



# Perfformio

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SOMATIC DISCIPLINES:  
PERFORMANCE TRAINING AND PRACTICE

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EDITOR  
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Cover illustration: Dancer/choreographer: Karin Potisk at the ‘Weave’ project (Photo by Gigi Gigianello and courtesy of Thomas Kampe).

## Introduction

### Somatic Disciplines: Performance Training and Practice

KENE IGWEONU

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I am pleased to present the second issue of *Perfformio* to you. *Perfformio* is a refereed eJournal of performing arts and allied disciplines which is published by the School of Performance and Literature at Swansea Metropolitan University. The journal was inaugurated in autumn 2009 with the publication of a special issue on African theatre and performance. As editor, the first issue reflects my interest in African theatre and performance, as well as serving as an indication of the journal's global outlook and international ambition.

In this second issue we focus on 'Somatic Disciplines: Performance Training and Practice' to look at the place of somatic practice in performance training, and how somatic practitioners respond to the challenges of performer training. There is a vast and growing amount of work being done in this area, particularly within dance, physical theatre and actor training, and this issue offer readers only a partial glimpse of this practice using three articles by practitioners and performers in the field.

The first article by Kate Kohler Amory, 'Acting for the Twenty-first Century: A Somatic Approach to Contemporary Actor Training', examines the somatic approach of Body-Mind Centering<sup>®</sup> in relation to actor training. In it, Amory draws on her practice as a somatic practitioner and actor trainer to offer readers a 'window' into her adoption of the technique of Body-Mind Centering as a viable tool for the training of actors and performers. Extending this discussion on Body-Mind Centering and actor training, Taavo Smith in 'On Somatic Acting' draws on his experience to write about how somatic training has influenced his choices as an actor and helped to transform his perception of warm-ups, blockage, scoring and collaboration. However, central to Smith's

essay is the question of what it means to be a somatic actor. The third article in this issue of *Perfformio* is by Thomas Kampe. ‘Weave’: The Feldenkrais Method as Choreographic Process’ is a report on Kampe’s 2009 research project in which he explores the use of the Feldenkrais Method<sup>®</sup>, as a creative medium or vehicle for creativity, within the choreographic process.

Somatics, as a distinct discipline, is vast and continues to grow in many directions. However, the three articles published in this issue of *Perfformio* offer a focused consideration of the field using examples drawn specifically from Feldenkrais Method and Body-Mind Centring. With this in mind, I hope you find the articles useful, and that you will enjoy reading and hopefully challenging some of the ideas expressed in them. Finally, in line with our editorial policy, the authors whose essays appear in this second instalment retain the copyright to their articles and can publish them elsewhere (either in the original form presented here or in a revised form). However, where an author elects to do so, *Perfformio* must be duly acknowledged as place of first publication in all instances.