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Seeing it Feelingly: On Affect and Bodyworld in Performance

In this article, the performing body is considered via a three-pronged approach involving affect theory and affective science, a scene from *King Lear*, and long-distance running. Inspired by the chiaroscuro of painting, this variety and mix of sources act as a methodological device to shed unfamiliar light (and shade) on the elusive topic of affect. While 'body' is viewed from the perspective of 'bodyworld' to denote constitutive and reciprocally shaping human–nonhuman relationalities, the 'performance' that occurs in bodies is analyzed in terms of a 'drama of affect' to signal the activity that germinates and circulates at various levels of consciousness in human behaviour, whether aesthetic, athletic, or daily. Frank Camilleri is Professor of Theatre Studies at the University of Malta and Artistic Director of Icarus Performance Project. He has performed, given workshops, and published various texts on performer training, theatre as a laboratory, and practice as research. He is the author of *Performer Training Reconfigured: Post-Psychophysical Perspectives for the Twenty-first Century* (Bloomsbury, 2019) and *Performer Training for Actors and Athletes* (Bloomsbury, forthcoming).

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THE STUDY OF AFFECT is a minefield, rife with visible and invisible pitfalls, but the subject is alluring on many fronts. The contentiousness of the term itself is attractive for the opportunity it provides to grapple with various aspects of embodiment, in particular with what I call 'bodyworld' to denote constitutive human–nonhuman relationalities that operate on the level of the reciprocally shaping energies that exist between body and world. The term 'bodyworld' fuses Phillip Zarrilli's psychophysical *bodymind* from the field of acting with Don Ihde's Husserl-inspired *lifeworld* from a postphenomenology that focuses on the impact of specific technologies on experience.¹ Consequently, the focus in this article on performing bodies settles on affect for a better understanding of the physical/material and ecological connections that necessarily involve technique as a way of being and doing.²

To shine a light on affect and bodies in performance, aspects of corporeality are discussed in endurance sports, specifically with regard to long-distance running. By considering elements of the extreme conditions of the body in such practices, where the body is

pushed to the limits of its capacities, the objective is to press to the farthest – and therefore *magnify* – certain qualities that are also present in aesthetic and daily performance, thus illuminating some dark corners in the process. The performing body that endures a 42.2-kilometre marathon run (or longer in ultramarathons) engages capacities and draws on reserves of a physical, mental, and emotional nature that bring out in stark relief characteristics that are actual or potential in all bodies. I refer to this multi-dimensional '*performance (that occurs) in bodies*' as the 'drama of affect' to signal the activity that germinates and circulates at various levels of awareness in human behaviour. This body-at-the-limits *necessarily* involves strategies of preparation, for training and performance. The focus on long-distance running is because, compared to other activities, it comes very close to daily behaviour: whoever walks can also run, irrespective of the ability or the form adopted and its efficacy, thus already marking a fundamental level of embodied technique.³ As such, it is through its at once extreme obligations *and* minimalist requirements that long-distance running magnifies and brings into sharper relief dimensions of

the bodyworld in performance that may otherwise be concealed.

My consideration of bodies in performance via the lens of affect as prompted by endurance is necessarily selective, revolving around the phenomenon of what athletes and aesthetic performers (including musicians) often call 'feeling'. To better illuminate bodies and objects in paintings, one may sometimes need to cast shadows to expose features that remain invisible – like Caravaggio's painterly *chiaroscuro*, which uses strong contrasts between light and dark to achieve a fuller sense of volume. The same can apply in the context of a discussion on affect, where the object of analysis is not available for direct scrutiny. The methodological equivalent of *chiaroscuro* in this article, or the use of strong contrasts between light and dark to achieve a fuller sense of volume in the depiction of bodies and objects, entails, amongst other things, highlighting the margins or the background rather than the foreground. In other words, by avoiding the frontal lighting of a primary focus on phenomenology, amply supplied elsewhere in accounts of performer process,⁴ what is favoured here is the side-, back-, and under-lighting provided by outlooks like affect theory and affective science, as well as by sports endurance practice with reference to bodies in performance.

The Affect Constellation

The first task when discussing 'feeling' is to identify, situate, and define certain words in the terminological constellation of affect. As others like Patrick Colm Hogan and Ruth Leys have noted, one's outlook on affect is dependent on that of related and overlapping phenomena like sensations, emotions, moods, attitudes, and dispositions.⁵ The choice of terms alone steers the discussion in one direction rather than another, hence the importance of outlining the understanding of affect that informs this article.

Due to the variables available in a constellation, there is no one way of configuring or reading the connections between the stars, even though a perceived outline or pattern gives that group its name. The terminological

constellation of affect is further complicated by the unequal luminosity of its constituent elements because of the different emphases that various perspectives and theories bestow on certain aspects and not others. Hence the imperative to consider affect in context, within a constellation, where meaning is emergent and contingent rather than predetermined.

The principal terms that are often used in the context of 'affect' – or even interchangeably with it – include 'emotion', 'feeling', and 'sensation'. The degree of slippage across these words can be confusing, depending on the perspective adopted. My grasp of these phenomena is informed by Brian Massumi's reading of Gilles Deleuze, especially regarding the distinction between *affect* and *emotion*, which can be placed on a spatio-temporal continuum with *non-conscious* or *pre-conscious affect* at one end leading to *conscious emotion* at the other. In between, there are sensorial perceptions, or *sensations* of one's body in the world (and therefore also of the world, hence 'bodyworld relationalities'), as well as *feelings*, which, as the word implies, can be sensorial (mainly of a tactile nature) and/or emotional (for example, to have 'feelings' for someone).

As I have noted elsewhere:

Massumi's understanding of affect is closely related to an expansive view of movement.⁶ For him, affects are relationalities – 'forces' or 'intensities' – between bodies (human and nonhuman) that emerge from and condition movement.⁷ Since bodies are always in a material context, movement for humans also marks the continuous generation of 'small', unformulated relationalities with the world around. Some of these non-conscious connections manage to surface in our awareness as sensations that we note or recognize (e.g. a particularly rough texture when touching or being touched by something). In turn, any of these sensations can evolve further into emotions that we identify and which through socio-material conditioning we can (re)cognize in specific ways (e.g. the roughness of a particular texture giving rise to fear or disgust or aversion).⁸

Massumi deems sensations and emotions as 'back-formations', that is, *retrospective readings* that occur at 'virtual' speeds of the previously unacknowledged and unrecognized intensity of affects.⁹

The notion of retrospection and of an evolutionary progression from one state to another makes it possible to propose a timeline of occurrence based on Eric Shouse's reading of Massumi. In a nutshell: 'Feelings are *personal* and *biographical*, emotions are *social*, and affects are *prepersonal*.'¹⁰ Such a timeline can be read imaginatively as a 'plot-line' with the evolving phenomena as 'characters' in the so-called 'drama' of the generation and circulation of affect. Shouse's definition of feeling as 'a sensation that has been checked against previous experiences and labelled' implies not only that sensation is a kind of feeling (in fact he uses the two words interchangeably) but also that it occurs *before* feeling.

Therefore, in a hypothetical timeline, first there is *sensation* (or sensorial movement/perception), which is then noted and identified as *feeling* (making it 'personal and biographical because every person has a distinct set of previous sensations . . . when interpreting and labelling their feelings'), and which is subsequently communicated as *emotion* according to one's sociocultural conventions and context.¹¹ Crucially, if the emotions of infants are 'direct expressions of affect' because they lack 'language and biography' to experience feelings, affects come prior to all in this overlapping and multifaceted continuum. This means that non-conscious sensations overlap with affects, while conscious sensations intersect with feeling. Indeed, echoing Massumi, Shouse describes affect as 'a non-conscious experience of intensity . . . a moment of unformed and unstructured potential'.

On this account, human affect marks a *mobilization* in the body that involves 'facial muscles, the viscera, the respiratory system, the skeleton, autonomic blood flow changes, and vocalizations that act together'.¹² This non-conscious movement is experienced consciously as sensation, which in adults is a feeling that can be related to past experiences (personal, sociocultural) but which in very young infants remains largely unprocessed except as manifested in physical reactions. While adults transmit their feelings as emotions, what they see as 'emotion' in babies is their own (adult) projection on and interpretation of the infants' affective

movements: 'Through facial expression, respiration, posture, colour, and vocalizations infants are able to express the intensity of the stimulations that impinge upon them.'¹³

Affective Differences

The picture of affect presented here is developed from, and in tandem with, cultural studies and it is not difficult to see why and how its inherent movement, resistance to fixity, and promise of change has been enlisted by those social and political projects that counter predetermined structures,¹⁴ including in performance.¹⁵ This understanding of affect belongs to 'affect theory' as distinct from 'affective science'. Although there is diversity within both disciplines, their genealogy can be summed up as follows: 'Writers in affect theory draw on a range of psychological, social, linguistic, and other theories, most often in the service of political analysis. . . . In contrast, affective science has its roots in cognitive science and to a lesser extent social psychology.'¹⁶ Ruth Leys articulates this distinction in terms of the humanities and sciences and of the different protocols and expectations that come with them.¹⁷ Due to diverse epistemological contexts, the constellation from affect theory in the preceding section is hardly recognizable from the perspective of affective science, which is why a wall is often encountered when situating affect because the same words are deployed to describe different phenomena.

To highlight the kind of divergences at play that stem from different conceptual and methodological assumptions, let us consider a fundamental principle. Louis C. Charland identifies a 'major issue' that concerns affective science: 'whether there can be unconscious affective states, which many argue is as self-contradictory as the claim that there can be unfelt feelings'.¹⁸ This question alone constitutes an existential crisis in many formulations of affect theory, based as they are on the separation of non-conscious affect and (re)cognizable emotion. Indeed, in affective science, 'affect' per se does not have any specific signification but, rather, is 'a fairly straightforward term that is simply more

encompassing than “emotion”. As such, it is intended to delimit a natural kind.¹⁹

In addition to emotions, feelings, and sensations, affective scientists are interested in the broader picture that includes moods, attitudes, stances, and dispositions, all of which fall under the ‘affective’. For example, contrary to affect theory’s privileging of affect as a fundamental non-conscious movement or intensity, Klaus R. Scherer’s conceptualization of feeling as a component of – and therefore as distinguishable from – emotion, does not refer to ‘affect’ at all. Instead, he considers different aspects of feeling in terms of ‘unconscious reflection and regulation’, which includes physiological symptoms, motor expression, action tendencies, and cognitive appraisal. In Scherer’s explanation, these phenomena overlap with ‘conscious representation and regulation’ and the ‘verbalization and communication of emotional experience’, thus presenting a complex and intricate picture of ‘experienced feeling’.²⁰ Such a schematic and pragmatic approach to the analysis of emotion is characteristic of affective science, as evidenced in *The Oxford Companion to Emotion and the Affective Sciences*. Although affect as understood by an affect theorist underpins and drives the phenomena mentioned by Scherer, and although the dynamics of ‘labelling’ occur in both Shouse (feeling as ‘labelled’ sensation) and Scherer (emotion as ‘labelled’ feeling), the variables do not result in quite the same constellations. This is mainly because the ‘affective’ in affective science is interchangeable with ‘emotional’, a simple synonymy that short-circuits much of affect theory’s crucial differences between the non-conscious and conscious dimensions of emotional states.

Although this article aligns affect with Massumi-inspired readings (and therefore with affect theory), the chiaroscuro contrast cast by affective science is aimed to backlight the phenomena of ‘feeling’ by indexing other possible interpretations. Similarly, a poetic account of the ‘affective’ can illustrate the performance that occurs *in* bodies to complement the insights gleaned from theory and science. Accordingly, a scene in William Shakespeare’s *King Lear* is analyzed to illuminate

the terminological and phenomenological qualities that accompany ‘feeling’ in the constellation of affects. This exercise will pave the way to a discussion around ‘feeling’ in sports endurance and acting practices.

The Lear Affect

The representation of ‘feeling’ in a dramatic text, especially by a canonical author like Shakespeare, is examined to put forward dominant ideas that have shaped and still shape prevalent imaginaries about the topic. Such representation is not intended to privilege words over embodiment but to indicate an aspect of bodyworld dynamics, that is, *how* the materiality of discourse back-forms felt perception (and therefore *affects*), thus not only *reflecting* but *conditioning how we feel*. Viewed from this angle, the primacy of logos over bodies ascribed to dramatic texts is diluted, dissected, and deconstructed in the parallel contexts of theory, science, and the corporeal practices of aesthetic and athletic processes evoked in this article.

Act IV scene 6 of *King Lear* draws a complex picture of felt experience. The scene is also particularly pertinent for ‘bodies in performance’ because the focus on perception, feeling, and emotion occurs in the context of a role that includes the part of someone acting other roles. As such, this aspect of the scene *enacts* some conditions of possibility for performance, including the *techniques* Edgar adopts (mainly different tones of voice and accents) to disguise his identity from his blind father. Like endurance practice, this enfolded dynamic serves to *magnify* (or ‘exaggerate’ in this case) certain inherent or occluded elements that are present in performance. Moreover, the depiction of extreme emotions and physical pain resonates with aspects of ‘feeling’ in sports endurance as described in the subsequent section.

In this scene, Edgar guides his father, the Earl of Gloucester, who has been blinded by the Duke of Cornwall. Gloucester is not aware of Edgar’s identity as the latter first pretends to be a peasant on a cliff, and, then, after the former supposedly jumps off the precipice with suicidal intent, a passer-by on a beach.

An agitated Lear appears at one point, inviting a parallel between the two old men. Amongst other motifs and themes, the scene deals with the nature of perception, the senses, and emotions, which can be analyzed via the shifting multivalence of the term 'feeling' to shed light (and shade) on the bigger picture of affect.

In the space of the 300 or so lines that constitute this scene, the term 'feeling' stands for: a *sensorial capacity* ('Feel you your legs?', as a disguised Edgar asks his father, l. 80);²¹ an *emotional faculty* ('feeling sorrows', as Edgar in another disguise describes his past to Gloucester, l. 248); and a *mixture of both* ('see it [by emotive] feelingly', as blind Gloucester answers Lear's question about how he sees 'this world goes' without eyes, l. 164). This semantic instability, which reflects the elusiveness of representing felt experience, is further complicated – enacted as it is *deconstructed* – when 'feeling' is made to overlap with other phenomena, thus giving a sense of the multiple and intersecting layers that constitute 'performance in bodies' and 'drama of affect'. As such, the porosity of 'feeling' in the Shakespearean logos aligns well with the myriad facets of 'embodied feeling'.

The other phenomena with which 'feeling' overlaps in this scene include *sensorial synaesthesia* ('see it [by tactile] feelingly' and, as Lear argues, to 'Look with thine ears', ll. 164, 166); *emotional empathy* ('change places' to experience what others are feeling, l. 168); a *state of mind*, whether it is insanity or insight ('Better [be] distract' to not feel sorrow as opposed to having 'ingenious feeling', ll. 309–10); a form of *cognition* as manifested in *world-awareness* ('see how this world goes', l. 165) and in *self-awareness* (the 'knowledge of themselves' of one's thoughts, l. 313); and a *moral or ethical sensibility* that comes with the consciousness of social injustice (for example, 'Hark in thine ear . . . which is the justice, which is the thief?' as Lear rhetorically asks, ll. 167–70).

It is not difficult to see the attraction for affect theorists to read such a fundamental, intersecting, and ever-dynamic phenomenon of feeling in terms of pre-conscious affect that emerges from a body's ongoing encounter with the world (including other bodies).

Consider, for example, the following account from Massumi that explains and seemingly maps the *performance in bodies* enacted in this scene from *King Lear*:

For affect is synaesthetic, implying a participation of the senses in each other: the measure of a living thing's potential interactions is its ability to transform the effects of one sensory mode into those of another. (Tactility and vision being the most obvious but no means the only examples; interoceptive senses, especially proprioception, are crucial.) . . . Formed, qualified, situated perceptions and cognitions fulfilling functions of actual connection or blockage are the capture and closure of affect. Emotion is the most intense (most contracted) expression of that *capture* – and of the fact that something has always and again escaped. Something remains unactualized, inseparable from but unassimilable to any *particular*, functionally anchored perspective. That is why all emotion is more or less disorienting, and why it is classically described as being outside of oneself . . .²²

In this light, the *performance in bodies* that transpires in Act IV scene 6 of *King Lear* can indeed be re-read in the terms of a *drama of affect* that poetically evokes the peregrinations and the dynamics/mechanisms that felt experience mobilizes within the individual. From the many incipient options available,²³ affect grows and develops through accumulation²⁴ and 'besideness'²⁵ into the relative concreteness of recognizable emotions. But that is not the end of the 'drama'. These 'captured' emotional and physiological states are said to contain not only traces of the paths selected but also of those not taken up and which reside as dormant potential or incipient tendencies that can emerge – or erupt – in other circumstances.²⁶ The attraction becomes even more tantalizing when the drama of affect, as also seen in *King Lear*, is layered by a political narrative of body–world relational causality, generative development, and the promise or threat of disruption/eruption in the social fabric.

Ruth Leys, and others who lean towards an affective science perspective,²⁷ find the political dimension problematic and have critiqued it as obfuscating a neurobiological understanding of affect, especially when it comes to the distinction between affect and emotion.²⁸ For example, Constantina Papoulias

and Felicity Callard present a case that considers affect 'as *part of a system of regulation* that makes both self and social coherence possible', rather than as an instable and potentially disruptive 'placeholder for the inherent dynamism and mutability of matter'.²⁹ However, that is the plot-line for another story. As far as this article is concerned, to balance the sensorial-emotional in *King Lear*, the following section deals with the sensorial-physiological in a sports endurance practice to shed further side-lighting on bodyworld in performance.

Enduring It

A range of typical instructions for runners includes moving at individual *distance-based* paces such as your '5-km pace', '10-km pace', and 'half-marathon pace', or at individual *exertion-based* paces like your 'race pace', 'steady pace', and 'easy pace'. To the outsider or novice athlete such directions can be confusing because there is no verifiable measure against which to gauge one's performance, like there is, for example, when following a heart-rate or speed-rate objective on a fitness watch. And yet, such individual-oriented instructions have 'roughly precise' meaning for runners with some experience. To professional and recreational athletes who practise them, these pace-indicators refer to a spectrum of intensity that resembles a colour palette. It is not an objective scale (like running at 12 km per hour or 150 heart beats per minute) but a subjective range that varies with every runner, sometimes even for the same runner on different days, based on current form and present conditions (whether recovering, maintaining, or peaking, and whether it is raining or windy on rough or smooth terrain). As sports writer and coach Matt Fitzgerald puts it in the context of endurance races:

Athletes pace themselves largely by *feel*. External feedback in the form of tie splits and the relative positions of other racers may influence pacing, but it's an *internal sense of the appropriateness of one's pace from moment to moment* that has the first and final say in determining whether an athlete chooses to speed up, hold steady, slow down, or collapse into a lifeless heap.³⁰

This 'internal sense' that athletes 'feel', therefore, does not consist of an objective appraisal of effort (which can be found in the data that even the most basic of phone or watch apps produces) but of the runner's own *perception of effort*. The feeling of oneself that accompanies an athlete's perception of effort recalls various aspects of the constellation of affect discussed so far, potentially shedding a different light on sensations, emotions, and the non-conscious intensities that animate the bodyworld in performance.

The 'internal sense' that conditions an athlete's perception of effort can be compared to Phillip Zarrilli's 'aesthetic inner bodymind' of actors,³¹ which marks a phenomenological state that is 'discovered and shaped through long-term, extra-daily modes of practice such as yoga, martial arts, and other in-depth forms of psychophysical training'.³² In other words, this 'inner bodymind' involves an engagement with technique that modulates at the same time as it fuses – 'intertwines' and 'braids', according to Zarrilli's reading of Maurice Merleau-Ponty³³ – the various felt qualities of embodiment. The dimensions of experience that are thus 'braided' range from the sensorimotorial exteroception and the visceral interoception that characterize daily performance, to the 'subtle' and sophisticated (*aesthetic*) sensibility that stimulates, drives, and shapes one's movement in theatre and dance performance. As such, technique provides *channels* or *pathways* for basic bodyworld sensations (how one feels oneself *in/and* the world) that is then *layered* with emotional feelings.³⁴

Athletes follow a similar process of subtle body-in-the-world attunement for optimal performance, including with regard to pacing, which marks an explicit modulated and braided connection between felt perception, decision making (or intentionality), and skilled action. Regarding the subjective pace-indicators that manifest elements of a runner's perception of effort, it is worth referring to attempts in sports science to account for 'perceptual intensities'.³⁵ Informed athletes will be aware of the Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE) Scale and refer to it (or to adapted versions of it) to understand better and calibrate

their running paces. The RPE Scale was developed by psychophysicist Gunnar Borg (1927–2020) to measure the intensity of physical activity. The scale is used in many scientific studies and by various clinicians, especially when dealing with muscular, cardiac, and respiratory issues, but it features ‘particularly in the field of sports medicine, where it is used by trainers to plan the intensity of training regimes’.³⁶ In the context of endurance practices such as long-distance running, it articulates the effort that athletes feel when running.

The RPE constitutes a scale of 6 to 20, from ‘extremely light’ on scale 7 to ‘extremely hard’ on scale 19.³⁷ This was subsequently developed by Borg himself to form a category (C) ratio (R) scale from 1 to 10, the Borg CR₁₀, starting from ‘0 Nothing at all’ and ‘0.5 Very, very weak (just noticeable)’, all the way through ‘5 Strong (heavy)’, ‘10 Very, very strong (almost max)’, and the off-scale ‘* Maximal’.³⁸ According to Borg, while the RPE enables the comparison of its values to ‘such physiological measurements as heart rate (HR) and oxygen consumption ($\dot{V}O_2$)’, the Borg CR₁₀ scale is ‘not determined by the form of any physiological functions or other measurements of exercise intensity, but by *internal psychophysical criteria*’.³⁹ In other words, the original scale is ideal for the more objective analyses involving testing, predictions, and prescriptions of perceived exertion, particularly by clinicians and coaches, whereas the CR₁₀ is ‘especially suitable for determining other subjective symptoms [of perceived effort], such as breathing difficulties, aches, and pain’.⁴⁰

As such, both versions of the scale seek to give some visibility to elusive dimensions of feeling. However, despite the mathematical and other considerations that went into its design, Borg himself cautions against taking the RPE scale ‘too literally’, for example against the verifiable measure of heart rate:

On any given day one may run and achieve a heart rate of 150 and feel ‘fine’ with an RPE of 13 [‘somewhat hard’], while on another day the same [150 HR] exertion may cause the runner to feel ‘bad’ with an RPE of 17 [‘very hard’] as a result of physical and emotional negative factors.⁴¹

This means that, as far as an individual runner’s felt experience is concerned, scales such as RPE and CR₁₀ function much the same way as if she followed her *own sense* of what an ‘easy pace’ or a ‘10-km pace’ feels like, hence Fitzgerald’s ‘internal sense of the appropriateness of one’s pace from moment to moment’.⁴²

The difference between scales like Borg’s and an individual athlete’s spectrum of intensity is their application: the former are diagnostic and predictive for prevention, rehabilitative, and performance-enhancing purposes, while the latter are descriptive and calibrating in the endeavour to optimize potential. Of course, both sets of objectives and functions overlap but the ‘appropriateness’ and ‘moment-to-moment’ qualities of an athlete’s sense (‘what *feels* right’) decidedly shift the perceptive centre of gravity towards the performing body as a main measuring instrument, as distinct from an external mechanism or device.

Performance in Bodies

Although the subjective nature of an athlete’s sense of pacing takes us back to our point of departure – to the problematic aspects of the affect constellation – the light/shade cast in the process provides further intersectional understanding of the kind alluded to by the poetics of ‘see[ing] it feelingly’. A return to affect theory further layer-lights the discussion, bestowing more chiaroscuro volume to the phenomenon. In a pertinent sense, the perception of effort enables an athlete to measure herself against herself, principally through the sensorial and emotional *feeling of oneself* and *acting on it*. This relation of oneself to oneself recalls Massumi’s consideration of sensations (or the sensorial feeling of movement) in terms of self-referentiality. For him, the doubling that attends sensation (‘the feeling of having a feeling’) is a *resonation* rather than a subjective split.⁴³ Like an echo, resonation does not operate on the surfaces of things and bodies but in the emptiness in between: ‘This complex self-continuity is a putting into relation of the movement to itself: self-relation.’⁴⁴ On this account, therefore,

experience is a way of relating to oneself via sensations and emotions that evolve from affects and which we cultivate as memory: a kind of echo chamber.⁴⁵

This understanding of experience is highly relevant in the context of an athlete's perception of effort. Firstly, it foregrounds the 'relation of the movement to itself', of running to itself *as technique* due to the continuous and repetitive nature of the activity for long durations. Indeed, endurance athletes do not 'only' run in space (in kilometres) but also in time (including in milliseconds that make huge differences), transforming the often invisible daily experiential space-time in material and tangible terms, hence the spatio-temporal matrix of *setting, maintaining, and adjusting a pace*. Secondly, it underlines the dynamics of feeling (sensorial and emotional) within the constellation of affect, and thus of the non-conscious bodyworld intensities in a runner's phenomenological assemblage as manifested in, for instance, the equipment or climate/terrain conditions that impact the perception of effort when pacing.⁴⁶ Thirdly, it exemplifies the 'performance in bodies' or 'drama of affect' evoked in this article to mark the activity that germinates and percolates at different levels of consciousness before, during, and after human action; in our case, endurance running.

Fitzgerald's explanation of an athlete's perceived effort parallels, in its dynamic doubling, Massumi's resonance of 'the feeling of having a feeling': 'Perceived effort actually has two layers. The first layer is how the athlete feels. The second layer is how the athlete feels *about* how she feels. The first layer is strictly physiological, whereas the second is emotional, or affective.'⁴⁷ Although Fitzgerald's use of 'affective' approximates that of affective science (that is, as an umbrella term for moods, dispositions, stances, and other states in addition to emotions), it is possible to align the combined two layers with aspects of Massumi's non-conscious intensity. Fitzgerald's layers are 'two' in name only to convey a sense of the complex relationalities that characterize affect. The 'rough precision' of perceived effort, as well as its quasi-volatile dependence on a multitude of factors,

parallel – albeit on a different level – the 'virtual synaesthetic perspectives' Massumi ascribes to affect.⁴⁸

'virtual' because of their [too-quick-to-have-happened] incipience,⁴⁹ 'synaesthetic' because they involve and transform sensory modes into each other, 'perspectives' because at this stage (in time) and level (of development) theirs is the realm of potential, not actualization.⁵⁰

The long-distance runner is, literally, always already chasing actualization, thus traversing the realm of potential, with her intersensory perception of effort continuously generating a multitude of information, and therefore of incipient possibilities that could be actioned but many of which are discarded or remain on a non-conscious level. This performance in the athlete's body, or drama of athletic affect, occurs too rapidly for (re)cognition to catch up because by the time the runner realizes what happened, could have happened, or any other incipient potentiality, she is already tackling the next metres in front of her, which produce different sets of sensory information and possibilities.⁵¹

The cultivated practice of self-relation that characterizes a runner's training in the perception of effort (for example, in the assessment and actioning of one's pace) is what marks the *experience* of an athlete. And it is this experience – this resonating chamber of feeling, where the 'labelling' of sensations *that accompanies skill and technique* – which comes to constitute a runner's 'roughly precise' *spectrum of intensity* when pacing a run. The self-relation of a runner pacing herself (*against/with herself*) indeed magnifies conditions that exist in other performing bodies, including in aesthetic or daily behaviour.

In *King Lear's* Act IV scene 6, Edgar's disguised roles resonate with a fundamental aspect of aesthetic performance, in particular of the theatrical kind but also more generally in everyday life: the ability to act oneself as another, irrespective of whether the 'other' is a psychologically realist character in a text-based drama or a more choreographic role in a physical theatre score. This is exactly the question that embodied-cognition philosopher Shaun Gallagher investigates with actor

Julia Gallagher with reference to 'feeling' as manifested in and channelled through empathy, the ability to put oneself in someone else's shoes and *experience* (rather than simply 'represent') someone else's feelings.

Building on theories of perception and psychology from the early twentieth century to more recent neuroscience understandings on empathy, Gallagher and Gallagher distinguish between S-imagination (simulative imagination) and N-imagination (narrative imagination) to propose a 'twofold conception'. Whilst S-imagination entails 'explicit, conscious . . . simulations of the other person's mental states',⁵² N-imagination draws from a rich variety of self- and sociocultural narratives that facilitates 'the possibility of acting oneself as another [that] is not reducible to imitation'. In generating empathy and behaviour based on the perception of 'the world in terms of how I can engage it', the (*in*)*formative richness* of N-imagination aligns it with an enactive cognitive approach to processing sensorial and emotional feelings.⁵³

Gallagher and Gallagher's suggestion of a twofold conception of empathy develops a phenomenological insight from pictorial art: when standing in front of a painting 'we know that we are not face-to-face with the painted (represented) figure yet we encounter or see in the painting the character portrayed'.⁵⁴ The authors suggest a similar 'twofoldness or double attunement' when it comes to the portrayal of 'character' and their 'feelings' on stage. For them, that 'portrayal' becomes enactive and experiential (rather than simulated and imitated)⁵⁵ precisely because of an embodied fusion of awareness and technique of the kind that Zarrilli distinguishes between the 'aesthetic inner bodymind' and the 'aesthetic outer bodymind' of performers, with the former marking a practitioner's awareness as cultivated during training and preparation, and the latter the persona that audiences see on the stage.⁵⁶

'Double attunement', Gallagher and Gallagher argue, applies also in 'everyday life' as exemplified by Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological account of 'our own body which is both the body that experiences (lived body or *Leib*) and the body that we can experience

as an object (*Körper*)'.⁵⁷ As such, this aligns well with the claim that aspects of endurance and aesthetic practices *magnify* or *inflate* existing or potential conditions in everyday life. One difference that Gallagher and Gallagher identify between quotidian and athletic/aesthetic mobilization of feeling pertains not so much to phenomenological status but its *time-line of occurrence*. While feelings of empathy in everyday life generally emerge from 'basic responses . . . involving embodied (motor, kinaesthetic, perceptual and affective) processes' to then 'progress into higher-order concerns about understanding context (via N-imagination)', the actor inverts the process when first studying, preparing, and rehearsing a role with the objective of then achieving (or *experiencing*) 'the more basic empathic processes in her actual performance'.⁵⁸ In both cases, however, what unfolds is the drama of affect – of sensations and emotion, perception and behaviour – in a body that is always in performance, on the stage, in sports, or in life.

Of Mixing Cuts

The mix of epistemological perspectives in this article brings together insights from theory, science, poetry, sport, and aesthetic performance with the aim of better understanding the affective dimension of performing bodies. The necessarily selective blending that this involves is frowned upon by scholars like Papoulias and Callard, who critique the propensity of 'the humanities [specifically of affect theorists] to "poach" scientific vocabulary and findings'.⁵⁹ Papoulias and Callard are not convinced by Massumi's admission of 'shameless poaching' that is 'designed to force a change in the humanities',⁶⁰ mainly because the political positioning that underpins it comes at the cost of scientific accuracy.⁶¹ Leys continues where Papoulias and Callard leave off, in particular criticizing the separation of affect from meaning and consciousness.⁶²

The articles by Papoulias and Callard and by Leys are erudite accounts that perforate the scientific application of some foundational notions developed in the name of affect as a non-conscious phenomenon that resists a

fixity made to stand for 'authority', be it semantic, political, or even psychological in the intentionality/agential sense. However, I do have some sympathy for the 'irritated response' that Papoulias and Callard received about their project:

The respondent protested against what she interpreted as our over-investment in proving the 'misuse' of science within cultural theory. She was not, she argued, interested in whether scientific terms were being used scientifically accurately or not; she was interested, rather, in how scientific terms and ideas could be 'useful' . . . for cultural theory, and in how they could help in reformulating what bodies could be and what they could do.⁶³

'What bodies could be and what they could do' are two valid questions that, through this article's perspectival lens on affect, can be reframed as 'how bodies perform', thus shifting the emphasis from 'what they mean' to 'how they are', in the process exposing 'doing' as a complex multi-level 'performance' which involves not only the body as biology but as socio-materiality.⁶⁴

Both Papoulias and Callard (2010) and Leys (2011) refer to actors and (the performance of) emotions in the context of Antonio Damasio's neuroscience:

Staged emotions, insofar as they are consciously 'put on', are said to be lacking in . . . micro-movement . . . Cf. Damasio: 'Casual voluntary mimicking of expressions of emotion is easily detected as fake – something always fails, whether in the configuration of the facial muscles or in the tone of voice.'⁶⁵

[A]n actor cannot convincingly portray the emotion he is trying to represent unless he experiences the emotion himself; if he does not, he can only simulate it, and the simulation will show.⁶⁶

Theatre and performance practitioners know that the issue is not as straightforward as this. Without the need to go further back in history, acting in the twentieth century was dominated by core concerns about the nature of 'truth' (or belief) in the work of actors, especially, but not exclusively, for those involved in psychological realist genres.⁶⁷ The rise of actor training alone, and the various

techniques that have been developed,⁶⁸ reflect attempts at understanding, reproducing/reliving, and analyzing scenic behaviour in terms of intentionality, agency, imagination, and other dimensions.⁶⁹ An actor's convincing portrayal of Gloucester's emotional travails does not entail *actually* enduring his life experiences (having eyes gouged out to bear the pain and blindness), nor would this guarantee a genuine ('not-fake') representation. In this regard, therefore, Papoulias, Callard, and Leys are guilty of similarly selective and legitimacy charges that they level against affect theorists regarding borrowing concepts 'across disciplines without mobilizing disciplinary boundary struggles'.⁷⁰

There are many things that not even science can fully explain. The nature of human experience is one of them. The humanities and arts can evoke such 'unpresentables' through the juxtaposition of elements that *allude to* (rather than represent) something.⁷¹ Because of its pragmatics and rigorous protocols, we tend to rely on science as an arbiter of truth, hence the inclination Papoulias and Callard identify in cultural theorists like Massumi of using science as 'the language of evidence and verification, a language offering legitimation'.⁷² All this notwithstanding the *curated* and *manufactured* status of science's experiments and methods,⁷³ which does not discredit it but, as Karen Barad argues, marks one path or 'cut' amongst others.⁷⁴ One cut does not constitute reality or truth, but just that: one cut of reality, one facet of truth. This article seeks to make the most of this insight by offering different cuts on human affect as a 'performance in bodies' that *forms* as it *informs* 'bodies in performance'.

Notes and References

1. Phillip B. Zarrilli, *Psychophysical Acting: An Inter-cultural Approach after Stanislavski* (London: Routledge, 2009), p. 4; Don Ihde, *Technology and the Lifeworld: From Garden to Earth* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990). For fuller discussions on bodyworld, see Frank Camilleri, *Performer Training Reconfigured: Post-Psychophysical Perspectives for the Twenty-First Century* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), p. 85–6; and Frank Camilleri, 'From Bodymind to Bodyworld: The Case of Mask Work as a Training for the Senses', *Theatre, Dance, and Performance Training*, XI, No. 1 (2020), p. 25–39 (p. 25–6).

2. I would like to acknowledge the input of Victor Ramirez Ladron de Guevera, who provided feedback on an early version of this article.
3. Although the case of disabled bodies that restrict or even exclude the act of walking/running without prosthesis falls beyond the remit of this article, it is possible to conceive of equivalent or compensatory activity from the daily behaviour of these bodies. For an account of elite Paralympic running from the perspective of the trainer, see P. David Howe, 'Coaching in the Flagship Paralympic Sport: A Tale from Trackside', in *High Performance Disability Sport Coaching*, ed. Geoffrey Z. Kohe and Derek M. Peters (London: Routledge, 2017), p. 113–26. For a discussion on wider socio-technical implications of mainstreaming training, see the three case studies of sports that incorporate running (football, tennis, and basketball) in Nigel Thomas and Andy Smith, *Disability, Sport, and Society: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2009), p. 75–97.
4. See Zarrilli, *Psychophysical Acting*, and Phillip B. Zarrilli, *(Toward) A Phenomenology of Acting* (London: Routledge, 2020). See also Frank Camilleri, *Performer Training Reconfigured*, p. 57–89.
5. Patrick Colm Hogan, 'Affect Studies', *Oxford Research Encyclopedias* (2016), <<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190201098.013.105>>; Ruth Leys, 'The Turn to Affect: A Critique', *Critical Inquiry*, XXXVII, No. 3 (Spring 2011), p. 434–72 (p. 443–4).
6. Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2002), p. 1–2.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 15, 24–7. See also *The Affect Theory Reader*, ed. Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2010), p. 1–3.
8. Camilleri, 'From Bodymind to Bodyworld', p. 27.
9. Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, p. 7, 10, 30.
10. Eric Shouse, 'Feeling, Emotion, Affect', *M/C Journal*, VIII, No. 6 (2005), <<https://doi.org/10.5204/mcj.2443>>.
11. *Ibid.*
12. Virginia E. Demos, quoted in *ibid.*
13. Shouse, 'Feeling, Emotion, Affect'.
14. See, for example, the affective nature of political theorist William E. Connolly's 'neuropolitics' in *Neuropolitics: Thinking, Culture, Speed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), p. xiii. See also Massumi's 'germinal politics' in *The Principle of Unrest: Activist Philosophy in the Expanded Field* (London: Open University Press, 2017), p. 110.
15. See, for example, the conceptualization of affect in James Thompson's applied performance practices in conflict situations in *Performance Affects: Applied Theatre and the End of Effect* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); and Marco Donnarumma's account of performance art's 'radical body politics' in 'Across Bodily and Disciplinary Borders: Hybridity as Methodology, Expression, Dynamic', *Performance Research*, XXV, No. 4 (2020), p. 36–44 (p. 37–8, 43–4).
16. Hogan, 'Affect Studies'.
17. Leys, 'The Turn to Affect', p. 464–8. See also Constantina Papoulias and Felicity Callard, 'Biology's Gift: Interrogating the Turn to Affect', *Body and Society*, XVI, No. 1 (2010), p. 29–56.
18. Louis C. Charland, in *The Oxford Companion to Emotion and the Affective Sciences*, ed. David Sander and Klaus R. Scherer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 10.
19. Hogan, 'Affect Studies'.
20. Klaus R. Scherer, in Sander and Scherer, *ibid.*, p. 184.
21. All line references to the play are from William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine (Folger Shakespeare Library; New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015).
22. Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, p. 35.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
24. *The Affect Theory Reader*, p. 2–3.
25. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2003), p. 8.
26. Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, p. 14–15, 30; Camilleri, 'From Bodymind to Bodyworld', p. 28.
27. See Hogan, 'Affect Studies'.
28. Leys, 'The Turn to Affect', p. 436–7, 441–4.
29. Papoulias and Callard, 'Biology's Gift', p. 29 (emphasis added), 46–7.
30. Matt Fitzgerald, *How Bad Do You Want It? Mastering the Psychology of Mind over Muscle* (London: Aurum Press, 2016), p. 46 (emphasis added).
31. For a detailed discussion, see Frank Camilleri, *Performer Training for Actors and Athletes* (London: Bloomsbury, forthcoming).
32. Zarrilli, *Psychophysical Acting*, p. 50–1.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
34. I elaborate on this aspect in the context of aesthetic performance in the subsequent section.
35. Gunnar Borg, *Borg's Perceived Exertion and Pain Scales* (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 1998), p. 13.
36. Nerys Williams, 'The Borg Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE) Scale', *Occupational Medicine*, LVII, No. 5 (2017), p. 404–5 (p. 404).
37. G. A. Borg, 'Psychophysical Bases of Perceived Exertion', *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, XIV, No. 5 (1982), p. 377–81 (p. 378); Borg, *Borg's Perceived Exertion and Pain Scales*, p. 30–1.
38. Borg, 'Psychophysical Bases', p. 380; Borg, *Borg's Perceived Exertion and Pain Scales*, p. 41.
39. Borg, *Borg's Perceived Exertion and Pain Scales*, p. 13 (emphasis added). Borg explains that 'psychophysical scaling . . . refers to the measurement of how perceived intensities vary with physical or physiological intensities' (*ibid.*). Borg uses the term 'psychophysical' in the scientific 'psychophysics' sense that studies the perceptual relationality between stimulus and sensation, as distinct from its phenomenological deployment in theatre and performance as the integration of outer/physical and inner/psychic action in which body–mind dualism is overcome (Zarrilli, *Psychophysical Acting*).
40. Borg, 'Psychophysical Bases', p. 380.
41. *Ibid.*
42. Fitzgerald, *How Bad Do You Want It?*, p. 46.
43. Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, p. 13–14.
44. *Ibid.* p. 14.
45. Camilleri, 'From Bodymind to Bodyworld', p. 27.
46. Cf. Frank Camilleri, 'Of Assemblages, Affordances, and Actants – or the Performer as Bodyworld: The Case of Puppet and Material Performance', *Studies in Theatre and Performance*, XLII, No. 2 (April 2020), p. 156–69 (p. 158–60).
47. Fitzgerald, *How Bad Do You Want It?*, p. 48.
48. Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, p. 35.
49. 'Something that happens too quickly to have happened, actually, is *virtual*. The body is as immediately virtual as it is actual. The virtual, the pressing crowd of

incipiencies and tendencies, is a realm of *potential*' (ibid., p. 30).

50. Camilleri, *Performer Training Reconfigured*, p. 153.

51. A fuller discussion of the complex phenomenon described in this paragraph entails, amongst other things, anticipation and decision-making skills that are performed expertly (technically) and almost automatically (on quasi-non-conscious levels) in game conditions. See, for example, *Routledge Handbook of Sport Expertise*, ed. Joseph Baker and Damian Farrow (London: Routledge, 2015), and *Anticipation and Decision Making in Sport*, ed. A. Mark Williams and Robin C. Jackson (London: Routledge, 2019). See also my discussion on automaticity in expert performance in Camilleri, *Performer Training for Actors and Athletes*.

52. Shaun Gallagher and Julia Gallagher, 'Acting Oneself as Another: An Actor's Empathy for her Character', *Topoi*, XXXIX, No. 1 (2020), p. 779–90 (p. 781).

53. Ibid., p. 782.

54. Ibid., p. 787.

55. Although 'imitation' is also an 'experience', the distinction here revolves around 'experiencing a specific feeling' and 'imitating-without-feeling that feeling'.

56. Zarrilli, *Psychophysical Acting*, p. 52, 55–8.

57. Gallagher and Gallagher, 'Acting Oneself as Another', p. 788.

58. Ibid.

59. Papoulias and Callard, 'Biology's Gift', p. 49.

60. Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, p. 20.

61. Papoulias and Callard, 'Biology's Gift', p. 36.

62. Leys, 'The Turn to Affect', p. 434–4, 440.

63. Papoulias and Callard, 'Biology's Gift', p. 53 (n. 26).

64. Hence the post-psycho-physical conceptualization of *bodyworld* (Camilleri, *Performer Training Reconfigured*, p. 62, 85–6), especially in terms of the '3As of bodyworld: assemblages, affordances, and actants', which foreground socio-technical and sociocultural dimensions beyond the strictly psycho-physical notion of *bodymind* (Camilleri, 'Of Assemblages, Affordances, and Actants').

65. Papoulias and Callard, 'Biology's Gift', p. 53 (n. 20).

66. Leys, 'The Turn to Affect', p. 463 (n. 52).

67. *Acting (Re)Considered: A Theoretical and Practical Guide*, ed. Phillip B. Zarrilli (second edition; London: Routledge, 2002).

68. *Actor Training*, ed. Alison Hodge (second edition; London: Routledge, 2010).

69. Rhonda Blair, *The Actor, Image, and Action: Acting and Cognitive Neuroscience* (London: Routledge, 2008).

70. Papoulias and Callard, 'Biology's Gift', p. 50.

71. Jean-François Lyotard, 'Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism?', trans. Régis Durand, in Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 71–81 (p. 78).

72. Papoulias and Callard, 'Biology's Gift', p. 37.

73. Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar, *Laboratory Life: The Construction of Scientific Facts* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986).

74. Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 175.