



PEEP: Antigone

An Exploration of Performing Live Theatre During a Pandemic, Using Sophocles' Antigone

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Abstract

Employing the dramaturgical methodology of Pandemic/Epidemic Embodied Performance (‘PEEP’), this practice-led research project staged a live theatre production of the ancient Greek tragedy *Antigone*, by Sophocles, in Auckland, New Zealand, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the restriction placed on theatre because of the global pandemic, the resulting production actualised a range of methods for theatre to respond in times of crisis while retaining the aesthetics and ephemeral qualities of live performance. Integral to this research is an exploration of how ancient Greek tragedy is relevant to contemporary theatre audiences.

The research project extensively engages with the scenographic work of practitioners Lizzie Clachan and Soutra Gilmour (focusing on their performance design contributions in British theatre), which influenced and informed the design of PEEP: *Antigone*. Artist Marcel Duchamp’s theoretic perception of spectatorship and liveness in Art is explored through his sculpture *Étant Donnés: 1. La Chute d’eau, 2. Le Gaz d’éclairage* (*Given: 1. The Waterfall, 2. The Illuminating Gas*). An examination of Robert Lepage’s roles as a dramaturg, director, and designer of the theatre, makes personal the pressures of working within the theatre and supported comprehension of the external conflicts that can obstruct the nature of theatre-making. Central to PEEP’s contextual focus is Feminist Theory and Theatre (FTT) in conjunction with Research as Theatre (RaT). These theories are explored through critical scholars Judith Butler and Yelena Gulzman, who subsequently argue for and against the approach that all research is categorically performative but not necessarily theatrical.

Positioning the research through an epistemologically dramaturgical and theatrical perspective, the written thesis follows the structure of an ancient Greek tragic plot, with titles to guide the audience through the story of this research process.

Table of Contents

PEEP: Antigone	2
Abstract	3
Table of Contents	4
List of Figures	6
Acknowledgements	10
Prólogos: The First Act of the Ancient Greek Drama	11
Parados: An Opening Choral Ode.....	14
Episode 1: Art and Artists; The Theorist and Practitioners Who Have Shaped the Research.	23
Marcel Duchamp.....	24
Étant Donnés: 1. La Chute d'eau, 2. Le Gaz d'éclairage (Given: 1. The Waterfall, 2. The Illuminating Gas)	24
Theatre Scenography	28
Lizzie Clachan and Soutra Gilmour.....	28
Robert Lepage	37
International COVID-related Theatre Designs	41
Episode 2: Methods and Methodologies.....	46
1. Feminist Theory and Theatre	46
2. Research as Theatre (RaT).....	51
The Agon	55

Peripetia and Anagnorisis: The change of circumstance and the moment of discovery.	55
The Theatron: The Scenographic Design of PEEP: Antigone.....	62
The Conception of PEEP: Antigone	62
Mirroring, Reflection, and Transparency.....	67
The Chorêgos and Didaskalos: The Processes and Methods of Directing Antigone	86
Exodus.....	98
References.....	100
Glossary	105
A Gallery of Images from the Production of Antigone	109
Appendices.....	121
Stage Direction Key	121
<i>Antigone</i> , Trailer and Final Performance, Corvus Theatre Co.	121
An Example of the Actors Consent for Antigone	122

List of Figures

Figure 1: Model Book, New Zealand Herald Articles, ‘The New Normal’.	14
Figure-2: All Theatre’s Closed Until Further Notice.	16
Figure 3 Antigone National Theatre 2012 Programme and Ticket.	19
Figure 4: Étant Donnés: 1. La Chute d’eau, 2. Le Gaz d’éclairage (Given: 1. The Waterfall, 2. The Illuminating Gas)	26
Figure 5: Yerma at the Young Vic.	29
Figure 6: Screenshot image from National Theatre: Live, Antigone. Eurydice’s Death.	31
Figure 7: Obama and Biden await updates on Bin Laden.	33
Figure 8: The Company in Antigone.	33
Figure 9: Antigone Model Box.	34
Figure 10: Theatre at Epidauros, Greece, Athen, Odeon of Herodes Atticus.	34
Figure 11: Derbhle Crotty as Hecuba in Hecuba	35
Figure 12: Yves Jacques in Robert Lepage’s The Far Side of the Moon	38
Figure 13: Antigone in Rehearsal - Creon and Haemon Conflict.	39
Figure 14: Zachary Macer as Chorus member	40
Figure 15: Through a mailbox slot, Japanese theatre offers new viewing experience	41
Figure 16: Screenshot Image from Chekhov’s The Seagull, a new online version	43
Figure 17: An Artists Impression of the Exterior of the Vertical Theatre.	43
Figure 18: You should be ashamed setting yourself up against the majority, disregarding the will of the people!	49
Figure 19: All good ideas start on the back of an envelope - PEEP	56

Figure 20: An usher wears a protective face shield before the start of "The Persians" an ancient Greek drama by Aeschylus first performed in 472 BC, following the easing of measures against the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), at the ancient amphitheatre of Epidauros, Greece.....	57
Figure 21: Zachary Macer and Holly Luton, with Daria Erastova and Narise Hansen Antigone Call-back.....	59
Figure 22: A furry friend disrupting my research.....	60
Figure 23: The second rehearsal of Antigone.....	62
Figure 24: : Sketch of Original PEEP: Antigone on the Grassy Knoll.....	65
Figure 25: Sketch 1 of the PEEP Show Glass Box.....	65
Figure 26: Antigone Tech Rehearsal – Three Glass Bubbles.....	66
Figure 27: Daria Erastova and Jane Luton as the Chorus.....	69
Figure 28: : Zachary Macer as The Boy, and Jane Luton as Teiresias.....	70
Figure 29: Antigone’s Conviction.....	71
Figure 30: Antigone’s Conviction 2.....	71
Figure 31: Jacqueline Hood as Creon and Zachary Macer as Haemon.....	73
Figure 32: Jacqueline Hood as Creon – “Polynices is to have no grave at all”.....	76
Figure 33: But I wasn’t afraid to speak! I warned you that this would happen. I knew how it would be!.....	77
Figure 34: And no woman will get the better of me.....	78
Figure 35: Daria Erastova as Eurydice, Eurydice’s Suicide.....	79
Figure 36: Creon’s Coronation and The Chorus.....	80
Figure 37: Antigone Hanging and Haemon Beside Her.....	81
Figure 38: Antigone and Polynices.....	82
Figure 39: Leave him alone, and let him learn how a wise man controls his tongue.....	84

Figure 40: Jane Luton as Teiresias.....	85
Figure 41: Holly Luton Directing the cast inside the ‘glass box’	86
Figure 42: The first rehearsal with Antigone and Ismene.....	88
Figure 43: What’s behind the mask controversy?.....	89
Figure 44: Donald Trump Tests Positive for COVID-19	93
Figure 45: Blood on the glass	95
Figure 46: Set Builder and Supervisor, Tim Luton, Constructing the Glass Box	97
Figure 47: The Chorus and Antigone.....	109
Figure 48: Zachary Macer as the Soldier and Jacqueline Hood as Creon	109
Figure 49: We saw her, actually setting the grave to rights.....	110
Figure 50: And yet you dared to disobey the law?	110
Figure 51: You are merely a man, mortal, like me!.....	111
Figure 52: The human face reveals conspiracies, before they are enacted, again, and then again.....	112
Figure 53: When a man commits crimes, and is proud of his action, a flaming sword hangs over his head	113
Figure 54: Narise Hansen as Chorus member.....	114
Figure 55: Let them be punished as I have been punished, and suffer the injustices that I have suffer..	115
Figure 56: Is there anyone more stupid, than the stupid man who refuses to see his own stupidity?.....	116
Figure 57: Daria Erastova as Eurydice	117
Figure 58: Antigone and Haemon, Death as in Love.....	118
Figure 59: Eurydice in the Mirror	119
Figure 60: Jane Luton as Chorus member	120

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

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Prólogos: The First Act of the Ancient Greek Drama

Before I begin, I would like the audiences to note that this thesis is written through the ontological lens of theatre, more specifically, an ancient Greek Tragedy plot. You are my audience, and I am the Didaskalos (Director).

Using the ancient Greek tragedy *Antigone* by Sophocles, this research asks how can theatre be performed live and maintain its aesthetic and ephemeral qualities during a global pandemic?

Each chapter of my research follows the structure of an ancient Greek tragedy¹. The Prólogos is the first act of the Greek tragedy; it is the play's opening, establishing the context and characters. My [Prólogos](#) contains my research question and research abstract and establishes the mode of the research.

The second chapter, [Parados: An Opening Choral Ode](#), signifies the Ode sung by the Chorus to open the play as they enter the Theatron². The Chorus informs the audience of the events which have taken place before the play. This chapter discusses the contexts of my research and the paradigms drawn from Dramaturgical Methodologies and Feminist thinking. I discuss the story of the COVID-19 pandemic and how it influenced this research. I consider the history of ancient Greek tragedy and the academic discourses surrounding its relevance within contemporary contexts. I explain the reasons behind choosing *Antigone* by Sophocles for this research.

[Episode 1: Art and Artists; The Theorist and Practitioners Who Have Shaped the Research](#)

discusses theorists and practitioners including Artist, Marcel Duchamp, and Theatre

¹ Prólogos, Parados, Episodes, Statsimons, Argon, Exodus.

² Theatre, from the ancient Greek, Theatron: The watching place.

Designers Lizzie Clachan, Soutra Gilmour, and Robert Lepage. This chapter discusses several international COVID-related theatre designs.

[*Episode 2: Methods and Methodologies*](#) examines the methods I used throughout the research. These are explored through the lens of Feminist Theory and Theatre (FTT) and Research as Theatre (RaT). I particularly focus on the scholarship of Yelena Gulzman and Judith Butler.

In ancient Greek tragedy, [*the Agon*](#)³ is the debate between two characters, usually the protagonist and the antagonist.⁴ This chapter discusses the key methodology of this research – *Pandemic/Epidemic Embodied Performance (PEEP)*. Several subchapters explain the context and processes applied to create my aesthetic and ephemeral production of *Antigone*. [*Peripetia and Anagnorisis: The change of circumstance and the moment of discovery*](#) explores how my original research proposal shifted, allowing an ‘Ah-ha’, a moment of discovery, to stage a production of *Antigone* in the pandemic. [*The Theatron: The Scenographic Design of PEEP: Antigone*](#) explores the physical designs of the production. [*The Chorêgos and Didaskalos: The processes and methods of Directing Antigone*](#) chapter examines the methods and processes used to direct, rehearse, and perform this play to a live audience. I discuss the obstructions and contingency of the research due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I explain how I used a Directors Model Book⁵ to archive, curate, and construct the production. I consider international theatre in the subchapter, [*International COVID-related Theatre Designs*](#).

The [*Exodus*](#) is the concluding scene of the ancient Greek drama. It was performed by the Chorus and allowed for a moment of commentary or reflection of the play's themes. In this

³ Agony, from the ancient Greek, Argon: Conflict, struggle, or debate.

⁴ In *Antigone*, this is the scene between Creon and Antigone. After being arrested, she is interrogated by Creon, having buried her brother in strict disregard of Creon's legal orders.

⁵ I use Bertolt Brecht's concept of a Model Book from his book, Bertolt Brecht, *Brecht on Performance: Messingkauf and Modelbooks*, ed. Tom Kuhn, Marc Silberman, and Steve Giles, trans. Steve Giles et al. (London: Methuen Drama, 2014).

chapter, I make concluding comments about my research and reflect on the learning processes that emerged from the project.

Throughout this thesis, footnotes intervene as *Stasimons*. These were interludes where the Chorus commented on the play's action, intersecting between each Episode (or Scene). These footnotes give further commentary, references, and citations, alongside my reflections on the research.

This thesis is submitted in conjunction with a video recording of the final production of *Antigone*. A copy of this production can be requested by contacting Corvus Theatre Co. at corvustheatreco@gmail.com. As we begin, the audience is reminded that all the dramaturgical, directorial, and design methods and processes, contextual practices, and lenses were considered during the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Parados: An Opening Choral Ode

The only disease man cannot salve, or cure, is death – Chorus, Antigone.



Figure 1: Holly Charlotte Luton, Model Book, New Zealand Herald Articles, 'The New Normal'. March 17 2020. Auckland, New Zealand.

In March of 2020, the world came to a standstill. Planes ground to a halt as Nations closed their borders. Cities fell silent as populations plunged into lockdowns and government-mandated isolations. Our cultural formalities changed how we socialised, dressed, and practised our rituals, old and new,⁶ as stockpiles of toilet paper, hoarded by shoppers, left shelves empty in supermarkets⁷. Like the plagues that have come before, the ritualistic gatherings and festivities of parliament, temples, mosques, churches, weddings, funerals, birthdays, markets and shops, hostelries, sporting arenas, theatres, and performing arts venues, all but ceased. These were the results of a new virus officially named COVID-19, as

⁶ Over time we practiced cleansing rituals of washing and sanitising our hands. We dressed in new ways with medical masks and PPE gear. We changed how we socialised with each other, tracking our movements and practicing social distancing.

⁷ I recall the story of my grandmother, stock piling sugar during the British sugar shortages in 1974.

it spread rapidly and globally. From March 2020 to September 2021, close to 300 million have contracted the virus, and five million have died globally.

Historically, theatre has seen many periods of turmoil because of plague, political upheaval, and war.⁸ Despite this, theatre has continually and determinedly operated under clandestine⁹ and isolated means.¹⁰ However, many decades have passed since theatre has experienced a mass-scale lockdown. In 1918, due to the influenza pandemic, New York City public health commissioner Royal Copeland, stated that he would keep “my theatres in as good condition as my wife keeps our home”.¹¹ Within one week, all theatres and schools closed. The *Evening Bulletin* documented that theatres in Philadelphia saw a loss of \$200,000 over two weeks,¹² an estimated \$3.5 million in 2020.¹³ In our current crisis, we see history reflecting itself as theatres around the world fall dark. We cannot help but wonder what the social and economic long-term consequences the pandemic will have on the theatres in London’s West End, New York’s Broadway, and here in Aotearoa, New Zealand.¹⁴

⁸ The Blitz of the Second World War caused numerous disruptions to the theatre, often resulting in hasty evacuations of audiences into underground bunkers.

⁹ As the theatre were shut down and banned during the Inter-regnum period of Oliver Cromwell’s tenure (1642-1660), theatres moved underground to more private and secret means.

¹⁰ London was often rife with plague during the Elizabethan era. Shakespeare’s Theatres (The Globe, The Rose, The Curtain) were often closed for long periods of time while plague ran rampant through the city of London.

¹¹ Charlotte Canning, ‘Theatre and the Last Pandemic’, *American Theatre: A Publication of Theatre Communications Group*, 24 March 2020, <https://www.americantheatre.org/2020/03/24/theatre-and-the-last-pandemic/>.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Zachary Woolfe, ‘Metropolitan Opera Cancels Season Over Virus and Faces \$60 Million Loss’, *The New York Times*, 19 March 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/19/arts/music/metropolitan-opera-coronavirus.html>. [For comparison, the Metropolitan Opera in New York, expected a \$60 million loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.]

¹⁴ David Chidekel, ‘Broadway: Broken Or Business As Usual?’, *Forbes*, 16 February 2021, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/legalentertainment/2021/02/16/broadway-broken-or-business-as-usual/?sh=7fec98fb2111>. [Chidekel suggests theatre has relied too heavily on liveness in an age of digital technology, and theatre should continue to stream their production in the future, both for its economic benefits, and accessibility for new audiences.]



Figure-2: All Theatre's Closed Until Further Notice, in Charlotte Canning, 'Theatre and the Last Pandemic', *American Theatre: A Publication of Theatre Communications Group*, 24 March 2020.¹

During this current pandemic, theatre artists seek solutions to remain relevant and share their work with audiences, pragmatically and aesthetically; from streaming services to open digital archives of pre-recorded performances¹⁵ with actors and directors gathering via Zoom and Skype to produce their work.

Theatre is regarded as the most social of all the art forms.¹⁶ Unfortunately, physical, and social distancing outlined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and local governmental

¹⁵ Lauren Hitchman, 'From Page to Stage to Screen: The Live Theatre Broadcast as a New Medium', *Adaptation* 11, no. 2 (6 August 2018): 171–85, <https://doi.org/10.1093/adaptation/apx029>.

¹⁶ Nadia Anwar, 'Theatre Combines so Many of the Other Art Forms', *The News on Sunday*, 10 July 2016, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/561301-theatre-combines-art-forms>. [When commenting on theatre as a social artform, Professor Martin Puchner, the founding director of the Mellon School of Theatre and Performance Research at Harvard University, states that "theatre is the most social art form. The gathering in theatrical space is the most political moment because it has to do with the groups of people. This is more like a rehearsal to political assembly, and a reflection.]"

bodies, have seen the closures of many venues. With today's knowledge and understanding of viruses – and their social and medical implications – the risks of sitting in a closed auditorium with many other people outweigh the joy of the artform. There is now a physical danger for the participants and audiences in the liveness of performance. This can include anything from handing over tickets to taking your seat in the theatre.

My research explores ways to maintain theatre's inherent aesthetics and ephemeral nature in the time of COVID-19. The scenographic design and methodology of *PEEP: Antigone* is a proposed solution and response to the disruptions of theatre caused by the pandemic. *PEEP: Antigone* is an aesthetic and live theatre performance, which adheres to the New Zealand government's mandates and practices to reduce the spread of the virus.

Fundamental to my research is Feminist Theory and Theatre (FTT). Feminist Theory is the “adoption of an approach to knowledge creation which recognises that all theories are perspectival”.¹⁷ As Louis Cohen suggests, Feminist Theory is a scholarship that seeks to “replace [past positions of research] with a different substantive agenda – of empowerment, voice, emancipation, equality, and representation for oppressed groups”¹⁸. In short, the ‘I’ is personal, and the personal matters. Thus, my written scholarship, in conjunction with the design of *PEEP: Antigone*, is inherently personal, and the research is positioned through first-person pronouns.

Contextually, I position this research from my perspective as a ciswoman who identifies with the pronouns, she/her. I am a ciswoman of British descent, residing in New Zealand since I was five. On my mother's side, I am a third-generation female university graduate. My parents raised me with the perspective that education is essential, and we often visited

¹⁷ Cohen, Louis, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison. *Research Methods in Education*, 5th Edition. 5th ed. London: Routledge, 2001, p. 34.

¹ Ibid.

historical sites, museums, art galleries, and theatres. My first theatre experience was at five months old, performing as an angel in the nursery's nativity play.

On the 20th of July 2012, I sat in the stalls, of the Olivier Theatre (row 2, seat R14), at The Royal National Theatre in London. I was watching a production of Don Taylor's translation¹⁹ of Sophocles' *Antigone*. It was my first encounter with Greek theatre, and I immediately fell in love. I realised that even ancient plays could speak to us and be reimagined in new contexts. This production ignited my passion and pursuance of theatre and history.

¹⁹ This is the translation I use during my research.



Figure 3 Holly Charlotte Luton, Antigone National Theatre 2012 Programme and Ticket, Auckland, New Zealand, April 2021.

The act of storytelling through visual and oral performance is inherent in the history of humans.²⁰ Extensive records show that our ancestors encouraged art and performance,²¹ and historians believe that the formal creation of theatre took place in ancient Athens, circa 530BCE. The earliest records suggest that theatre was not just a form of entertainment but a ritualistic event during the festival of Dionysia. Thespis is the first recorded exarchon (actor) in Ancient Athens and gives rise to the term ‘thespian’.²² Most ancient Greek plays in their entirety are lost to time, except a few full works from four significant ancient playwrights: Aristophanes, Euripides, Sophocles, and Aeschylus. These surviving plays consist of Comedies and Tragedies²³ and centre on themes of war, politics, and the ancient Myths.

Written circa 441 BCE, *Antigone*, by Sophocles, follows the ancient Greek myth of Oedipus and the resulting tragedy of the Theban royal family. *Antigone* centres on themes of state power and family obligations and the disruption of rites and rituals of burial practices. Although *Antigone* is the third play in the Theban trilogy, it was written first. In 430BCE, an unknown plague swept through the theatre capital of Greece, and Sophocles’ homeland, Athens. It is still not known what the plague was, which killed thousands of Athenian citizens.²⁴ Surviving the plague, Sophocles was inspired to write his subsequent tragedies,

²⁰ Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapien: A Brief History of Humankind* (Canada: Penguin Random House Company, 2014), p. 27. [“Fiction has enabled us not merely to imagine things, but to do so collectively”].

²¹ Caroline Davies, ‘Research on Dordogne Cave Art Shows Children Learned to Finger-Paint in Palaeolithic Age, Approximately 13,000 Years Ago’, *The Guardian*, 30 September 2011, sec. Archaeology, <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2011/sep/30/stone-age-toddlers-art-lessons#:~:text=Archaeologists%20at%20one%20of%20the,soft%20red%20clay%20to%20produce>. [an examination of the Dordogne Cave Art in France, shows that our ancient ancestors passed their traditions and stories onto their children by teaching them how to paint. Small fingerprints and indentations left by children, demonstrated how parents encouraged art, by lifting them up to reach the cave ceilings].

²² Thespian, from the ancient Greek, Thespis: an actor.

²³ A third genre, the ‘satyr’ plays also existed, although all are now lost. In these plays, actors dress as the goat-like Satyr, wearing phallic costumes, singing and dancing, and often satirically mocking citizens and politicians of Athens. Satyr, from which we get Satire.

²⁴ Robin Mitchell-Boyask, ‘The Art of Medicine: Plague and Theatre in Ancient Athens’, *The Lancet* Vol. 373 (31 January 2009): 374–75.

Oedipus the King and *Oedipus at Colonus* (the first and second in the trilogy). Using plague as a metaphor for the curse upon the family and the Theban State, the plays demonstrate the infectious nature fate can have on future generations. Thus, I chose *Antigone* for this research due to its thematic relevance and similar contexts of plague and pandemic.

As Yuval Noah Harari suggests, humans have “the ability to create an imagined reality out of words enabled large numbers of strangers to cooperate effectively”²⁵. For millennia, humans have collectively shared their experiences through myths. By changing and altering those myths, we can better understand how we cooperate and communicate as a species.

This research began with an analysis of past productions of ancient Greek performances in New Zealand. Despite Classical Studies being a National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) subject in New Zealand Secondary schools and taught at tertiary level, the lack of Greek performance in New Zealand is surprising. Through archival research, 45 documented and curated productions of Greek theatre, some produced within non-theatrical spaces.²⁶ A majority of these are comedies; many repeated several times.

It is crucial in understanding ancient Greek theatre to discuss the philosophy of Aristotle, as expressed in his most famous work, *The Poetics*. This book assesses the efficacy and characteristics of ancient Greek theatre. Especially significant is Aristotle’s definition of Greek tragedy. He articulates that moral ambiguity is at the heart of every great tragedy, and the tragic hero must be neither a villain nor a virtuous man. The tragic hero does not redeem himself through “misfortune to good fortune, but only the opposite, only good fortune to misfortune; the cause must not be vice, but a great error”.²⁷ He states, “this is the plot that

²⁵ Harari, *Sapien: A Brief History of Humankind*. p. 36

²⁶ Massey University, ‘Inmates Explore Morals in Greek Theatre’, 13 December 2017, https://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/about-massey/news/article.cfm?mnarticle_uuid=31C3F3B9-EEAE-4592-B1A0-BC51D172CE51. [These include school productions and a production of *Antigone* performed by prisoners using puppets.]

²⁷ This is understood to be ‘Hamartia’ or the fatal flaw.

will produce the technically finest tragedy”.²⁸ Tragedy must invoke “pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its catharsis of such emotions”.²⁹ Aristotle determines that *Antigone* is the harshest and most disgusting of all tragedies, “for there is no emotional crisis; accordingly, poets only rarely create such situations, as in the *Antigone*, when Haemon fails to kill Creon”.³⁰

Nicole Loraux asks her audience, what is the purpose of tragedy, especially when performed in the 21st century? “What do spectators in the theatre gain from thinking, in the mode of fiction, things that in everyday life cannot and must not be thought?”³¹ Loraux’s scholarship made me consider why tragedy still matters to us. During these complex and strenuous times, what can tragedy do to help us better understand the political and social structures we occupy? Therefore, before finalising my textual choice of *Antigone*, I asked myself several questions:

*Why am I choosing to stage a tragedy in these tragic times? Would it not be better to choose a Comedy, a play which might bring joy and laughter to an audience? Aristotle reflects that theatre should purge emotion and create catharsis for an audience. The purpose of tragedy is to evoke pity and fear. Are these the emotions we wish to conjure in Antigone?*³²

Finalising the textual choice, I began to examine numerous artworks, artists, and theorists who have influenced the directional and designed choices of the production of *Antigone*.

²⁸ L. J. Potts, *Aristotle on the Art of Fiction: 'The Poetics'* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 33-34

²⁹ Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1449b.

³⁰ Potts, *Aristotle on the Art of Fiction: 'The Poetics'*, pp. 35-36

³¹ Nicole Loraux, *Tragic Ways of Killing a Woman*, trans. Anthony Forster (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), p. 64

³² Holly Luton, *PEEP: Antigone Project Diary*, Auckland, New Zealand, 5 April 2020,

Episode 1: Art and Artists; The Theorist and Practitioners Who Have Shaped the Research.

Peter Brook suggests that theatre is defined as the action of one person walking across an empty space while another observes.³³ Since the mid-19th century, practitioners and artists have experimented in shifting the spatial definitions of theatre, incorporating vast technological advances in lighting, sound, and projection design.

During this pandemic, the notion of Brook's theatre space has been experimented with. When theatre cannot be seen by an audience in person, within a physical space, theatre must adapt. A problem lies in how we understand space. Does theatre only exist within a physical, conventional theatrical space? Performances outside of traditional theatre spaces are not a new concept. For example, performances have taken place in outdoor venues, shop windows, prisons, and schools. Artists and Scenographers frequently experiment with their art and play with the notion of space. The following artists were influential in the final design of *PEEP: Antigone*, and their notions of the possibilities of space shaped the directorial and designed processes of the research.

³³ Peter Brook, *The Empty Space: A Book About the Theatre: Deadly, Holy, Rough, Immediate* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), p. 11

Marcel Duchamp

Étant Donnés: 1. La Chute d'eau, 2. Le Gaz d'éclairage (Given: 1. The Waterfall, 2. The Illuminating Gas)

Marcel Duchamp is famed for his conceptual art and his association with the Dada and Cubism movement. While his work has comprised of painting and sculpture mediums, it is the latter that I shall discuss in this chapter. *Étant donnés*³⁴ (Duchamp's last work and made in secret) is a large three-dimensional tableau. However, it is only visible from one position: through a peephole³⁵ in a large wooden door.³⁶ Through it lies a naked woman, her face obstructed, outstretched, holding a gas lamp amidst a large landscape backdrop.³⁷

Étant donnés informed my research and enabled me to communicate the intentions of *PEEP: Antigone* to an audience. As Dawn Ades (et al.) suggests, three-dimensionality has the inherent ability to be palpable, solid, and tangible.³⁸ In theatre, we understand this to be the collective sharing of space, both as actors and audience. Theatre is palpable in many ways; we might see the same play, occupy the same space, practice the same theatre rituals. Nevertheless, because we are individuals, our affective experiences can be entirely different to one another. Our placement in the theatre, perspectivism³⁹ or personal contexts can shape

³⁴ His full translated work is entitled *Étant Donnés: 1. La Chute d'eau, 2. Le Gaz d'éclairage (Given: 1. The Waterfall, 2. The Illuminating Gas)*

³⁵ Although already deciding on the concept of a peepshow, Duchamp's work was a wonderful coincidence to discover in my research.

³⁶ Dawn Ades, Neil Cox, and David Hopkins, *Marcel Duchamp* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1999), p. 190

³⁷ In strict instruction to be only revealed after Duchamp's death, the original work now resides in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, with a prepared 'Manual of Instruction' in order to assemble the work.

³⁸ Ades, Cox, and Hopkins, *Marcel Duchamp*, p. 190

³⁹ Perspectivism is a term devised by German Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. It adopts the view that all ideas and research is undertaken with contextual perspectives; each individual's context will influence how they view knowledge, observe the world, and how they approach it.

our emotional resonance. Together our experience might be similar, but it is not the same.

The artwork, *Étant Donnés*,

*Can never be touched, not because of any constraints imposed by the museum, but
because it is separated from the spectator by the impenetrable barrier of the door,
and moreover, can only ever be seen from one viewpoint.*⁴⁰

However, theatre currently has strict constraints imposed on it as a result of the pandemic.

This means that theatre has to find ways to exist that can still be palpable but do not harm the participants or spectators.

Although *Étant Donnés* is a sculpture, it embodies the intrinsic ephemeral nature that theatre produces, where “no technical device can substitute for the physical encounter of the eyes”.⁴¹

The concept of spectatorship was a subject of discussion, and difficulty was encountered when producing theatre during the pandemic. The production was filmed to curate the practice-led component for examination. The recording provided the possibility of streaming the performance in the likelihood that Auckland could be moved to a higher alert-level or locked down completely. However, I acknowledge that filmed performances are not the solution for future-proofing theatre, nor can they replicate or replace the aesthetical magic of seeing live performances. Despite the attempts to maintain theatrical relevancy in the pandemic through filmographic means, Artist Director of the National Theatre, Rufus Norris, states that film “cannot replace the magic of live performance”.⁴² Although *Étant Donnés* invites the audience to peer through a peephole, spectators have the agency to choose what they observe. Live theatre also has the innate power to enable audience agency.

⁴⁰ Ades, Cox, and Hopkins, *Marcel Duchamp*, p. 191

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 204

⁴² Rufus Norris, in National Theatre, *National Theatre / Live Shows Return from Summer 2021*, YouTube Video (London, 2021), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmWZnZRlcr0>.



Figure 4: Marcel Duchamp, Étant Donnés: 1. La Chute d'eau, 2. Le Gaz d'éclairage (Given: 1. The Waterfall, 2. The Illuminating Gas), 1946-1966, Sculpture, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia.¹

In theatre, the audience can decipher, focus, make choices about what they observe; the protagonist, the deuteragonist, the Tritagonist, the Chorus, the costumes, the lighting, the set, and the theatre itself, unlike film, where the audience only see through the director's lens. All these elements individually give audiences a different perspective or outcome regarding the drama. The theatre director might indicate what to watch through theatrical focus, but we do not have to follow their lead.

Duchamp explicitly states that art cannot exist without a spectator, and as Brook suggests, theatre must occur with one participant and one who observes too. Duchamp indicates that art is not

*performed by the artist alone; the spectator brings the work in contact with the external world by deciphering and interpreting its inner qualifications and this adds his contribution to the creative act.*⁴³

In theatre, the audience contributes to the creative act by their presence and responses. They are just as much a vital part of the experience as the actor. Likewise, Duchamp's work exemplified the intrinsic spirit of theatre; ephemerality.⁴⁴ Art, he considered, has a life of about forty years before it is history.⁴⁵ Theatre exists only in the moment and is gone after each performance.

⁴³ Ades, Cox, and Hopkins, *Marcel Duchamp*, p. 205

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 206 ["The significance of an artist's work, too, Duchamp held to be ephemeral".]

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Theatre Scenography

Lizzie Clachan and Soutra Gilmour

Lizzie Clachan and Soutra Gilmour are two scenographers with numerous years of experience as designers in British Theatre. My research is informed by three productions, one live, one recorded, and one from an archived gallery. I was particularly interested in Clachan's design for the 2015 National Theatre's production of *Yerma*, and Gilmour's, design for the 2012 production of *Antigone*, and the 2015 Royal Shakespeare Company's (RSC) production of *Hecuba*.

Like Duchamp, transparency, mirroring, and reflections are used in Gilmour and Clachan's designs as a vessel for metaphor and allegory. Clachan's production of *Yerma* occurs within a large glass box, on a traverse stage, that can be interpreted to represent a womb or incubator. Trapped in the glass box, the walls torment the protagonist, Yerma, as the omnipotent eyes of the audience observe her misfortune. Struggling to conceive a child, she is burdened with the guilt of unfulfilled expectations of motherhood.

As Adam J. Ledger explains, a glass box can serve several functions in scenographic design.⁴⁶ For the audience, there is both transparency and mirroring. Using a traverse stage in *Yerma*, audiences are seated on either side of the centralised glass box. As an audience, we gaze into the box, yet we are estranged and separated from the action by the Perspex walls. We can also gaze *through* it and observe the audience seated on the opposite side, forcing us to monitor each other's behaviours within the theatre.⁴⁷ Finally, audiences can see themselves

⁴⁶ Adam J. Ledger, *The Director and Directing: Craft, Process and Aesthetic in Contemporary Theatre* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), p. 237

⁴⁷ In the 2015 production of Aristophanes' ancient Greek Comedy, *Lysistrata*, (directed by Michael Hurst at the Auckland Theatre Company, staged at the Q Theatre, Auckland, New Zealand), audiences mimicked this behaviour in the traverse theatre setting. Thematically centred on war and sex, audiences uncomfortably watched each other's reactions, as the actors imitated the large phallic costume pieces of the Satyr plays.

reflected in the glass. As Ledger suggests, “the appearance of glass boxes in contemporary work concerns a particular concern with viewing and voyeurship”.⁴⁸ Semir Zeki argues that the glass box provides a “near impossible task of not looking at others in this ‘mirror’”⁴⁹ and can demonstrate important lessons about our interaction with reflections and mirrors. The glass box provides “mechanisms for scrutiny”,⁵⁰ and in doing so, builds tension throughout the play. These concepts were influential when designing the glass box for my production of *PEEP: Antigone*.



Figure 5: Stephanie Berger, *Yerma* at the Young Vic, National Theatre, London, UK, 2015.¹

⁴⁸ Ledger, *The Director and Directing: Craft, Process and Aesthetic in Contemporary Theatre*, p. 237.

⁴⁹ Semir Zeki, ‘Artistic Creativity and the Brain’, *Science* 293, no. 5527 (6 July 2001): 51–52, p. 51 [Zeki suggests that as humans, we are one of the only species able to recognise our own reflection. It is inherent in our behaviour to look at ourselves when we pass reflective surfaces, often checking out our appearance or for defensive strategies against predators.]

⁵⁰ Ledger, *The Director and Directing: Craft, Process and Aesthetic in Contemporary Theatre*, p. 195

In theatre, the director often plays a significant role in scenographic design. The set encompasses the world of the performance and is influential in how the play is directed. Likewise, the direction influences the design of the set. Theatre is regarded as a place in which to observe performativity through acting. However, Dorita Hannah argues that the designed elements of drama are places of performativity. She argues that design can enable the augmentation of an “actor’s body, performing without and in spite of human agency”.⁵¹ Through design, directors can create playful moments.⁵² One such gruesome and yet profoundly satisfying moment in *Yerma* was created by director Simon Stone and designer Clachan. Yerma projectile vomits onto the glass, which drips down the Perspex walls. The audiences recoil and express their disgust, safe knowing that the glass box has protected them. In Gilmour’s design of *Antigone*, we see a similar effect with the revelation of Eurydice’s suicide, which is set in Creon’s office, inside a large glass box.⁵³ In the final scene, the fluorescent lights click back on, revealing Eurydice’s lifeless body as the blood, chaotic splattered, oozes down the glass.⁵⁴ In these instances, the glass boxes were places *for* performativity and *are* independently performative.

⁵¹ Dorita Hannah, *Event-Space: Theatre Architecture and the Historical Avant-Garde* (London: Routledge, 2018), p. 6

⁵² Ledger, *The Director and Directing: Craft, Process and Aesthetic in Contemporary Theatre*, p. 196

⁵³ Gilmour won the ‘2012 Evening Standard Theatre Awards for Best Design’ for *Antigone*.

⁵⁴ I still get goosebumps recalling this powerful moment in this production of *Antigone*, as I remember my brother sitting next to me, absolutely horrified by this moment also. As I am writing this thesis, he still remembers this moment and how awesome of a production it was!



Figure 6: Holly Charlotte Luton, Screenshot image from National Theatre: Live, *Antigone*. Eurydice's Death. National Theatre, London, UK. July 2012.¹

Disappointingly, there is a dearth of information regarding Gilmour's scenographic work. However, a gallery collection of her work is accessible via her website.⁵⁵ Her work, which includes many reflective, mirrored, and transparent materials, excites the eye and resonates emotionally. Conceptually, director Polly Findlay, and designer Gilmour, set *Antigone* within an underground bunker. Contextual material sourced during the rehearsal process and parallel images from inside the White House during 'Operation Neptune Spear'⁵⁶ influenced the scenographic design and direction. It is interesting to compare the Prólogos scene on stage with the image of the United States President and his team watching the live feed of the assassination of Osama Bin Laden.

⁵⁵ Soutra Gilmour, 'Soutra Gilmour: Theatre', accessed 12 July 2020, <https://www.soutragilmour.com/theatre>.

⁵⁶ The 2011, United States strategy to assassinate Osama Bin Laden

Gilmour's design has taken inspiration from the original ancient Greek Theatron. The Olivier Theatre in which this production took place was built to reflect the design of the ancient Greek theatre at Epidauros.⁵⁷ Inside the glass box, Creon's office imitates the separation between the Skene and the Orchêstra. The action is figuratively and literally open for everyone to view. It is a striking element on the stage as the personal and political blend together, exposing the Theban royal family to his Senators⁵⁸ and to us the audience: the people of Thebes.

⁵⁷ National Theatre, '1964 - 2014 Greek Tragedy at the National Theatre' (London, 2014), <https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/greek-tragedy-at-the-national-theatre/wRnCOFJ0>.

⁵⁸ This is a very specific element of Don Taylor's translation of the original text. To use the word 'Senator' implies close political ties with Creon, their leader, rather than the separation of the Chorus from the Hero. It makes the play all the more intimate and focuses on the political challenges and hierarchies within government. The Chorus are supposed to make comment and reflect on the action, but tensions arise when your own policy makers criticise your actions.



Figure 7: Petee Souza, *Obama and Biden await updates on Bin Laden*, 1 May 2011.⁵⁹



Figure 8: Johan Persson, *The Company in Antigone*, National Theatre London, UK, June 2012.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Pete Souza, *Obama and Biden Await Updates on Bin Laden*, 1 May 2011, Photograph, 1 May 2011, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Obama_and_Biden_await_updates_on_bin_Laden.jpg.

⁶⁰ Polly Findlay, *Antigone*, Theatre Performance (Olivier Theatre, London, 2012).



Figure 9: Soutra Gilmour, *Antigone Model Box*, National Theatre, London, UK, June 2012.⁶¹



Figure 10: Berthold Werner, *Theatre at Epidauros*, Greece, Athen, Odeon of Herodes Atticus, Athens, Greece, 9 October 2017

⁶¹ Findlay, *Antigone*.



Figure 11: Topher McGrillis, Derbhle Crotty as Hecuba in Hecuba, Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford, UK, September 2015.⁶²

In the RSC's 2015 production of Euripides' *Hecuba*, Gilmour's signature use of reflection is rendered through the use of a large, angled mirror. The highly polished stage floor creates reflections, transforming the set into an optical illusion. As exemplified in the above image, Hecuba is seen to be extended, manipulated, and doubled twice over. This can be interpreted in several ways. Her extension and doubling could be construed as an accentuation of power. The contortion and reverse of her reflection might be interpreted as the disassociation from her divine past and current refugee status, as she is stripped of her homeland and dignity. The use of reflection and optical illusions informed my designs for PEEP: Antigone. The polished concrete floor of the Engineering building similarly reflected both the setting and the characters. Scenography is an essential process and product in which directors and designers can "construct and convey knowledge"⁶³ to the audience and the actors. Some theatre designs can be monotonous, an entity, or 'thing', which does not have a physical purpose or generate no symbolism. Ledger requires that theatre design should be "understood not through ontologies or in a single existence",⁶⁴ but serve a purpose, and rather than providing answers, leave audiences asking more questions.

⁶² Erica Whyman, *Hecuba*, Theatre Performance (Stratford-upon-Avon: Swan Theatre, 2015). [Royal Shakespeare Company's production of Euripides' *Hecuba*, designed by Soutra Gilmour.]

⁶³ Ledger, *The Director and Directing: Craft, Process and Aesthetic in Contemporary Theatre*. p. 237

⁶⁴ Ibid.

Robert Lepage

*Design must be part of the totality of what the director offers [...] and in the case of significant and international figures such as Lepage, [...] directors are the designers too.*⁶⁵

French-Canadian dramaturg, Robert Lepage, embraces the roles of director and designer. Ex Machina,⁶⁶ Lepage's theatre company, are renowned for producing multidisciplinary performances, many of which have been ground-breaking in their use of technologies.⁶⁷ Lepage intends to make theatre accessible for all and bring theatre directly to the people.⁶⁸ Using a studio-based black box theatre, Ex Machina creates portable theatre with the ability to adapt to the conditions of theatre venues around the world.⁶⁹ This concept informed the development of *PEEP: Antigone*, with the proposal that *PEEP: Antigone* could be moved from venue to venue. The Engineering building at Auckland University of Technology (AUT), acted similarly to a black box studio, where the production would be developed without the restrictions and hindrances of traditional theatre spaces.

In 2018, a touring production of Ex Machina's *The Far Side of the Moon* was performed at the Aotea Centre in Auckland, Tāmaki Makaurau. Watching this production, I recall the use of reflections and mirrors by Lepage. Entering the theatre, a large prismatic structure extends across the stage, creating a wall of mirrors. The structure was moved and repositioned to refract light and reflect the actor, highlighting the themes of a man reflecting upon his life.

⁶⁵ Ledger, *The Director and Directing: Craft, Process and Aesthetic in Contemporary Theatre*. p. 197

⁶⁶ Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović, *Robert Lepage* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 21
[“The choice of name for the company relates to Lepage's artistic interest in hybrid art forms. Apart from the obvious reference to the Ancient Greek drama ‘Deus Ex Machina’ (God from the machine), that resolves the unsolvable cries of human conditions, the name Ex Machina is a central metaphor for the interconnections between the performer and technology, a meeting place between different arts”.]

⁶⁷ Ex Machina, ‘Ex Machina, Robert Lepage’, *Ex Machina*, <https://exmachina.ca/robert-lepage>.

⁶⁸ Dundjerović, *Robert Lepage*, pp. 21-22

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 21

Based upon the ancient belief that the moon was a mirror; the mirrors act as a metaphor for humanity's “vanity and disfigurement”⁷⁰. As exemplified in the image below, the mirrors allow the audience to see the actor and the props shapeshift, giving the audience a different viewpoint on the story. Although we sit end-on to the performance, we can see the actor from many perspectives, including from above and behind.⁷¹



Figure 12: Richard Feldman, Yves Jacques in Robert Lepage's *The Far Side of the Moon*, February 2005.¹

⁷⁰ Ex Machina, 'The Far Side of the Moon (Auckland Arts Festival Theatre Programme)' (Ex Machina, 22 March 2018).

⁷¹ Ex Machina, *La Face Cachée de La Lune / The Far Side of the Moon*, YouTube Video (Quebec, Canada, 2011).

Lepage sees the potential in the relationship between actors and objects and thus welcomes the notion that objects, and set, are performative. He considers that objects are not necessarily defined by their physical properties but by how a performer might approach and use them. The object or set might present different meanings, depending upon the contexts in which the actors use and interact with them. Thus, these interactions may establish how an audience perceives them.⁷² For example, in *The Far Side of the Moon*, a washing machine door becomes a spaceship window, a womb, and a goldfish bowl. In *PEEP: Antigone*, props were carefully selected and strictly minimalised to draw focus on the textual material rather than generate distraction with unnecessary objects. For example, the knife Creon uses to kill Haemon was made a focal point on the stage. Each night the knife and blood bottles were placed on either side of the stage. The audience could see them throughout the play, and the props foreshadowed the violence to come.

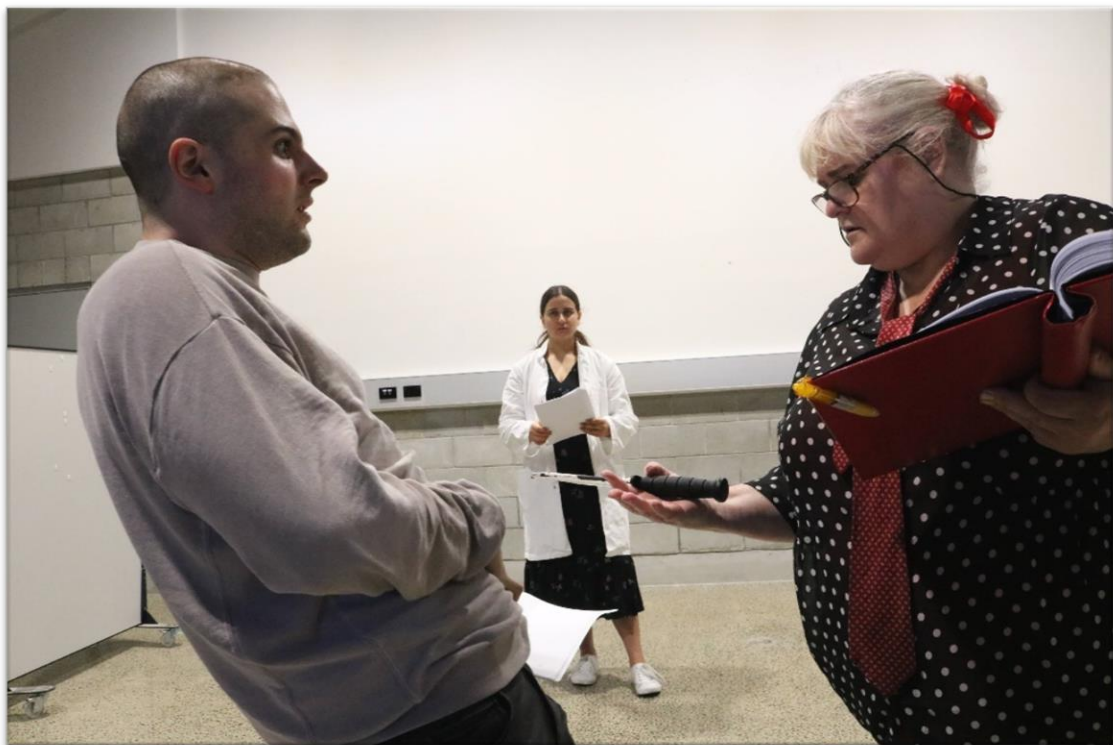


Figure 13: Holly Charlotte Luton, Antigone in Rehearsal - Creon and Haemon Conflict, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 7 December 2020.

⁷² Dundjerović, *Robert Lepage*, p. 73

As Lepage explains, the magic of theatre happens when we assemble objects and people who otherwise bear individual meaning but together generate performativity.

*What fascinates me about the act of creation is that you fill a space with objects that have no relation to each other, and because they are there, 'all piled up in the same box', there is a secret logic, a way of organising them. Each piece of the puzzle ends up finding its place.*⁷³

Jane Isobel Luton suggests that research

appears to mirror drama, for drama too depends on moments of serendipity when a play, an actor, space, a text come together to create a powerful and magic moment that resonates in the audience.⁷⁴



Figure 14: Chrisna Swart, Zachary Macer as Chorus member, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.

⁷³ Robert Lepage, *Interview by author*, Tape Recording, (Quebec City: January 2002).

⁷⁴ Jane Isobel Luton, 'Playing on the Barricades: Embodied Reflections on Passion and Melancholia in Drama Education by Key Practitioners' (Doctoral Thesis, Auckland, New Zealand, The University of Auckland, 2015), p. 128

International COVID-related Theatre Designs

In the subsequent weeks following the production, I became aware of a Japanese Dance Company, *Moonlight Mobile Theatre*. The company have proposed a similar conceptual model of a ‘peepshow’ where audiences, separated by cubicles, can observe performances through “small holes and slots resembling mailbox[s]”.⁷⁵ The artistic director, Nobuyoshi Asai, suggests that “limiting the scope of viewing allows the audience to become more absorbed in the performance”.⁷⁶ First demonstrated in December of 2020, this concept was sought-after, selling out their 12 dance performances. However, each audience only consisted of 30 patrons. Despite the innovative and inspiring design, Asai explained that the small audience capacity is financially unreliable and does not cover the cost of the performances “and the additional safety measures such as disinfecting the venue”.⁷⁷



Figure 15: *Moonlight Mobile Theatre, Through a mailbox slot, Japanese theatre offers new viewing experience, 2 March 2021.*

⁷⁵ Reuters Staff, ‘Through the Mailbox Slot: Japanese Theatre Offers New Viewing Experience’, *Reuters*, 2 March 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-japan-theatre-idUSKBN2AU0B2>.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

In the United Kingdom, *The Vertical Theatre*, in conjunction with *Stufish Entertainment Architects*, have envisaged potential designs for a ‘pop-up’ theatre venue devised for ‘future-proofing’ live entertainment.⁷⁸ The theatre group proposes a free-standing structure, with well-ventilated walls and socially distanced seating, providing a “commercially viable space for live entertainment now, in a world of social distancing”.⁷⁹ In contrast to *Moonlight Mobile Theatre*, this modal design expects to be more sustainable financially with greater audience capacity and help move theatre towards ‘pre-pandemic normality’. Although the Vertical Theatre was devised for pandemic purposes, the design is “fully adaptable for when Covid-19 restrictions are a thing of the past”.⁸⁰ In a joint statement, the directors and designers of the Vertical Theatre stated that they are

*devoted to the vital importance of arts and culture. We believe they are an essential part of human experience, of what makes us who we are. We are very excited to be able to bring this innovative new venue offering to the live entertainment world at this pivotal moment for the future of the arts.*⁸¹

⁷⁸ Matthew Hemley, ‘Pop-up Venue to “Future-Proof” Live Performance beyond Covid Era’, *The Stage*, 28 January 2021, <https://www.thestage.co.uk/news/pop-up-venue-to-future-proof-live-performance-beyond-covid-era>.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.



Figure 17: The Vertical Theatre Group, An Artists Impression of the Exterior of the Vertical Theatre, United Kingdom, 28 January 2021. <https://www.thestage.co.uk/news/pop-up-venue-to-future-proof-live-performance-beyond-covid-era>



Figure 16: Holly Charlotte Luton, Screenshot Image from Chekhov's *The Seagull*, a new online version, Auckland Theatre Company, Auckland, New Zealand, 8 May 2020.

In May of 2020, New Zealand Theatre Company, the Auckland Theatre Company (ATC), was internationally recognised⁸² for their adaption of Anton Chekhov's, *The Seagull*.⁸³ The ATC used innovative processes and social media and communication platforms (Zoom, Facetime, Facebook/Messenger) to rehearse and perform this production. It received more consecutive viewer-count visits than an in-person performance at the Waterfront Theatre's 660 seat auditorium in Auckland. Each week, the production was recorded in one take, edited, and then broadcast via YouTube in 30-minute episodes across four weeks. Echoing the complexities and depressions the pandemic has caused, the play's themes endeavoured to connect to the collective experience of our 'Team of 5 million'.⁸⁴

It was evident how the lock-down levels influenced the rehearsals processes, with each bubble expanding further across the four weeks. Consequentially, isolation and social distancing have enabled us to recognise that we inherently crave physical communication and strive for a collective need to socialise with others face-to-face. Although the production garnered rave reviews, the lack of 'liveness' situated this play, not as a form of theatre but a "new digital medium"⁸⁵ of story-telling.

Unfortunately, despite the arts sector's significant contribution to the economy, the lack of financial support can be severely detrimental to theatrical innovation and creation. In typical circumstances, receiving funding for the arts is often limited, and, in this pandemic, monetary grants are further reduced. Similarly, *PEEP: Antigone* relied on the innovation, time, and generosity of many people. Costumes and props were sourced through the Botany Downs

⁸² Peter Ormerod, 'Five of the Best Plays to Watch Online in the Coming Days', *The Scotsman*, 21 May 2020, https://www.scotsman.com/read-this/five-best-plays-watch-online-coming-days-2860095?fbclid=IwAR3qE_8pGRG7viAcZT613zNnOby4kHbcRjBSsjLxIYyYbJKPeKZYYUNQ7Gs.

⁸³ Eleanor Bishop, *The Seagull*, Theatre Performance via YouTube (YouTube, 2020).

⁸⁴ A term generated by the New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern; recognising the power of New Zealanders collectively aiming to conquer the pandemic.

⁸⁵ Eleanor Bishop, Chekhov's *The Seagull*: Q&A with Eleanor Bishop & Colin McColl, interview by Colin McColl, YouTube Video, 29 May 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fK-IiS9Sks4>. [In an interview conducted with the director Eleanor Bishop, she described how *The Seagull* was not theatre, but a "new digital medium".]

Secondary School drama department. The Engineering department at AUT provided the screens and Engineering space. My father, Tim Luton, who worked as an Engineering technician at AUT, spent many hours assisting us to set up the space. As Clachan states, “there’s a serious point there: theatre doesn’t make much money and you’ve got to find a cheaper way of doing everything, the profits are so low”.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Alice Saville, ‘Lizzie Clachan: “I’m Interested in the Stage as a Place for Images.”’, *Exeunt Magazine*, 28 September 2015, <http://exeuntmagazine.com/features/lizzie-clachan-im-interested-in-the-stage-as-a-place-for-images/>.

Episode 2: Methods and Methodologies

In this chapter Feminist Theory and Theatre (FTT) and Research as Theatre (RaT) are considered. The methods discussed in this chapter have functioned as paradigms for my research.

1. Feminist Theory and Theatre

*To be female is [...] a facticity which has no meaning, but to be a woman is to have become a woman, to compel the body to conform to an historical idea of 'woman,' to induce the body to become a cultural sign, to materialize oneself in obedience to an historically delimited possibility, and to do this as a sustained and repeated corporeal project.*⁸⁷

Feminist Theory is fundamentally critical of the so-called ‘naturalistic explanations’ of sex and sexuality. These notions assume that “women's social existence can be derived from some fact of their physiology”.⁸⁸ However, women are not inherently inferior by the notion of their sex assigned at birth.⁸⁹ Feminist Theory has sought to reconceive the notion of the feminine body as a symbol of distinction, which bears cultural meaning, and embodies cultural and historical possibilities, not limitations. Judith Butler suggests that the acts by which gender is constituted⁹⁰ bear similarities to performative acts within theatrical contexts.

⁸⁷ Judith Butler, ‘Performative Acts and Gender Constitution An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory’, *The Johns Hopkins University Press, Theatre Journal*, Vol. 40, no. 4 (December 1988): 519–31. P. 522

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 520

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 520 [This has often been a formal dispute within Feminist Theory, in the attempts to distinguish sex from gender, and the assumptions that identity can dictate or necessitate “certain social meanings for women's experience”.]

⁹⁰ This is constituted by how one does one's body, and one does one's body differently. How we might present and express ourselves, through fashion, gesture, speech patterns, hobbies and interests, and in breaking historical conventions and or stereotypes about one's gender.

As previously positioned, ‘perspectivism’ is the concept that all research is undertaken with individual contextual perspectives and will therefore influence how scholarship is undertaken. Within Feminist Theory, perspectivism is at the forefront. It suggests that knowledge is not restricted to the rational concepts of scientific and quantitative inquiry but can be embodied, personified, and disseminated through socialised and performative research. Unfortunately, as Yelena Gluzman suggests, “it has been a struggle to pursue feminist theory-inspired methods of knowledge in ways that could be broadly legible as knowledge”.⁹¹ As I discuss in my chapter on Research as Theatre (RaT), an internal conflict within academia has often perceived Feminist Theory, Dramaturgy, and Theatrical Research as subordinate to the quantitative and scientific processes.

Nevertheless, my research is heavily weighted towards an exploration of ancient Greek plays with female protagonists. I have explored both the contextual material, the history of the text, and how dramatists and dramaturgs approach the subject of the feminine in modern contexts. I share a particular fondness for these female protagonists, including Antigone in *Antigone*, Hecuba and Cassandra in *Women of Troy*, Medea in *Medea*, and Lysistrata in *Lysistrata*. Profoundly obvious are the subjects of the plays, each focusing on the title female character. It is regarded that women did not write or perform in ancient Greek theatre, as they were viewed as lesser members of society. As a result, they were typically illiterate. The surviving plays are attributed to four male writers. However, scholarship has long disputed whether women attended the theatre. As Goldhill suggests, “no single piece of evidence can offer a clear and direct answer to the problem”.⁹² Whether or not women attended the theatre, it is

⁹¹ Yelena Gluzman, ‘Feminist Theory Theatre’, in *Imagined Theatres: Writing for a Theoretical Stage*, by Daniel Sack (Taylor & Francis Group, n.d.), 80–81, accessed 17 April 2020, p. 81

⁹² Simon Goldhill, ‘The Audience of Athenian Tragedy’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*, ed. P. E. Easterling (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 62–66, p. 62

interesting that women were the focal point of many ancient Greek plays. In exploring Aristotle's, *The Poetics*, L. J. Potts concludes:

*I do not believe that Aristotle would have made the silly statement that it is inappropriate in a woman to be brave or clever; especially as it conflicts with several famous examples in Greek tragedy [...] for instance [...] Sophocles' Antigone and Euripides's Medea. But he may well have said that there are kinds of courage and cleverness that are unnatural in a woman.*⁹³

As Critchley suggests, Greek "is gender trouble. It is the travesty of the politics of sexual difference at the core of the political order. Tragedy queers' norms. But the effect of that queering is deeply uncertain".⁹⁴ Judith Butlers recognises that Antigone represents more than the notion of the 'feminine,' but the "instability, porosity, and fragility of gender identity".⁹⁵ Antigone functions as a type of 'antigenerational'⁹⁶ figure, establishing a new form of gender identity. Loraux asks, 'what glory is available to women in ancient Greece when glory is only rewarded for a heroic male death?' Women face the paradox that for their death to be glorious, it must be manly.⁹⁷ As exemplified by Creon, he is humiliated by Antigone's presented manliness as she seeks glory in a heroic death:

This woman is very proud. [...] She glories in the crime she has committed, and insults me to my face, as well as ignoring my decree. [...] There will be no exchanging of roles here, me playing the woman while she plays the king! - Creon

⁹³ Potts, *Aristotle on the Art of Fiction: 'The Poetics'*, p. 78

⁹⁴ Simon Critchley, *Tragedy, The Greeks and Us* (London: Profile Books Ltd, 2020), p. 34

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 55

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 53

This paradox is further heightened in *PEEP: Antigone*, by a female actor playing the role of Creon, who espoused that:

Women must learn to obey [...] they can have no special treatment. [...] It's time they understood they are women and their proper place in this society. – Creon



Figure 18: Swart, Chrisna. You should be ashamed setting yourself up against the majority, disregarding the will of the people! Antigone, Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand. 29 January 2021.

Loraux suggests that women in tragedy are “more entitled to play the man in her death than the man is to assume any aspect of woman’s conduct, even in his manner of death”.⁹⁸ Women in tragedy only possess freedom if it is realised in death: “for women, there is liberty in tragedy—liberty in death”.⁹⁹ There is dramatic irony in Antigone’s presented manliness, as she recognises that as women,

We have too little time to waste it on men and the laws they make.

– Antigone

Mark Fortier suggests that traditionally, once women were accepted to partake in the dominant, masculine, cultural practices, they became indoctrinated with masculine values, identities, and ideologies, espousing an ‘emasculatation’¹⁰⁰ of the self.¹⁰¹ Instead, Feminist Theory seeks out patriarchal values, identities, and ideologies, to challenge this hegemony.

As Gluzman indicates, Feminist Theory and Theatre suggests that research is an endless cycle and that its purpose is not to recognise an ending. Like research, rehearsals are “provisional attempts to make interpretations available to we, to each other, and to the materials through which they were performed”.¹⁰² The responses generated from rehearsals are enriched by the inquiry and perspectivism of each participant. FFT is a “slow, ongoing interpretive process with no centre and no clear stopping point”.¹⁰³ Although *PEEP: Antigone* was required to meet objective deadlines and resulting aims, I wanted to continue adapting and developing dramaturgical methods and responses. As Luton suggests, the act of making theatre is “not a

⁹⁸ Loraux, *Tragic Ways of Killing a Woman*, p. 64

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 17

¹⁰⁰ John Langshaw Austin, *How to Do Things With Words* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 27.

¹⁰¹ Mark Fortier, *Theory/Theatre, An Introduction*, Third Edition (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 85.

¹⁰² Gluzman, ‘Feminist Theory Theatre’, p. 81

¹⁰³ Ibid.

final dissemination; it is instead a continuing act of analysis”.¹⁰⁴ The research aims were realised in several public performances of *PEEP: Antigone*, creating an aesthetic and ephemeral performance. Research as Theatre (RaT) recognises that the performative and the subsequent written scholarship is a single performance event.

2. Research as Theatre (RaT)

*“Research is performative; this is the notion that scholarship, even when it is concerned with simply describing an aspect of the world, not only is acting upon and shaping that world but also is itself constituted as scholarship through a “citational” reiteration of ritualized norms and accepted modes of speech ”.*¹⁰⁵

The notion of research as performative was principally recognised by John Langshaw Austin,¹⁰⁶ who proposed that the ways in which language was deliberated and circumstantiated in written scholarship could “impact the situation in which they are uttered, shaping the constraints on meaning for present and future utterances”.¹⁰⁷ Judith Butler concurs that the performativity of research can be seen “as a process in which seemingly stable, naturally occurring phenomena (like gender identity or subjecthood) are produced through citations or reiterations of preceding practices”.¹⁰⁸

Despite the suggestion that all scholarship is inherently performative, both Butler and Austin fervently separate performativity from theatricality – all research is *performative* but not all

¹⁰⁴ Luton, ‘Playing on the Barricades: Embodied Reflections on Passion and Melancholia in Drama Education by Key Practitioners’, p. 157

¹⁰⁵ Yelena Gluzman, ‘Research as Theatre (RaT): Positioning Theatre at the Centre of PAR, and PAR at the Centre of the Academy’, in *Performance as Research: Knowledge, Methods, Impact* (London: Routledge, 2017), 105–32. P 105

¹⁰⁶ Austin, *How to Do Things With Words*, p. 22

¹⁰⁷ Gluzman, ‘Research as Theatre (RaT): Positioning Theatre at the Centre of PAR, and PAR at the Centre of the Academy’, p 105

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 105-106

research is *theatrical*. Austin suggests that theatricality is ‘artificial’ and weakens language¹⁰⁹, suggesting that,

*as utterances our performatives are also - heir to certain other-kinds of ill which infect all utterances. [...] I mean, for example, the following: a performative utterance will, for example, be in a peculiar way hollow or void if said by an actor on the stage, or if introduced in a poem, or spoken in soliloquy.*¹¹⁰

Butler distinguishes performativity from theatricality through the acts of role-playing and characterisation, which can mask facts from fiction in scholarship.

*Role-playing presumes an intentional subject, one who can realize or ‘de-realize’ an identity, masking the crucial ‘compulsory’ nature of the citationality through which that subject is formed.*¹¹¹

For researchers and scholars who undertake theatrical and dramaturgical scholarship, the anti-theatrical position of Butler and Austin adds “fuel to the complex logics of a long-standing anti-theatricality that permeates Western philosophy”.¹¹² Theatricality and dramaturgy have endured a long-standing conflict in academia.

Yelena Gulzman is passionate that theatre must be seen concretely and centrally in the performativity in scholarship. Theatre performance enables “scholars to engage not with the fact of ongoing performativity but rather with the concrete, situated processes by which scholarship is materialised”.¹¹³ Gulzman considers that theatre makes space for experimental inquiry in research.¹¹⁴ She suggests that we should consider theatricality in all senses of

¹⁰⁹ Austin, *How to Do Things With Words*, p. 22

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Gluzman, ‘Research as Theatre (RaT): Positioning Theatre at the Centre of PAR, and PAR at the Centre of the Academy’, p. 105

¹¹² Ibid., p. 106

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 125

scholarship. Not just in the conventional formats of presentation and performances but also in conferences, debates and discussions, literature review, data collection, archiving and curating, reading, writing, publishing, and teaching.

Gulzman's research exemplifies the importance of simultaneously engaging a theatrical project or performance with research findings. The theatrical performance and written research merge to become a singular performance event. Like Gulzman's work, I have endeavoured to generate a "mildly subversive feat of meta-theatricality".¹¹⁵ In conjunction with designing and directing my production of *Antigone*, I decided to structure my written thesis as an ancient Greek tragedy, thus forming one theatrical performative piece.

As the director and designer, I am emotionally attached to my research. Like the ancient Greek tragic heroes, I have a sense of hubris or pride.¹¹⁶ I was proud of the work I was creating. But at times, my hubris felt like dangerous self-confidence taking on the numerous roles of researcher, director, designer, sound engineer and operator, prop master, filmmaker, projection designer, graphic designer, costume designer, and stage manager. It was partly out of fear, the contingency of the pandemic, and the unstable nature of theatre-making that I took on so many roles. I draw similar parallels to Lepage, who too searched for "stability, independence and control over all aspects of theatre production".¹¹⁷ Gulzman recognises the intensity of making theatre:

Is theatre intentional? Yes, it is not only intentional but also impossible, requiring enormous coordination of energy and matter to realize [...] And, above all, the

¹¹⁵ Melanie Dreyer-Lude, 'Threads: Linking PAR Practice across Spectrums', in *Performance as Research: Knowledge, Methods, Impact* (London: Routledge, 2017), 75–83. P. 78

¹¹⁶ Christopher Booker, *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories* (London: Continuum, 2005), p. 174 [Christopher Booker suggest that the ancient Greek notion of hubris reflected more than extreme pride, but the idea that a character was "stepping over the bounds" of their position.]

¹¹⁷ Dundjerović, *Robert Lepage*, p. 19

*consequentiality of the theatre [...] since its intentions are never simply realized,
but [are] always contingent, thwarted and undone.¹¹⁸*

Research as Theatre (RaT) is unstable¹¹⁹ but is always flexible and adaptable to circumstantial changes. Likewise, the processes of theatre-making in this pandemic must be flexible too.

¹¹⁸ Gluzman, 'Research as Theatre (RaT): Positioning Theatre at the Centre of PAR, and PAR at the Centre of the Academy', pp. 107-108

¹¹⁹ The contingency and instability of the theatre was supplemented with the unpredictable nature of the pandemic.

The Agon

Peripetia and Anagnorisis: The change of circumstance and the moment of discovery.

The artefactual design of this research was the result of 12 months of planning, since March of 2020, workshoping, directing, designing, rehearsing, and performing. Within this timeframe, Aotearoa, New Zealand, experienced four nationwide lockdowns with many additional community scares.¹²⁰ The inescapable and unpredictable nature of the pandemic has greatly influenced how I enacted this research, needing to adapt and change both in the short-term and long term. Theatre and normalcy are not in conjunction during a pandemic.

My original proposal for this research was to examine ancient Greek theatre, staged in unconventional theatre spaces using *Women of Troy*, by Euripides.¹²¹ Although the New Zealand government knew about the virus appearing in Wuhan, China, we awaited the resulting outcome. The revelation of the virus' fast-spreading nature became apparent when declared a pandemic by the WHO. It was my first 'peripetia', a change in fortune for my research. During the subsequent government announcement that New Zealand would be locked down, this research encountered its first anagnorisis, a moment of realisation. Instead, I chose to explore *Antigone* by Sophocles for its thematic relevance and contextual parallels to today. Including how political figures navigate conflict and discord in times of plague and the restrictions placed upon our burial rites and rituals.

¹²⁰ New Zealand Doctor, 'Timeline - Coronavirus - COVID-19', *New Zealand Doctor, Rata Aotearoa*, 2019 - 2021, <https://www.nzdoctor.co.nz/timeline-coronavirus>.

¹²¹ Euripides, 'The Women of Troy', in *Euripides: The Bacchae and Other Plays*, trans. Philip Vellacott (London: Penguin Books, 1973).

The second moment of anagnorisis was the realisation that my intention to produce a piece of theatre, using traditional processes and methods of auditions, rehearsals, and performance to a live audience, would be severely disrupted. Approaching this problem with dramaturgical knowledge and experience, I generated sketches and brainstormed, seeking alternative theatrical methods to produce theatre during the pandemic. Thus, the resulting scribble on the back of an envelope was formed, and an idea was born – PEEP: Pandemic/Epidemic Embodied Performance. Like the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) used by hospitals and medical facilities, *PEEP: Antigone* was designed to use similar protective devices and practices¹²² throughout the theatrical process. Masks became of particular significance throughout the research, imitating those used during ancient Greek theatre.

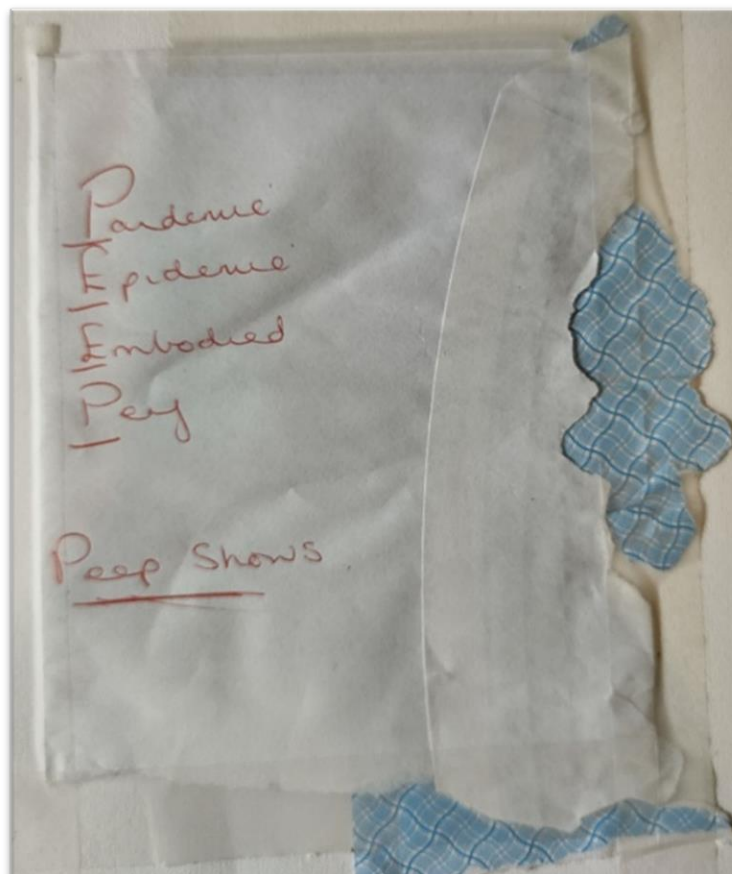


Figure 19: Holly Charlotte Luton, *All good ideas start on the back of an envelope - PEEP*, Auckland, New Zealand. 5 April 2020.

¹²² These included Perspex screens, mask use, sanitisation and social distancing.



Figure 20: Costas Baltas, An usher wears a protective face shield before the start of "The Persians" an ancient Greek drama by Aeschylus first performed in 472 BC, following the easing of measures against the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), at the ancient amphitheatre of Epidauros, Greece, Epidauros, Greece, 24 July 2020.¹²³

The preparations for *PEEP: Antigone* began in June of 2020. The decision was made to begin rehearsals in September of 2020 for the performance dates of February 4th, 5th, and 6th in 2021. Following the determination of the New Zealand government to ‘go hard, and go early’¹²⁴ into lockdown, to prevent the spread of the virus, so too was the decision made for the project to ‘go hard, and early’. This longer-than-usual rehearsal period offered time for experimentation, inquiry, and reflection with the actors. The extended preparation timeframe

¹²³ George Georgiopoulos, ‘Greece Extends Mask-Wearing Requirement as Coronavirus Infections Flare Up’, *Reuters*, 1 August 2020.

¹²⁴ It was fortunate that the production was able to be performed, as the next weekend, New Zealand went into a Level Three lockdown with the Valentine’s Day community cases in February of 2021.

allowed flexibility and responsiveness in the case that alternative solutions might be required. Auditions were conducted in August of 2020, seeking six actors to play Antigone, Ismene, Creon, Teiresias, and Eurydice. The actors would double as an ensemble, playing the Chorus members.¹²⁵ As recommended for events at Level Three, six actors were cast to form a bubble of less than ten.¹²⁶ This would allow us to perform a live-streamed performance of the production should we enter a lockdown.

The popular use of videoconferencing programmes saw a global spike in 2020 when platforms such as Skype, FaceTime, and Zoom became absorbed into our daily routines. These platforms dictated our face-to-face social communication in education curriculums, work schedules, and worldwide connection with family and friends. Zoom, the platform which saw the most significant increase of use, hosted 300 million daily meeting participants in April of 2020.¹²⁷ From my own diary, I note:

My AUT classes were conducted via Zoom, and regular conversations were spent with friends and family in the United Kingdom and United States on Skype and Facebook. While these platforms were already popular, other social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok, allowed us to share a collective experience of the pandemic on all sides of the globe. Hilarity ensued, as we attempted to reinvent our culture of communication. While funny face-changing filters altered our identities, we desperately struggled to mute and unmute ourselves, and save ourselves from the embarrassments of standing up on video, as we wore our pyjama from the waist down.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Zachary Macer filled the roles of Haemon and the Soldier, prior to the auditions, and Narise Hansen, cast as Ismene, would also fill the role of the Messenger.

¹²⁶ As a bubble of 7, we could perform together and occupy the same space, with an audience observing via a streamed online performance.

¹²⁷ Jerry Bowles, 'How Zoom Defied Its Critics and Became the Go-to Video Conferencing App for Surviving the Pandemic', *Diginomica*, 18 January 2021, <https://diginomica.com/how-zoom-defied-its-critics-and-became-go-video-conferencing-app-surviving-pandemic>.

¹²⁸ Holly Luton, *Antigone Project Diary*, Auckland, New Zealand, 25 February 2021.

Our auditions, originally due to be held at the AUT campus, could not be enacted in-person at Level Three. Following the government's announcement, actors were notified that auditions would take place via Zoom. Within our virtual space, I, as the director, along with Zachary Macer (who played Haemon and the Soldier), and Jane Luton (who later joined the cast as Teiresias and Chorus), were present to script read. Auditionees were encouraged to learn the script, set up a quiet and open place in their homes, and use a suitable microphone to position their web camera to see their whole body, gesture, and movements.



Figure 21: Holly Charlotte Luton, Zachary Macer and Holly Luton, with Daria Erastova and Narise Hansen Antigone Callback, Antigone, Auckland, New Zealand, 3 September 2020.

Although this initial process was a success, and the actors were responsive and active in the changes, the technology proved less than favourable. It was a learning curve for everyone. Bad internet connections slowed the process, web cameras and microphones were either turned off or did not work, camera positioning was like goldilocks; just right, too close, or too far. Some actors read off screens rather than scripts, as the glowing display of desktops highlighted their expressions. The audio delay of participants made it difficult to accomplish the Greek dialogue – stichomythia. Background noise and activity, often humorous, was chaotic in an otherwise organised audition; construction on the streets outside, children, roommates, and partners conversing in living spaces, pots and pans crashing in kitchens, and pets waiting for dinnertime appeared in backgrounds and foregrounds.



Figure 22: Holly Charlotte Luton, A furry friend disrupting my research, Auckland, New Zealand, 3 September 2020.

Peripetia occurred in attempting to find an actor to play the role of Teiresias. Jane, who had taken part in the audition process as a script reader, was asked to join the cast. Another moment of peripetia transpired when one of our cast members had to remove themselves from the rehearsal process due to other commitments. While this moment of peripetia was unfortunate, anagnorisis led to actor and dramaturg Jacqueline Hood, swiftly taking on the role of Creon in November of 2020. While this required some slight directorial changes, Jacqueline embraced the role easily, collaboratively making thoughtful considerations about the research process. The final cast comprised of Alice Cunliffe as Antigone, Narise Hansen as Ismene and the Messenger, Zachary Macer as the Soldier and Haemon, Daria Erastova as Eurydice, Jane Luton as Teiresias, and Jacqueline Hood as Creon. With the casting complete, the research now began to integrate the text-based analysis with the research's production design and dramaturgical methods. Photographs from the production included in the thesis were taken by Jane Luton, photographer Chrisna Swart, and I. These images have been incredibly helpful for translating the live production into the written thesis.

The Theatron: The Scenographic Design of PEEP: Antigone

The Conception of PEEP: Antigone



Figure 23: Holly Luton, The second rehearsal of Antigone, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 27 September 2020.

Examining COVID-related theatre designs of both international and national companies, three structural elements stand out – modal and scenographic design, audience-actor spatial relationships, and the change in procedures and practices of the theatre.

The original intent for the performance of *Antigone* was for it to take place in an outdoor, well-ventilated area to offset the possibilities of spreading the virus. As the play progressed into dusk, the utilisation of natural light, with the natural echo and reverberation saturating the surrounding walls, would mimic the Theatron of ancient Greece. Therefore, the lighting and sound design would be minimal.

The performance space would include Perspex screens, arranged on three sides, separating the actors from the audience, creating a thrust-stage ‘glass-box’. The screens would be used aesthetically for the actors to touch, draw on, spit, and spray (fake) blood.

In this theatre space, audiences would be placed at the specified distance from the acting space of two metres, instigated by the WHO procedures for social distancing. Chairs (sanitised before and after each performance) would be arranged in socially distanced ‘bubbles’, consisting of groups in which the patrons purchased their tickets and arrived in the theatre space. With the development of the ‘COVID-19 Tracer App’ by the Ministry of Health, New Zealand, Codes would be provided throughout the theatre space and in the programmes handed out to the audience. In the circumstance that alert levels would change, audiences would be instructed as to any provisional adjustments of the performance and notified through the ticketing service and via the Corvus Theatre Company website.¹²⁹

The original choice to use an outdoor location, with a ‘glass box’, changed within the first weeks of the project, as it proved impractical. The Perspex (ballistic proof) screens, sourced through the AUT Engineering department, proved too heavy for relocation from the to the proposed space. Secondly, providing power output for lighting and sound to the outdoor space was unfeasible.

The aesthetic scenographic design of the Perspex ‘glass box’ remained with the pandemic procedures and practices in the final design.¹³⁰ However, the theatre space was relocated into the Engineering space WZ111, where screens were housed. This space later became known

¹²⁹ Holly Charlotte Luton, ‘Corvus Theatre Co’, Corvus Theatre Co, 1 January 2021, <https://corvustheatreco.wordpress.com/>. [Images from the rehearsals and performances, and more information regarding the administration and organisation of the production can be found via the website, <https://corvustheatreco.wordpress.com/>]

¹³⁰ Arranged seating was provided for patrons, mask use was encouraged, and the sanitisation of the auditorium was conducted. QR Codes were provided in the programmes and via a projection onto the white backdrop as audiences were seated into the auditorium.

as the ‘glass box, in the glass box, in the glass box, in the glass box’, as demonstrated in figure 26. The actors performed in the scenographic Perspex ‘glass box’. The audience was seated in the glass-walled auditorium, and passers-by could see the performance outside the auditorium or view the performance from the above glass-mezzanine. The final design was serendipitous; the change of circumstance was a moment of discovery and resulted in an aesthetically pleasing production.

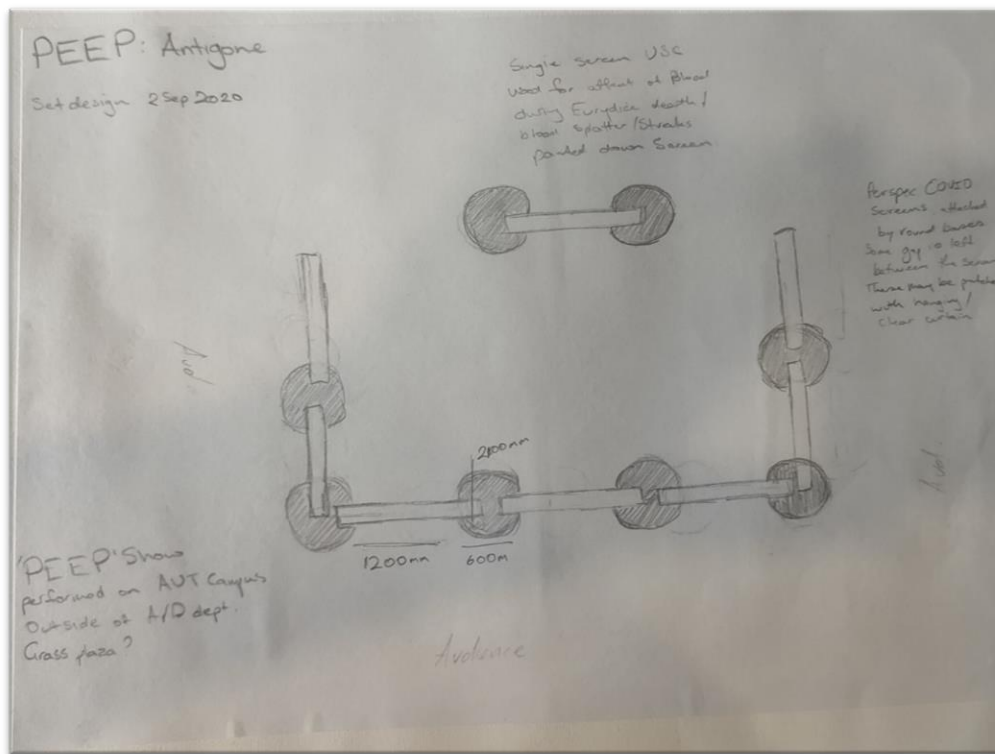


Figure 24: Holly Charlotte Luton, Sketch of Original PEEP: Antigone on the Grassy Knoll, Auckland, New Zealand, 2 September 2020.

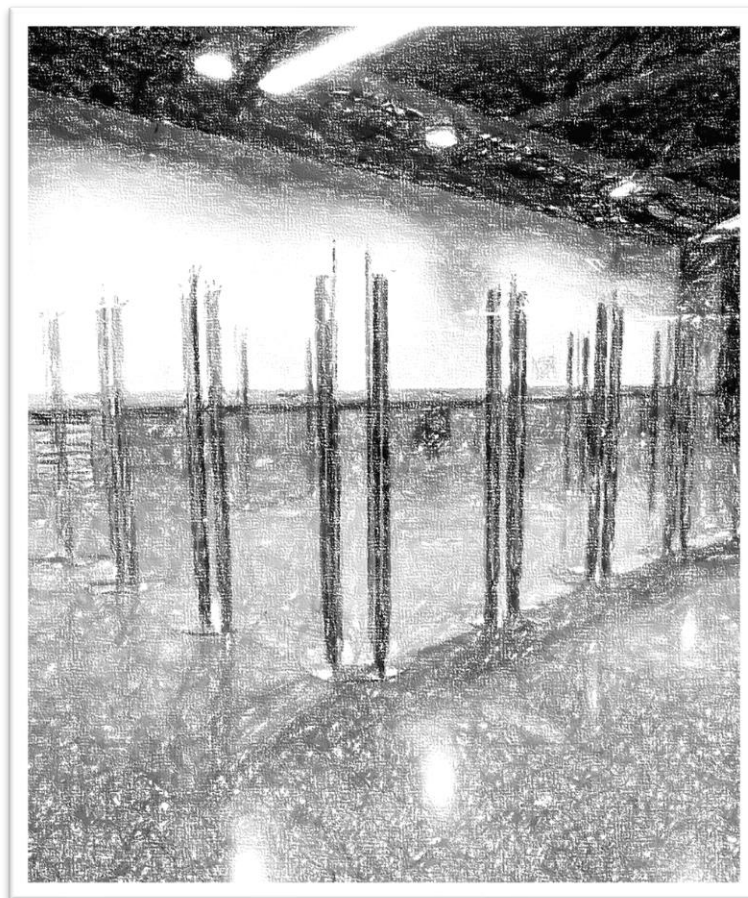


Figure 25: Holly Charlotte Luton. Sketch 1 of the PEEP Show Glass Box, Antigone. Corvus Theatre Co. Auckland, New Zealand, December 2020



Figure 26: Jane Isobel Luton, Antigone Tech Rehearsal – Three Glass Bubbles, Antigone, Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 27 January 2021.

Luton suggests that

Serendipity, a term first coined by Horace Walpole in 1754, is “the making of accidental discoveries” [...] To realise a moment is serendipitous I must have a sense of “curiosity, spontaneity, imaginativeness, a sense of adventure”.¹³¹

It is exciting for the director and designer to use their imaginations to stage theatre in unconventional spaces. As Clachan explains, “there’s an irony in the fact that artists and theatre-makers have been increasingly excited about making work in non-traditional venues just as these venues are attracting the attention of other, deeper-pocketed impresarios”.

Mirroring, Reflection, and Transparency

Aesthetically, the clinical and industrial style of the engineering space generated reflections and mirroring, like those of Gilmour’s *Hecuba*. The polished concrete floor, the mirrored Perspex glass box, and the gleam of the costumes, combined with a blood-spray of red theatrical lighting, produced scenery that otherwise might not be recreated within a purpose-built theatre space.

Costumes

Costumes were specifically chosen for their reflective properties. For example, Creon’s coronation hood was made of reflective, red and black, satin and Antigone was dressed in polished, white Doc Marten boots and a maroon leather jacket, which reflected and refracted the light.

¹³¹ Luton, ‘Playing on the Barricades: Embodied Reflections on Passion and Melancholia in Drama Education by Key Practitioners’, p. 128

Parallel to the ancient Greek theatre masks, modern N95 medical masks were used by the Chorus during the opening cleaning ritual. Secondly, they dressed in white laboratory coats, reflecting PPE.

Unexpectedly, while designing the costume for Teiresias, a black facemask was sourced, which appeared to emulate the infamous ‘plague doctor’ beak-like mask of the 17th and early 18th-century European plagues. Additional accessories included mirrored glasses, which shielded the bandaged eyes of Teiresias from the audience. The glasses reflected Creon in the eyes of Teiresias’ upon first meeting him. A long dark reflective trench coat appeared plague doctor-like. The boy, who acts as Teiresias’ guide, was dressed in similar clothing that mirrored Teiresias.

Informed by Antigone’s key adjective, ‘extremist’, produced from the Model Book tasks, a blue boiler/jumpsuit and hangman’s hood was used during Antigone’s conviction scene. This costume paralleled the uniforms of the ‘Guantanamo Bay prisoners’¹³² and the clothing used by the extremist terror group, ‘Islamic State of Iraq and Syria’ (ISIS), for the execution of their political prisoners.

¹³² United States military detention camp in Cuba.



Figure 27: Chrisna Swart, Daria Erastova and Jane Luton as the Chorus, Antigone, Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.



Figure 28: Chrisna Swart, Zachary Macer as The Boy, and Jane Luton as Teiresias, Antigone, Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.



Figure 29: Holly Charlotte Luton, Antigone's Conviction, Antigone, Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 27 January 2020



Figure 30: Chrisna Swart, Antigone's Conviction 2, Antigone, Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 27 January 2020

Sound and Lighting

While the Theatron is a ‘place for viewing’, the auditorium is a ‘place for listening’. Some technical equipment was used to enhance the actors’ voices through the presence of two stand-alone microphones, Down Stage Left and Right, in the ‘glass box’. However, the natural effect of the actors’ voices in the concrete Engineering space was fortuitous. The vastness of the extended space resonated and echoed the actors’ voices and heightened many moments. As demonstrated in the argument between Haemon and Creon, Haemon’s echoing threat –

if she dies, she won’t die alone – Haemon

– followed and contrasted by the long silence of Creon’s bewilderment, elicited goosebumps among the actors and audience alike.¹³³

The following image highlights this moment when Creon’s power is exhibited through voice and body. At the same time, Haemon’s power is exhibited through the use of space, as he is projected onto the white backdrop behind. Figure 28 captures the reflection of the audience, lights, surrounding auditorium, and the outside Saint Pauls Street.

¹³³ Unfortunately, the video recording of *Antigone* does not capture the same resonance as experienced within the space.



Figure 31: Chrisna Swart, Jacqueline Hood as Creon and Zachary Macer as Haemon, Antigone, Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.

Sound effects and music were selected to develop and convey guiding symbolic motifs through the production.¹³⁴ The track ‘Ancient Temple Ambience’ was played several times whenever the death of Polynices was mentioned. Combined with the DSC red spotlight, the act of musical repetition created a motif in which the audience could connect sound and light with Polynices dead body. His body, seen only in the opening video projection. Secondly, the track ‘Dark Ambient Drama’ was carefully used in four moments – The first, as Creon threatens Antigone with “weapons of the law”. Confessing her ‘terrorist’ acts against State, she laughs, humoured that Creon’s son, Haemon, would disapprove of his capital punishments. The second during Haemon and Creon’s argument, as Haemon inexplicably threatens to commit suicide should Creon send Antigone to her death. The third, during Antigone’s conviction, when she is sent to her “stone tomb” by Creon for the act of treason and terrorism. Finally, Haemon and Antigone are joined in love as in death; Antigone; hanged, and Haemon; slaughtered by his father. The sound plays a final time. This musical motif reflected the relationship of Haemon and Antigone and their determination to see a pious martyrs’ death together.

A low rumbling sound effect reverberated throughout the theatre in key moments. The effect symbolised the impending ‘prophecy foretold’ by Teiresias. Although we do not encounter Teiresias until the final scenes of *Antigone*, his later presence is finally connected with the rumbling heard throughout the play. Audiences with contextual knowledge of Sophocles’ Theban trilogy recognise Teiresias from *Oedipus the King*, who delivers a similar prophecy to Creon as to Oedipus that he (Creon) has been the cause of such despair and suffering for his people.

¹³⁴ A repeating sound or phrase, used to convey thematic meaning.

*The suffering you inflicted upon others, will be inflicted upon you, you will suffer,
as they did. – Teiresias*

The curse of Oedipus is endemic to the Theban family, and the rumbling in *Antigone* insinuates the tragic irony of fate and prophecy.¹³⁵

*But when one unlucky family incurs the gods' malignity from generation to
generation, they must swallow the bitter potion, again, and then again! – Chorus*

Consequentially, designing theatre in non-theatrical spaces often presents drawbacks when it comes to technologies. Although the engineering space did host a large inbuilt stereo system, which allowed us to control the Sound Design and Effects for the production, a lighting rig was not installed. Instead, consultations with our Lighting Designer, Paul Summers, resulted in a lighting plan which coincidentally produced reflections and mirroring on the 'glass box' and the polished floor. The lighting was extended around the base of the 'glass box' on all sides and was directed upwards, underlighting the actors faces. A downstage spot glowed red under the actors' chins when characters described the horrific sight of Polynices' rotting body. The lighting caused the actors to look ghoulish and ghost-like.

¹³⁵ Claire Colebrook, *Irony* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 14 ["Tragic irony is exemplified in ancient drama [...]. The audience watched a drama unfold, already knowing its destined outcome [...]. In Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, for example, 'we' (the audience) can see what Oedipus is blind to. The man he murders is his father, but he does not know it".]



Figure 32: Holly Charlotte Luton, Jacqueline Hood as Creon – “Polynices is to have no grave at all”, ‘Antigone’, Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 4 February 2021.

Set: Chairs in a 'glass box'

During rehearsals, we discovered that as 'glass box' is our only fixed set, we could play with a multitude of reflections. Time was spent during the rehearsals directing the actors to face and interact with the reflective surfaces. We discovered that Actor A, facing away, with their back to Actor B, would be able to see Actor B's actions and reactions mirrored in the surface of the glass, and vice versa. This acting method was used again when Actor A, Antigone and B, Ismene, were seated back-to-back but could see each other's reflections in the glass. As Simon Critchley suggests, there is mirroring within the play text too:

*There is the double death of Eteocles and Polynices, [...] There is the doubling of Antigone and Ismene, which mirrors that of their brothers and their own future strife. [...] everything and everyone is doubled and doubled over in the play.*¹³⁶



Figure 33: Chrisna Swart, *But I wasn't afraid to speak! I warned you that this would happen. I knew how it would be! Antigone*. Corvus Theatre Co. Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.

¹³⁶ Critchley, *Tragedy, The Greeks and Us*, p. 50



Figure 34: Chrisna Swart, And no woman will get the better of me, Antigone, Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021

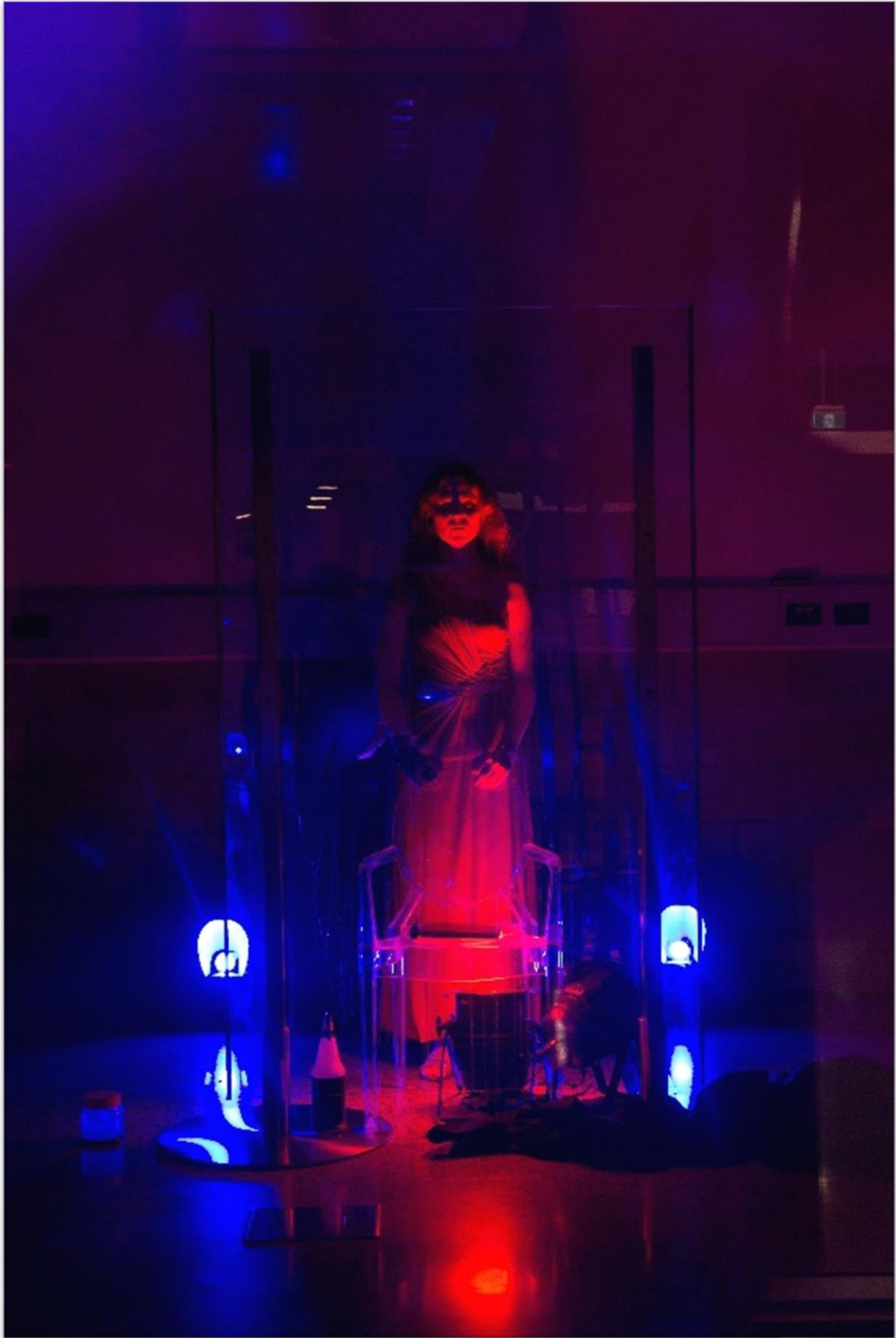


Figure 35: Chrisna Swart, Daria Erastova as Eurydice, Eurydice's Suicide, Antigone, Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.

Transparency and reflection were fundamental in the design of *Antigone*, and the use of minimalistic set through metallic and Perspex chairs, added another layer to the scenographic design. Altogether, five chairs (two constructed of steel and wood, and three made of clear acrylic) were employed by the actors as objects of relaxation, integration, and elevation. These Perspex chairs, originally designed by Philippe Starck, are often referred to as ‘ghost chairs’. One arm rested Perspex chair permanent remained behind the single Perspex panel, USC. A spotlight fixture sat under this chair, pointing upwards towards the white backdrop. The chair became symbolic of ‘The Theban Royal Throne’, a place of stability and strength. In cyclical direction and design, the audience encountered this space in two contrasting focal moments – The first, Creon’s entrance and coronation, and the second, the revelation of Eurydice’s suicide. The secondary point became a symbol of the destruction and despair in the Theban royal family. This moment was revealed using a black curtain, which was ripped down by the Messenger, revealing a blood splatted screen, as a wash of red lights stained the stage.

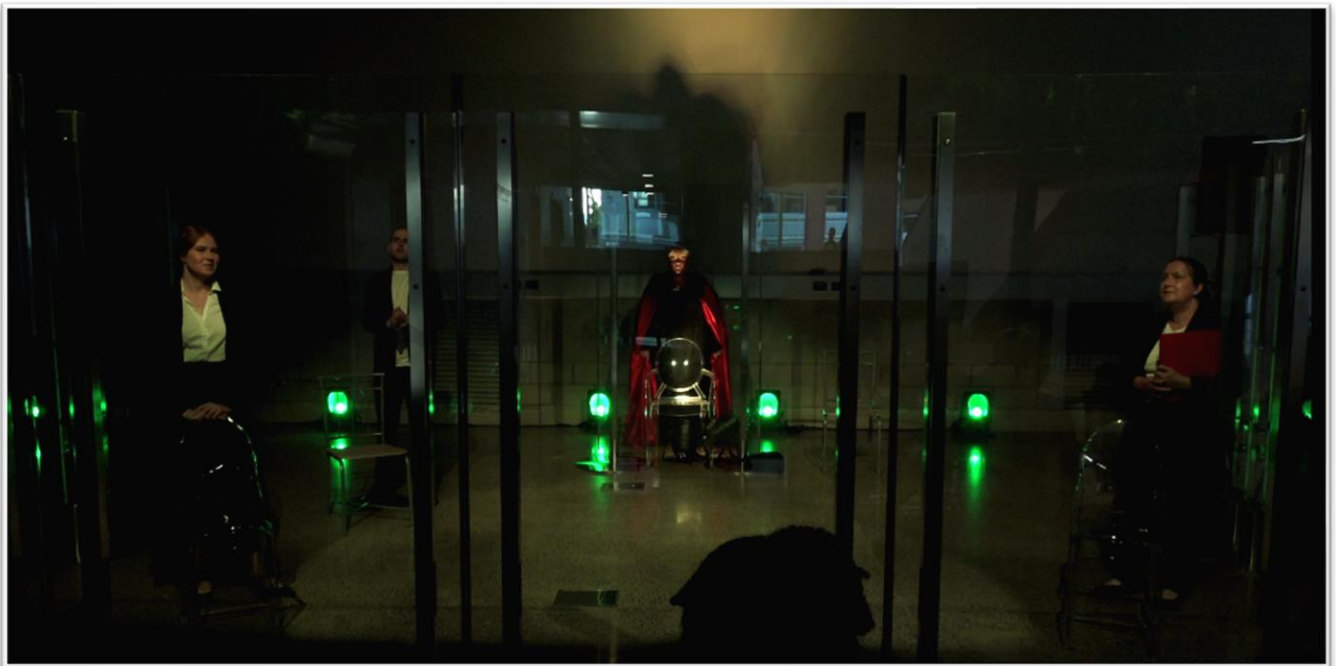


Figure 36: Holly Charlotte Luton, *Creon’s Coronation and The Chorus, ‘Antigone’*, Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 4th February 2021.



Figure 37: Chrisna Swart, Antigone Hanging and Haemon Beside Her, Antigone, Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.

The actors used the chairs as objects of elevation or standing plinths, for example Antigone's death. This action was demonstrated stylistically by Alice Cunliffe (Antigone). Antigone is seen climbing onto the DSR metal chair. She places the hangman's hood over her head slowly as she hangs herself.¹³⁷ This moment was unusual as death or violence is not shown on stage in traditional ancient Greek theatre. Instead, a device known as the 'Ekkyklema', (a wheeled platform) was pushed out onto the stage, revealing the dead body to the audience.

¹³⁷ Her fate is that of her mother, Jocasta, whom we in Sophocles' Oedipus the King, who also chooses to hang herself.

Projections



Figure 38: Chrisna Swart, Antigone and Polynices, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.

Exploiting the purpose of the Ekkyklema, projections were enlisted as a storytelling device to parallel the original contraption. As demonstrated in the figure below, projections were used to illustrate off-stage action, particularly illustrating mortality or violence. These included 'Polynices' burial', 'Antigone in the Cave', and 'Eurydice in the Mirror'. All except the final violent conflict between Creon and Haemon, which was explicitly demonstrated on stage.

'Polynices burial' projection began with a black screen, as the sound of the ocean waves breaks gently, and a fly buzzing is heard. Fading into view, the hand of Polynices with blood dripping and pooling onto the sand is revealed. This moment was held for a minute before footsteps are heard — a pair of polished, white Doc Martens head towards Polynices, where they stop. Cut to black. On stage: As the projection plays, Antigone can be seen USL standing in the same boots as she leans against the back wall.

‘Antigone in the Cave’, filmed in the underground pool house at my home, began with static as though the audience is viewing security footage from a VHS videotape. Antigone is pushed into the cave with a hood covering her face. She removes the hood and begins to look around as the footage plays; static breaks up the images as it cuts between three camera angles. Finally, we see Antigone reaching for a pipe, with which we assume she hangs herself from, before looking directly into the camera. Static cuts to black.

In ‘Eurydice in the Mirror’, Eurydice is seen inside the palace. She is stoic and hiding her grief of the news that her son, Haemon, has been killed by her husband, Creon. She is looking in a mirror and is seen brushing her hair. Subsequently, looking away, she brings into view a pair of sharpened scissors that glint in the light. Eurydice looks directly into the camera through the mirror. Cut to black. In all three of these projects, the low rumbling sound can be heard.

Although actors in ancient Greek theatre wore masks to convey their character and emotions, the audience would not have easily seen their eyes. In *PEEP: Antigone*, projections were used to focus on the eyes of each character. Each major character in the play was afforded one projection in which the audience could gaze into their eyes and feel the emotional weight of their character. In my production, we saw Ismene, “weeping for her sister”, Haemon, threatening his father with his death, Antigone, in the cave, preparing to hang herself, Eurydice, in the mirror, stoic with grief, and finally, Creon, as the “old man, through suffering becoming wise”. In the final seconds of each projection, the actors looked directly into the camera, as though glaring into the audience, sharing their truth with us as they ask us to take pity on them. “Tragedy”, as Aristotle wrote, is expected to evoke pity and fear from an audience. However, the only character whom we do not see in a projection is Teiresias. As the blind prophet of Thebes, he is the vessel of truth, a divine communicator and interpreter for the Gods. Bandaged and bloodied, we never see Teiresias’ eyes, for he “sees things to

which others are blind”. He does not ask for pity in his ‘truth’, but his truth does inspire fear. Upon confronting Creon, Teiresias produces a jar of eyes, moist and pooling in blood, plucked from the corpse of Polynices by the dogs and crows. The eyes of Teiresias and the eyeballs of Polynices remind us of Creon’s inability to *see* the truth. This prop was created using a plastic jar filled with fake blood and two lychees to replicate the eyeballs, with the guava to create the gore and flesh of Polynices.



Figure 39: Chrisna Swart, *Leave him alone, and let him learn how a wise man controls his tongue, Antigone*, Corvus Theatre Co., 29 January 2021.

The projections served several purposes. Following the government's guidelines for an event, the first projection displayed the QR Code for *PEEP: Antigone*, which the audience were encouraged to scan via the ‘COVID-19 Tracer App’. Although not initially planned, the projections became a solution when Zach was involved in an accident a few weeks before the

final performances. The decision was made to protect his well-being and prevent any additional stress during the rehearsal process through consultation with Zach, the supervisory staff, and the cast and crew. In another moment of anagnorisis, the scene between Haemon and Creon was adjusted to reflect the mediums of communication used in the pandemic. Filmed when Zach was feeling a bit better, a video of Haemon calling his father via Skype was projected onto the back wall as Jacqueline interacted with the large video. I was amazed by Zach's ability as an actor to adapt to the changing conditions of the research, as he was required to be both a film and stage actor. His performance in the contrasting roles as Haemon and the Soldier was a delight to watch each night. I realised that this was a solution if an actor became ill and needed to isolate from the cast and crew.



Figure 40: Chrisna Swart, Jane Luton as Teiresias, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.

The Chorêgos and Didaskalos: The Processes and Methods

of Directing Antigone



Figure 41: Jane Luton, Holly Luton Directing the cast inside the 'glass box', 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 27 January 2021.

This chapter will discuss the processes and methods of directing and developing the concept of *PEEP: Antigone*. The production considered guidelines for safe practice throughout the research process. These included forming a ten-person bubble; six actors, three crew, and myself as the director/designer. Additionally, the rehearsal, performance, and auditorium spaces were sanitised after each use. The cast and crew wore masks, and some audience members attended wearing their masks. Social distancing in the rehearsal space was enacted at alert Level Two, and any actors or crew who presented flu-like symptoms were asked to isolate and get tested for COVID-19. One of our actors took a leave of absence for two weeks to recover from flu-like symptoms. Audiences were notified of changes to the performance when alert levels changed via the Corvus Theatre Company website¹³⁸. All advertising material, including programmes, tickets, and posters, included the QR Code for the event. Patrons were advised to scan the code via the ‘COVID-19 Tracer App’ upon their arrival.

¹³⁸ Luton, ‘Corvus Theatre Co’. <https://corvustheatreco.wordpress.com/>

Director's Script and Model Book



Figure 42: Holly Charlotte Luton, The first rehearsal with Antigone and Ismene, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 24 September 2020.

The Director's Script and Model Book archived the research process and curated several artefacts that influenced and shaped the work. The book acted as a place of memorialisation and was openly accessible for the actors to use throughout the rehearsal process. The book houses activities that the actors undertook during rehearsal to build characterisation. A figure below shows a cutting from the New Zealand Herald, highlighting the concern and controversy surrounding mask used at the beginning of the pandemic.



Figure 43: New Zealand Herald, What's behind the mask controversy? New Zealand, 17 March 2020.¹³⁹

Rehearsal tasks were undertaken by the actors for the development of characters and contextual research for their roles. Individually, each actor undertook the tasks to gain a greater insight into the similarities and differences of the director and the actor's intention for each character. This task involved a large bingo-like sheet of paper with numerous adjectives and characterisations. Separately, the director and actor would choose twenty words that best described their character. These words were then shared, and together the actor and director were allowed time to justify and debate their specific choices. Collectively agreeing upon

¹³⁹ ["This week, public health experts reiterated a call for New Zealanders to "mass-mask" to help prevent the transmission of Covid-19, despite official Government advice resolutely insisting it wasn't necessary. [...] Bloomfield, who has said those in higher-risk environments, such as public transport, may wish to wear masks but they would not be compelled to. "We've just had another look at the evidence. People may wish to use a mask. If they know how to use it properly, that's fine, but at this point we won't be insisting on masking"].

each word, these would then be narrowed down to ten, where repeated or similar adjectives were removed. The task was undertaken again and narrowed down to five words. Examining the final five words, a new word or phrase that encompassed the character was generated. This phrase or adjective would be a key focal image for the actor and would often be reiterated throughout the actor's rehearsal process for physical and emotional characterisation. For example, Antigone was described as 'extremist', Ismene as 'meek', and Teiresias as 'Absolutist'.

Applying the methods of the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates, 'Socratic dialogue' was utilised in rehearsals for inquiry. Each character in *Antigone* yearns for the approval of the Gods. Socrates asks, 'do the gods love piety *because* it is pious? Alternatively, is it pious because the gods love it?' Posing this question to each actor brought the shared response that their chosen course of action is not the right one, although the character perceives it. They each strive for piety, and in doing so, all fall tragically. Therefore, Creon is not the only hubristic character as initially intended by Sophocles, but each character possesses hubris. As the Chorus suggest,

*when a man commits crimes, and is proud of his actions, a flaming sword hangs
over his head, no future but the grave, and a funeral urn. – Chorus*

Throughout the rehearsal process, Aristotle's philosophy of Greek tragedy was discussed by the actors. In their press releases on the Corvus Theatre Co. Facebook page, the actors described that they felt *Antigone* had something important to say for a 21st-century audience. Some of their comments included,

Antigone is a remarkably modern story given that it was written 2500 years ago.

This research has been an excellent example of theatrical evolution and adaptation for the realities and challenges of the pandemic. I think Antigone is an amazing experiment, and one of the many will recognise the new reality we are living in.¹⁴⁰

Antigone has so much relevance today, and this production adds an awesome modern touch without losing the core themes and conventions of the show. Theatre is a way to escape from the struggles of the real world, and Antigone is an exemplar of theatrical creativity COVID-19 has inspired.¹⁴¹

This is a play for now. Although it was written in Ancient Greece, there are parallels between Sophocles' world and ours today, a time of plague, political unrest, and extremism. [...] Antigone provides an opportunity for the audience members to reflect on the human condition: the state in which people struggle to evolve from self-obsession and can fall prey to impulses that ultimately don't serve themselves or others around them.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Corvus Theatre Co and Daria Erastova, 'Introducing Our Eurydice: Daria Erastova', Facebook, *Corvus Theatre Co* (blog), 26 January 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/CorvusTheatreCo/>.

¹⁴¹ Corvus Theatre Co and Narise Hansen, 'Introducing Our Ismene: Narise Hansen', Facebook, *Corvus Theatre Co* (blog), 30 January 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/CorvusTheatreCo/>.

¹⁴² Corvus Theatre Co and Alice Cunliffe, 'Introducing Our Antigone: Alice Cunliffe.', Facebook, *Corvus Theatre Co* (blog), 19 January 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/CorvusTheatreCo/>.

The cast engaged in numerous dialogues about figures who possessed hubristic traits. Several political and religious figures provided connections for characterisation. For example, Creon became more and more a Trumpian figure, with the influences of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. Antigone possessed similar attributes to religious extremist groups. Teiresias paralleled Donald Trump’s fundamentalist evangelical ‘spiritual adviser’, Paula White. In a ‘marathon prayer service’ in November 2020, she called “on the almighty for divine intervention in the presidential race”.¹⁴³ White’s use of repetition and ‘speaking in tongues’ was particularly meaningful for character building and physicality. Her words mirrored Teiresias’ prophetic messages and the Oracles of Delphi in ancient Greece:

*You will give us victory. I hear a sound of abundance of rain. I hear a sound of victory. I hear a sound of shouting and singing. I hear a sound of victory. I hear a sound of abundance of rain. I hear a sound of victory. I hear a sound of abundance of rain. I hear a sound of victory. [...] The Lord says it is done. The Lord says it is done. The Lord says it is done. For I hear victory, victory, victory, victory. In the corners of heaven. In the corners of heaven. Victory, victory, victory, victory, victory, victory, victory.*¹⁴⁴

Contextual circumstances were very much influential in shaping the rehearsal process. While waiting for the cast to arrive for the rehearsal on October 2nd, the following notification

¹⁴³ Joe Sommerlad, ““The Lord Says It Is Done”: White House Spiritual Adviser Paula White Prays for “angels from Africa” to Cement Trump’s Re-Election”, *The Independent*, 5 November 2020, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-election-2020/us-election-trump-paula-white-house-prayer-b1616014.html>.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

appeared on my phone – an example of hubris in action.

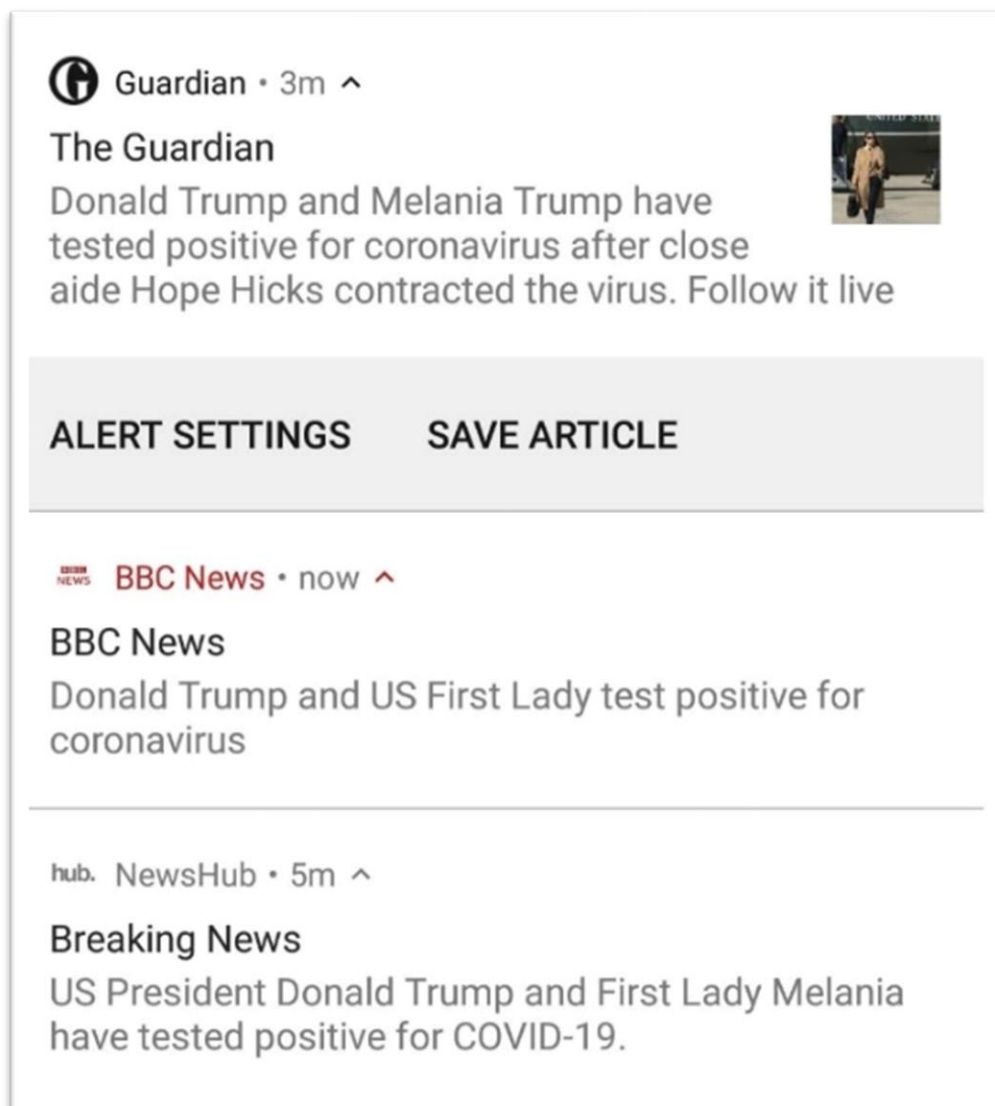


Figure 44: Holly Charlotte Luton, *Donald Trump Tests Positive for COVID-19*, Auckland, New Zealand, 2 October 2020.

This news was another moment of irony when we could compare Creon to Donald Trump; both men, with extreme hubris, make dangerous decisions without considering the consequences. Creon is the tragic figure, who through a fatal error, becomes wise.

A secondary, non-speaking Prólogos and Exodus was added to *PEEP: Antigone*. As the audience entered the auditorium, the Chorus, dressed as medical cleaners and took part in a performative cleaning ritual inside the ‘glass box’. The opening and closing rituals functioned to remove any blood residue from the previous performances and sanitise the performance space. Visually, the cleansing of the space exemplified to the audience that we are still situated in a pandemic. Taking inspiration from the playfulness of Gilmour and Clachan’s designs, in the final scene, as Haemon is killed, fake blood was vigorously sprayed on the glass walls by the Chorus. Using sanitation bottles and a weed killer pressure sprayer mirrored those used in the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2015 Ebola epidemic in Africa.

The opening and closing rituals, audience conversations, and procedures used by the Front of House crew are included in the *PEEP: Antigone* video recording. Both the crew and I appear in the video wearing masks, and the crew are seen directing patrons to their seats. They ask how many have attended with them and group them within their bubbles. It is interesting to note the instances in which the audience cough or sneeze. Seated in the theatre, we often do not recognise this happening around us. It is only when watching the video of the performance that these moments become especially noticeable.



Figure 45: Chrisna Swart, Blood on the glass, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.

Similar to Duchamp's notion of viewership and ephemerality in artwork, the thrust stage was an intentional choice with the audience on three sides. In this way, no one person would share the same experience as another in the audience. A few audience members attended more than once, seated in different locations.

In the subsequent weeks following the performance, the actors reflected on the research process and analysed how the glass added a sense of security. Although the Chorus began the play using masks, we discovered through the research process the challenges of communication with muffled speech and the impossibility of lipreading. In the meantime, while the general population of New Zealand waits to receive a COVID-19 vaccination, ‘glass boxes’ have demonstrated that theatre can maintain a sense of normalcy while providing ephemeral and aesthetic theatre, albeit at Levels One and Two. The week following the performance, Auckland was once more sent into a Level Three lockdown after it was discovered that several community cases had emerged. This was then rapidly followed by a week-long lockdown, known as Valentine’s Day cases.



Figure 46: Holly Charlotte Luton, Set Builder and Supervisor, Tim Luton, Constructing the Glass Box, Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 26 January 2021.

Exodus

As I write this conclusion in September 2021, we are still in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although New Zealand appeared to possess many freedoms, much to the envy of the world, the pandemic has proven again to be a contingent being. Creating uncertainty and instability the current Delta variant has resulted in another nationwide lockdown, as cases spike. Striking lucky once again, I complete work on another pandemic-related production three days before the August 2021 lockdown. I await my second Pfizer vaccination with anticipation and optimism for life to return to normalcy again. While we continue to seek short-term solutions, this lockdown has once again proven the urgency for dramaturgs, designers, and directors to look to the future of theatre's existence. Some have asked whether theatre's downfall was a result of hamartia, the fatal flaw. Chidekel suggests theatre was unprepared for disaster, and its subsequent breakdown was inevitable.¹⁴⁵ Although the magic of live theatre will always draw in audiences, he suggests that theatre has relied too heavily on liveness in an age of digital technology.¹⁴⁶ Critchley suggests that hamartia is not a fatal flaw but a characterful error that is no fault of our own.¹⁴⁷ Disruptions were not the fault of theatres, but the fault of those in power and their hubris, as we entrust them to keep us safe and our societies functioning. The desperation for theatres to open is a sign of our collective want for imagination and storytelling and our need to share collective spaces as humans. This research inspired me to create a new theatre company that is adaptive and responsive to contextual circumstances. I developed this company to continue making theatre, which is aesthetic and ephemeral throughout the pandemic, and for the future. I aim to continue the research into Doctoral study as I seek further solutions for future-proofing theatre from

¹⁴⁵ Chidekel, 'Broadway: Broken Or Business As Usual?'

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Critchley, *Tragedy, The Greeks and Us*. p. 214

further crises. The structure of a Sophoclean tragedy recognises that in order to become wise, one must suffer. I, too, have become wise as a result of the pandemic, and in creating this research, I have realised that theatre is fragile. Perhaps theatre must suffer for us to realise its magnificence as an art form and the magic of liveness. Nevertheless, as the recent lived experience has shown, theatre must adapt for the future to keep it alive and live.

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(A full research bibliography is available at <https://hollycluton.wordpress.com/bibliography/>)

Glossary

Theatron	Greek: A place for viewing; <i>Thea</i> – to see, <i>tron</i> – denoting place. From where we get ‘Theatre’.
Auditorium	Latin: A place for listening; from <i>audītōrius</i> .
Prólogos	Greek: before speaking. <i>Pró</i> – before, <i>logos</i> – word. The opening to the play which establishes contexts and characters. From where we get Prologue or Preface.
Párodos	Greek: Entrance place. A side entrance to the Orchêstra. The first song, sung by the Chorus.
Agon	Greek: the debate or conflict. From where we get ‘agony’.
Skene	Greek: House or hut. A Permanent structure (usually stone) at the back of the stage. A place which housed the costumes and where actors waited to enter the stage.
Periaktoi	Greek: revolving. Painted wooden panels, able to rotate, to display the scenery or background.
Proskenion	Greek: Place in front of the Skene. The raised performance space in front of the Skene building. Used by the leading actors. From where we get ‘Proscenium’.
Orchêstra	A place of performance used primarily by the Chorus. From where we get ‘Orchestra’.
Altar	A central plinth, placed in the middle of the Orchêstra. Dedicated to the Greek God of theatre, Dionysus, a sacrificial podium, used at the end of each festival. Mask are believed to be among the items sacrificed for the Gods.

Ekkyklema	Greek: Roll-out machine. A wheeled platform which was pushed into view of the audience, revealing a dead character.
Deus Ex Machina	Greek: God from the Machine. A counterweight system which lifted an actor high above the Skene in ancient Greek theatre.
Didaskalos	Greek: teacher or tutor. Often the playwright, the Didaskalos would direct the Chorus and supervise every part of the production. From where we get Director.
Chorêgos	Greek: To lead the chorus. A wealthy Athenian who prepared the finances for the production, and the salaries of the Chorus. From where we get Choreographer.
Exarchon	Greek: lead actor. Only male actors performed in ancient Greece. Three actors led the play, taking on multiple character roles. For example, in <i>Antigone</i> , an actor would have played the roles of Creon, another the roles of Antigone, Haemon, and the Messenger, and the final actor playing the roles of Ismene, Teiresias, and the Soldier.
Protagonist	Greek: Chief actor or first actor.
Deuteragonist	Greek: Second actor.
Tritagonist	Greek: Third actor.
Chorus	A group of 12 to 50 actors who sang or danced in unison, often commenting upon the action of the play or advising the protagonist. Each wore masks which were similar to each other.
Koryphaîos	Greek: Leader of group. The leader of the Chorus. The Koryphaîos spoke for Chorus, whenever the rest were taking part in the action of the play.

Stichomythia	Greek: The dialogue between two characters, speaking alternate lines of verse. A linguistic device used in ancient Greek drama. <i>Stikhos</i> – row of speech, <i>mythos</i> – to talk.
Hamartia	Greek: To fail or be wrong. The fatal flaw of a character which sees their demise or downfall.
Peripetia	The change of circumstance, reversal of fortune, or turning point in the play for a leading character. In <i>Antigone</i> , Creon experiences peripetia when he is confronted by Antigone, who has disobeyed his orders as the new King of Thebes
Anagnorisis	The moment of realisation or recognition for a leading character. In <i>Antigone</i> , Creon experience this at the end of the play when regrets his pride and recognises that he has destroyed his whole family. However, Antigone knows and recognises the downfall that is about to occur from the beginning of the play. In <i>Oedipus the King</i> , peripetia and anagnorisis occur at the same time. In <i>Antigone</i> ,
Hubris	Extreme or excessive pride, dangerous self-confidence.
Catharsis	The purification, purging, or cleansing of emotion. In Greek tragedy these emotions are pity and fear.
Motif	A repeated sound or phrase, to convey thematic meaning.
Ancient Greek mask	Little is known about the masks of the ancient Greek theatre, given that no full artefact survives today. Believed to have been made of clay or organic materials and decorated with hair or wigs. The masks had significantly large features, and the mouths were either cone-shaped to project the actor's voices or solid which caused resonance of the actor's voices. Leading actors wore masks which demonstrated

	the gender and emotional themes of each character. As roles were divided between the three leading actors, only two-to-three-character roles could appear on stage at once. Masks distinguished the individual characters from each other and the actors who played the multiple roles. The Chorus also wore masks, that were similarly decorated to look like one another.
N95 Respirator Mask	A filtration respirator, worn over the face, covering the mouth and nose. Filtrates 95% of airborne particles. Particularly see being used by medical organisations during the COVID-19 pandemic.
COVID-19 Pandemic.	Also known as Coronavirus, COVID, or SARS-CoV-2. Origins discovered in Wuhan, China in December of 2019. A severe acute respiratory syndrome, declared a global pandemic in February 2020 by the World Health Organisation (WHO).
Lockdown	A restriction whereby preventing the movement of peoples freely.
Social Distancing	Also known as Physical Distancing. A medical intervention indented to prevent the spread of infectious or contagious diseases.
PEEP	Pandemic/Epidemic Embodied Performance. A methodology created by Holly Charlotte Luton.
WHO	World Health Organisation.
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment.
FTT	Feminist Theory and Theatre. A feminist and theatrical methodology.
RaT	Research as Theatre. A theatrical methodology.
NCEA	National Certificate in Educational Achievement. The educational standard taught in New Zealand Secondary schools.
RSC	Royal Shakespeare Company.

A Gallery of Images from the Production of Antigone

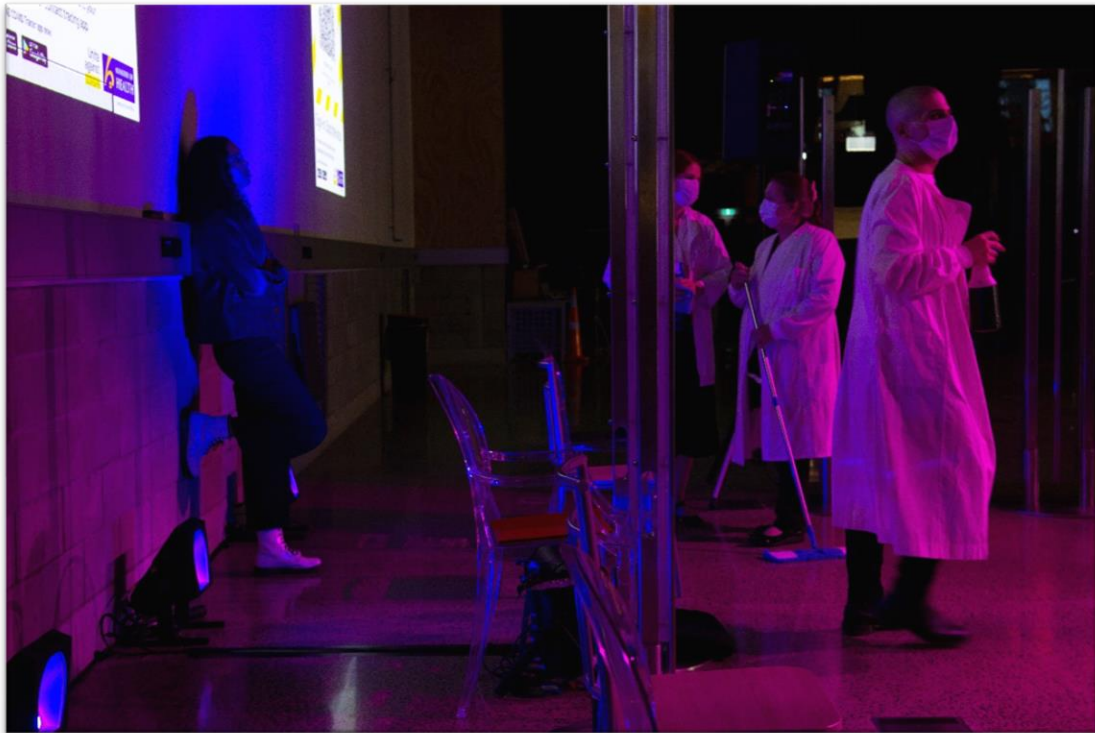


Figure 47: Chrisna Swart, The Chorus and Antigone, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.

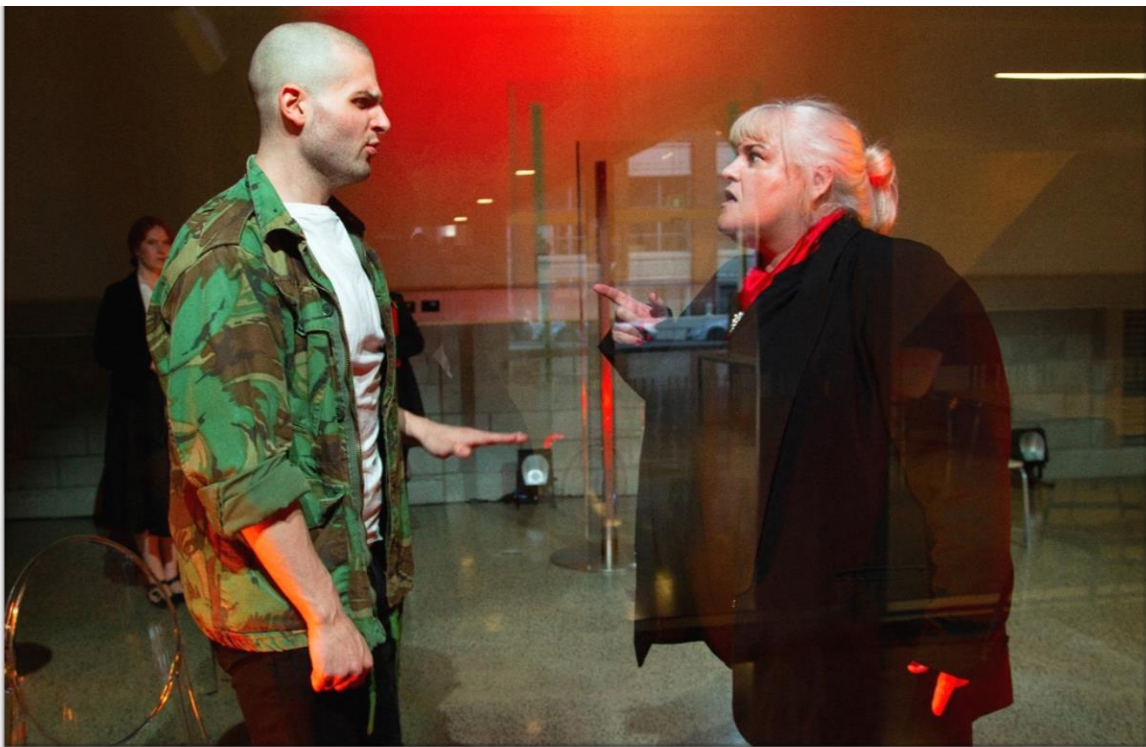


Figure 48: Chrisna Swart, Zachary Macer as the Soldier and Jacqueline Hood as Creon, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.



Figure 49: Chrisna Swart, we saw her, actually setting the grave to rights, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.

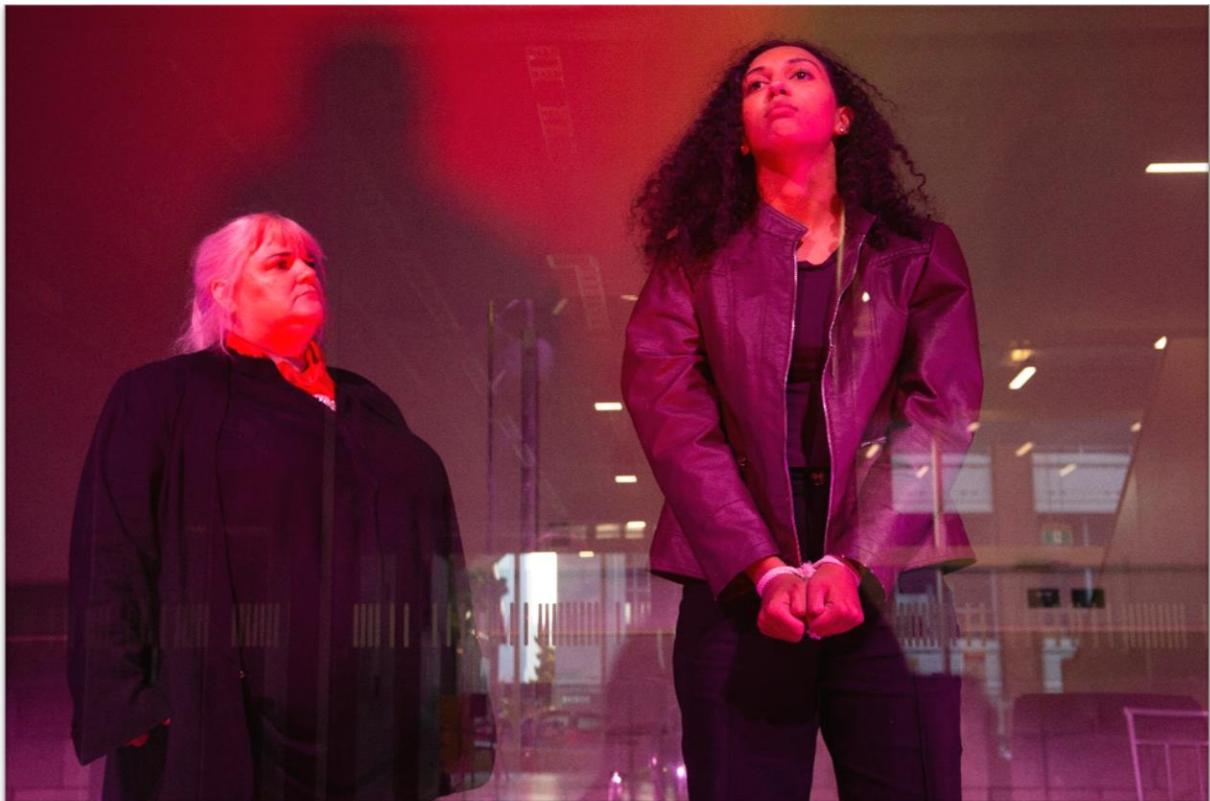


Figure 50: Chrisna Swart, And yet you dared to disobey the law? 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.



Figure 51: Chrisna Swart, You are merely a man, mortal, like me! 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.



Figure 52: Chrisna Swart, The human face reveals conspiracies, before they are enacted, again, and then again, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.



Figure 53: Chrisna Swart, When a man commits crimes, and is proud of his action, a flaming sword hangs over his head, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.



Figure 54: Chrisna Swart, Narise Hansen as Chorus member, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.

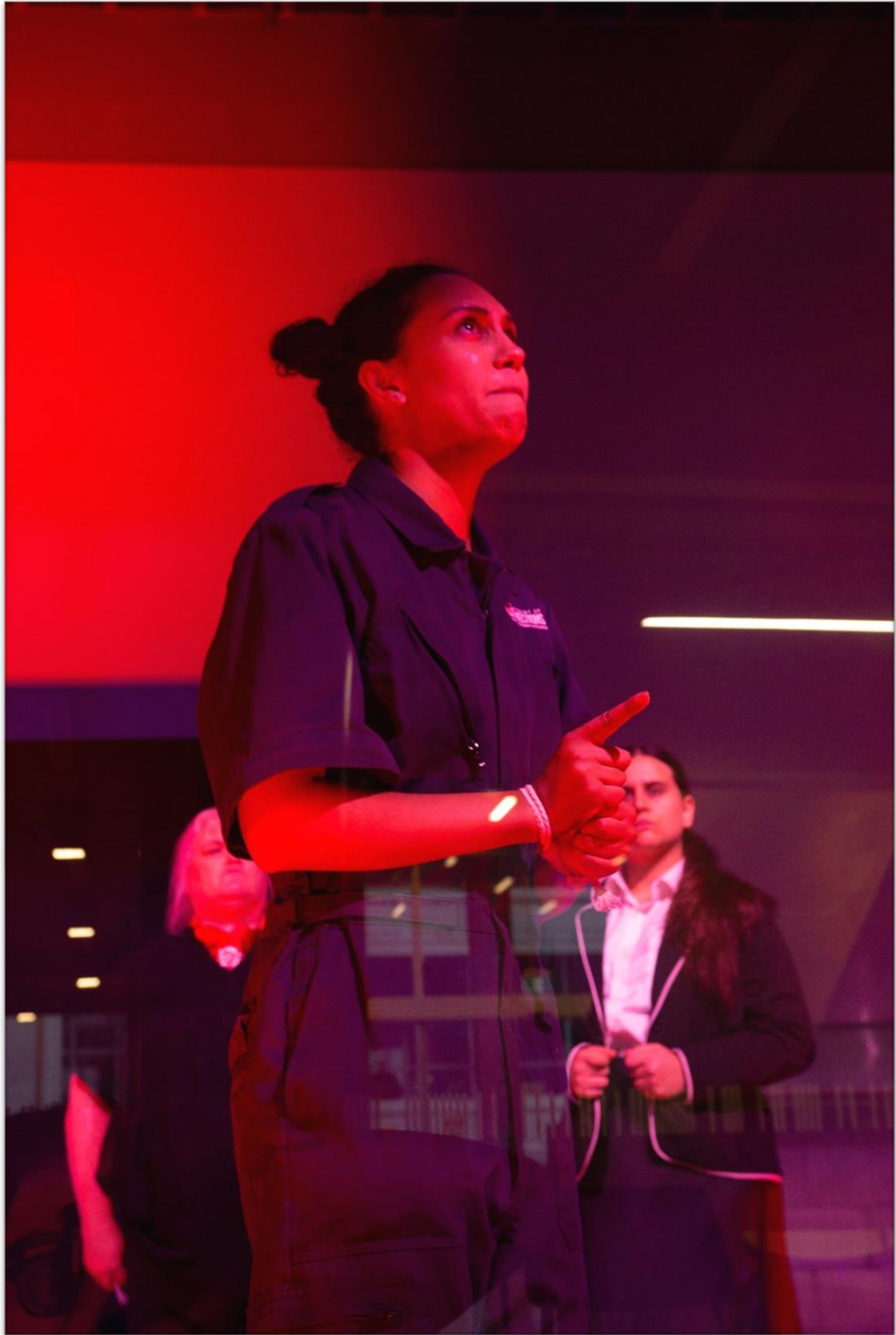


Figure 55: Chrisna Swart, Let them be punished as I have been punished, and suffer the injustices that I have suffer. 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.

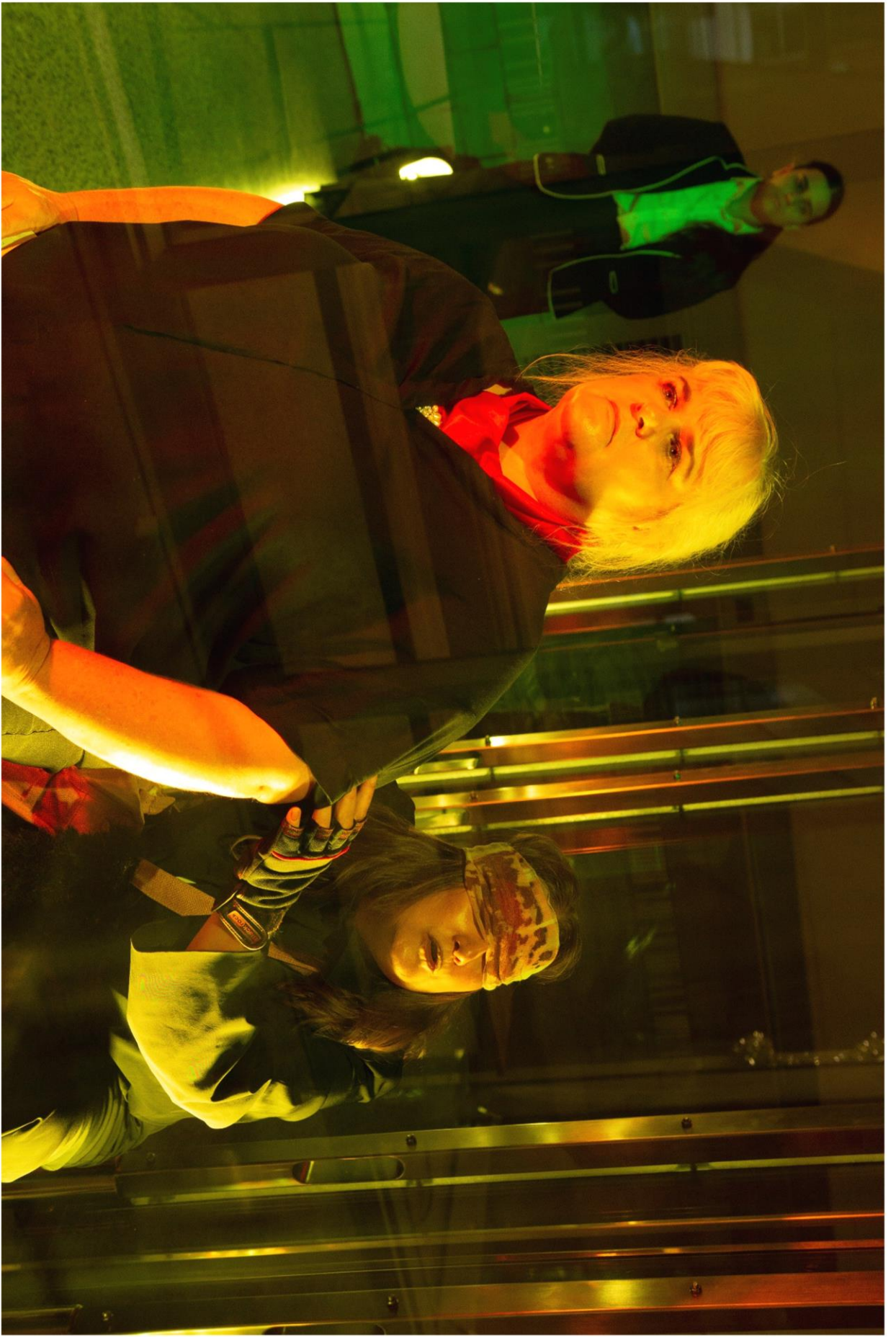


Figure 56: Chrisna Swart, Is there anyone more stupid, than the stupid man who refuses to see his own stupidity? 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021



Figure 57: Chrisna Swart, Daria Erastova as Eurydice, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.



Figure 58: Chrisna Swart, Antigone and Haemon, Death as in Love. 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021



Figure 59: Chrisna Swart, Eurydice in the Mirror, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021

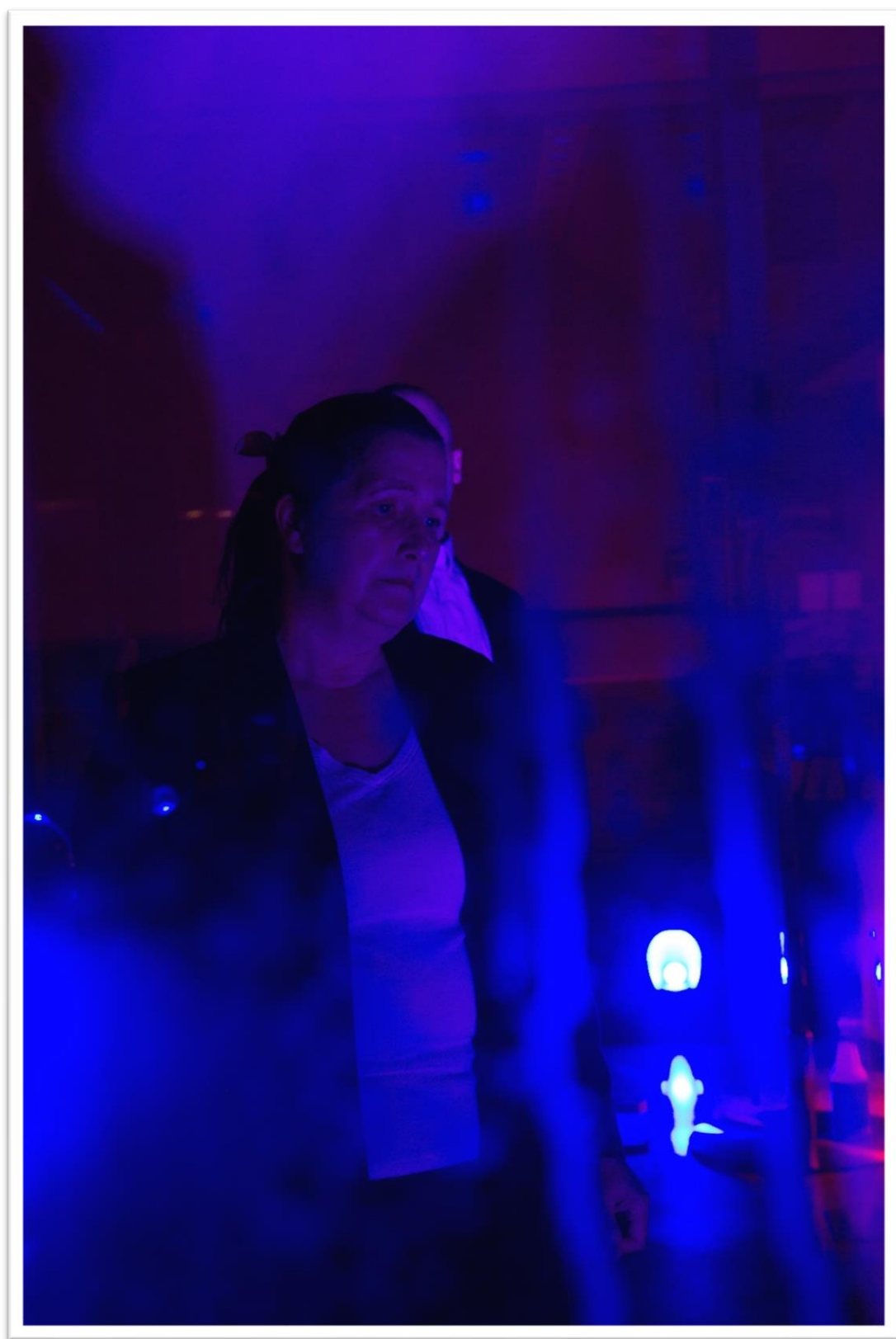


Figure 60: Chrisna Swart, Jane Luton as Chorus member, 'Antigone', Corvus Theatre Co., Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January 2021.

Appendices

Stage Direction Key

Audience Right (Aud. R)	Upstage Right (USR)	Upstage Centre (USC)	Upstage Left (USL)	Audience Left (Aud. L)
	Centre Stage Right (CSR)	Centre Stage (CS)	Centre Stage Left (CSL)	
	Downstage Right (DSR)	Downstage Centre (DSC)	Downstage Left (DSL)	
	AUDIENCE (Aud.)			

Antigone, Trailer and Final Performance, Corvus Theatre Co.



Visit <https://corvustheatreco.wordpress.com/> or contact corvustheatreco@gmail.com to request a copy of the final performance of *Antigone*.

An Example of the Actors Consent for Antigone

PEEP Show: An exploration of performing live theatre during a pandemic, using Sophocles' Antigone.

Researcher: Holly Charlotte Luton

Supervisor: Associate Professor Andrew Denton

I, ___, hereby grant Researcher, Holly Charlotte Luton, my consent to be an actor and research participant for PEEP: Antigone, through the Institution of Art and Design, Postgraduate Department at Auckland University of Technology. This consent will take effect from 12th September 2020.

1. I confirm that I am over 18 years of age and capable of entering a contract.
2. I commit that I will do my best in this project and give my 100% attention.
3. I understand the health and safety concerns of performing this research during a pandemic and confirm that I will take appropriate action (where possible) when advised by the Researcher and Institution, for the benefit and safety of all involved.
4. I consent to not disclose information regarding the research/performance outside of rehearsals with non-participants.
5. The Researcher and the Institution will always use discretion when using my image and/or profile and will not use it to discredit me in any way.
6. I consent to the use my name in the research process, as it pertains to the written thesis.
7. I confirm that this Researcher and Institution has the right to record me through photographs, videos, and audio formats.
8. The Researcher and Institution has the rights to use my performance, voice, likeness, image, etc. as it pertains to PEEP: Antigone and any related materials, such as publicity, marketing, etc. in any capacity. This includes distribution, promotion, exhibition, etc.
9. I consent that photographs, videos, and related artefacts of the rehearsal and performance process will be submitted in the final thesis.
10. I consent that source material may be used beyond the research including but not limited to, academic articles, journals, conferences, performances etc.

11. I understand that these materials (videos, audios, artefacts) will become the property of the Researcher and this Institution, including copyright therein, and I acknowledge that I am not entitled to payment or any other compensation for the use of such material.
12. I understand that I will not be able to remove myself from the rehearsal and performance process, up to 14 weeks prior to the final performance.
13. I waive all personal rights to object to the use of my image, name, or personality in connection with any imagery, video, or audio of me in the Researchers submitted thesis.
14. I agree that, by retaining this release form signed by me, the Institution can be assured that it has my permission to proceed.
15. I confirm that all information listed in this document is true and accurate.

This documentation will be kept for up to a period of five years on site at Auckland University of Technology, after which it will be destroyed.

Participant Name (Print)

Participant Signature

Date _____

Researcher Name (Print)

Researcher Signature

Date _____