

Stephen Atkins PhD

Artist's Summary of PaR Activities

Overview

Dr. Stephen Atkins is a Canadian performer, director, educator, and practice-led researcher whose work bridges actor training, rehearsal systems, performance philosophy, and intercultural performance practice. With more than thirty-five years of professional experience across stage, film, higher education, and independent performance laboratories, his research explores embodied cognition, relational rehearsal structures, queer performance, and post-methods approaches to actor training.

Atkins is the creator of Crosspoints, an integrative acting system and modular rehearsal framework developed through long-term studio practice, international workshops, conference presentations, and interdisciplinary research. Crosspoints synthesizes principles drawn from Stanislavski's Active Analysis, Demidov, Viewpoints, Suzuki Actor Training, Meisner Technique, Grotowski, performance art, and contemporary philosophies of embodiment and relationality. The project has expanded into workshops, publications, conference papers, digital resources, and the forthcoming Crosspoints Acting Deck.

His research and teaching have been presented internationally through collaborations, workshops, conferences, and institutional partnerships across Canada, the United Kingdom, Europe, Asia, and Australia. Atkins has held teaching and directing roles with institutions and organizations including Capilano University, East 15 Acting School, Rose Bruford College, Simon Fraser University, Zen Zen Zo Physical Theatre, and international training programs in Japan, China, and Europe.

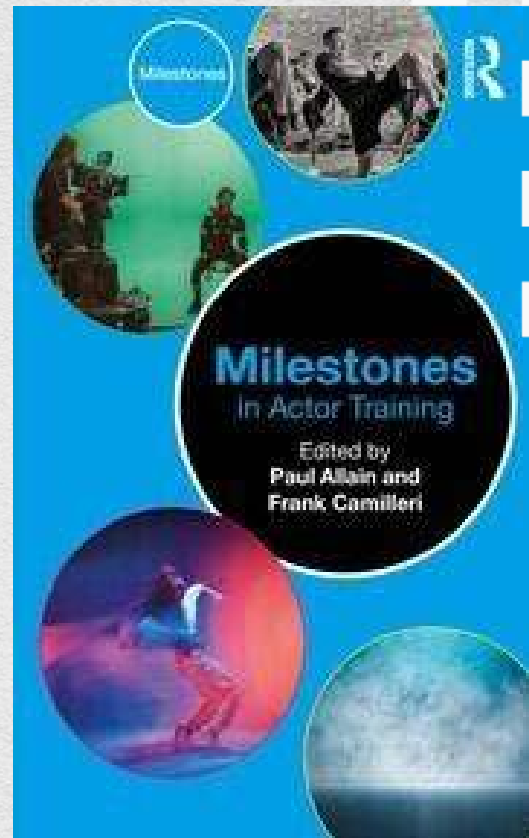
Atkins completed a PhD in Drama and Theatre at University of Kent with the thesis *Crosspoints: Toward an Integrative Framework for Actor Training and Rehearsal*. His scholarly work investigates relational approaches to rehearsal and performance, with particular emphasis on neurodiversity, externalized rehearsal structures, intercultural training methods, performance scores, and postdramatic approaches to actor development.

Publications

His publications include peer-reviewed journal articles in *Stanislavski Studies*, *Body, Space & Technology*, and *Canadian Theatre Review*, as well as chapters in edited collections such as *Milestones in Actor Training*. Atkins serves as Associate Editor and Blog Lead for *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training* and is Reviews Editor for *Performing Ethos*. He is also an active member of the International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR) Performance as Research Working Group.

Alongside academic research, Atkins has maintained an extensive creative practice as a director, dramaturg, deviser, and performer. His directing credits include productions of *Woyzeck*, *The Skriker*, *Cabaret*, *Prosecution*, *Les Belles-Soeurs*, and devised intercultural performance projects. Recent projects include the Cantonese fusion opera *The Awakening*, developed in collaboration with the Vancouver Cantonese Opera Society .

His work continues to explore the intersections of methodology, embodied cognition, queer performance, and contemporary performance cultures.





The Card Deck

The Crosspoints Acting Deck is a modular actor-training and rehearsal system developed by Dr. Stephen Atkins through decades of international practice-led research in performance, directing, and actor pedagogy.

The deck provides actors, directors, and teachers with a flexible framework for generating rehearsal scores, exploring character relationships, and externalizing creative decision-making.

Organized through interconnected suits and conceptual prompts, the system encourages exploratory, embodied, and collaborative approaches to rehearsal while resisting rigid psychological or prescriptive models of acting.



Profile: List Form

Stephen Atkins's Core Research Focus investigates:

- Actor Training
- Rehearsal Systems
- Acting Philosophy
- Intercultural and Queer Performance
- Post-method acting pedagogy

His work is influenced by:

- Stanislavski's Active Analysis
- Demidov
- Meisner Technique
- Performance Art
- Neurodiversity
- Embodied Cognition

Atkins has assembled the **Crosspoints**, an integrative acting system and modular rehearsal framework developed through long-term studio practice, international workshops, conference presentations, and interdisciplinary research. Crosspoints has developed into:

- A rehearsal methodology
- A teaching framework
- A card-based knowledge system
- A publication stream and digital community.

His publications include work in:

- Stanislavski Studies
- Body, Space & Technology
- Milestones in Actor Training
- Canadian Theatre Review

He also serves as:

- Associate Editor + Lead Blog Developer for Theatre, Dance and Performance Training (TDPT) Journal
- Associate Editor for Book Reviews Performing Ethos Journal
- Member of the International Federation of Performance Research (IFTR) - Performance as Research (PaR) Working Group

Alongside his academic work, Atkins has maintained an extensive creative practice as:

- Actor / Performer
- Deviser
- Acting Coach
- Workshop Leader
- Dramaturg
- Director



Summary

Atkins's work positions actor training as a form of practice-led research. Across performance, pedagogy, writing, directing, and public workshops, his work develops tools for actors and teachers to work with complexity, contradiction, embodiment, and relational presence.