New York[72] in 1988, it seems Bryceland's family felt Fugard had let her down further by not caring for her well enough. She was sent for psychiatric tests and had a brain scan, but Astbury believes "she became very unwilling to talk about what was happening"

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[70] In 1971 Fugard was trying to get a visa to take *Boesman and Lena* to the Lincoln Center in the United States, and declared he would insist on Bryceland playing Lena (Trew, 1971:14).

[71] Fugard wrote *A Lesson from Aloes* in 1978.

[72] *Road to Mecca* premiered Off-Broadway at the Promenade Theatre on 12 April 1988. Fugard directed and played Marius Byleveld, Yvonne Bryceland played Miss Helen and Amy Irving played Elsa Barlow. It won the 1988 New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for Best Foreign Play and Bryceland won the 1987-1988 Obie Award for Outstanding Performance.

(Astbury, 2011b: location 1855).

Miss Helen, the character that Bryceland played in Fugard's *Road to Mecca* (1988) is based on a real woman, Helen Martins, who ended her own life. Bryceland had applied the same obsessive determination to understanding her as any other character she had played: "I'm totally moved by Miss Helen and her isolation. How quick people are to dismiss what they can't understand" (as cited in Daniel, 1984:5). In a comment that is telling of Bryceland's capacity for sympathy and compassion, she said she was saddened by how few people bothered to understand the artist's talent and pain: "How awful to live one's whole life and get so little in return in terms of other people's response" (as cited in Daniel, 1984:5). To gain this understanding, however, meant that Bryceland also needed to access the darkness of the character, even though she was aware of the risks and discomfort in doing so: "Some things one wishes one didn't understand – it is quite scary. That aspect of darkness…that fear of losing the creative impulse" (as cited in Daniel, 1984:5).

In the end, it is perhaps unsurprising that it was while she played Miss Helen that Bryceland herself could not continue her work. Mid-show in New York, Bryceland stalled in her performance and later told Fugard that she felt as though Miss Helen had 'consumed her' (2011b). Fugard acknowledges that he did put pressure on Bryceland to keep going, even when she said she was done with playing Miss Helen (this event is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three). It seems Fugard himself was under much pressure having signed for the play to run, and after undergoing much struggle to get Bryceland and the play to run in New York in the first place. Fugard also stated that he did not know what to do with Bryceland getting so ill, and thought she was suffering from some sort of actor's 'burn out' (Fugard, 2011b). Astbury thought that what happened to Bryceland was more complex than that, and saw it as a process of shutting down (Astbury, 2011b). Bryceland had described such experiences of not being able to act anymore as "terrors", and at the end of her life was desperate to find answers for what had happened to her (Astbury, 2011b: location 1969).

In summary

This dissertation hypothesizes that Bryceland and Fugard were a brilliant but not flawless symbiotic union, driven by the higher purpose of their work - the search for 'truth'. As this chapter demonstrated, their commitment to their art was deeply contemplated, analyzed and sacrificed for. Their depth of care for every

infinitely complex detail of Fugard's characters and stories is evident in the language they both used to describe their work and goals. *The New York Times* called her "The actress who reads the soul of Fugard" (Winer, 1988). The bond between Bryceland and Fugard, their common vision, and the lengths they were willing to go to achieve their goals are not common practice in theatre and performance, but can be seen as exceptional, and strongly echoes the artistic concept of *duende* in the reaching for heightened theatre experience for actor and audience. As ambitious as many theatre practitioners are, it is rare to hear actors or directors speak with quite such profound dedication on the topic of theatre, or to reach so deeply and personally and to take such emotional risks in their search to find the true meaning in their work.

Clearly, Fugard is not always easy to work with: he is intense and very demanding as a director, pitching great challenges at his actors. He challenged Bryceland to her very core. Actress Jennifer Steyn[73] says that her experience of him was not as gentle or quiet; she saw him as impatient and possessive, and that he would tell her to 'just do it' if he got tired of her trying to work things out (as cited in McDonald, 2006:218). However, this intensive working process with Fugard led to many great performances from his actors. And it seems the challenges were balanced by a joy in the rehearsal room and much laughter (Steyn cited in McDonald, 2006). It is evident, too, that Bryceland was an intensely focused actress, but that this was balanced by an exuberant joy in her life and work: "I am open, I hope/to joy, as to anything else" (as cited in Herber, 1979:31). It seems that in their married life together Astbury and Bryceland laughed a lot (Astbury, 2011a), and references to her throaty laugh can be found in many interviews and articles. This ability to find joy in her work included her special capacity to truly understand the experience of other people, no matter what personal sacrifices were required of her to achieve this insight. Understanding the level of courage and depth with which she was willing to work offers insight about how Bryceland brought such poignant and truthful characters to life in Fugard's plays. It also explains Bryceland's willingness to stand up to those who attempted to dominate and silence her in her life and in her acting, and what ultimately led to the creation of The Space in 1972.

[73] Jennifer Steyn is a South African actress who played the role of Betty in the world premiere of Fugard's *The Captain's Tiger* in 1999.

Chapter Five: The birth and evolution of The Space as representative of Bryceland's values and practises

The forgotten theatre trailblazer

> Yvonne Bryceland remains the acceptable face of white South Africa, a tested radical who, through her long collaboration with the dramatist and actor Athol Fugard, determinedly positioned herself for collision with the keepers of apartheid in her native land. (Simpson, 1986)

One of the most important legacies left by Yvonne Bryceland is the establishment of The Space theatre in Cape Town in 1972. The significant new works done first at The Space, the themes of the plays, and the political stance Bryceland and her theatre took, led her to become internationally recognized. Ironically, in South Africa she has almost been forgotten, despite Fugard unequivocally calling The Space the cornerstone to all South Africa's later achievements in theatre. In a facsimile sent to Percy Sieff for The Space theatre's 25th Anniversary, Fugard referred to The Space as "the one single event in South African theatre during Apartheid years on which […] the theatre of the new South Africa is being built", an "inspiring vision of a theatre of defiance and decency, with its invitation to theatre artists to abandon the ossified forms of the past and to liberate themselves and their work" (1997).

Journalist Albert Thomas wrote that the "contribution of The Space to local society must not be underestimated for when the history of South African theatre is written, it will have to feature large in the book for its daring, innovation and it non-racial stance" (1979). That contribution included the bringing of new actors, experimental theatre and thought-provoking new plays to South African culture. In 1991, Bryceland was referred to as the "Grande dame of the South African stage" and an "unparalleled tragedian" (On the Local Scene, 1991:22).

And yet, in educational books on South African theatre, such as the Dramatic Arts Textbooks that are used in Secondary Schools, Bryceland and her contribution to The Space theatre are barely mentioned. For example: the Grade 10 textbook has a small photograph of Bryceland and a two sentence side comment,

focused on the fact that blackface[74] make-up was used in *Boesman and Lena* (by quite another actress) (Ciro *et al.*, 2011:127); the Grade 11 textbook has two paragraphs on The Space and a quote by Pieter-Dirk Uys about his play *No Space for The Space* (Ciro *et al.*, 2012:134 -135); the Grade 12 Textbook features the same photograph of Bryceland with her name as a side note (Ciro *et al.*, 2014:199). Bryceland's body of work and stature as an actress are granted barely any significance at all. Fugard stated that it is scandalous that Bryceland is not recognized for her pioneering (2011b).

This chapter, in an attempt to redress this absence, will: First offer a brief but dense description of the evolution of The Space; secondly discuss how it represents the values and practices of Bryceland; and third elucidate the impact this theatre has had on South African theatre in general. This chapter demonstrates how Bryceland should be far from forgotten, but rather placed center stage as a powerful and influential theatre practitioner. Specifically, it proposes that the name Bryceland should be part of discussions about how it was that South African theatre shifted from being government controlled and Eurocentric to speaking in a unique and potent voice of outcry against political and social injustices with universal echoes.

How and why did Bryceland come to feel the urgent need for a new, specific, dedicated space in which she and Fugard could practise their art? How did Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury establish The Space to meet that need? And how were Bryceland's personal values and philosophy made manifest there? These are the central questions to be answered in this chapter. Included will be a discussion of how Bryceland did not waiver from the artistic aims and policies set down for the launch of The Space, even as her collaborative work with Fugard evolved, and her career developed.

The challenge of this task is that so little is on record regarding the details of what Bryceland did at The Space in terms of establishing, running and managing the theatre. The Space archives show that Astbury made Bryceland's dream for the theatre a practical reality, and mostly managed the theatre, while Bryceland was involved at every other level: she appeared in play after play; wrote programmes; taught young actors; selected plays, directors and casts; confronted security branch members; and even scraped and painted the walls. Her daughters were there often, appearing after school, recalls actress and educator Bobbie Fitchen

[74] *Blackface* is the use of dark make up by a white actor who is portraying a character of another race.

(2011-2016). For example: Colleen, Bryceland's elder daughter, helped Bryceland to make soup for audience members. Subjects I interviewed, who had experienced The Space, say that Bryceland and Fugard were generally seen as the main figureheads. There seems a general understanding that she was determined to have a theatre in which she and Fugard primarily, but also others, could pursue their artistic vision, and she and Astbury worked tirelessly to make this happen. According to Astbury - in his biography, and recently his online publications about The Space[75] (2011 and 2015-2016) - he did most of the planning and administrative work. Fugard is similarly seen as integral to The Space, but I was not able to find any record of administrative duties he performed for the theatre; he was focused rather on writing and producing new plays. Fugard acknowledges that one of the major debts he has in his career is to The Space. It does seem that the three were the mainstays of the theatre: Fitchen describes how all three would be upstairs conducting meetings to which nobody else was privy (2011-2016). The minutes or agendas for these meetings are not in The Space archives.

The picture that emerged from my research and consideration, and which seems the most accurate, is that Bryceland, Astbury and Fugard each played a major role in the story of The Space being established and run from 1972 to 1979. These three pioneers, with their new vision for South African theatre, each made their vital contribution to its success - and Bryceland was one of the triadic points. Without Bryceland, Astbury would never have been involved in establishing and running a theatre, and therefore Fugard would not have written certain plays. Without Astbury, Bryceland and Fugard would not have had a place of their own to work, and plays like *Statements* and so many others may not have been created. Without Fugard, Bryceland and Astbury may not have felt either the drive to establish the theatre, or the confidence that audiences would flock to see the new works there. During that time in South Africa, a play written and by Fugard drew notable audiences. In summary then, each of the three brought essential contributions which co-joined to ensure the creation of the important South African theatre history milestone that was The Space. Astbury's books are written from his perspective, and tend to place him as central to the management of

[75] Astbury has written about his experiences at The Space in: *The Space/Die Ruimte/Indawo* (1980); e-book *Trusting the Actor* (2011) [Kindle version] and *Theatre of Survival* (2015-2016).

The Space. However, the immediate perception I received from subjects I interviewed about The Space was that it was Bryceland and her work with Fugard that lay at the heart of the theatre; as summed up by Fitchen, "Fugard and Yvonne were the King and Queen of the Space" (2011-2016).

This chapter will thus discuss the background, establishment and running of The Space, with Bryceland as the focal figure; however, to more accurately reflect the information that I collected, it will of necessity shift from Fugard to Astbury to Bryceland as each of them carried major contributions at different times in an overlapping and merging manner. For the purposes of this chapter I will utilise an idiographic strategy which, according to Babbie and Mouton (2005), examines a single event in time and place via the coherence within the larger structure. Therefore, to fully understand the reasons for and significance of The Space, a brief exploration of the political and social environment in South Africa between 1960-1979, within which Bryceland and Fugard practiced theatre, is necessary.

Key questions for this approach included: What was the political and social environment at the time? What were conditions like for South African theatre practitioners? What was it like for Bryceland and Fugard who chose to oppose the laws of apartheid in their work in the theatre before The Space existed? What kind of productions did Bryceland aim to do at The Space? What was her philosophy of acting, and her ambition for theatre practice? Theatre history books, archival material from the collection on The Space housed at the Baxter Theatre, Bryceland's personal documents, and interviews with actors and theatre practitioners who were involved at The Space, were all used as sources to reconstruct that historical event as accurately as possible.

How Bryceland and Fugard operated before The Space

Before the establishment of The Space theatre, there was no venue like it in South Africa. At that time, the South African government's apartheid policies were in full force. Beyond the broad racial segregation laws of apartheid, Walder describes details of how the Group Areas Act of 1950 enforced legislation in relation to experiencing theatre (1984). Increased segregation through 'social' or 'petty' apartheid included the legalized separation of people in theatres according to race. Black and white actors, directors or audience members were not allowed to sit or work together without official permission. Added to that, the content

and material that was allowed to appear in theatres was also tightly controlled by government: for example, to monitor people's activities, the police were able to tap telephones and intercept telephone calls. The consequences of not obeying the laws were arrest or possible death.

Fugard's collaborator, Mannie Manim[76], summed up the policy of the government-backed Performing Arts Council of Transvaal[77] (PACT) when he said that they could only do "plays with white people about white problems" (as cited in Stephanou & Henriques, 2005:45). This meant that, in general, theatres managed by the Performing Arts Council of South Africa were producing plays that looked and sounded as European or American as possible.

By contrast, Fugard expressed a philosophy in which the country's "creative impetus" needed to come from the working together of people of all races; and he acted on this, risking the wrath of the government (Stephanou & Henriques, 2005:16). A colleague, Mary Benson, recalled the risks that Fugard was prepared to take to work with people of all races in the early 1960s; she said he was driven by a hunger for new excitement and hope, and he wanted to make theatre that had meaning (1997). To avoid arrest for his actors and himself, Fugard worked in spaces as varied as his garage, or backyards in townships, gathering illegally with his casts. According to actor Fats Dibeco[78], Fugard would present his newly written plays anywhere: a dining hall in a commune in Parktown, or in backyards with those who were under house-arrest watching over the fence (as cited in Stephanou & Henriques, 2005:16). Fugard worked with little or no money, and his plays were focused on the actors and the story. In this minimalistic style, Fugard openly acknowledged the influence of European theatre practitioners like Peter Brook and Jerzy Grotowski whose work had allowed Fugard to realise there were other ways of doing theatre, beside the high production value shows mostly being put on by the Performing Arts Boards[79]. Brook, in particular, speaks of theatre in its essence

[76] Mannie Manim is an award-winning producer, director and lighting designer. In 2011 he was awarded the South African 'Order of Ikhamanga' in Silver for his contribution to theatre in South Africa. Manim lit and produced all of Fugard's plays since 1970.

[78] Fats Dibeco (1937-1999) was an actor known for his roles in films such as *Blind Justice* (1988) and *A Good Man in Africa* (1994).

[79] The South African National Theatre Organisation was changed to four provincial arts councils in 1961. In 1962 the Cape Performing Arts Board (CAPAB) was established and its task was to further the performing arts. The government subsidised the Boards, and had control over which plays were produced. Staff, including actors, were considered full-time employees. In 1994,

as requiring no more than the actor, an audience and an empty space (1968). Grotowski focused on the actor as primary to an experience of theatre that went beyond the traditional and commercial into that of the spiritual or transcendental (1968).

During the 1960s Bryceland was working as a librarian at The Argus newspaper in Cape Town, and doing radio plays for the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) in Sea Point. According to her daughter Colleen King, she took some elocution lessons, but otherwise received no formal training (2012). Between 1964 and 1968 Bryceland did some amateur plays at small theatres around Cape Town, including *The Italian Job* at The Little Theatre in 1953. At this time in her personal life, Bryceland was divorced from her first husband Daniel Bryceland, and was a single mother of three girls. It was while working at The Argus newspaper that she met photographer Brian Astbury, sixteen years her junior.

In 1961, Bryceland and Astbury went to watch Fugard's *The Blood Knot* (1961) which was staged at the Orange Street Synagogue in Cape Town. It was presented in a hall as the cast was multi-racial and thus not allowed into a theatre. As recalled by Astbury, the hall was packed with people and stiflingly hot, the venue had limited lighting, and the set was minimal - a table and two chairs (Astbury, 2015, 16 February). However, three hours later, when Astbury and Bryceland left the hall, they felt that for the first time they had seen a play that was "unmistakably South African" (Astbury, 2015, 16 February). This event was to have a profound impact on the course of their professional lives in the future. Bryceland announced that this was the kind of theatre she wanted to do.

By 1964 Bryceland began to work as a professional actress with the Cape Performing Arts Board (CAPAB). By this time, she had a fair amount of experience doing radio plays. She still worked another part-time job as an entertainment columnist at Cape Town's The Argus newspaper. She had married Astbury, who was working as a theatre, ballet and opera photographer freelancing for Fair Lady magazine's editor Jane Raphaely[80]. Fugard was still writing, directing and acting in his plays, mostly in unsuited locations, for

under the new government, the Performing Arts Boards around the country were transformed and theatres that were previously government subsidised had to become independent.

[80] Jane Raphaely was the founding editor of the South African magazine, Fair Lady. She has won multiple awards for professional and humanitarian achievements.

example Dorkay House[81] in Johannesburg, or an abandoned[82] snake pit in his hometown Port Elizabeth. Fugard continued to work, but with much difficulty as he had to consider government constraints should he want to present his plays to an audience. When Fugard presented *The Coat* in 1966 to its first audience in a white area, officials set strict conditions: the audience were not allowed to be 'the public'; the black actors were not allowed to use the toilets in the hall; and the cast were to return home immediately after the performance. Fugard managed this by referring to the audience as 'a theatre appreciation group' rather than 'the public', and said they were going to be shown a 'sample' of work. When the actors finished the performance, they had to travel directly back to their township (Walder, 1984). Walder notes that Fugard had gotten used to working under such rough conditions, and dealing with racial segregation laws (1984). However, he and his actors often suffered for their choice to persist with this kind of theatre. For example: later, in 1967, some of Fugard's actors would be detained in South Africa's Transkei Bantustan[83] as a direct result of their work in the theatre; and Fugard did not escape trouble either - he had his passport removed by the government (Benson, 1997). Fugard brought his play *Hello and Goodbye* (1965) to Cape Town in 1965. This play was allowed to be performed in the Labia Theatre[84] because the characters are two white people, Hester and Johnny. Astbury and Bryceland attended the show, and once again, says Astbury, Fugard created theatre magic (Astbury, 2015, 16 February). As an entertainment columnist, Bryceland met with and interviewed Fugard after the play. The two had met before, at an amateur dramatic production some years earlier, but this meeting was to be the beginning of one of South Africa's most fruitful theatre collaborations. Fugard says they talked for hours (2011b), and Astbury recalls that new ideas were sparked (Astbury, 2015, 9 February). Bryceland felt that this kind of theatre was what her life was all about, and she

[81] Dorkay House was an ill-suited and run down city building in Johannesburg in which Fugard rehearsed and presented some of his earlier plays.

[82] Fugard's early theatre group, the Serpent Players derived its name from this secret rehearsal space where his multi-racial group of actors were often forced to work at night to avoid the law which forbade such inter-racial gatherings.

[83] In the 1940s, ten Bantustan or 'homelands' regions were set aside for black people as autonomous nation states for various cultures; however a few of these, like Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei, were called independent but only within South Africa, while others, KwaZulu and QwaQwa, were supposed to be somewhat autonomous but were never independent. At the end of apartheid these regions were re-joined as part of South Africa.

[84] The Labia Theatre (in Orange Street, Gardens, Cape Town) was established in 1949 by Princess Labia in May 1949 as a theatre for the performing arts, and Fugard rehearsed and presented Orestes there. It is now a popular cinema.

became determined to do it (Astbury, 2015, 16 February).

In the year that followed this meeting, Bryceland began to feel increasingly unfulfilled by the European and American plays CAPAB was producing in which she was acting (Astbury, 2015, 16 February). It was then that Fugard arrived in Cape Town accompanied by director Barney Simon, with an offer for her to play the character of Millie in his play *People Are Living There*. For an actress, the role can be considered a great challenge: Millie is a complex, lonely, menopausal South African landlady, and the play is poignant. It would have offered very different kind of work to what she was doing for CAPAB. Bryceland immediately wanted the opportunity to work with Fugard, and to take the role of Millie. To this end she was prepared to resign from her paying job at CAPAB.

When Bryceland explained the situation to the management at CAPAB, they asked to see Fugard's script, which Bryceland showed to them. Since *People are Living There* has an all-white cast, CAPAB foresaw no problem with the play, and offered to produce it for Fugard with Bryceland playing Millie. This meant that Bryceland did not need to resign, and that the play now had funding. Fugard accepted the offer, and returned to Cape Town to direct the play and take of the role of one of the characters, Don, in 1968. The play did extremely well; the run was sold out and CAPAB were very satisfied with the result (Astbury, 2015,16 February). *People are Living There* toured to the Alexander Theatre in Johannesburg (managed by PACT), also very successfully.

Fugard's next play was commissioned by Professor Guy Butler[85] of Rhodes University in Grahamstown. The play, *Boesman and Lena* (1969), is about a coloured couple discussing their life on the mudflats of Swartkops[86] in the Eastern Cape and is ostensibly based on real-life characters. Again, CAPAB had no problem with the race of the characters, and this time offered to co-produce it. Bryceland would take the role of the female character Lena, and Fugard her husband Boesman, both playing in dark make-up. *Boesman and Lena* premiered in Grahamstown in 1969. The play went on to tour Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban in 1970.

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[85] Frederick Guy Butler (1918 - 2001) was a South African playwright, poet, academic and writer.

[86] The Swartkops Mudflats are in the Swartkops Estuary, an ecologically important natural estuary near Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape of South Africa.

In 1971 Fugard got his passport back from the government, and Fugard and Bryceland were able to take *Boesman and Lena* to The Royal Court Theatre in London. Again the play achieved full houses and received much acclaim; this was Bryceland's European debut as an actress and she was praised by the London critics and noted in the press (Astbury, 2015, 15 February). She would, in the next three decades, go on to build a highly successful professional career both in South Africa and the United Kingdom, moving between the two. The success brought Fugard and Bryceland much attention as political theatre revolutionaries. *Boesman and Lena*, on a deeper level[87], is about an uneducated and unemployed coloured couple who are forced from their humble tin-shack home by government bulldozers during the apartheid policy of forced removals[88]. Homeless, they trudge through the mudflats looking for a place to rest. They eke out an existence selling empty bottles back to bottle stores. They are alcoholic and destitute, and Fugard examined the themes of abuse and existentialism through their desperate attempts at love and communication. The play thus gave volume to the voice of outcry growing at that time about apartheid. This was the time when Nelson Mandela[89] was imprisoned on Robben Island, and the anti-apartheid movement was gaining momentum. Fugard and Bryceland thus became seen as South Africans who brought attention to the social and political ramifications of the apartheid system through their theatre work.

The performances of *Boesman and Lena* in London would also be important as a stepping stone towards Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury establishing The Space in the following year. For each, the experience shifted their ambitions for theatre. Bryceland was now noticed in London, earmarked as an actress who took a political stance in South Africa. The *Eastern Province Herald* quoted Ross Devenish as saying it was thanks to her tremendous courage that new ground was being broken for alternative theatre and protest plays, and that she was the actress working most closely with Fugard (as cited in Bateman, 1992:6). For

[87] CAPAB seemed to have missed this aspect of political outcry in the play, or they might not have co-produced it.

[88] Between 1960 and 1983, 3.5 million black South Africans, and over 860,000 of other races, were forcibly removed from their homes in the implementation of the Group Areas Act to divide and control racially separated communities. This often involved bulldozers that were used to raze homes to the ground, forcing people to flee.

[89] Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela (1918-2013) was President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999. He was an anti-apartheid revolutionary and in 1962 was arrested, convicted of conspiracy to overthrow the state, and sentenced to life imprisonment. He served 27 years in prison, initially on Robben Island, and became the international figurehead for the anti-apartheid struggle during that time.

Fugard, the Royal Court Theatre represented a freedom to work honestly; he seems to have relished the support he found there, saying there was a sense of trust at The Court that was special, that it offered "a space that allowed me to make mistakes" (as cited in Walder, 1984:28).

Astbury, who was in London mainly as a supporter and spectator, took note of the Royal Court Theatre as a performance venue. It was a small, simple space, with approximately 70 seats, and he thought it seemed to have been put together without much money (Astbury, 1979:1). In it, he saw a potential model for the kind of theatre they could have in Cape Town. Astbury, who had accompanied Bryceland to many social events attended by an "exhilarating mix of actors, directors, writers, designers, poets, painters, dancers who formed Cape Town's small artistic community at that time", explains that for years he had listened to Bryceland, Fugard and other artists saying how they wished they had a place of their own to work in (Astbury, 1979:6). He wrote a letter to his mother, and to a lawyer friend, Malcolm Roup, announcing that on his return to Cape Town he was going to search for a space in which to create a photographic studio, which would also serve as a performance venue where Bryceland and Fugard could do work they wanted to do (Astbury, 2015, 15 February).

When Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury returned to Cape Town there was a shift in the trajectory of the previous four years. Fugard wanted to try something new in his theatre practice, and this would give rise to the experimental play *Orestes* (1971). The results of this new piece of theatre moved them well away from any state funded work toward independence and the establishment of their own theatre, The Space. After the success that CAPAB enjoyed in response to *People are Living There* (1968) and *Boesman and Lena* (1969), CAPAB were willing to support Fugard in his next project. CAPAB launched a new initiative, the Theatre Laboratory[90], and used Fugard's new, unscripted idea around *Orestes* as its first project. They offered Fugard funding, and access to any actors from their 'stable' that he wished to work with. Fugard

[90] The aim of the Theatre Laboratory was to support experimentation in theatre. Its stated focus was on improving the actor/spectator relationship, thus seeming to be inspired by, or in alignment with, the philosophies proposed by Grotowski and Brook. (*Cape Performing Arts Board: The Companies: The Theatre Laboratory*. [Online] Available at: http://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Cape_Performing_Arts_Board [25 September 2016].)

chose Bryceland, Val Donald[91] and Wilson Dunster[92].

As already mentioned in Chapters Three and Four, *Orestes* was an experimental production for which Fugard wrote no actual script. He based the work on improvisations with the actors. His preliminary idea was to adapt the original Clytemnestra tragedy to the violence being experienced in South Africa at the time. Fugard used the event of John Harris, who placed a suitcase full of dynamite and petrol next to a bench in the Johannesburg Railway Station, which killed an elderly woman and injured several others. CAPAB became increasingly nervous about the play as the rehearsals went on in private, and no call came for costumes, sets or other theatre extras. A member of the South African Censor Board was sent in to investigate it. The censor found nothing amiss, and the play went ahead. Despite this, Astbury says that CAPAB seemed shocked and embarrassed by the production when it opened on 24 March, 1971. It lasted about an hour, and was based on roughly 200 scripted words. Bryceland played Clytemnestra and as part of her enactment she physically smashed a wooden chair - named Agamemnon[93] - to pieces in every show. Astbury recalls that CAPAB tried to minimize the impact of the play by presenting it in small and unfamiliar locations around Cape Town (such as The Union Castle auditorium and an abandoned cinema in Camps Bay) but the run sold out, and it gathered a following. At The University of Cape Town, it played in the cafeteria to a full house (Astbury, 2015, 17 February).

Orestes created confusion and amazement for critics and audiences, and led to the embarrassed withdrawal of funding from CAPAB. However, for Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury it cemented their dream for the creation of their own, new type of theatre. Bryceland's performance was explosive, dangerous and unforgettable (Fugard, 2011b). He wanted to do more of such work. The experiment had refocused the importance of silence and the spoken word for Fugard as a playwright: "What was so marvellous in working on that project […] was just how pristine, what weight you gave to a line, a word, a gesture, if you set it in silence" (Fugard *et al.,* 1974). Astbury had been in the rehearsal room, commissioned to take photographs

[91] Val Donald is a South African actress who workshopped *Orestes* with Athol Fugard and Yvonne Bryceland, and was in other plays at The Space.

[92] Wilson Dunster is a South African actor. At The Space he would perform in *People are Living There, Bar and Ger, Dimetos, The Glass Menagerie, Medea* and *Occupations* (amongst others).

[93] In Greek mythology, Agamemnon is Clytemnestra's husband who is murdered, in some versions, by his wife.

for three days, and witnessed the depth at which Fugard was working. He called these the most exciting days of his life. He believed that work of that calibre had to continue. It was the catalyst that spurred him to get serious about finding a space where Fugard and Bryceland could do more such important work: "It all began with *Orestes*. Without *Orestes* there would have been no Space. It is important that this fact be recorded" (Astbury, 1979:1).

Astbury secures a building for The Space

Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury knew that in a space of their own they would be working for a pittance, but they would also be free from being pressured to do work they did not believe in (Astbury, 2011b: location 350). It was Astbury who tackled the task of finding an actual building, stating his motivation such: "If you know something needs to be done then you must do it. Don't wait for someone else" (Astbury, 2011b: location 350). He initially thought of finding a photographic studio that could accommodate around 20 seats. He viewed several options, and asked friend and architect, Maciek Miszewski, for advice on setting up his studio. Miszewski was a friend of Mavis Taylor, a director, and had met Bryceland and Astbury at social gatherings around Cape Town. He, along with many other volunteers, helped Bryceland and Astbury to set up and run The Space, giving freely of his time and expertise. Together, Astbury and Miszewski inspected and considered various buildings in Cape Town until they found a two-storey building on the corner of Buiten and Bloem Streets. Although the rental was triple that which Astbury had first considered - at R600.00 a month - Astbury accepted the deal and on the 1st January 1972 they could move in.

It also appears to have been Astbury[94] who went out in search of the right team to help with fundraising. They needed money for resources, as the two storeys they were renting were literally empty space. Though the theatre would always remain humble, they did need very basic lights, seats and other equipment. Astbury approached media and businesswomen Jane Raphaely, for whom he did regular freelance photographic work, and she guided Astbury towards a team of charity fundraisers, including Moyra Fine, Adele Searle, Kathy Jowell and Gloria Brodie. Jowell proposed a name for the committee - The Foundation

[94] Most available information on The Space is written by Astbury himself, and he describes events from his point of view. Bryceland seems to have left no account of her involvement at The Space at this stage of the process.

for Art and Theatre - and this was instated to ensure transparency in the fundraising for The Space from 1972 to 1979 (Astbury, 2015, 8 April).

One of the matters Astbury and his team of helpers seems to have dealt with from the beginning was the issue of allowing people of all races to watch the plays. They knew the government could shut them down at some point for selling tickets to non-segregated audiences, but if they had a legally permissible theatre appreciation 'club', they could side-step the law. To this end, Asbury had some top legal minds in Cape Town give them free advice (Astbury, 2015, 8 April). With the venue secured, the Foundation for Art and Theatre raising money, and Miszewski designing layouts, Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury concerned themselves with the matter of which production would be used to launch the theatre. Astbury wanted to present Fugard's *People are Living There* (1968) because the play was already very popular, and Asbury reasoned they would get good financial inflow from audiences filling the new theatre. However, Fugard refused to direct it for them, and announced he would rather write a new play for the occasion. This caused much excitement for everyone involved (Astbury, 2015, 25 March).

In mid-December 1971, the Fugard family, Bryceland and Astbury, and Bryceland's youngest daughter Melanie, went to the Wilderness[95] on holiday together. During this time, Fugard shared some ideas for new plays with Bryceland and Astbury. Among these was a newspaper clipping Fugard had about an illicit affair between a white librarian and a coloured priest that shocked the nation because it contravened the Immorality Act of 1957 that forbade any sexual contact between white people and those of other races. This real event would become the basis for Fugard's *Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act.* This would be The Space's first play, an original South African play starring Bryceland and Fugard. It would, says Astbury, firmly establish what The Space would represent in the future (Astbury, 2015, 25 March).

Astbury and Bryceland took occupation of the building in Buiten Street on 3rd January 1972 on their return from the working holiday. The community gathered to help, including school children, university students and housewives; and even pensioners pitched in with scraping, painting, sweeping and cleaning to get The Space ready. Astbury says it seemed that people volunteered at The Space because they supported what

[95] The seaside town of Wilderness has sandy beaches and lagoons and is situated in an area along the N2 highway, called the Garden Route, in the Western Cape of South Africa.

Bryceland was doing (Astbury, 2011, a). The project seemed to keep growing, especially when it became known that Fugard was committed to it; then "people flocked in to help", but they never asked for money (Astbury, 1979: 8). In the time period leading up to the launch, 24-hour days were the rule (Astbury, 1979: 9). There is a photograph of Bryceland in the midst of it all, scraping at a wall. Similarly, another image shows her daughters and friends painting a wall.

Practical and technical specialists were also needed, and again friends volunteered. For example, Jeff Shapiro, a sometime actor and voice-over artist, was also a carpenter and constructor and built the rostra[96]. Bryceland's friend, Les Benson, ran an engineering shop of sorts and constructed low cost lighting boards for the theatre. Donations of a hot water cylinder and carpets made all the difference to the new dressing room. When a local theatre, the Alhambra, closed down many practical pieces, including four dressing tables and a standing mirror, were donated to The Space.

When it came to naming the theatre, events ran smoothly. Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury were still feeling inspired by their visit to the Open Space in London and the philosophy of *The Empty Space* as proposed by Brook. Added to that, this was 'the space' they had all been speaking of and dreaming about. Around this time, according to Astbury, Fugard arrived at the venue and was very excited by *the space*, and so the name for the theatre was adopted (Gray, 1984:57).

Securing the financial resources to launch the theatre, and keep it going, would forever remain a challenge. Astbury observed that The Space would always run with a minimum financial buffer saving them from closure (Astbury, 1979). In early 1972, before the opening, Astbury, Fine and the other committee members organised a fundraising evening of prose and poetry compiled by director Barney Simon. David Bloomberg allowed them to present it for free at his venue, The Barn. Janet Suzman[97] had been approached to read some poems, and Bryceland and Fugard met with her to discuss the idea. However, Suzman did not want to perform alone. Bryceland and Fugard were very busy rehearsing for *Statements*, but agreed to perform;

[96] A raised platform used in theatre and performance; usually a stationary flat surface for actors to perform on, which can be used in a variety of ways to create elevation and visual interest.

[97] Janet Suzman was a South African actress who went to London and had a very successful career there. Her mother was a friend of Moyra Fine. This connection led to Suzman's involvement with the fundraiser.

as did Percy Sieff, and poet Sue Clark. Simon also asked actress Fatima Dike to perform *Madam Please*. At the end of the evening, recalls Asbury, "'bringing down the house' is an old cliché, but it could have been minted that night…that night at The Barn was a genuine, spine-tingling ovation" (Astbury, 2015, 3 March). This successful evening accomplished two major achievements for The Space: firstly, many of Cape Town's social elite were in the audience, and the fundraiser brought much needed money for sustaining the running costs of The Space for a period of time; secondly, it captured the attention and efforts of several notable Cape Town actresses and poets, who would remain in collaboration with the venue until its end.

Construction on the lower storey of The Space proceeded, while upstairs Bryceland, Fugard and Sieff worked on *Statements.* It is remarkable that Bryceland, Fugard and Sieff managed to continue workshopping[98] - brainstorming, writing and exploring the creative and emotional scenes that would give rise to *Statements* - through the noise and disruptions that were going on around them. Astbury left them to that most important task. In keeping with the purpose of The Space, he specifically wanted no-one to interfere with what Fugard and Bryceland wished to communicate, knowing that without great plays there would be no point to the theatre (Astbury, 2011a).

It is insightful to consider some of the practical matters involved in preparing the building as a theatre venue. Astbury's initial idea of setting up a photographic studio, in which theatre events could take place, remained a core concept. The laws of apartheid stated that while people of different races were not allowed to view theatre together, they were allowed to view art in a gallery together. Malcolm Roup, a friend and lawyer, offered Astbury a legal loophole, explaining that if art viewers happened to go to a café to get a bite to eat and then sat down and ate while viewing the art in the gallery, it would be considered legal for them to be together. Astbury thus set about finding artists who would exhibit their work in his new gallery and thereby provide a constant flow of new six-weekly exhibitions. Artists who exhibited works at The Gallery of The Space included: Dimitri Nicolas-Fanourakis, Richard Wake, Kevin Atkinson, Shelley Sacks, Gavin and Amanda Young, Cliffe Bestall, Debbie May and Issy Sacks amongst others.

[98] In the process of workshopping, an initial unscripted idea is explored through improvisation, collaboration and discussion. The actors then bring the characters, environment and action to life, and the play is/can be captured in a script by the writer or director.

At this time, urgent meetings were being held to solve the problem of alterations which were needed to make the entrance to The Space adhere to fire safety regulations. This was eventually designed and built by architect Miszewski and structural engineer Wynand Truter. Artist Gerrit Hillhorst happened to be there and hearing about the need for the building's front façade to be painted, volunteered to do it. He sourced various donations of paint, got assistance from artist Mogamat Robertson and then constructed a rather dangerous cradle-like scaffold from which to work. The resulting façade, with colourful 3D window-like effects, was so impressive it was to be featured in a book on South African Art and became, says Astbury, something of a tourist icon (Astbury, 2015, 9 March).

The opening night of the theatre was fast approaching, and there was still the matter of getting publicity in the press to attract audiences. On 22 January 1972, Journalist Gareth Thompson wrote an article for The Argus headed: "Watch This Space. Fugard and Bryceland team up in city's exciting new experimental theatre. For the man behind it, photographer Brian Astbury, an obsession became a reality". This headline succinctly captures the three central figures in the development of The Space and their respective roles. Similarly, photographs in the article show Bryceland and Fugard in deep discussion, while Astbury is seen sitting in the empty space with photographs of cleaning, construction and painting going on around him. In reality, Bryceland and Fugard were engaged in the imaginative theatre work, creating the original plays on which The Space's theatrical reputation would rest, and Astbury was the practical man behind the building and operations.

Bryceland, Fugard and Sieff continued work on the new play which, true to the process of workshopping, kept changing. Eventually, the two arrived in Astbury's new office and announced the title of the play: *Statements After an Arrest under the Immorality Act*. Astbury was concerned about the length of the title, and the content it suggested, but says it "unequivocally nailed our colours to the mast" (Astbury, 1979:15).

Indelibly, and literally stamping the identities of Bryceland and Fugard onto the inaugural production of The Space, graphic designer Margaret Hillhorst used their actual fingerprints, superimposed with their portraits, in the design of the posters. This was a risk for Bryceland and Fugard to take. Such was the atmosphere of fear at the time in South Africa, that as Astbury walked around town distributing the posters, he noticed how shop owners would agree to put the posters up in their front windows, but then hastily

remove them as soon as he was gone for fear of the apartheid-enforcing special police. Adding to the last minute stress was Fugard who kept changing the play. Barney Simon and Mannie Manim arrived to give lighting help and support. Manim rearranged the lights, and Simon gave Fugard input on the play. Fugard became increasingly stressed and made further adaptations. For Bryceland, this was very stressful: as new lines kept being added, these needed to be memorised, enacted and integrated smoothly into the rest of the play. Astbury recalls Bryceland getting increasingly distressed in the days leading up to the opening. There was much at stake, not only a new play, but Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury's vision for a new theatre.

In May 1972, opening night arrived. *Statements* is a compelling play and caused great exhilaration amongst the audience. In the small performance space, with the proximity of the audience, the two central characters are caught out in the empty library late at night. The lovers are together, naked but for a blanket, with the policemen's torchlight maliciously exposing them. They are questioned by the police, and the statements give voice to the love and longing of two lovers who are not allowed to be together under the laws of apartheid because of their race. After the show, in The Gallery downstairs, Astbury likened the atmosphere to his experience years before when he and Bryceland had seen *The Blood Knot*: one of pride and elation (Astbury, 2015, 23 July). Reviews of the play were mixed: critic W.E.G. Louw called the play "great theatre" in the Afrikaans paper *Die Burger*; novelist James Ambrose Brown of *The Cape Times* called it "shocking"; and Owen Williams of *The Argus* found it "damnably dull" (as cited in Astbury, 2015, 23 July). After opening night, and despite (or perhaps because) of the mixed reviews, bookings for the play immediately picked up, and The Space theatre was launched.

Bryceland's acting focus at The Space

At this point in the chapter, attention will be turned more directly towards Bryceland's contributions. There is ample evidence to show that she worked extremely hard both as an actress, and in general, at The Space. John Michell wrote "there seemed to be no end to the inventiveness of those early days; the place was a cauldron of inspiration and activity. […] And Bryceland was always in the thick of it" (1991:44). Astbury says Bryceland was very involved in making final decisions at The Space. While he did most of the searching and reading for plays to produce, it was always with Bryceland that these options were discussed.

For example, it was Bryceland who recommended they stage *Ashes* by David Rudkin and Bill Tanner's *Tsafendas*. Astbury and Bryceland worked as a team, and this was important since Bryceland also went on tour often between 1972 and 1979 (Astbury, 2016).

There are many personal details about Bryceland that were disclosed to me during the interview process which, for ethical reasons and sensitivity to Bryceland as a person, cannot be disclosed in this dissertation. These have informed my understanding of Bryceland as a person, and offered insight into what inspired her work. This ethical sensitivity is a motivating factor for the writing of a screenplay as a research artefact as it allowed me to capture some of this 'informed insight' without disclosing certain personal details. What can be openly discussed is Bryceland's ambition for her theatre practice: her family agree that she held a deep ambition as an actress.

Astbury believes that without this level of fierce determination, Bryceland could not have gone as far as she did (Astbury, 2011a). This ambition, and Bryceland's strong desire to work with Fugard, undoubtedly drove her to establish The Space. Fugard says Bryceland had hoped to work extensively at The Space with Fugard creating new plays[99] (Fugard, 2011b). She had thought it possible for the Fugard family, his wife Sheila and daughter Lisa, to move to Cape Town, and had even found a house for them to rent in the city - but Fugard refused to relocate from Port Elizabeth. The Fugard family stayed in a bungalow in Cape Town during the weeks before the launch of The Space, and then returned to Port Elizabeth, where Fugard continued work on another play, *Sizwe Banzi is Dead*, with the Serpent Players. This they brought to The Space in 1973. From a strategic point of view, Bryceland might have viewed working with Fugard as offering potential for her career. Fugard had a growing international reputation as a playwright, and he had already brought Bryceland to London for the staging of *Boesman and Lena* where she had received extensive exposure[100]. Fugard's colleagues, Barney Simon and Mannie Manim, were also rapidly rising to the top echelons of South African theatre, and would go on to establish The Market Theatre in Johannesburg.

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[99] Fugard expresses this problem in his play *The Birdwatchers* (2011), through the characters which he said are based on himself, Bryceland and Barney Simon (Fugard, 2011b).

[100] 'Exposure' is important for an actor since the continuity of their work depends on their being seen by a range of future employers and collaborators. Astbury counted thirty-six London newspaper reviews of the play which referred to Bryceland's acting as 'wonderful'. This would count as very good exposure for an actress wanting to grow her reputation and career.

On meeting Bryceland, and after seeing her act, they too wished to work with her and created the opportunities to do so. The friendship between Bryceland, Simon and Fugard was explored in Fugard's play *The Birdwatchers*, produced in 2011.

The working relationship of Bryceland and Fugard was discussed in detail in Chapter Four. In brief it is important to mention here that Bryceland became an important personal support for Fugard, and he has stated that she believed in him and made him the writer he was (Fugard, 2011b). As an actress, Bryceland trusted Fugard entirely; as Astbury noted, Fugard worked at deeper levels with his actors than any other director he has ever seen (Astbury, 2011a). It is clear then that their personal relationship fed their professional one. Both of their careers developed thanks to this synergetic relationship. Would Bryceland have been as successful without the vehicle of Fugard, his plays and his rich female roles which showcased her talents as she became professional? It is not possible to calculate the effect their relationship had on Bryceland's career. What is possible to see is how The Space, and the contributions Bryceland made there, helped set her apart as a theatre practitioner who forged her own path forward in theatre, and brought many positive effects on South African theatre in her wake.

Bryceland achieved this by driving the theatre forward once it had been opened and its first play successfully staged; it was then up to her and Astbury to keep running the theatre. This would have been no small task. Viable plays needed to be produced on an ongoing basis, the standard of which had to remain excellent in order to build a good reputation and keep audiences coming to the theatre. The producing, advertising, and finances for each new play needed to be managed; and as Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury had stated in the aims of The Space, they expected everybody to be paid fairly. Actor Pieter-Dirk Uys recalls that one of the remarkable features of The Space was that "we worked liked slaves and felt like Caesars, all paid the same R22,50 a week, from the assistant stage manager to Yvonne Bryceland" (as cited in Van Eeden, 2006). Bryceland's humble attitude in getting theatre practicalities done, and doing whatever was required, is also captured by Uys who notes, "Bryceland […] sometimes worked as assistant stage

manager[101] when not playing the lead"; such democracy in the context of theatre and performance was a first in South Africa (as cited in Van Eeden, 2006).

According to Fitchen, it was Bryceland, Fugard, Astbury, Moyra Fine and stage designer and actress Bee Berman who decided which plays should go on. Although there are no records of exactly who commissioned which play, Fitchen describes the approach to decision making: they held meetings "upstairs – which was out of bounds for the rest of us…there would be Fugard, Bryceland, Moyra, Bee Berman, Astbury around the table doing the business" (Fitchen, 2011-2016).

Bryceland acted in play after play, which means she would have been rehearsing during the day and performing at night. For a professional theatre actor, this type of schedule is typical; they may be working on two or more plays simultaneously because as soon as a run of one play is done, the next play may open and thus needs to be rehearsed. Added to that, Bryceland was also acting in plays for other theatres around the country, and sometimes had to tour plays. The plays Bryceland performed in at The Space between 1972 and 1979 included: *Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act*; *Fragments*; *The Glass Menagerie*; *Going to Pot*; *Dimetos*; *Hello and Goodbye*; *The House of Blue Leaves*; *Kennedy's Children*; *A Long Day's Journey into Night*; *Madly in Love*; *Medea*; *Miss South Africa*; *Occupations*; *Othello Slegs Blankes*; *People are Living There*; *A Phoenix too Frequent*; *Ruffian on the Stair*; *The Tiger*; *Alpha Beta*; *Ashes*; *Bar and Ger*; *The Bear* and *The Bitter Tears of Petra Von Kant*. She also directed *Thirteen Clocks*. Away from The Space, Bryceland also played in Fugard's *Dimetos* (1976) (with Paul Scofield and Ben Kingsley); Franz Grillparzer's *Medea* (1977) translated by Barney Simon; Fugard's *Hello and Goodbye* (1978) and Edward Bond's *The Woman* (1978) in London; and *Richard III* (1979).

Aims and Artistic Policy as reflections of Bryceland's approach to theatre

The Space archival material offers insight about the theatre practice and purpose of Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury, specifically as these are captured in the Aims and Artistic policy documents that were drawn up for the launch of the theatre. Astbury says he wrote the Manifesto before The Space opened because the

[101] A stage manager provides support to the director, actors, designers, stage crew and technicians throughout the production. They assist backstage during the play. The assistant stage-manager supports the stage manager.

fundraising committee needed it (Astbury, 2015, 3 March). The Aims reveal much about what Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury wanted to achieve at The Space, including their oft stated determination to tell the 'truth' in theatre.

The Aims of the Space

1. Stress on honesty, dedication and relevance
2. A theatre that is ambitious and not fearful
3. A theatre whose art emerges from our greater society and is made for it.
4. The nurturing of local talent in writing, directing, acting, design, music, dance, lighting and technical matters.
5. Basic capital must be raised to ensure proper publicity for shows.
6. Rather 200 people at R1.00 than 50 at R2.50
7. All productions must be budgeted to pay the workers and artists decently.

(Space pamphlet circa 1979)

It speaks volumes about Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury that honesty, dedication and relevance lay at the core of their theatre practice. From all accounts they were honest in their dealings, and as emphasized in point 7) above, they managed productions in such a way that workers and artists were remunerated fairly. Furthermore, Astbury willingly engaged with the Foundation for Art and Theatre that had been instated to ensure transparency in the fundraising for The Space. There is no indication of any dubious financial activities used to bolster the new theatre; on the contrary, Astbury and Bryceland earned little to no money from The Space. This humble financial approach is evident in point 6) which states their ideal as rather wanting more audience members to attend for lower ticket prices, than fewer for higher-priced tickets.

Their aim to create and present work that was relevant is made clear under point 1): "Stress on honesty, dedication and relevance". This again echoes their determination to 'tell the truth' in their theatre work, and this aspiration for truth and relevance would have been what allowed Bryceland and Astbury, and later the first audience to watch *Statements* (1972), to feel pride and elation at The Space.

Astbury frequently refers to the relationship between The Space and the community (Astbury, 2015, 8 April), and their dedication to keeping The Space going for many years against huge odds also speaks to their sense of dedication to their community. In point 3), their aim that their art should arise from society and be made for it, is clearly stated. Indeed, looking at Fugard plays as examples - such as: *Statements* (1972); *Boesman and Lena* (1969) and *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* (1972) - it is clear to see how the works arose from contemporary social issues, and in turn reflected these issues back to society. These were thus not just words that sounded impressive for a document about theatre aims; by looking at the history of The Space, it is evident that these aims were consistently and persistently entrenched in practice.

Point 2) – "A theatre that is ambitious and not fearful" - echoes the consistently stated ambition between Bryceland and Fugard in their earlier collaboration, to be 'brave', to take risks in their theatre work. They all needed courage and resolve to establish a theatre such as The Space, with no assurances of success, and taking an activist stance against the oppressive regime of the National Party in the early 1970s. This was not a government known for its gentleness or compassion, and the three pioneers must have known the personal risks they were taking. Bryceland's courage in standing up to the government officials who raided The Space will be discussed further on in this chapter. Her courage as an actress to portray her characters with brutal honesty is discussed in Chapters Three and Four. Bryceland's fearlessness was a characteristic that Fugard, as well as other actors and directors, greatly respected and admired.

The aim of "nurturing […] local talent in writing, directing, acting, design, music, dance, lighting and technical matters" as stated under point 4), is one that deserves highlighting. Fitchen was a recipient of Bryceland's guidance and assistance when she was a young actress (Fitchen, 2011-2016). A few years after the launch of The Space, the Bryceland School of Acting was established precisely in this vein. The list of talented theatre practitioners who launched their careers at The Space, and were given opportunity and support, is lengthy but a few names are worth mentioning: John Kani; Winston Ntshona; writer Geraldine

Aron; Pieter Dirk Uys; Bill Flynn; Paul Slabolepszy; Fatima Dike and Denise Newman.

The Artistic Policy of the Space.

> The importance of The Space has always been centerd on its preparedness to present plays which challenge the social and political conditions in South Africa – and indeed elsewhere. This policy must obviously be continued and what makes the whole project worthwhile. The freeing of minds from thinking in a rut, the exposure of unjust practices and attitudes, the provision of a platform for those artists whose work is not catered for elsewhere – those functions are what this project is about. It is also about fun, entertainment and music.
>
> (Space pamphlet circa 1979)

Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury worded the Artistic Policy in clear and precise language. They intended their theatre to be challenging and awakening, to expose social problems, including socio-political ramifications that they viewed as in South African society. My research has shown that many of the laws of segregation were considered unjust by them and thus tackled in plays. The policy also speaks to helping those who were 'not catered for' elsewhere. Bryceland's nurturing of talents, and Fugard's workshopping of plays, would be pivotal in bringing this point of policy to fruition. More than that, it promised to give many new practitioners the opportunity to be mentored, a detail that will be discussed further on. And finally, the artistic policy adds that the Space should also be "about fun, entertainment and music". I considered that they may have included this aim because Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury were trying to remember that beneath all the tragedy and pain of life, human beings also love and laugh. Bryceland herself is on record saying that her life and her work brought her great joy (Herber, 1979). At The Space, in spite of the pathos in much of the subject matter of the plays, there seemed to have been a great deal of humour, and

camaraderie. As Uys observed: "most of the things I say are not jokes. They are the truth. But the truth can be very funny" (as cited in Kennedy, 2013:1). However, the last word must rest with Astbury who says they were being somewhat facetious in their inclusion of this aim (Astbury, 2016). At the time of the Artistic Policy being drawn up, the likes of CAPAB were producing mostly musicals, which boasted much song and dance and were popular with the masses, and other high cost productions that were not politically or intellectually challenging in content. In summary, the Artistic Policy and Aims of The Space provide evidence that Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury purposefully set about establishing the theatre as a venue for work that: was artistically excellent; provided opportunities to all those who wished to do relevant theatre work; and provided a voice to the artists who wanted to expose South African injustices.

Long-term effects of The Space

To gain a sense of the impact that The Space has had on the South African theatre environment, I investigated The Space archives, and interviewed friends, students and family of Bryceland. What emerged is a picture of a humble theatre supporting new artists and launching original work whilst also facing government raids and threats of closure. Through this project, Bryceland, Astbury and Fugard changed what had been seen on local stages thus far, and showed what was possible for South African theatre.

The work at The Space earned Bryceland much respect and love from theatre practitioners and audiences. After her death, Astbury observed that many actors, whether world-famous or still struggling to become known, wrote to tell him that she was the reason they were still in the theatre (Asbury, 2011b:156). Further examples of theatre practitioners[102] who worked at The Space in their early years include: writer and actor Pieter Dirk Uys; playwrights Geraldine Aron and Fatima Dike; musical writer and producer David Kramer; and actors such as Richard E. Grant; Marius Weyers; Fiona Ramsay; Percy Sieff; Blaise Koch; Ian Roberts; Henry Goodman; Trix Pienaar; Grethe Fox; Thoko Ntshinga; Keith Grenville and Jacqui Singer.

Bryceland also supported people working in related fields, for example: actors' agent Sybil Sands who became the first actors' agent in Cape Town. With Bryceland's encouragement, she set up a desk and phone

[102] These are well known theatre figures based in, and working primarily from South Africa; some, like Richard E. Grant and Geraldine Aron, are now based permanently in London.

at the top of the stairs to the second storey at The Space, and launched her life-long career, going on to represent some of South Africa's best talent (Sands, 2011). Actress and teacher Bobbie Fitchen cut her drama teeth at The Space under Bryceland, who as Fitchen remembers, was a tough task master. In the interview about Bryceland as a mentor, Fitchen offered a rich memory which captures Bryceland at The Space. Fitchen describes the petite[103] Bryceland sitting at the top of the stairs, with her long hair either tied up in a scarf or in two bunches, holding a big mug[104] of tea. She recalls how she, other actors and Yvonne would sit and talk about doing radio and voice work, which Fitchen at that point was just beginning to pursue and Bryceland already did very successfully (Fitchen, 2011-2016).

An example of Bryceland's support of writers other than Fugard, is Geraldine Aron[105]: Bryceland found a copy of Aron's quirky poem - a biographic memoir about a sister and brother as children - on Astbury's desk at The Space (Astbury, 1979). Bryceland enjoyed the poem and saw the dramatic potential in it; she asked Wilson Dunster to perform it with her and Walter Donahue to direct it under the title *Bar and Ger*. Aron thus directly credits Bryceland with launching her career. Bryceland knew that Aron had never written a play before and had no theatre experience, yet Aron says she was treated with kindness and respect and given a voice by Bryceland (2011). After its successful performance at The Space, *Bar and Ger* was published (1975) and to this day is performed in various languages around the world. Aron remembers that years later Bryceland was still performing *Bar and Ger* at London's National Theatre, and says she watched every production and was never disappointed. Film maker Ashley Lazarus adapted *Bar and Ger* as a short film in the late 1970s and Aron calls the copy she has "one of my most cherished possessions" (2011).

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[103] This seems an accurate reflection as there are various mentions of Bryceland's physique. Fugard said "she was very small you know, there was no excess weight or anything" (2011b). I observed that Bryceland's daughter Colleen King is very petite with the same thick long black hair as her mother. Similarly, Bryceland is described as having a "sparrow-frail figure" in a *Road to Mecca* review (Wardle, 1985:8).

[104] Large mugs are commonly used by South Africans to drink tea, rather than a cup and saucer. It can be seen as a personal preference, which is less formal.

[105] Geraldine Aron is an Irish playwright. *Bar and Ger* was first performed at The Space in 1975, and later produced in other countries and won awards: Edinburgh Fringe First; Variety Magazine's Edinburgh's Best Ten; Salter's Cup UK; Kentucky State Thespian Award; South Africa RAPS Best Play; Transvaal Drama Festival, Best Play; The Eileen Harper Memorial Trophy. Aron's *My Brilliant Divorce* was nominated for the 2004 Laurence Olivier Award for Best Entertainment (Dawn French in role, at the Apollo Theatre in London's West End). Twelve of Aron's plays have been performed on television or radio.

Fugard says that The Space was "a nursery for a lot of South African writing, myself included, trying to look at our reality and explore it and say something about it" (2011b). Other writers who were discovered at The Space include Fatima Dike, who went on to become The Space's resident playwright in the years after presenting her first play *The Sacrifice of Krell* in 1976[106]. Likewise, by reviewing The Space's programmes, it is possible to track the first efforts of several artists: director Donald Howarth[107] with his play *Othello Slegs Blankes* (1972); Paul Slabolepszy beginning his partnership with Bill Flynn; and the first performances of Pieter Dirk Uys who now tours internationally with his original political satire shows. According to Uys, there was one firm foundational principle at The Space which was they welcomed anyone who wanted to be a member of the audience. He explains just how prolific the work being done at The Space from 1972 to 1979 was: "We acted and directed, sometimes for the first time and often in more than one language. We wrote and rewrote and world-premiered something every week" (Uys, 2005:27). The calibre of theatre practitioners who began at The Space is significant. Apart from his own one-person shows, Uys states that he directed many other plays with the involvement of the "cream of South African theatre" which includes those mentioned previously as well as actors such as: Maralin van Reenen, Lynne Maree, Dawie Malan, Peter Piccolo and others (as cited in Van Eeden, 2006).

Bryceland's role as a supporter and mentor should be recognized: she evidently wished to focus on education in the field of Drama, and used The Space to achieve this on top of all the other remarkable feats accomplished there. Astbury observes that Bryceland was a shy, modest person but "she believed in ploughing back her experience, especially to young actors" (Astbury, 2011b: location 430). Around 1972 Bryceland established the Yvonne Bryceland School of Drama.

Its aims were set down as follows:

> 1) to awaken and foster within each student a sensitive awareness of his environment through the arts.

[106] Fatima Dike would go on to become a noted spokesperson for black and women's rights in South Africa.

[107] Donald Howarth is an English playwright and theatre director.

> 2) to discover and encourage future potential actors.
>
> 3) to give students essentially PRACTICAL training by using teachers actively involved in theatre.
>
> (Space pamphlet circa 1979).

The manifesto of the School also offered a list of excellent actors who would teach at the school: Denise Newman; Val Donald; Jacqui Singer; Paul Slabolepszy; Steve Daitch and Lianda Martin. Guest Lecturers included Professor Robert Mohr; Donald Howarth; Robin Malan; Tessa Marwick and Gisela Taeger-Berger. Many of these teachers have been, or still are, associated with drama schools or tertiary educational departments and thus considered experts in their field. Both Bryceland and Fugard gave formal lectures at times. There is documented evidence of at least one person's enrolment at Bryceland's Drama school - which operated on a Saturday morning - namely: Arthur Benjamin[108] (Astbury, 2015, 9 March). However, no student records, lessons plans or any other documented evidence was found for the running of the School beyond general evidence regarding Bryceland's support of young dramatists.

The socio-political atmosphere and risks of working at The Space

Gray states that The Space evaded the national ruling that theatre should be racially segregated for nearly a decade (Gray, 2010). More to the point, Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury made clear assertions in The Space's Artistic Policy that The Space would be challenging the status quo in South Africa. During this time, Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury would unfailingly present work they believed in and aligned with these aims, and run into serious trouble with the government: "From the start everybody was allowed in. And we waited for the law to stop us" (Astbury, 1979:11). The Space was unique at that time as any South African, no matter their race, was welcome to enter their theatre and watch the plays. Added to that the plays were exciting because they were often original scripts by local playwrights with subject matter that represented their personal experiences and emotional journeys within a South African context, and so audiences kept coming.

[108] Benjamin's involvement at The Space extended beyond being mentored/schooled for acting: he was later on The Space Club committee, managed the financial books, was one of the lighting operators and occasionally ran the box office.

However, in order to do this Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury needed to find legal ambiguities for preventing the police from closing them down. One loophole, already discussed earlier in this chapter, was the art gallery. Another was inspired by the Argo Film clubs initiated in 1972 by Astbury, Bryceland, Fugard and Fine which were open to all races; and if a club bought all the tickets to a show for use by their members, then non-members were usually not admitted. The Space borrowed this idea, which allowed them to ask suspected government security branch inspectors to identify themselves before watching a particular show in the 'theatre' venue. Since they could not produce club membership cards, they could not watch the show. When *Sizwe Banzi* was first due to appear before a multiracial audience in 1972, the police caught wind of this and forced the management to cancel the show. When they reopened the show the following night under the guise of a 'club' of non-paying members, two plain clothes policemen trying to intimidate them again, had to back off (Walder, 1984:77).

Despite obtaining legal advice, and using such evasive measures to ensure all people were allowed to watch plays at The Space, the anxiety of Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury must have been amplified by the ever-present threat of all their efforts coming to naught as shows were closed down, sometimes right at the beginning of a production run, sometimes after a few days or weeks of a production opening. They carried on despite the frequent presence of censors and the police who could, and did, close shows as quickly as they wished. Bryceland knew that should they refuse to close a show, they could be jailed, that the authorities had the power to arrest them (Fitchen, 2011-2016). An example that captures the tension surrounding the presentation of a new play is offered by Fugard who recalls going to Cape Town with actors John Kani and Winston Ntshona to perform their new play *The Island*[109] (1972). He recalls that one night they were getting ready for the evening performance, and they stood on a table:

> John, Winston, myself and Yvonne, all of us looking through a small little window, it was actually a skylight, where we could see Robben Island[110] and think of the people on Robben

[109] *The Island* (1972) is set on Robben Island, though it was never named as such to avoid censorship. This is where political prisoners, like Nelson Mandela, were sent during apartheid. The story was about two prisoners performing a play that tied the Greek classic, Sophocles' *Antigone* to the South African political situation.

[110] Robben Island is visible from Cape Town, and is separated from the city by 6.9 kilometres of sea.

> Island. What an inspirational moment. But then the police came and there was a notice served on us that we were violating the group areas act by allowing blacks to occupy a zone. (2011b)

Astbury got legal advice, and on this they called future performances 'Club Theatre' which meant everybody who came was a private guest, and the performance was not a public occasion. This was an important distinction as only people who had been invited by name and could show an invitation were allowed in. The police had to leave them alone after that, says Fugard, but they were there for other shows, "sitting and watching" (2011b). Fitchen recalls just how serious the reality was: "It was scary when things got closed down. I remember an actress being hauled out of her dressing room and off to Caledon[111] Police Station because she didn't have her pass book[112]" (2011-2016).

Another tactic that Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury employed to avoid censorship was to not write down a newly workshopped script until the last minute. This was an attempt to have as little evidence as possible for the government to use against them. This process would dovetail with the improvisational workshop style they adopted when creating new plays at The Space, but most importantly - for avoiding legal trouble - it made the identification of authors improbable.

It was thus tricky for the government to take control of The Space as it was not blatantly protesting. Fitchen describes the on-the-ground feeling at The Space at the time as a place where artists were able to voice their experience of living under the apartheid regime, without revolution or bloodshed: "There was no yelling of 'Amandla'[113]!" (2011-2016). However, examples of plays The Space presented show that the effects of specific apartheid laws were explored, sometimes subtly, sometimes blatantly. *Sizwe Banzi* (1972) examined the nature and effect of the pass law on people in South Africa. *The Island* (1973)[114] touched on

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[111] Caledon Police Station was in the city of Cape Town, near to The Space.

[112] In 1952 the South African government enacted a law that required black Africans to carry a pass book. If found without it, individuals were stripped of their South African citizenship and deported to the homelands.

[113] *Amandla* is a Zulu and Xhosa word meaning 'power'. The word was often used in resistance protests and gatherings during the time of the anti-apartheid struggles.

[114] The play was first performed at The Space in July 1973. In order to evade censorship, the play premiered under the title *Die Hodoshe Span* (translation: *The Carrion-fly Team*). *Hodoshe* is Xhosa for a "carrion fly", a large green fly that eats rotten meat, and in the play it represented an unseen character who symbolised the apartheid state and racist rule, and it was referred to and represented by the sound of a prison whistle. It later went to the Royal Court Theatre in London, then at the Edison Theatre on Broadway where it ran for 52 performances from 24 November 1974.

the laws banning black opposition parties such as the ANC (African National Congress). And *Statements* (1972)[115] directly confronted the Immorality Act (Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, 1949) (Walder, 1984:76). Fitchen sums this up by saying: "None of us were politicians…but it gave us a platform". She recalls that the plays made the audience think about the effect of apartheid on people of all races, and she often observed how "the audience would be stunned and quiet"; certainly the content of plays made some audience members afraid to go to The Space in case of arrest, and companies and businesses were nervous to advertise, or be associated with, the theatre (2011-2016).

What was significant also was the fact that Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury saw to it that The Space continued to offer an excellent standard of work. As a result, some very important people started frequenting the theatre, sometimes in secret. Fitchen recalls ticking off a list the names of important guests who came to see a show, including future president FW de Klerk's brother: "National party people who were trying to liberalize but […] didn't want to be seen" (2011-2016). Likewise, South African business leaders would be at The Space, sitting in the front rows on opening nights alongside Moyra Fine - who was a volunteer at The Space but also the sister of leading South African businessman Raymond Ackerman. Fitchen describes many of the audience members as "the who's who of South Africa - the Ackermans, Oppenheimers…liberals you know…" (2011-2016).

At The Space a new kind of outlook was being articulated by some of the best theatre practitioners in the country, even if it still had to be carefully done. Astbury reflected on The Space in this way: "Our theatre in Buiten Street. I have never thought of this before but *buiten* means outside - and that's what we were" (Astbury, 2011b: location 365). It is thus evident that Bryceland's ambition for a new kind of South African theatre, which Fugard referred to as "her pioneering" (2011b) was brought to fruition at The Space. As such she and the theatre hold a pivotal position in the trajectory of South African theatre history.

[115] All three plays were new plays produced by Fugard, and all premiered at The Space.

In summary

Astbury is currently working on a film documentary about The Space. It seems fitting to conclude this chapter with a poem which was written by Astbury in his booklet *The Space/Die Ruimte/Indawo* (1979:2-3) to capture the essence of his experience there:

I am grateful.
I wish to acknowledge my gratitude.

There was blood,
And tears
And laughter

There were moments of logic,
And of absurdity

There were times of triumph and joy,
And of defeat and misery

There were those who had faith,
And those who scoffed

There was value – and there were human beings

Always
It was people that kept it alive

Nothing was ever simple – but it was in simplicity
That its greatest strength lay

It was beautiful because people are beautiful,
And ugly because people can be that, too

I learned much from it,
And, if I now fail to pass on to you
Some of the spirit, the energy,
The muddle, the contradiction,
The joy
That was The Space,

Please forgive me.
I am still too close to it.
Maybe later.

But this book can't wait.

It was thanks to Bryceland as an essential point in The Space triad that The Space emerged as a firebrand theatre which faced the dangers of opposing the South African apartheid government, saw the creation of many original works which achieved international acclaim, and forever changed the standard and ambitions of original South African theatre. The importance of this is clearly demonstrated by Fugard:

> If there is one single event in South African theatre during Apartheid years on which, it can safely be said, the theatre of the new South Africa is being built, it is, unquestionably the foundation of The Space Theatre… I say unhesitatingly that my debt to the Space Theatre, to the stunning unique talent of Yvonne Bryceland and the vision of Brian Astbury, is one of the major ones of my career in Theatre…that brave and successful experiment deserves to be celebrated by the whole country. (1997)

As a result of "that brave and successful experiment" that was The Space, South Africa today has The Baxter Theatre[116] in Cape Town and The Market Theatre[117] in Johannesburg, two of the country's most significant theatres which based their aims on those of The Space. As Fugard has stated, there would "be no Market Theatre today" without The Space, because it was after viewing it and all it stood for, that both Manim and Simon were given the courage to establish their own theatre (Fugard, 2011b). These theatres continue the legacy of The Space by producing and staging new and original South African works, and supporting emerging talent. By revolting against Eurocentric theatre as it was being produced by the government-backed Performing Arts Councils, and establishing an alternative theatre style in a venue like The Space, Bryceland helped shift the South African theatre experience towards one that reflected contemporary truth. Added to that, as an actress in Fugard plays such as *Boesman and Lena* (1969), *Statements* (1972) and *Road to Mecca* (1984), she helped carry that message to the world stage.

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[116] The Baxter Theatre Center is a performing arts complex in Cape Town. It was opened in 1977.

[117] The Market Theatre opened in 1976 as an independent, non-racial theatre.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

> I would not be the writer I am today - I would not enjoy the reputation, call it fame if you like, even the degree of physical comfort that comes from being a successful writer - I would not enjoy any of those had Yvonne Bryceland not come into my life at one of the most critical and formative periods of my writing career. My debt of gratitude to her as an artist, as a human being, as comrade, as friend is beyond words. It's a debt I will just have to try to articulate and reaffirm for the rest of my life. It's a very profound debt. (Fugard cited in Hacksley, 1993:6)

As demonstrated in this dissertation, Bryceland is worthy of being remembered by all who work in theatre in South Africa with comparable appreciation. This dissertation is a way in which such attention, as Fugard suggested was due, has been focused on Bryceland. Astbury said that in her personal life Bryceland shied away from being in the limelight, and could not bear being the center of attention; it was only when playing a character in a play she believed in, that she was fearless on stage (Astbury, 1992:2-3). This dissertation has finally placed her center stage, and applauds her as a muse to top theatre practitioners, and as an inspiring actress who showed great courage in her political convictions at The Space theatre by opening the doors to people of all races during apartheid. It recognizes that she rose tenaciously against many obstacles in her life, to become one of the best actresses of our country and a major contributor to South African theatre history.

Research on The Space theatre involved examining how it came to be needed: why Bryceland, Fugard and Astbury established it in 1972; what work was done there; and what the long-term repercussions of the theatre are. What became clear was the gap in knowledge between the facts of Bryceland's life and how she helped to establish new theatre norms and acting standards. Le Roux wrote: "It is appalling that nothing and no-one has found it necessary to document a woman so brave and strong in the grip of apartheid" (2012). Historical records and archive material offered up many pieces of the puzzle when it came to discussing these questions. The general sweep of The Space theatre is better documented than other aspects of Bryceland's life, in large part thanks to Astbury's ongoing efforts. However, the focus of this work, as captured in Chapter Five, is on Bryceland more than the general historical account of The Space. While many people enjoyed working there and experienced Bryceland at The Space, it was still challenging to track subjects down and capture their recollections. There was also a frustrating sense of urgency, as the

capturing of this oral history needed to happen while the elderly subjects were still well enough to converse. It was a very slow and painstaking process. Some subjects were reluctant to write e-mails about her, as Paul Slabolepszy explained most succinctly, "This is part of my problem - I type with TWO fingers (as bad as Athol Fugard, who never types at all!)" (2011). I therefore had to try to travel around the country and meet with her colleagues and family, if and when they were available in the country, or even willing to discuss her. Winston Ntshona and John Kani proved impossible to track down. Astbury himself did not wish to disclose much about his late wife and wept while trying to speak of her, but then told me to read about Bryceland in his Kindle book which he was writing about actor training. This I did when it became available, and gained very valuable insight from it. In hindsight, I can see how Bryceland's story has almost literally been buried in archives in forgotten corners of the Baxter Theatre administration. Some of the most important information was found in the dusty and spider-web covered old cardboard box under an elderly actors' agent Sybil Sand's desk at her home. Such was the delicate process of gathering facts on Bryceland's life and work.

Similarly, it was no simple matter to sift through all the events at The Space in attempts to understand what Bryceland was exactly responsible for, and how Astbury and other people kept the theatre running. The general feeling amongst subjects I spoke to is that it was *Bryceland's theatre*. However, this dissertation looked at the facts, and then took the clear stance that in reality Astbury did most of the practical work; and Bryceland was the leading lady or star of the theatre, mainly responsible for choosing plays, directors and cast, and acting, although she took on many other responsibilities, too. Fugard, meanwhile, was integral to the success of The Space by virtue of his reputation and the plays he produced there. Fugard has equally credited both Bryceland and Astbury for their contribution: "It has to be remembered that, through the work of Yvonne and Brian, [The Space] became the very first alternative theatre and helped establish the whole theatre of liberation which is so vociferous and lively now" (as cited in Bryceland 'greatest performing talent to come out of SA', *The Star Bureau*, 1992:2). *The Star* called the theatre ground-breaking: "With its reputation for brilliant creativity and liberal politics, [The Space] became the scene of some of Fugard's most explosive successes and Bryceland's most dynamic performances" (Bryceland 'greatest performing talent to come out of SA', *The Star Bureau*, 1992:2). In summary, and in direct relation to Bryceland, the

research revealed: firstly, her great courage and determination at The Space when opposing apartheid laws; secondly, how she nurtured many new talents, and gave them opportunities to establish themselves; thirdly, that she took the lead roles in many new and powerful plays produced at The Space, which gave her room to grow her acting to its fullest potential; and finally, that The Space changed what South African audiences expected in terms of the content and vibrancy of our theatre and this led to the establishment of The Market and The Baxter theatres.

The third point, regarding Bryceland's full potential as an actress, warranted pause and new consideration. Despite years of attempts to discuss her acting in terms of elements like technique and methods, these foundational structures proved limited and yielded insufficient explanation to help us understand the effect of Bryceland's acting, as described by her acting on fellow actors, audiences and directors. It was clear that Bryceland acted at a far higher level than that of technical proficiency. Through this dissertation, I explored notions of expressing the experience of what happens when a great actor surpasses an excellent standard of work, and enters the realm of the transcendent. Astbury considers that "[Bryceland] did not hide behind the characters she played, as some actors do"; he observes further that in the case of Bryceland the characters "became part of her - and she them - her personality melding with theirs into a whole in which no-one could be sure where Yvonne began and Milly/Lena/Freda/Hester/Martha/Helen took over" (1992:2-3).

Fugard agrees that he observed this merging of person and character in Bryceland many times. As demonstrated in Chapter Three, this is an area of acting not yet definitively explained by science or psychology, and one that could be studied further beyond the scope of this dissertation's focus on Bryceland. The question of what elevates an actor to this transcendental realm remains mysterious: "Acting is peculiar magic" (Astbury, 1992:2). Such is the superstition and wariness of this powerful experience, that actors very reluctantly mention it, except to say they are searching for the truth; in the words of Streep: "In my acting I wanted […] to find the truth in the women I played" (Streep, 2011:55). What can be ascertained is that both actor and audience are strongly affected by this experience. For the actor to 'let go' of their persona, to suspend being the self in service of the truth of a character and a story, is both a psychologically dangerous and liberating act, as discussed in Chapter Four.

Astbury states that when it is properly done, the process is one that offers healing. We cannot know if Bryceland herself found healing, though I think she found some release from her own trauma as we see in her own writing. For example: on page 161. I refer to a quote from Bryceland: "out of my personal unhappiness, pain and misery,/it was like suddenly seeing in different colours./Everything seemed to grow and change at the same time." (as cited in Herber, 1979:26). We also cannot know exactly what caused her demise. Brain scans and medical tests done on Bryceland after her New York 'terrors' began only revealed a liver disease, which may have contributed a purely medical aspect to her inability to work on stage much longer. We have no way of knowing what was going on psychologically at this time for Bryceland, and she evidently did not understand it either. This 'not knowing' is part of what was so frightening for her, and part of what I believe should be researched in the future: ethical and psychological protocol and processes and safeguards for actors. This is what she wanted to investigate answers to. For the psychologists like Hamden, the whole point is that it is dangerous for actors because they don't carefully resolve their own damage and pain properly before packing away their trauma again. The point made in this dissertation is that the sacrifices Bryceland made gave *others* a sense of healing and peace. Thus, while she was seen as a healer, we do not have any way of knowing if she experienced her own healing through her work, beyond her expression of visiting deeper things in her own life, gaining insight and understanding and finding joy in her work which may indicate a sense of purging for her.

Astbury thinks that her work aided others: "The actor stands before us, spiritually naked, every nerve-end exposed, a marvelous alchemy takes place and we see not the actor or the character – we see ourselves". In this regard he honors Bryceland by stating: "I am extremely proud and lucky to have lived with an actress who strove never to arrive at less than that moment. She was a healer" (Astbury, 1992:2). This dissertation has aimed to honor Bryceland in a similar way.

It is in this area of acting that I have discovered my teaching, coaching and acting practice is most inspired. I would love for any acting student, mine or otherwise, to achieve their fullest potential, and so this exploration of Bryceland's high level of acting has yielded much consideration and discussion. Bryceland set a new standard for actors in South Africa. She worked in a dangerous, truthful way, and reached the top of her profession. Was it necessary to take such emotional risks? Was she dabbling in psychologically

dangerous character and actor interface zones for which we, as actors, have no safety processes yet? I have used my background in the theatre to attempt to penetrate and reflect on this unsolved mystery. I have utilized the research artefact of the screenplay to paint the picture for the reader of all the events in Bryceland's life that may have contributed to her emotional reservoir and strength, which, as discussed in Chapters Three and Four, she used in her acting.

She told Astbury, when he became an acting coach, to push his students further, that actors are tougher than they look and will not break. She may have motivated herself in this way. Her advice to Astbury, however, may have been her own undoing. It seems she pushed herself too far, and did 'break' in the end. Fugard speaks of Bryceland as being dangerous and potent. I imagine that her own pain and anger at the injustice this country meted out to people during apartheid, and her empathy for the abused and downtrodden female figure, formed part of her outrage and this anger informed the darker and more 'dangerous' aspect of her performances. Recent tests[118] conducted by Thompson and Jaque have revealed that actors have greater imaginations that non-actors, yet have more "unresolved mourning and elevated dissociation" (2012:361). They draw a concrete link to the dangers that actors are tapping into: a vulnerability, they say, that is most pronounced in actors as they hold the "mirror up to nature" (Hamlet, Act III, Sc I: Shakespeare) and to their "own past trauma and loss related experiences" (Thomson & Jaque, 2012:367). It has fallen outside the scope of this study to grapple with the psychological debates around the acting process; nevertheless, it is one area recommended for further study.

Bryceland herself was interested in pursuing this line of enquiry and Astbury quotes her as saying, "Everybody is too scared to talk about it". And says she planned a book, wanting to interview, "anybody willing to talk; approach psychologists or psychiatrists in an attempt to find answers" (Astbury, 2011b: location 1969). As actors we are mostly rather ignorant of what we are dealing with in this area, and this, as said before, opens too many avenues for damage and abuse. Bryceland's last wish was to study this mysterious and dangerous aspect of acting and provide other actors with a proverbial 'safety net' without

[118] In 2012, Thomson and Jaque used The Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) and three self-report instruments to test: emotional regulation, absorption/imagination, fantasy proneness, degree of resolution for past trauma and loss and attachment classification in actors.

which she evidently worked.

Arts-based research methods - most specifically the creative and performative writing strategies such as demonstrated the screenplay in Chapter Two - were found to be the most suitable for expressing the various aspects of Bryceland's work, and bringing to light new knowledge of her philosophy about, and approach to, acting. I recognised that the screenplay could be enhanced in terms of film-writing technique and structure, but my aim was to create a compelling filmic narrative and simultaneously offer academically well-researched and sound biographic information. Many aspects of artistic practice, such as performing with *duende*, fall outside of measurable and analytic frames. There is, as Lorca says, "neither map nor discipline" (1933/2007:2). As a dramatist, my way of contextualising Bryceland's greatness was to collect the facts and the emotionally told stories about her, consider all the influencing facets, and finally express my understanding of her through the screenplay as research artefact. *Dancing with Darkness* was thus a creation borne out of the process of my emotional and metaphysical understanding about her pain, her life, her courage, her acting, her role as a mother and as a South African, and all the other aspects of her. In the end, the potent performance moments that arose from this infinitely complex human being, required a distilled representation.

In this dissertation, the metaphor of *duende* has been employed to offer a perspective on this process of what happens to (or through) an actor - specifically Bryceland - at a moment of transcendent performance. In *Dancing with Darkness*, the *duende* figure represents the supporting force behind Bryceland's search for artistic truth in her acting: reflecting her journey from personal psychological darkness through to literally and figuratively being 'in the light' in performance. The metaphor of *duende* is an expression of the biographical events in her life, re-imagined using visual, musical, oral and rhythmic signs, and is offered as a central key for a reader to unlock the complexity of a human life. Documenting or capturing, in written form, Bryceland's spirit and performance power was in itself paradoxical; that is, trying to explain heightened artistic and spiritual freedom in any sort of structured, linguistic or other constrained manner goes against the very essence of *duende* and creative freedom. Arts-based research was one method that supported the creation of a unique, specific metaphor. The concept of *duende* is ancient, culturally variable and dense with projected meaning; it is simultaneously enigmatic and open to new interpretation, which

afforded my artistic conceptualisation of it to act as a weighted anchor for the rest of the creative process. Though my vessel of creativity was thus tethered in a deeply held place, in the proverbial waters of creative thought, indiscernible and mysterious below everything visible on the surface, it allowed a certain degree of movement, spinning, rising and falling, adapting, and yet ultimately held the creation of the character of Bryceland's *duende* steady in one region of thought.

The arts-based research process also aptly allowed for the mirroring purpose of drama, namely: the distillation of complex facets into one loaded metaphor, which then supports a return spiralling outwards as it becomes the catalyst for multi-layered consideration and discussion. In this, it also offers the potential for future artists to interpret the core material through their own creative and technical processes of cinematography, musical scoring, direction and performance, thereby once again supporting an actress to 'breathe life' back into the woman, Bryceland, and her story.

The mutability of the *duende* concept allows it to be very specifically applied for Bryceland. When I decided to incorporate *duende* as part of the complex picture this dissertation would present of Bryceland, I shaped the metaphor quite specifically in consideration of all the wider aspects of her life which might have contributed towards the person she was, as well as the driving force behind her work - her religious background, her relationships with others, her approach to community, her ideas about helping young actors and being of service. A phrase that stood out for me in this regard came from an interview by Le Roux in which she states: "Yvonne's ambition came from her very core…to not be a nobody. Yes, it was a quietly held ambition" (2012). The fact that Bryceland dedicated her Olivier award 'to all the nobodies in the world' cements those words in truth. Now, as we reach the final scene of this work, the experience of Bryceland's life and work is ideally a felt one.

For over a quarter of a century of my theatre practice, I researched, read and investigated the broader question of what it takes to achieve a heightened performance. One aspect at play for an actor is having a strong character vehicle and I therefore looked at great roles and texts that give actors the material with which they can create great performances. In this area I was always deeply intrigued by Fugard's female characters, and wondered how he could write so poignantly on the complex female psyche. I began this dissertation wondering about his courageous and forceful female roles, and I wondered which women were

inspired their creation. I have played some of his female roles, spoken at length with Fugard, and read vast amounts of what is written on the topic. Fugard is a challenging and intelligent man, who stood for what he believed in, it would take a strong woman to work with him. Bryceland emerged as the leading figure of inspiration and he openly acknowledges that she helped him become the writer that he is, and that she was his soul mate. Fugard sometimes mentions his mother as an inspirational figure, but it seems Bryceland gave him most of his key insights. He acknowledges that he has "received many accolades for the female portraits" in his plays and that: "Yvonne had an enormous amount to do with that. She led me to understand the secrets of the female psyche, insights I might never have gained had it not been for my collaboration with her" (Fugard, 1992. *Light Years*, Vol. 4 No.1:3)

I then wondered about Bryceland's life story and why so little is known about her. This led me to investigate her life and work. What I discovered both excited and disturbed me. Despite being shoved aside and abused by one man, Bryceland gritted her teeth and marched on, exactly as Fugard's female characters do who march on with courage and fierce determination in the face of bleak reality. In the end, Bryceland lived her dream, which she said was to act (as cited in Heilbuth, 1992:5). This tiny doll-like, bird of a woman, with the dangerous and explosive spirit, built a revolutionary theatre, fought against a regime by standing up to security forces on her own stage at The Space, and went out into the world and filled theatres with her extraordinary performances. And yet it seems from all accounts she remained humble, and remembered her origins, when she won internationally coveted acting awards, she dedicated them to the forgotten people of the world.

In her lifetime, Bryceland inspired many people, both artists, family and friends, and she has inspired me. I therefore have no doubt that Bryceland can serve as a role model and inspiration for current and future theatre practitioners and actors if we hold her up and discuss her and her work. Now that we know about her, we can do so. Similarly, I imagine that scholars in the areas of theatre studies, education, history, gender studies and psychology may be left wondering about how aspects of her story apply to their specialties, and will hopefully be similarly inspired to 'push harder', be courageous and fly beyond technical boundaries into new domains of wonder, and excel in their own work.

The story of Bryceland is riveting, complex, unpredictable and beautiful. She, as the central character in her own narrative, is a unique, aspirational, multi-layered, and classically flawed heroine. Approaching her from an actor's point of view drew me deeply into a rich mine of discovery. It became increasingly clear that to attempt to describe this historic figure without embracing her qualities of effervescence, courage and fierce determination in her life's work of practicing her art-form to the ultimate heights, would not do her justice. By offering her story as a research artefact, the screenplay *Dancing with Darkness*, I was able to express my deeply felt understanding of her, and to create the authentic world in which she evolved. I considered what the final film would look and sound like. For South Africans it should 'feel' authentic; for foreigners it should be illuminating about what South Africa was really like during Bryceland's lifetime. I thought about the actors who might play the roles in the film, and was satisfied that the actors would have the deep research they needed in the text (and in this dissertation), be well challenged and emotionally charged to play the strong roles.

I trust, reader, that you have gained a richer sense of who she was, and what she did. As a teacher, it is my hope that you developed an emotional response to Bryceland and her South African theatre practice during the reading of the screenplay, that your curiosity about her was elicited and then well-sated by the discussions that followed in the next chapters. Mostly I hope that the experience of journeying through this dissertation has been informative and exciting; it certainly was for me.

Bryceland had such an effect on people that she inspired two of the greatest playwrights in the world to write for her. She wrote monologues which were absorbed into Fugard's scripts, and he called her one of the most important pioneers in South African theatre. A muse indeed. As South African actors, we should acknowledge more fully her contribution to our theatre practice and our approach to acting. We should respect her as a person and try to emulate her example. As South African acting educators, we should understand her life story, and its effect on her acting work, and thereby help our acting students gain keys of insight into the true magic of acting. Beyond that, through her example, actors should hold fast to the understanding that acting is very ancient, profound and meaningful work with which they are dancing. A final tribute from Astbury, which encapsulates this, seems fitting:

> Yvonne Bryceland - For 30 years I lived in the warmth of her giant shadow, watching in awe her ability to transform herself into characters seemingly way beyond the reach of her 5'3' frame; how she could connect to their terrible pain, and then communicate this to an audience night after night - changing lives and healing. This is not idle - I still meet people who, years after her passing on to the next phase, will tell me how a particular play affected them, gave them hope and succour. Her work is the touchstone of courage, honour, honesty and total commitment against which I have judged all my own work, and that of others. Impossible to equal. But imperative to attempt to match. (Astbury, 2011b: location 156)

I offered the screenplay as an illumination of Bryceland's life and acting process in particular. I now invite you to imagine what Bryceland experienced as she worked on stage for her audience. I offer this final piece of creative writing as another opportunity for the reader - who like myself has no further access to the lived experience of Bryceland - to consider her heightened experience, her goal of communicating from the deepest reaches of truth she could find, of being someone else in this world, and in so doing risking herself in the task of sharing the human experience. As Bryceland said, being an actor is being open to all the wild amazing possibilities, all those things every human being shares (Herber, 1979). As the final curtain on this discussion about her story falls, I stand in ovation and applaud a woman who will continue to inspire me in my work, my courage and my life.

> *Standing in dark wings, she holds a woman and a story in her mind, heart and body. She can hear the audience arriving, talking and taking their seats in the auditorium. She can hear her own heartbeat echo at speed through her body. She waits, charged, warmed-up, breathing deeply, loosening her jaw. She is ready. At a given time, the audience hears the house music get softer, house lights dim. The chatter stops. The audience focuses on the stage. The lights go out. She breathes in, blows out, and then walks out onto stage, in the dark. She waits. She can hear the audience breathe, move in their seats. There is anticipation. Light comes on, sometimes so bright she can see only reflections of glasses, the front row of faces, and audience silhouettes beyond. Her vision is not good anyway. She breathes, opens herself to the audience, and then, for the next ninety minutes or so, she releases the story to them. Duende dances with her. The communication happens. Her skills help the audience*

forget the reality, forget themselves, and together with her, travel to another place and time. For the audience, she weaves together words, movement, energy and her character into a complete piece of dramatic art. In the process the audience throws emotional and cognitive hooks into the scenes, and draws out connections to themselves. She can feel the audience get tense, can see tears on the front row faces flow, hears the gasps as the characters surprise them. They laugh out loud, they let go of their own realities and enter the world she has offered. She carries the audience on a journey, at times racing forward, then holding the energy in suspense, lulling and conjuring, exciting and delighting. And when it is all drawn to a close, there is a moment of thunderous mutual exchange and applauded thanks. Then it is over. The audience rise and carry with them new ideas, shifted emotions. They will hopefully discuss, argue, find delight in their exciting discoveries. She leaves the light. She moves alone through the dark wings, the tension now dissolved. She collapses backstage, spent, sweating, laughing - contemplative sometimes.

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Addendum A: examples of AQAS as applied to Bryceland's acting

Score	COGNITIVE AND ANALYTICAL	Boesman and Lena 1	Boesman and Lena 2	Boesman and Lena 3	Road to Mecca 1	Road to Mecca 2	Road to Mecca 3
1	Intense text and character analysis via psychology and social world of character results in unique, creative and memorable character who is affecting and believable. Rhythm and pace used deliberately and skilfully. Physical choices for character have been carefully analysed and executed. Performance smooth and ingrained with director's vision.						
2	Text and character analysis via psychology and social world of character leads to a truthful character portrait in performance. Rhythm and pace used skilfully. Physical choices for character have been performed well. Performance smooth and ingrained with director's vision.						
3	Text and character analysis via psychology and social world of character leads to a good character portrait in performance. Rhythm and pace used well. Good physical choices for character. Performance reflects director's vision. Text used with understanding and merges well with character analysis.						
4	Text seems considered and character analysis evident. Character realistic. Rhythm and pace used with awareness. Physical choices clearly made for character. Performance reflects director's vision somewhat. Text used with some understanding and merges well with character analysis						
5	No apparent analysis of or insight into text or character. Not believable Rhythm and pace not used well. Weak physical choices for character. Performance does not reflect director's vision. Text used with little understanding and does not merge with character analysis.						

Figure 1: AQAS grid showing assessment criteria as applied to Bryceland's acting

Acting Analysis Elements: →	Element 1 Cognitive and Analytic	Element 2 Emotional Psychological and Social	Element 3 Physical: Body and Facial expression	Element 4 Voice and Speech	Element 5 Methods and Techniques	Element 6 Braiding and interface with audience.
Play - and moment of examination number: ↓						
A. Boesman and Lena Performance Moment 1	1	7	13	19	25	31
B. Boesman and Lena Performance Moment 2	2	8	14	20	26	32
C. Boesman and Lena Performance Moment 3	3	9	15	21	27	33
A. Road to Mecca Performance Moment 1	4	10	16	22	28	34
B. Road to Mecca Performance Moment 2	5	11	17	23	29	35
C. Road to Mecca Performance Moment 3	6	12	18	24	30	36

Figure 2: Grid of AQAS analysis elements by number as applied to Bryceland's acting

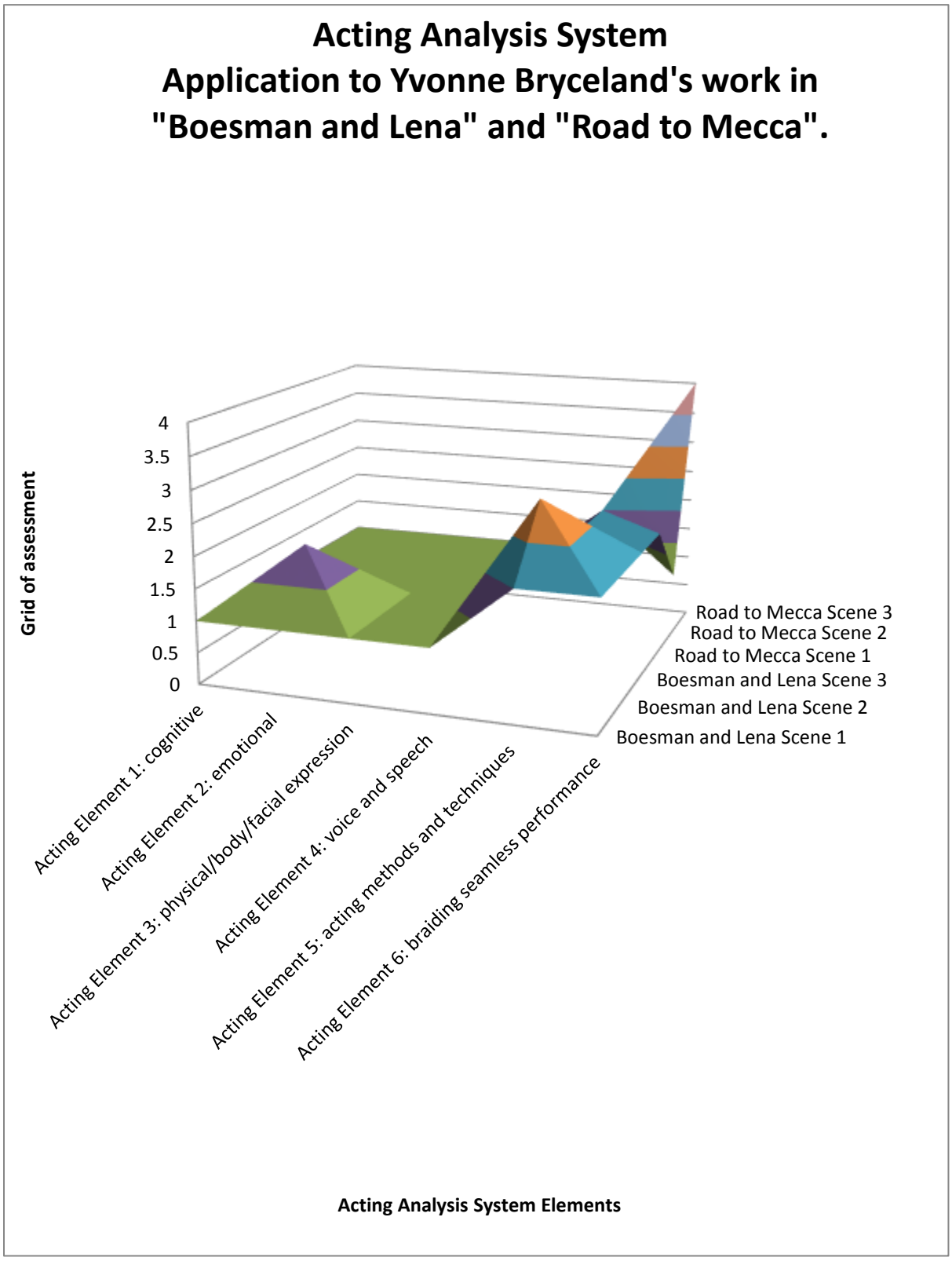


Figure 3: A visual illustration of the quality of Bryceland's work as demonstrated by the AQAS

Addendum B: photographs of Yvonne Bryceland

Figures 4 & 5: Yvonne Bryceland as Lena in Fugard's *Boesman and Lena* (1969)

Figure 6: Yvonne Bryceland and Athol Fugard in rehearsal for *Statements After An Arrest Under The Immorality Act*, The Space, 1972

Figure 7: Yvonne Bryceland as Petra Van Kant in *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant* (originally in German as *Die bitteren Tränen der Petra von Kant*) (1972)

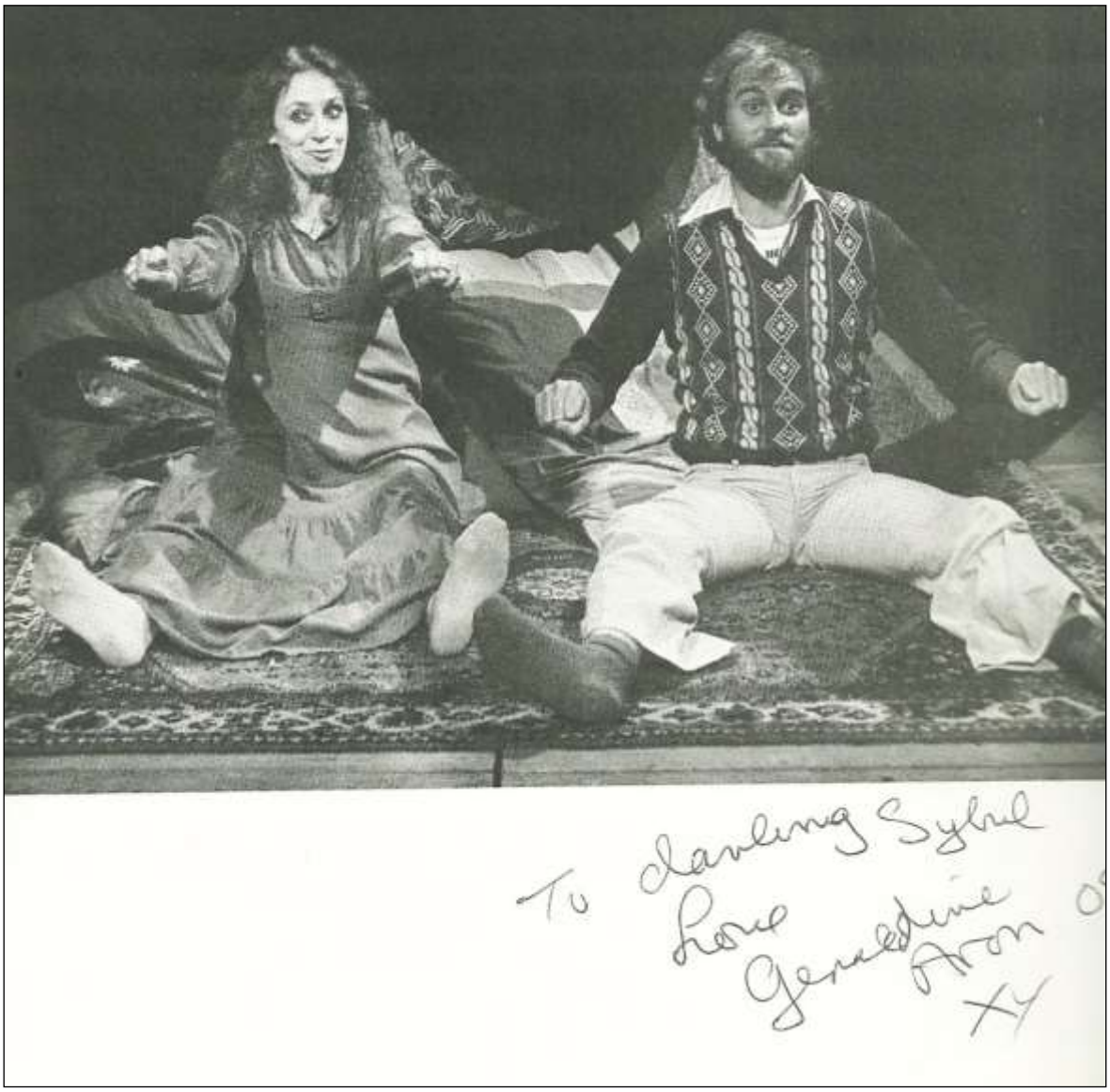


Figure 8: Yvonne Bryceland and Wilson Dunster in Geraldine Aron's *Bar and Ger* (1975). Directed by Walter Donohue. The play premiered at The Space in 1975.

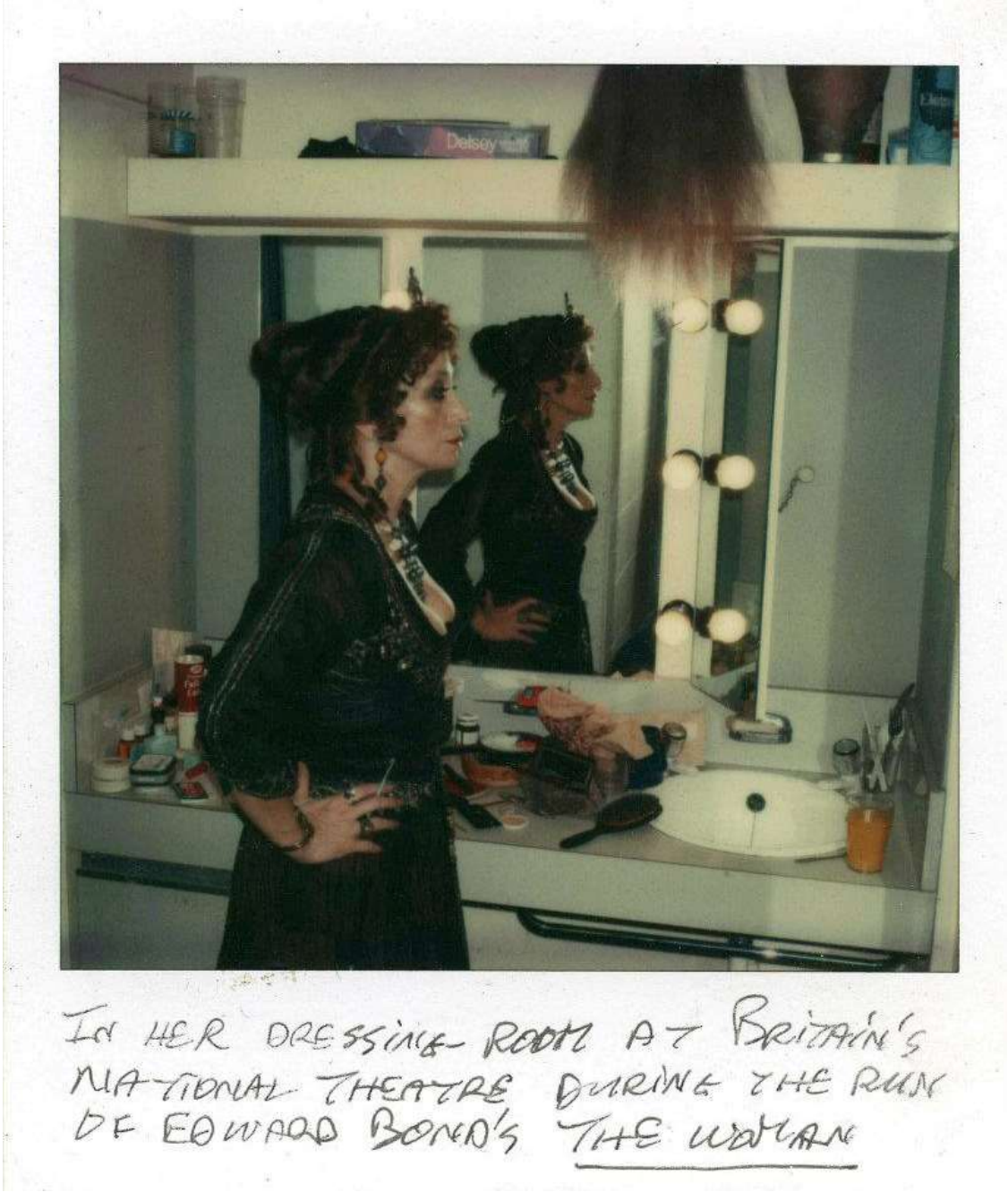


Figure 9: Yvonne Bryceland in the dressing room at the National Theatre in London during the run of Edward Bond's *The Woman* (1978) [Photo: Brian Astbury]

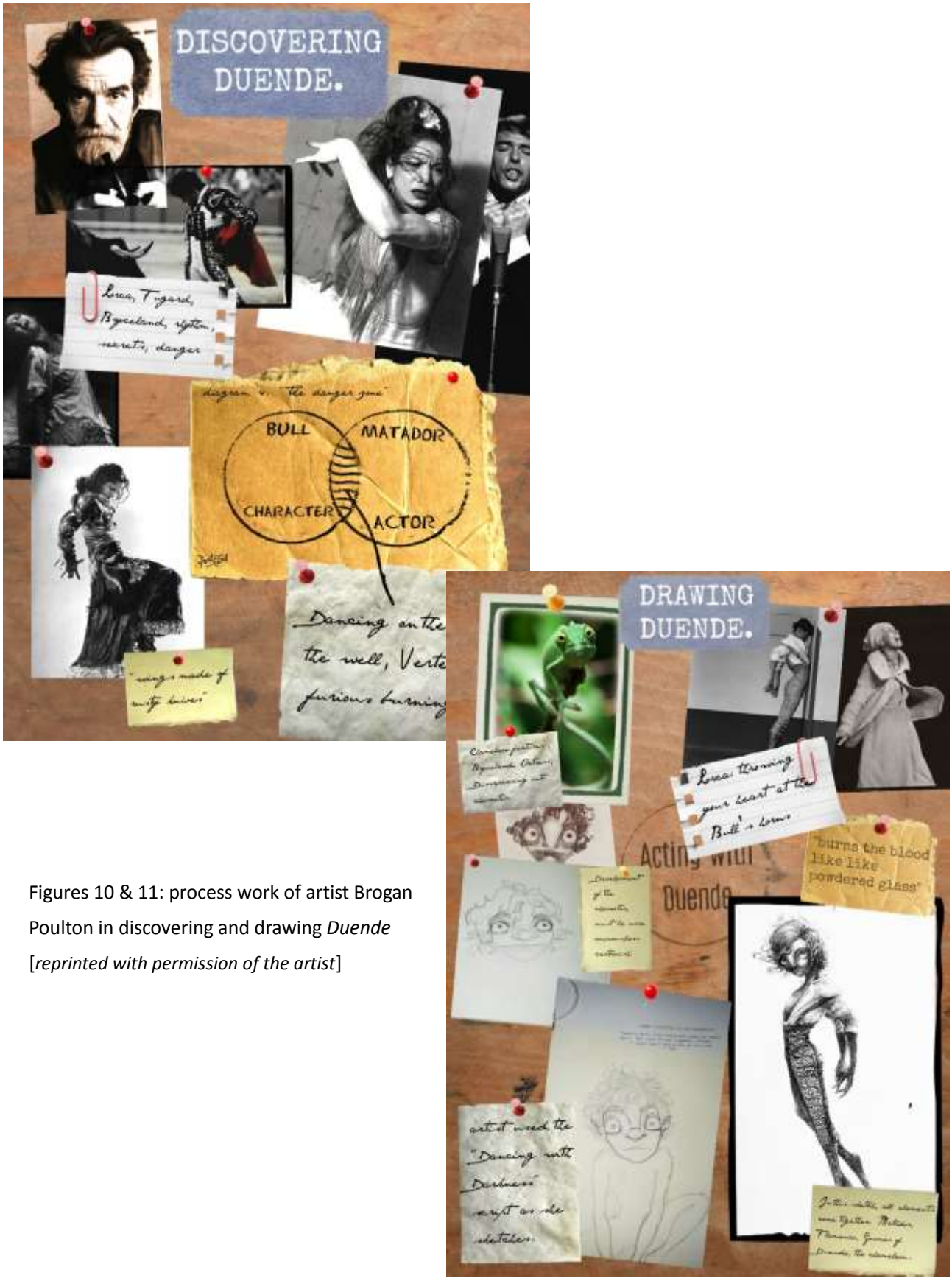
Addendum C: excerpt of transcribed interview (2011) between Athol Fugard and Alison Hofer

ALISON HOFER	**After talking to you last time I was thinking about this, thinking that next time I see you I want to ask you this: whether Yvonne…whether you think she danced in this area? Yes, I brought you his speech….**
ATHOL FUGARD	Oh yes she did. Oh it's a wonderful idea. Wonderful, wonderful idea. Ja, there's no question about the fact that she, she had a connection with something that you just don't get with the ordinary run of the mill performing artist. And uhm…oh ja absolutely. The spirit comes from a physical response to movement... gives you chills, makes you smile or cry. Wow!!
ATHOL FUGARD	The rationality, earthiness, a heightened awareness of death and a dash of the diabolical. I once, but I can't recount the circumstances, watched Yvonne stab a grapefruit to death.
ALISON HOFER	**You told me…**
ATHOL FUGARD	Did I tell you about it [laughs] Absolutely, absolutely. You've got it. You've got it. Reached that point where you've left… That's it. That's it. Where the buttons to press to get Yvonne going were so mysterious. I felt them instinctively and because you know we were so close, we were so bonded. It was easy to move in on her and to get that performance.
ALISON HOFER	**Having the courage to go where other actors usually bail out?**
ATHOL FUGARD	What are the four qualities listed in that article? It is the diabolical, the earthiness, what are the other two?
ALISON HOFER	**Dancing with death? That element of reaching in and getting quite dark. Not being afraid of that. Looking death in the eyes.**
ATHOL FUGARD	Yes here we are. Vision of duende. Irrationality, earthiness, a heightened awareness of death and a dash of the diabolical. Amazing.
ALISON HOFER	**It's great hey?**
ATHOL FUGARD	Oh that's amazing.
ALISON HOFER	**Does it capture something of her spirit?**
ATHOL FUGARD	Totally!
ALISON HOFER	**And how it adapts on stage?**
ATHOL FUGARD	I'm just trying to think because reason never worked with Yvonne. Irrationality did.
ALISON HOFER	**And feelings.**

ATHOL FUGARD	…is she so great because it's exhausting to go there. She had incredible energy.
ALISON HOFER	**Did you feel it when you performed together? Like in *Boesman and Lena,* you know that relationship and where that goes, and the rollercoaster that you go on as an actor? And then you are dancing in it and you are glaring it down. That's hard to play. And I know it because you told me last time about her stormy relationship. She was dealing with familiar turf.**
ATHOL FUGARD	Yes that's right. You know we are dealing with something that's definable ultimately. It's recognisable - only that combination of elements can produce that extraordinary work. See her do roles of… or a…of the great dark ladies of theatre you know. Would have been an astonishing Lady Macbeth. I don't know if she ever played that role. But….ja.

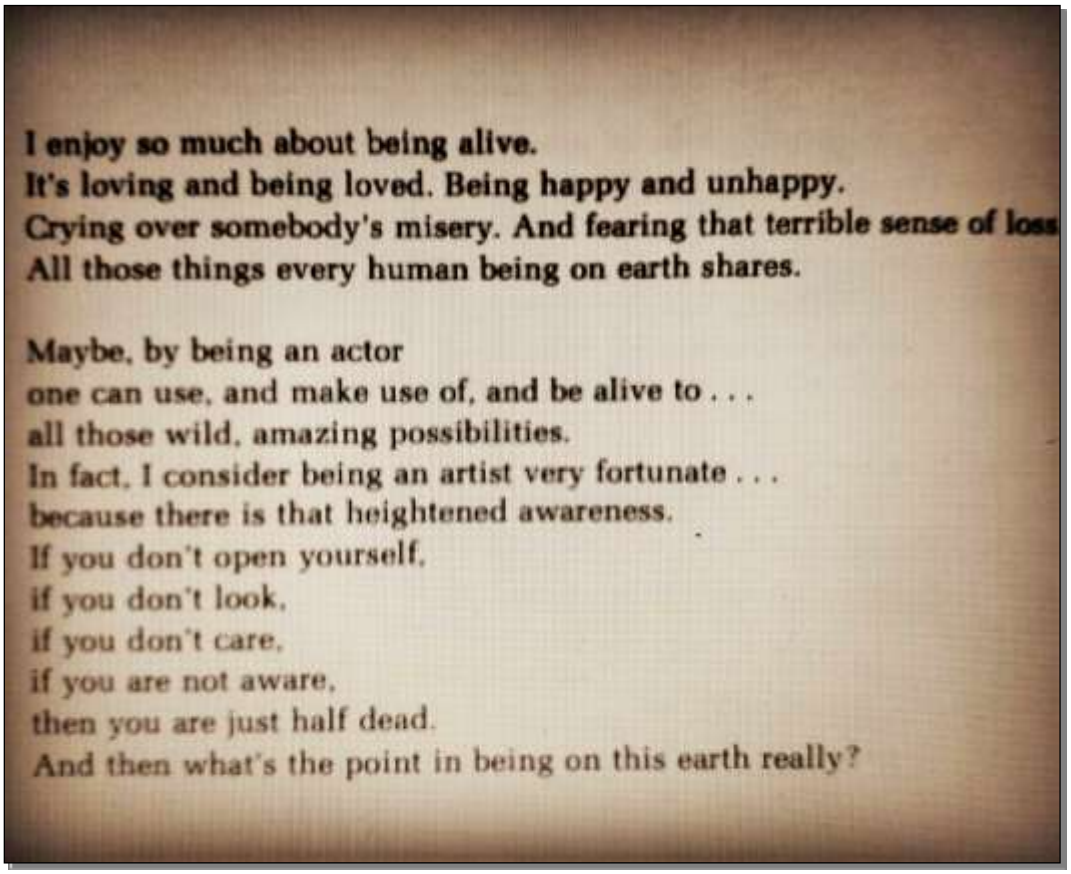
Addendum D: artist's rendition of Duende and process work

Figure 9: Dancing with Darkness: Artist Brogan Poulton's rendition of Duende [*reprinted with the artist's permission*]



Figures 10 & 11: process work of artist Brogan Poulton in discovering and drawing *Duende* [*reprinted with permission of the artist*]

Addendum E: in Bryceland's own words



I enjoy so much about being alive.
It's loving and being loved. Being happy and unhappy.
Crying over somebody's misery. And fearing that terrible sense of loss
All those things every human being on earth shares.

Maybe, by being an actor
one can use, and make use of, and be alive to . . .
all those wild, amazing possibilities.
In fact, I consider being an artist very fortunate . . .
because there is that heightened awareness.
If you don't open yourself,
if you don't look,
if you don't care,
if you are not aware,
then you are just half dead.
And then what's the point in being on this earth really?

Figure 10: A copy of Yvonne Bryceland's description of her work written in 1979 (Herber, 1979)

Addendum F: Bond's tribute to Bryceland

Tribute read by Keith Grenville at the Cape Town Memorial Service for Yvonne Bryceland on 4 February 1992. The tribute was from Edward Bond, one of England's most distinguished playwrights and directors

Yvonne Bryceland was a great actress. It is difficult to describe her power to anyone who did not see her. I wanted to direct her in my play, The Woman, at the National Theatre, but the artistic director was reluctant to cast her. I asked him to audition her. I sat alone with him high up at the back of the Olivier Theatre, a huge barn of a place.

Bryceland suddenly appeared at the back of the stage, walked forward a few paces, sat, and waited. Her back was bolt upright, her legs stretched out straight in front of her, her heels about two feet apart, her hands flat on the stage. A tiny doll in a long black dress.

At that moment the theatre was filled - the stage accomplished. There were only three people in the whole space but she filled every inch of it with a strange, brilliant power. It excited me and made me afraid. It was an unforgettable lesson in drama, a challenge.

(She got the part of course.)

I have tried to accept it. Many actors and actresses have great stage presence, but I have seen such raw, open power so mysteriously and authoritatively displayed by only one other actor ... Laurence Olivier.

Her place of birth, her unconventional training, her experience at the Space and her own gifts may have made it possible for her to combine thought, emotion, body in a profound representation and analysis of our wrenching, explosive times - but in history the death rattle is the cry of the new born babe.

She could have been the catalyst. Our theatre will change without her, but it will be more difficult and perhaps less enjoyable.

Yvonne was even more important, more influential as a person, than as an actress. She influenced all I have written since I met her. In writing my plays I have shared great happiness with her. Her kindness and simplicity were as moving as her strength. Gorky said of Tolstoy "As long as he was there I didn't have to worry about the world. It was all right."

I and many others feel that way about her. She is dead and I shall go on writing plays for her. What else could a writer who had written for her, a director who had directed her, a person who had known her, do, or want to do?