

**Moving
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(Con)figuring Sport

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How much of it is a problem of thinking about history?

SK: To blame it on history is to make excuses. If you compare Sri Lanka with Singapore: we have all the resources in the world, we've got landscapes, we've got minerals, we've got tea. And yet we are barely successful, and we only have ourselves to blame for it. If you come and visit Sri Lanka, you will think to yourself, 'Why isn't this country doing much better than it is?' We are blessed with so many things but we have squandered them.

During the war, we said to ourselves, if we stop this war, we're going to be unstoppable. But we also said, after we end this war, we are going to need a benevolent dictator – because we can't really work with democracy, we can't work through political collaboration. Now we're in a place where the war has actually ended and that excuse is gone. So now we have the opportunity to rebuild. The next ten years will be a good indication.

For those who have left, I do think there is a desire to return, especially among the younger people that I've spoken to. But with the older folk, there are some wounds that cut very deep, and the way they look back at the country is not too favourable.

We do have the talent pool to do well. The bureaucracy isn't as bad as in some other countries. People speak good English. So there is really no reason for us to be where we are.

These issues came later in my writing of the novel. Originally I just wanted to write about the great spin bowler that I could never be, right? But as I wrote deeper, it occurred to me that this is a metaphor for the country and the characters. W.G. is also a brilliant man who never really did anything with his life.

I have to say, though, that I am optimistic. In 2009, the war ended. I went back this July, and Colombo looks a lot more impressive than it ever did. Yes, there are still problems with the economy but there's reason for hope ... although not so much with the cricket team at the moment.

NOTES

1. Shehan Karunatilaka, *Chinaman: The Legend of Pradeep Mathew* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2011). The term, chinaman, is a cricketing slang that refers to an unorthodox method of left-handed spin bowling. Cricket legend attributes the term to one of its earliest exponents, the West Indies player, Elliss 'Puss' Achong, who was of part Chinese origin. The novel is so titled because Pradeep Mathew's bowling repertoire includes an extremely effective version of the chinaman – the ball becoming as elusive as the man himself.
2. Here, Shehan Karunatilaka is referring to the Pradeep Mathew quest plot of the novel. In fact, an epilogue actually takes the novel to the year 2009, albeit with no mention of the end of the civil war.

ALEX BOYD AND LYNETTE HUNTER

The Art of Play: Lishi, Contemporary Dance, and Cricket

Sports of all kinds tend to be competitive. Winning the game or match or tournament becomes the goal – listen to the tautology in that sentence which comes as easily to the tongue as the generational link in European culture between 'tournament' and medieval knights 'turning' their opponents on to the ground. But getting the goal is not the same as achieving a goal. Audiences and spectators get their adrenalin high and their endorphin shot of fulfilment not so much from the end result but from the way the game is played.¹ This is what we would call the aesthetics of movement, made up of kinesthetic affect and deep practice.

This essay proposes an exploration of some of the material interconnections between result-driven games and process-focused play through a case study involving an international match at the Headingley Cricket Ground, Phoenix Dance Theatre, and the Daoist movement system, Lishi. Lishi International (LI) became part of the project through connections with imove and with DJST – a project devised in Yorkshire in advance of the 2012 Olympics to raise public awareness of the connections between body movement and health. The case study follows the development of a performance that was choreographed by both LI and Phoenix Dance Theatre in collaboration with the Headingley Cricket Club management. The event took place during the tea-break of a match between Australia and Pakistan in July 2010.

Lishi provides a unique catalyst for this interplay between the arts and sports. It is a movement tradition from China which is often confused with martial arts and frequently at the centre of the discussion about sports and dance, about success and aesthetics, and about goals and process. A traditional whole-body breathing practice, the Weihai Lishi Quanfa or Lishi [威海李式拳法], is a Daoist family system from Weihai in north-eastern China that focuses on health and well-being. Like many of the Daoist movement practices, such as Tàijí, it has applications in wushu, which is a word that in China covers many physical arts from dance to

badminton to martial arts. Traditional energy-based movement practices began to re-surface in China in the years after the Cultural Revolution,² and today the resurgence of Daoism provides a context and structure for several complex and sophisticated systems.³ Many of these have been connected at a physical level with martial arts movement, and are now reclaiming their broader heritage as whole-body meditation forms. The current grandmaster of the system is Desmond Murray, who is also the International Vice-President of the Weihai Wushu Association and the President of Lishi International.

Lishi has a developed physical and verbal vocabulary for considering all movement, whether in sport or art, as 'play', focusing on a process-based aesthetics of site particular performance. Its presence in the Headingley performance raised larger questions about the aesthetics of group interaction based on body movement that challenged the prevailing culture of results-driven production, both in the arts and in sports. Phoenix Dance wanted to collaborate with LI because of the energy work that is fundamental to this Asian tradition. Alex Boyd, Deputy President for LI, had worked with Phoenix Dance and with the Northern Ballet Company on strategies for moving from dance technique to energy exploration in choreographed movement. From the first day of their training, Lishi students develop a sensitivity to energy through breathing exercises. No matter what style these breathing exercises are applied within, they teach practitioners to cultivate and direct a sense of presence through movement. The basis of the Lishi choreography for this project was a breakdown of the postures, spatial and distance relationships, and kinesthetic flow in cricket as a sport. The involvement of Headingley Cricket Club was to provide a sports scenography that foregrounded the involvement of the audience with the performance on the cricket field.

Throughout the rehearsal schedule of three weeks, the performers worked independently, with the two Phoenix Dance lead dancers choreographing sequences for the 'bowler' and the 'ball', and the eleven Lishi International members working with choreography devised by Alex Boyd for the 'batsmen' and the 'fielders'. Adam Sunderland, the artistic director, worked between the two groups, coming in with ideas that they would materialize in their own movement vocabularies. Drawing on previous work (for example, between badminton players and jazz musicians), he raised the energy for the Headingley project and liaised among all participants. The intense training of the two groups made the performers easy to mould and flex, and the day of the performance was the first time the two Phoenix Dance artists met and worked with the

Lishi practitioners. The potentially abrasive combination of professionalized contemporary dance with a traditional movement system was literally put into play through the ethos of energy work in Lishi. After a news event at Millenium Square in Leeds at which sections of their work were demonstrated, the two groups rehearsed the whole piece at Phoenix Dance Theatre, and then proceeded to Headingley Cricket Ground for the actual performance.

The following narration is provided by Alex Boyd:

Twelve Lishi practitioners and two professionals from Phoenix Dance Theatre based in Leeds, England, walk on to Headingley Cricket Ground during the tea-break of an Australia versus Pakistan international cricket match. Dressed in new cricket whites, ten male and female Lishi 'fielders' wait for the two 'batsmen', complete with helmets and pads, to enter the pitch, the space where the batsmen exchange 'ends' during a match. The Lishi group call on the ritual of cricket with their opening 'prepare' move, temporarily halting the bustle and movement of the stadium before the performance begins. Next, the Phoenix Dance Theatre 'bowler', a male dressed in whites, and the 'ball', a female dressed in red hot-pants and crop-top, perform a contemporary dance interplay of sensual attraction and repulsion, warming up for the action that will engage with elements of a micro-cricket match.

Some spectators cheer as the 'ball' is lifted into the air above the bowler – her body spread open as though parachuting into the packed stadium. The eleven fielders adopt Lishi animal postures with their legs and torso while their arms and eyes reach upwards and outwards to catch a ball in a flight that never is, awaiting the commencement of action. The bowler 'throws' the 'ball' towards one batsman who, with a huge circle of his bat and a forward step into a 'dragon' stance or lunge, symbolically sends her out into the field. The batsmen start to exchange runs, leaping in the air while performing acrobatic and synchronized wushu manoeuvres as though their bats were actually curved sabres.

The dancer playing the 'ball' greets each fielder in turn and they dance together, contemporary meeting ancient, while a red silk is tied to her presented limb or midriff before she flies gracefully onwards. The batsmen meet in the middle as rhythmic drum beats build in crescendo – they circle before exchanging bat strokes directed towards each other, skilfully warding off the strokes or evading them by side-stepping, ducking, and spinning, the resonance of their colliding bats echoing around the stadium until they realize that the 'ball' is now flying towards the stump. The fielders are directing their collective energy towards the batsmen, throwing fast hand strokes from Lishi's 'Poisoned Hand' movement delivered with a piercing 'SSS' sound from their breath. The batsmen break off from one another, characteristically leaping and rolling towards their crease but, alas, their stump has been compromised by the 'ball' who has knocked it over. 'Howzat!' shout the wildly dancing fielders;

they are 'out'. The 'bowler' and 'ball' dance victoriously. The crowd of over 7,000 spectators are bemused yet applaud enthusiastically.

The kinesthetics of movement: Affect and embodied knowledge

The ten-minute performance was not completely choreographed, although the piece consisted of six sequences with a start and an end. This enabled considerable free improvisation among the performers, and both groups took movements from their training or from dance pieces in their repertoire, expanding them out to the size of the grounds, covering large distances but still keeping within the disciplines of contemporary dance and traditional Lishi. Rather than mimicking the game of cricket, the sequences were focused on holding the audience's attention around the moments of highly charged energy exchange that usually happen quickly, and are liable to pass by unobserved in the playing of the sport. The Phoenix Dance movement between the 'bowler' and the 'ball' emphasized the sexual energy in the game shifting it toward a heterosexual display in tune with the history of choreography in ballet and modern dance. As is well-known, that history underwrites a context in which female dancers are picked up, twirled around, bent over, and so on by more athletic and visually muscular men.⁴ Psychoanalytic studies of sport over the past sixty years have consistently drawn attention to the dominance of male-only sport as a homosocial and homosexual site for sexual energy.⁵ In this context, the Phoenix Dance choreography externalizes and controls a cultural anxiety with homosexual interplay into a form of heterosexual interaction.⁶

In contrast, the Lishi choreography was far more ambiguous. In introducing a culturally different movement tradition with which many of the audience would not have been familiar, the Lishi performers injected into the performance unexpected action. Among the fielders, that action began with flowing and concentrated 'yin' movement, in which the performers were working within their own local space. This built increasingly towards the end of the piece, shifting to more dynamic and interactive 'yang' movement. At the same time, the batsmen were tightly choreographed in an intense interplay that continually touched on the sequences between the 'bowler' and the 'ball'.

Alex Boyd, who played one of the batsmen, has noted that the central embodied performance experience was about distance and spatial connection. The two batsmen were a long way apart – the stumps being twenty-two yards from each other – yet they had to work together to respond to the bowler's challenge. Together they had to make a split

second decision whether to run or not to do so. There was a point of no return when they were committed to the movement or had changed their minds to avoid being caught off crease. There was the intense connection when they passed each other in the middle. At the same time the movements focused on individual energy. The batsmen connected over distance partly by keeping their eyes on each other, each ready to respond to the slightest shift of energy in the other. The result was their movements mirrored each other, setting up a spatial interplay of being together yet apart. For the choreographer, the task was 'How to see cricket': here specifically how to see 'distance' and how to 'close distance' to achieve nearness. Lishi has various skills that work with distance, including the aesthetics of the Daoist concept, 'the shortest is the longest'. These skills not only achieved control over closeness and distance between the performers, but extended that control out to the distance between the audience and the performers.

Elements in Lishi that performers can draw on include visual effects, sound, movement, colour, and the kinesthetic energy called 'qi'. The choreographer deployed these elements to explore the attention and proprioception of some aspects of play in cricket. For example, the mirroring movements of the batsmen required them to use peripheral vision to put themselves in each other's place, and sense more immediately the imminent movement of the other person. At the same time, they were responding to the bowler's challenge and, to a large extent, challenging each other to interact. The mirrored movement allowed them to feed off each other's energy but at the same time it split their focus. Mirroring is, in Lishi movement, 'double-weighted' or neutral, so any kind of mirrored movement is a challenge and introduces suspense or a moment of unpredictability.

The choreography of this part of the piece arrested the feeling of tension that occurs in passing during the game of cricket and performed its affects of play in a to-and-fro sequence. The stances pushed intention forward (for example, a lunge with all the weight on the front, bended leg) and then drew it back (for example, standing with all the weight on one straight leg and foot, and with the ball and toes of the other foot pressing into the ground as if ready to pounce), in a relation traditionally called roll aways. Roll aways are found in many Asian movement systems, and their work in Lishi is to train in passing energy back and forward. Some postures dissipate energy and some generate it. Moving through them works like a battery that sets up a circuit that shifts energy to focused parts of the body. Energy can then be directed in a particular way, and

someone else receiving it can play with it.

The choreography had the two batsmen-performers using eye-contact to coordinate their long 'speed steps' and spinning leaps, which were then arrested in the intense moment of passing each other. Drawing on a centuries-old 'Dao' or Sabre form, they performed that sequence of moving 'qi' through the body, extending it to someone else, and then playing with it. The bats cut through the air at a decidedly un-cricket angle so that, when they finally collided, a resonating 'phat' rolled out around the stadium. The Lishi choreography was not there to illustrate cricket, or demonstrate it to the audience, but to generate a focus of attention and a resonant feeling that would draw the audience into an experience not only of the complex kinesthetic relations between the batsmen but also their relation to the 'bowler' and the 'ball'. That resonating sound coincided with the 'ball' knocking over the stumps, knocking the wind or energy out of the batsmen. The audience probably 'gets' the illustrative and demonstrative elements of the choreography, but the more important aspect is the ability to experience the feeling of working together and of challenge, the affects of distance and closeness, of neutrality and interruption, through a kinesthetic or embodied performance. We would argue that this is one of the elements of movement aesthetics that keeps sportspeople, whether players or audience, engaged.

Another way of 'seeing' cricket emerged from the choreography generated around the fielders. On the larger plan of the choreography that involved Phoenix Dance, the dynamics that is pulsed out from the pitch and the batsmen and bowler to the fielders, and back in again, is carried by the dancer who played the 'ball'. The opening 'yin' movements of the fielder-performers were choreographed to encourage them to connect to the audience in the stadium and the other performers, not by directly addressing them or 'acting out' the physical actions of fielders in cricket, but by focusing on particular elements to do with alignment and the kinesthetics of the traditional forms. The LI performers had to connect with all the aspects around them and move their energy to be 'present' in the stadium space. 'Presence' is a highly complex concept in Performance Studies yet everyone recognizes it. It is tied to that feeling one has when it is impossible to take one's eyes off someone walking across a stage, or to the seemingly magnetic attraction of sportspeople engaging with each other. The performers worked on this task using their skills to embody postures that were pushed to their limit, poised between balance and imbalance, at the edge.

The choreography of the piece underlined the way that the

contemporary dance performers, the 'bowler' and the 'ball' who worked with Phoenix Dance Theatre, moved differently from the Lishi dancers. Their ballet base with its historicized training, and its link with Western etiquette and outward behavioural display, was set in high relief against the culturally unknown, and hence ambiguous and unpredictable, movements of Lishi. The entwined choreographies generated a sense of circling round, with energy going out from the centre through the movements of the contemporary dance but simultaneously being retained at the centre by the energy work of the batsmen-performers. The fielder-performers and the 'ball' created a sustained inward-outward energy to intensify the centrality of the 'sacred' piece of turf, through timing and range, through the sound prompts of a score provided by Adam Sunderland, 'Poem of a Drum', and through the interchanges between contemporary dance and traditional movement.

Lishi performs what a lot of people feel through sport. It articulates something about the tensions and emotions in a game that most people recognize but do not usually think about. The performance at Headingley heightened the emotions and reactions of cricket by defamiliarizing them, not only through the conventional trope of sexuality but also through a different cultural movement form with a clear emphasis on movement as play. The former asked for recognition of a culturally specific topic that acted as a metaphor for the sexual energy of the game, and the latter prompted a more ambiguous process of affective response, a growing awareness of the unseen and usually-too-swift exchanges between and among cricket players. We would like to suggest that the combination of Lishi, a traditional movement system from China, with contemporary dance from the West created a transcultural energy that disrupted generic and culturally specific expectations of movement and dance. This foregrounded the aesthetics of movement and joined it with the often unacknowledged aesthetics of cricket, that are themselves built around the transcultural interplay of sportspeople from many different, mostly Commonwealth, or historically Commonwealth, countries.

The aesthetics of movement: Institutions and practice

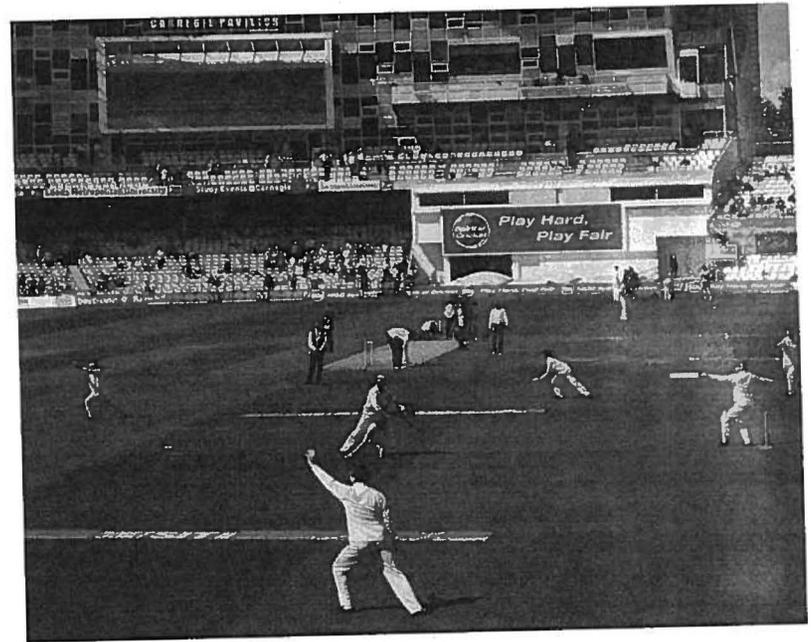
One of the cultural differences between sport and other group interactions based on body movement, such as dance, is the result-driven public face of the former and the attentive focus on process given to the latter. Sports are set up to be result-driven because they are located in a capital-intensive system which has to spend a large amount of money up front (training, facilities, etc.) and hence has to try to guarantee ticket

sales.⁷ A game that demonstrates a clear index to 'success' offers defined and immediate goals. A team that wins is more likely to get those results – another set of tautologies that bring to the surface the way Western capitalism has systemically embedded this kind of satisfaction.

But theatre and dance have their own complicity in economic structures. Like sport, dance-theatre is usually unique live performance. Until the recent projections of opera by way of cinema or website, itself only possible in the case of highly successful opera houses at which live performance tickets are generally sold out, staged productions were usually the one-off. Currently in Western countries, dance-theatre is a risky, capital intensive business with substantial funding locked up in buildings and administration prior to any performance. Hence there always have to be ways to get the audiences out to watch: the inexorable 'bums on seats' factor that dogs performance companies.

This establishes many similarities between sport and the arts. It is significant that although sports sell tickets through projecting 'wins', they also sell many tickets, in some cases a majority of tickets, through subscription or loyalty. Theatre and dance also sell tickets through a history of 'successful' productions and the hiring of 'stars', but again often sell more through subscription to local audience members. While theatre audiences may think they are making a risk investment and may also be loyal to a particular theatre, they are usually also committed to the overall aesthetic process of the art form. They know some of the shows will not be to their liking even if 'successful'. They know others will not find their way to performance that is charged with energy. Yet they support the overall project of the process of creating and building performance as an aesthetic experience.

Nevertheless, in both sport and the arts there usually has to be some kind of measured 'success' over time or funding falls through. There are not enough seats in a theatre compared to a stadium to fund performance through ticket sales, nor are there leagues and championship matches (although there can be tours, transfers and festivals), to sustain theatre and dance without external support. Funding sources for the arts are usually patrons, private or public, and there is relatively little additional income – unlike in sports which are supported far more through advertisement, either directly or through merchandise and television rights. This is why the arts need high-profile patrons in a way that sports often manage to do without – although with the more recent international aspirations of some sports, such as football, even here patrons have been shown to be essential.



The above brief and relatively familiar analysis is here to underline the difference in the administrative and patronage investment between the arts and sports. Sports depend on a predictable outcome, that is, winning, for ongoing support. The arts are also dependent on 'success' but, since the role of the arts in Western countries is to be the licensed transgressor of sociopolitical and cultural norms, there is an inbuilt tension between predictability and disruption. One of the significant aspects of the Headingley Cricket Club performance was that it was not publicized. There were no notes in any programme, there was no introduction via the tannoy system when the performers entered or left the stadium, there were no subtitles announcing Phoenix Dance Theatre or Lishi International on the big screen projections. The performance had the ambience that comes with popup theatre, whether in improvised dance, street theatre, activist intervention, hit-and-run theatre or similar process-based work.⁸ This is rare if not unheard of for contemporary dance companies like Phoenix, and more in tune with Lishi projects.⁹ The result at Headingley was an audience that was destabilized, faced for ten minutes not only with an unexpected performance for a cricket tea-break but also with something difficult to interpret and potentially alienating. In the

event the initially tentative audience became increasingly involved in the performance and, at the end, demonstrated their appreciation through applause that lasted beyond clapping the 'team' off the pitch. What had they engaged with?

We would argue that in addition to the function of the arts in Western states to disrupt cultural norms, there is a more distinctive and testing move made by the arts that foregrounds elements in lived experience that lie outside of hegemonic determinism. It is these elements on which a contemporary dance company such as Phoenix Dance Theatre depends, and that a movement practice such as Lishi materializes through performance. It is also these elements that bind together the underlying energy work in both sports and the arts. One of Lishi's greatest strengths is to encourage people to find the time to build an environment that supports 'practice'. A practice is not just something done over and over again – it is a way of doing things that calls for focus and attentiveness. A doctor has a practice; and although not many people know about it, a dancer usually has a practice. Dancers and choreographers speak with respect about someone who 'still has a practice'.

Phoenix Dance will train its dancers to have a practice in dance. What Lishi trains is a practice that is based in movement, but one that transfers an attitude of mind and body into all aspects of its practitioners' lives. A practice is a deep, ongoing, embodied way of knowing and being. We all know someone with a practice, from those who make time to spend time with older people to those who read a poem over and over again, from those who engage every day in the thoughtful cooking of a meal to those who lovingly restore antique cars. No one will have the same practice and Lishi is based on a philosophy that makes us more able to recognize different practices, it helps us to raise our awareness of how people are doing things, and gives us confidence in the attention we pay to things we value.

That moment of arrest in the choreography of the batsmen-performers allowed the embodied affects of distance and closeness, of familiarity and challenge, that engage sportspeople – and most of us in our daily dealings with others – to be translated into productive responses, which underline the choice we have to work with other people rather than to obstruct them, and the intensity of that interaction. The surrounding choreography of the fielder-performers introduced play rather than winning a game as the key to this kind of engagement, for play derives from collaboration and opens us up to new possibilities for imagining a sense of self. It also underlines the fullness and integrity that kinesthetic elements of

proprioception, perception, attention and awareness invoke.

The movements in the Lishi performance at Headingley could be interpreted in terms of the more culturally visible skills of wushu or martial arts, yet they are embedded in a practice that is about people training themselves in kinesthetic recognition, an aesthetics of movement that is far removed from martial arts and which only manifests in ways particular to a time and place. For that matter, there are also clear martial aspects to most sport. Cricket demonstrates these yet also foregrounds its aesthetic values as the martial becomes play through training. This training is in common with many practices that have developed over millennia, from playing a musical instrument to dance to carving among others. Training as a practice not only results in apparently effortless performance – it inhabits interaction with attentive energy that we usually take for granted. A practice trains us into being present, it makes the ordinary extraordinary. As suggested by current exploration in the phenomenology of performance, practice moves a performance from the aesthetics of disruption into resonance with memory, embodied knowledge, and lived experience.¹⁰ It moves sport from winning into playing.

Although it is unlikely that the combination of cricket, contemporary dance, and Daoist movement practice was intentional, it unleashed a potentially clichéd performance about sexuality and martial arts that became at first disturbing and then resonant with the particular audience. Key to this effect was the undermining of generic expectations in the choreography and the de-linking of the performance from many identifiable institutional grounds through elements of popup theatre. In the gap that was created, the attentive energy of practice emerged, the play that sustains interest in all performance whether classified as art or as sport.

NOTES

1. The phrase 'It's not the winning or losing, but how you play the game' has been adapted from the United States' sports writer, Grantland Rice, who wrote in 1927: 'For when the One Great Scorer comes, / To write against your name, / He marks – not that you won or lost – / But how you played the Game'.
2. David Palmer, *Qigong Fever: Body, Science, and Utopia in China* (New York: Columbia UP, 2007).
3. Ian Johnson, 'Are China's Rulers Getting Religion?' *New York Review of Books*, 29 October 2012.
4. See Susan Foster, ed., *Corporealities: Dancing, Knowledge, Culture, and Power* (London/New York: Routledge, 1996); Susan Manning, 'The Female Dancer and the Male Gaze: Feminist Critiques of Early Modern Dance', in *Meaning in Motion*, ed., Jane Desmond (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2006), pp. 153–66; Cynthia Bull, 'Sense, Meaning and Perception in Three Dance Cultures', in *Meaning in Motion*, ed., Jane Desmond

pp. 267–88, 275.

5. See Adrian Stokes, 'Psychoanalytic Reflections on the development of ball games, particularly cricket', *International Journal of Psycho-analysis*, 35 (1956) 185–92; Alan Dundes, 'Into the Endzone for a Touchdown: A Psychoanalytic Consideration of American Football', *Western Folklore*, 37:2 (April 1978) 75–88; and the more recent article by Marcus Free, 'Psychoanalytic perspectives on sport: a critical review' *International Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies*, 5:4 (December 2008) 273–96. Dundes refers to American football as an analogue for all sports played by men with balls as 'belonging to the general range of male rituals around the world in which masculinity is defined and affirmed. In American culture, women are permitted to be present as spectators or even cheerleaders, but they are not participants ... This too suggests that sport activity is in some sense a substitute for normal heterosexual relations. The men are "dead" as far as relationship with females are concerned. In sport and in ritual, men play both male and female parts'.
6. This strategy is not unfamiliar: an example is Benedict Mason's football opera, *Playing Away*, with Howard Brenton as the librettist. The opera produced by Opera North at the Grand Theatre, Leeds, and at the Munich Biennale (1994), was revived at the Bregenz festival in 2007. The role of the 'ball' was also performed by a female dancer.
7. Depending on audience habits this is risky. The Headingley match was dependent on the large local Asian population coming out to support their team, and the sports ground management knew that this audience tend to buy the tickets on the day so there was no guarantee that the game would in fact happen. A 'take' of less than a workable proportion results in a cancellation.
8. This kind of theatre is studied by, for example, Praise Zenenga, 'Hit-and-Run Theatre: the Rise of a New Dramatic Form in Zimbabwe', *Theatre History Studies: African and African American Theatre*, 30 (Tuscaloosa, AL: U of Alabama P, 2010) 14–41; Nicolas Zaunbrecher, 'The Elements of Improvisation: Structural Tools for Spontaneous Theatre', *Theatre Topics*, 21:1 (March 2011) 49–60; Linda Park-Fuller, 'Audiencing the Audience: Playback Theatre, Performative Writing, and Social Activism', *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 23:3 (2003) 288–310; see also the focus on process-based, site specific performance in Julie Holledge and Joanne Tompkins, *Women's Intercultural Performance* (London: Routledge, 2000).
9. See <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9dD3gbQXYaE>> for a Somerset House London popup Lishi International event.
10. See Sally Ann Ness, 'Being a Body in a Cultural Way: Understanding the cultural in the Embodiment of Dance', in *Cultural Bodies: Ethnography and Theory*, eds Helen Thomas and Jamilah Ahmed (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), pp. 123–44; Thomas Csordas, 'Embodiment and Cultural Phenomenology', in *Perspectives on Embodiment: The Intersections of Nature and Culture*, eds Gail Weiss and Honi Fern Haber (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 143–62; Thomas Csordas, 'Introduction: the body as representation and being-in-the-world', in *Embodiment and Experience: the Existential Ground of Culture and Self*, ed., Thomas Csordas (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), pp. 1–26; and André Lepecki, 'Introduction: Presence and Body in Dance and Performance Theory', in *Of the Presence of the Body: Essays on Dance and Performance Theory*, ed., André Lepecki (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan, 2004), pp. 1–9.

CHRIS MURRAY

The White Crane Art of Shàolín's Five Ancestors: a conversation with Chan See-meng

Master Chan See-meng [陳思明] is the successor of Master Chee Kim Thong (1918–2001), whose arts included most famously *Bái Hè Shàolín Wúzǔquán* [白鶴少林五祖拳], the White Crane lineage of Shàolín's Five Ancestors Fist.¹ Having lived in Glasgow, Kuala Lumpur, and Hong Kong, Master Chan is now based in Singapore, where he teaches martial arts exercises for health at the Pyramid Club in addition to private lessons in *Tàijíquán* and *Wúzǔquán*.

Master Chan first became interested in martial arts as a boy, when he was inspired by the stories recounted by Lee Dai Sor in Rediffusion broadcasts of the 1950s. 'Stories of heroes', Master Chan recalls. 'How righteous they are. How they want to help, not bully people. These ingredients got into me. I wanted to do things like the old heroes.' In particular he remembers a favourite story about Yang Luchan, the founder of Yang style *Tàijíquán*:

When Yang went to see the master, Mr Chen Changxing, Mr Chen did not accept him. He made a mistake, because he brought gold bars and a lot of expensive gifts to the master. So the master chucked him out. The reason? 'You are coming to learn my art. You think your money can buy my art?' Chen wouldn't accept him as a student. Then, out of the blue, there appeared a strange man, bald-headed, no eyebrows. And he would spend all day sweeping leaves around Mr Chen's house. He did it for about a year.

One day a stranger came to visit Mr Chen to challenge him to fight. Unfortunately Mr Chen was ill with diarrhoea. He couldn't even get out of bed, he was so weak, but the guy insisted, 'I've waited ten years for this fight, you have to fight me.' Then the leaf-sweeper appeared and said, 'Mr Chen, don't worry. I will represent you, I will fight him.' And then he fought off this assailant. Mr Chen said, 'Hey, your technique is like mine!' The man knelt down and apologized: 'It is me, Yang. I came to see you one year ago, but you kicked me out.' 'So how can you learn the art?' 'Every night when you are teaching I'm out in the woods, peeping at you.'

Mr Chen called all of his students. In the old days, if you peeped and tried to learn, by tradition the master would kill you. One of these students knew of Yang and said, 'This guy comes from a good family. Please don't kill him. He's a good man, it's just that he's mad about learning martial arts.' So Mr Chen said, 'I didn't say anything