

Through the Immersive Lookingglass Acting Workshop

– A “Glocal Learning” Exchange and Cross-Cultural Collaboration Between
the U.S. and India through Viewpoints and Rasa Methodologies –

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I. Introduction

This case study situates itself at the intersection of globalized actor training, intercultural pedagogy, and the role of technology in performance education. In the post-COVID era, real-time digital connection has shifted from novelty to everyday necessity, reshaping how collaboration and learning occur across borders and time zones. Against this backdrop, the article investigates the integration of Indian Navarasa and American Viewpoints methodologies within digitally connected high-tech classrooms. Both performance practices are rooted in and inspired by dance choreographic traditions: in India, dance and theatre have historically been inseparable, codified in Bharata Muni’s 『*Nāṭyaśāstra*』 (c. 200 BCE–200 CE) as a unified aesthetic practice; in the United States, Viewpoints emerged from modern dance experimentation in the 1960s and 70s before becoming a staple in theatre education and devised theater, transforming a tradition long dominated by text and psychological realism. Our *Immersive Lookingglass Glocal US-India Acting Workshop* underscores how performance methodologies rooted in dance choreography can serve as a generative source for theatre across cultures, time and distance.

Both Navarasa and Viewpoints demonstrate how dance and theatre historically overlap. In India, the ancient 『*Nāṭyaśāstra*』, widely known as the foundational treatise of Indian aesthetics, defines

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performance (*nāṭya*) as a synthesis of drama, dance, and music—an integrated art of performance. In the United States, choreographer Mary Overlie introduced the Six Viewpoints—space, shape, time, emotion, movement, and story—within the postmodern dance movement of the 1970s. Anne Bogart encountered Overlie’s work at New York University in the late 1970s and, together with Tina Landau, codified the method as *Viewpoints*, a compositional approach that provided theatre practitioners with a radically different avenue from psychology-driven acting and conventional Western text-based drama. As Bogart and Landau note, “To Anne (and later Tina), it was instantly clear that Mary’s approach to generating movement for the stage was applicable to creating viscerally dynamic moments of theater with actors and other collaborators”(Bogart & Landau, 2005, p. 5). These intertwined lineages position dance choreography not as a separate form but as a generative catalyst that continues to shape contemporary theatre practice.

This U.S.–India Acting Workshop was supported by the University of Southern California’s Viterbi Engineering School’s iPodia initiative, with technology provided by Microsoft to connect USC in Los Angeles—the heart of Hollywood—with Whistling Woods International Film Academy in Mumbai, located in the heart of Bollywood.

Central research questions include: how real-time intercultural exchange influences student learning and engagement in the pedagogy of experiential “glocal” education; what role technology can play in bridging methodologies across cultural traditions in the post-COVID era and beyond Zoom; and how students can embody what they have learned in digital and intercultural contexts through the creation of performance vignettes.

II. Background of iPodia

The iPodia initiative, founded at USC’s Viterbi School of Engineering in 2009, has grown into an international alliance of 17 universities across four continents, committed to creating “classrooms without borders” and advancing what is described as “glocal” education—global learning on local campuses (University of Southern California, n.d.-a). Unlike most online courses, which focus on digitizing lectures for one-way consumption, iPodia’s mission is to center interactive peer learning that dismantles institutional and cultural barriers and fostering global innovation.

In 2023, USC’s Office of the Provost expanded this vision through the creation of the iPodia Faculty Fellowship (University of Southern California, n.d.-b). As part of the inaugural Faculty Fellow cohort, my goal was to develop a global acting exchange program with my Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) students majoring in acting. The movement section of *The Actor’s Instrument*, by nature embodied and experiential, would be more challenging than the traditional lecture-based iPodia

courses. The initial obstacle, however, was identifying an international partner institution that would both align with USC’s Research I standing and meet the rigor of a conservatory-level BFA acting program while minimizing language barriers by using English as the shared working language. While I anticipated my personal international contacts would suffice to start, the reality of building reciprocal institutional partnerships proved far more complex.

With support from the iPodia team, led by Dr. Stephen Lu (Director) and Elisabeth Arnold Weiss (Associate Director for Partnership and Outreach), I was introduced to Whistling Woods International in Mumbai, a nationally recognized film academy, and this proved to be the breakthrough. In collaboration with the then Head of Acting Oorvazi Irani and Faculty in Actor’s Studio Sonali Bhardwaj, I started developing a synchronous *glocal* acting exchange program, supported by immersive classroom technology and Microsoft Teams. Students from both countries encountered the challenges and opportunities of engaging across nearly twelve time zones, while also gaining the rare chance to cross-learn U.S. Viewpoints training and India’s Rasa-based methodologies. This real-time intercultural exchange offered students, faculty, and staff an invaluable chance to broaden and reshape performance pedagogy—expanding how we teach, learn and generate performance. It highlights how digital and cultural hybridity can strengthen theatre education and advance inclusivity in performance processes and implementation.

iPodia Classroom



<Figure 1> iPodia Classroom, University of Southern California¹⁾

1) University of Southern California.(n.d.-a). “iPodia alliance”. *University of Southern California – iPodia*. <<https://ipodia.usc.edu/ipodia-alliance>, 2025. 09. 10>.

III. Workshop Description and Analysis

1. Workshop 1 Introducing Navarasa, The Nine Emotions of Indian Aesthetics

The first US-India workshop was led by Sonali Bhardwaj, faculty in Actor's Studio, at Whistling Woods International in Mumbai, assisted by two teaching assistants. Bhardwaj trained under G. Venu, a renowned master of Kudiattam—the oldest living form of Sanskrit theatre from Kerala—and the founder of Navarasa Sādhana, a systematic approach to daily rasa training. Venu's work has been instrumental in codifying practices that connect the ancient 『*Nāṭyaśāstra*』—a foundational Sanskrit text on drama, dance, and aesthetics, composed between 200 BCE and 200 CE—to contemporary performance pedagogy, and Bhardwaj situates her teaching within this lineage.

The initial intent was for all of the Indian students to join simultaneously with the USC cohort, but because of the late evening schedule in Mumbai, Whistling Woods could not mandate their attendance. As a result, the session, which began at 8 a.m. Pacific Coast Time (PCT), was conducted as a more traditional remote master class with only the USC students present. While this format did not fully realize the iPodia mission of having both student groups engaged in real time, it nonetheless proved highly effective. Bhardwaj engaged with the USC students as though they were in her studio, demonstrating how embodied knowledge could be transmitted across borders through technology.

“The fundamental objective of a dramatic performance in Indian theater tradition is to evoke Rasa in the spectator”(Saif, 2017). Bhardwaj framed this Navarasa practice as ritualized embodiment. The classroom had an open flamed lamp with flowers around it, symbolizing focused energy, and the TAs were wearing traditional Indian clothing which was explained to us as “simple training costume to signal neutrality” though it looked elaborate to our untrained Western eyes. From this foundation, she guided students through exercises centered on eyes, breath, and imagination.

The pivotal exercise was the adoption of the *chauka* stance—a deep, balanced squat with spine aligned and weight evenly distributed. In this posture, students were restricted in moving their bodies and instructed instead to generate rasa solely through their eyes, facial expression, and breath. Bhardwaj selected the following three rasas to introduce during our limited time frame. For Love (*Śṛṅgāra*), she walked the students through constructing sensory-rich stories of meeting a beloved, then sustaining the state with wide eyes and controlled breath. Bhardwaj added music to deepen the immersion, encouraging them to “dance with your eyebrows” and “smile with your gaze.” For Disgust (*Bībhatsa*), she conjured the imagery of a war field littered with injured bodies, asking students to imagine crushing an eyeball underfoot or inhaling the stench of decay. Here the breath shortened and grew jagged, often accompanied by guttural sounds. Peace (*Śānta*) concluded the session: students imagined the arc of an entire life, then released body and breath into stillness as if taking a final exhale. The *chauka* stance and micro-expressions students exercised are as foundational for Indian classical

dancers as for actors at a film academy, demonstrating how dance choreography and theatrical practices confluence within Indian aesthetics.



<Figure 2> Navarasa workshop with Sonali Bhardwaj on screen, chauka stance²⁾

For many USC students and I, this discipline of immobility was revelatory. One student remarked: “The hardest part was internally visualizing it and experiencing it, but then also balancing that with how much do I perform this and how much am I just feeling it.” Another reflected on Love: “Rather than feeling it in my heart, I felt it deep in my pelvis—as if the emotion had weight in my body.” On Disgust, a student noted: “The breath was a lot shorter than love. I almost didn’t want to breathe at all, because every inhale carried the smell of blood.” In Peace, another described: “It felt like emptying a pitcher—you pour everything out, but you can refill it as soon as you return.”

Despite the distance, Bhardwaj’s pedagogy was highly interactive and intimate, due to her large real scale image, reflected on the wall screen and also crisp audio, transmitted through our local USC iPodia classroom. On her end in Mumbai, she was able to notice minute shifts in posture and breath of the US students, and asked probing questions: “What color did you see while practicing love?” “Where in your body did the emotion live?” “Was it difficult to let go of your body during peace?” These questions deepened the students’ awareness and created a palpable sense of connection across, despite our physical distance being approximately 14,000 km/8,700 miles away on completely

2) University of Southern California.(n.d.-a). “iPodia alliance”. *University of Southern California – iPodia*. <<https://ipodia.usc.edu/ipodia-alliance>, 2025. 09. 10>.

opposite time zones.

For my USC students—who are primarily trained in Western methodologies such as Stanislavski’s psychophysical realism or movement-based Anne Bogart and Tina Landau’s Viewpoints—the Navarasa exercises illuminated a strikingly different approach: accessing emotion through stillness, micro-expressions, and breath, rather than through text analysis or external action.

By the end of the session, the USC students had a firsthand experiential understanding of Navarasa not as abstract philosophy but as a rigorous, embodied discipline. The *chauka* stance and the restriction to eyes and breath revealed the subtlety, stamina, and imaginative intensity required to generate *rasa*. What might have seemed like limitation became a vehicle for expression: proof that the body, even held still, can be a vast instrument of performance through imagination and breath work. The three *rasas* explored in this first session—Love (*Śṛṅgāra*), Disgust (*Bībhatsa*), and Peace (*Śānta*)—did not remain isolated exercises. They were carried forward into the following week’s Viewpoints Composition exercise, where students were asked to incorporate these emotional *rasa* states within Viewpoints’ “ingredients,” weaving Indian aesthetics into American ensemble practice.



<Figure 3> Navarasa workshop with Sonali Bhardwaj on screen, USC students in iPodia classroom³⁾

3) University of Southern California.(n.d.-a). “iPodia alliance”. *University of Southern California – iPodia*. <<https://ipodia.usc.edu/ipodia-alliance>, 2025. 09. 10>.

2. Workshop 2 Viewpoints through the Immersive Lookingglass

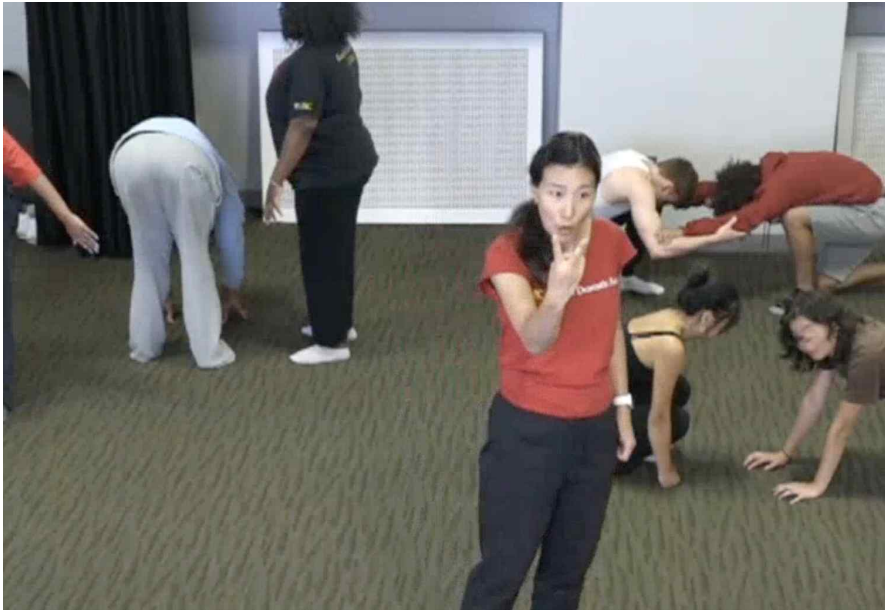
The following week, I led the second workshop introducing Viewpoints methodology to both students in their relative glocal classrooms. My training in this work comes directly from Anne Bogart, head of the Directing Program at Columbia University, and her SITI Company, and this lineage has profoundly shaped my pedagogy. Viewpoints, as articulated by Bogart and Landau(2005), expands physical and vocal awareness by dismantling hierarchical performance structures and inviting actors to engage with time, space, and movement as important elements of Composition.

It is important to remember that the Viewpoints were first created by choreographer Mary Overlie as a dance composition tool in the 1970s. Bogart and Landau's adaptation of this dance structure into actor training shows how movement analysis and choreographic principles transformed the foundations of U.S. theatre pedagogy. Long associated with devised theater, the method provides tools for ensemble-based improvisation and collaborative creation. It is not only a methodology for the stage but also a valuable academic tool: it awakens students' physical intelligence, fosters ensemble collaboration, and cultivates 'doing over talking or thinking.' And therefore, as a foundational acting technique, I integrate Viewpoints into all my acting classes at USC. Students begin with the nine Physical Viewpoints—architecture, topography, spatial relationships, gesture, shape, tempo, duration, repetition, and kinesthetic response—and later add the Vocal Viewpoints of pitch, dynamic, acceleration and deceleration, silence, and timbre. Once grounded in this shared language, they generate "Composition" pieces by using specific "ingredients," a process that is intentionally flexible, unpredictable, and capable of including intentional theatrical elements.

It was exciting to finally have both the Actor's Instrument (Movement) class of thirteen USC BFA students and the fourteen senior acting students from Whistling Woods International in Mumbai, introducing themselves to each other at the top of class. For the first time, both cohorts occupied the *glocal* classrooms: two studios, thousands of miles apart, linked by the large-format screen I refer to as the "Lookingglass Portal," which created the sense of standing face-to-face in a shared rehearsal hall.

Then we began exploring the nine Viewpoints on our feet, first starting with walking on a grid pattern in the space, altering tempo and duration, then scaffolding with shape, gesture, spatial relationship, architecture, and repetition. Each element was introduced incrementally, with pauses for reflection. When one cohort moved, the other observed across the Lookingglass Portal—Group A (USC) performing while Group B (Whistling Woods) watched, then switching roles so the Indian students exercised the same Viewpoints while USC students observed.

The discoveries came from watching how cultural aesthetics shaped embodiment across the glocal classrooms. Through mirroring and kinesthetic response, both groups began to pick up—and subtly translate—each other's movement vocabularies.



<Figure 4> Viewpoints workshop with Esther K. Chae instructing both USC students in iPodia classroom and Whistling Woods students through the “Lookingglass Portal” wall screen⁴⁾

After each Viewpoint had been exercised, I directed the students under “exquisite pressure” to devise and create a short Composition piece—one of the most applicable exercises of Viewpoints pedagogy (Bogart & Landau, 2005). Each cohort from both campuses had 15 mins to score and devise a short performance vignette using the following elements:

5 mins Composition Ingredients (to be used with all 9 Viewpoints):

- Choose an idea or theme from the three Rasas (Love, Disgust, Peace)
- Clear Entrance/Exit
- Music with no lyrics but atmospheric, ambient, repetitive, open (film scores, Pina, Cirque du Soleil, Philip Glass, lo-fi hip hop, etc.)
- Revelation of Space
- Revelation of Relationship(s) between Characters
- Balance between Behavioral and Expressive gestures
- 10 seconds of Mirror Exercise
- 1 very loud Sound
- 1 Tableau

Each group generated a brief vignette and then presented it across the Lookingglass Portal. Though presented in broad strokes with minimal rehearsal time, the sketches were a window into the rehearsal

4) University of Southern California.(n.d.-a). “iPodia alliance”. *University of Southern California – iPodia*. <<https://ipodia.usc.edu/ipodia-alliance>, 2025. 09. 10>.

process—playful, theatrical, and rooted in kinesthetic responses to each other, cultural gesture, and shared Viewpoint movement vocabulary.

The workshop also demonstrated why Viewpoints is an invaluable methodology in intercultural and digital contexts: it is radically malleable. Because Compositions are built from whatever “ingredients” the instructor provides, the framework can easily apply newly introduced ideas, practices, and confluence different cultural traditions. In this case, integrating the three Rasas (Love, Disgust, Peace) from the previous session into the compositional recipe allowed students to experiment how internal emotional states could be externalized through the nine Viewpoints that can serve as a flexible tool. This discovery, which combines methodologies from two different classrooms, cultures, and training backgrounds within a very short and condensed timeline, is an important starting point. However, it also indicates the need for further exploration with the next iPodia Program 2.0, where fuller immersion and outside-class rehearsal time can be preplanned and integrated into a performative presentation.

From my observation and student feedback from both sides, it was clear that this workshop illuminated how acting pedagogy can transcend geography when coupled with embodied methodologies and thoughtful technological frameworks. Our artistic exchanges reinforced all three of my research questions: the potential of experiential *glocal* pedagogy to transform student engagement and learning opportunities, the effective role of post-COVID technology in transmitting embodied practice across distance when robust technological support is provided, and the creation of performance vignettes that emerge from generative and interculturally mediated rehearsals, however short.

IV. Scholarship and Key Findings

1. Pedagogy – experiential “glocal” learning. How does real-time intercultural exchange influence student learning and engagement?

Two acting methodologies—the Indian Navarasa (Nine Rasas) and the American Nine Viewpoints—were exchanged and embodied across *glocal* classrooms. Both Rasa and Viewpoints trainings stem from dance theater and dance choreographic systems and were implemented into our are educational training and used to devise performance pieces. This real-time encounter of different methodologies, mediated by technology yet grounded in the physical presence of each cohort, revealed the high impact of intercultural exchange to deepen engagement and reshape pedagogical practice. Students and faculty engaged simultaneously across continents, fostering trust, mutual presence, and inclusive learning directly from primary sources rather than secondhand interpretation.

Equally significant, this structure disrupted conventional hierarchies by shifting the paradigm

between “master teacher” and “student learner.” Rather than relying only on a unidirectional flow of knowledge, participants encountered a pedagogy of reciprocity through discussions and feedback during the workshop, where authority was shared, and cultural knowledge was validated on both sides. The Composition exercises positioned students not as passive recipients but as active and generative artists, embodying an equitable exchange of global methodologies.

The student responses reveal this dynamic most clearly. A USC participant emphasized the difficulty and novelty of learning through an unfamiliar cultural lens:

“Workshop 1- Rasas was a completely new thing for me and it was challenging. It was difficult to convey these powerful emotions with only our faces and our breathing, but it is something that I will continue to take with me in my work.”

—USC BFA junior student

In contrast, a Whistling Woods student articulated a sense of recognition, describing the encounter as a reframing of familiar practices:

“The experience wasn’t new, but the interesting part was that we were doing the same thing that were taught in our college in a very different way. For example: the repetition, mirror thing was done in our physical theatre and the same thing we used in today’s exercise in a very interesting way... Overall it was my first time being in a masterclass with students from outside our country.”

—Whistling Woods International student

Together, these reflections delineate two complementary pathways of global pedagogy: the challenge of stepping into a completely foreign methodology and the reinvigoration of reflecting on one’s own training through a new cultural lens or definition of terminology with an international counterpart. Staying in the “safe zone” breeds uninspired performances for actors. It is precisely through encounters with divergent traditions and practices that students expand their artistic vocabularies, discover alternative sources of creativity, and deepen their capacity for responsiveness in performance. Integrating vastly different pedagogies does not dilute student learning; it intensifies it, cultivating agility, adaptability, and rigor that are essential for contemporary global actors.

2. Technology – post-COVID era and beyond Zoom. What role can technology play in bridging methodologies across international geolocations?

No doubt, we would not have experienced and learned to the level we did without full access to a high-tech classroom integrated with Microsoft Team application and a dedicated management support team for this program. The high-resolution full wall screen, clear sound quality and comfortable

carpeted space was ideal for the two separate sessions of a two-hour class, especially in reducing any “Zoom fatigue,” caused by heightened cognitive load of the dissonance of people not actually being in the same space together.

The role of technology in connecting geographies and communication methods has shifted dramatically in the post-COVID era. What was once seen as supplementary—video/audio transmission and the use of apps—has now become ubiquitous in daily life and in education. Most educational institutions today have smart classrooms, typically outfitted with a screen and basic frontal audio. While this setup suffices for lecture delivery or video playback, it does not adequately support the demands of performance pedagogy, which requires as much of an immersive environment as possible.

The iPodia classroom at USC’s Viterbi School of Engineering, recently renovated with Microsoft’s investment, provided an elevated infrastructure for immersive exchange. The space was equipped with upgraded projection, integrated audio, and interactive connectivity features far beyond standard classrooms. Without this technological capacity, my students and I, and our counterparts at Whistling Woods International in Mumbai, would not have been able to experience the same degree of “real-time” intercultural glocal learning.

iPodia Classroom Specifications

- 2 Sony BRC-X1000 4K PTZ Cameras, front and back of room
- 3 Ceiling Array Microphones
- 6 Full-range Pendant Speakers
- Front Large wall-mounted screen (142” x 80”)
- 2 Rear screens (72” x 41”)
- Moveable Steelcase Node Chairs (all cleared to create a studio-like environment for unrestricted movement)
- Instructor PC on desk with camera control to Zoom in and out
- Multiple “Surface Hubs” (large computer screens on rollers that can easily be moved around in the space)

Whistling Woods International, as a film academy, was well positioned to support our immersive acting program exchange. Their studios, cameras, and technicians allowed for dynamic framing—zooming in and out on students and teachers, shifting angles, and adjusting visuals and sound for clarity in real time. Their nimble setup provided far greater local flexibility than our technologically advanced but lecture-oriented iPodia classroom, where operations were managed solely by our Program Manager, Jenny Visapattana.

Even so, we encountered minor technical challenges, including sound distortion and response lag that disrupted flow and focus. While these issues were easily managed during rehearsals or lessons by simply repeating directions, they raised questions about feasibility in a live performance context

across continents. As Helm and Beaven(2020) observe, ““VE (Virtual Exchange) is an often ‘messy’ endeavour: whilst interactions and activities may be structured and planned, the outcomes are unpredictable and depend on a multiplicity of factors. Yet it is often the unexpected and the challenges that lead us to reflect and learn.”” This framing highlights that such glitches are not merely obstacles but productive sites of learning, and they remain an area for exploration in a future iteration of the iPodia U.S.-India Acting Program 2.0.

But what if one’s institution, like most, does not have the backing of a major tech company or equivalent access to a high-tech classroom? From my observation and experience, I posit that if scale can be adjusted and manipulated to approximate body size through projection, and if good-quality sound can be achieved with easily accessible portable sound systems, then the immersive construct of “sharing the same space” can still be realized. My observation is that the high resolution of video and visuals to which we have become accustomed becomes less important, if these two elements are reconfigured by strategically leveraging available resources.

While USC’s iPodia classroom is equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure, it was designed primarily as a flexible lecture hall rather than a performance studio. The main camera in the iPodia classroom on the USC campus is positioned above the large wall screen, higher than eye level, and therefore disrupted the sense of direct eye contact when we addressed our Indian counterparts through the *lookingglass* wall screen. By contrast, Whistling Woods International’s studio setup and camera equipment’s adaptability allowed for a more immersive glocal classroom experience for us. An adjustable camera position design would be greatly beneficial for future non-lecture-based programs that depend on embodied intercultural collaboration. With this in mind, performance-based studios in academia would benefit from incorporating smart room designs that support immersive exchanges extending beyond classroom walls.

3. Content - generating performance vignettes. How did students embody what they learned in digital and intercultural contexts and connect with each other?

Using the Viewpoints’ Composition ingredients technique, students applied real-time learnings from both Navarasa and Viewpoints methodologies to devise short first-draft theatrical pieces under the *exquisite pressure* of a fifteen-minute time limit. Even in these preliminary sketches, interconnections emerged that exemplified the collaboration and innovation across the two glocal classrooms. For instance, after one of the U.S. groups presented, the Indian students offered pointed feedback, observing that one of the required ingredients—the ten-second hold to create a tableau—was missing and needed to be incorporated. The U.S. group immediately recognized this oversight with collective exclamations, revised their work on the spot, and re-presented the piece with this addition, verifying how the adjustment was essential in their short composition storytelling.

Another example of the classroom without borders model arose not during formal exercises but during an informal break. When one USC BFA student began doing pushups, male students in Mumbai playfully countered by showcasing their pushup skills. A few more USC students quickly joined in, and what followed was a spontaneous, playful pushup competition unfolding simultaneously across the two glocal classrooms. This embodied exchange—unscripted, improvisational, and playful—captured the ethos of the borderless classroom, with students bringing their full physical presence across time zones, in equal and active participation. As Lu and Yortsos(2023) explain, “iLearning uses technologies to eliminate the interaction distance of effective peer learning for students. As such, students at distant locations, on multiple campuses, and with diverse cultures can learn together seamlessly as local peers”(Lu & Yortsos, 2023, p. 2).

Unlike the inherent hierarchy that emerges when a master teacher enters as guest, or the imbalance of comfort and power when visiting students enter another group’s home ground, iPodia’s glocal model—anchored in simultaneous, technology-mediated co-presence—created an equitable learning environment in which both campuses retained agency, presence, and ease with neither overshadowing the other.



<Figure 5> Spontaneous push-up competition with USC students in small right screen⁵⁾

V. Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Student feedback underscored the depth of engagement facilitated by intercultural collaboration. University of Southern California students noted that their training had traditionally emphasized internalized emotional recall and psychological realism, whereas Navarasa offered a valuable

5) University of Southern California.(n.d.-a). “iPodia alliance”. *University of Southern California – iPodia*. <<https://ipodia.usc.edu/ipodia-alliance>, 2025. 09. 10>.

alternative approach grounded in externalized breath and movement. Whistling Woods International students found that Viewpoints did not introduce completely unfamiliar practices so much as provide new terminology and frameworks—encouraging spontaneity, collaborative group work, and a fresh way of conceptualizing improvisation and kinesthetic response.

Program evaluations underscored its effectiveness: all participants expressed strong interest in future iterations, highlighting the pedagogical value of intercultural exchange, embodied practice, and collaborative inquiry. Students on both sides emphasized that direct exposure to diverse aesthetic traditions deepened both their artistic practice and global awareness. Building on this success, the next phase of the *Through the Immersive Lookingglass: iPodia U.S.-India Acting Workshop* would be to expand into a hybrid rehearsal model, culminating in collaboratively devised performance works. In this way, iPodia not only advances inclusive pedagogy but also demonstrates how global, technology-enabled classrooms can catalyze new forms of disciplinary knowledge and practice.

As one USC student reflected afterward: "... we're on opposite ends of the world ... and I was like, oh this is really cool!"

VI. Challenges and Next Steps

The workshops demonstrated the potential of immersive classrooms to enhance engagement and reduce "Zoom fatigue." However, challenges remain in addressing time zones, language barriers, and disparities in technological access.

Logistical and Technical Challenges

- Time zone differences: Coordinating synchronous workshops across nearly opposite time zones (Los Angeles and Mumbai are separated by a 12.5-hour time difference) required significant institutional flexibility and careful scheduling.
- Pre-production demands: Organizing multi-site workshops required extensive preparation, including technical rehearsals, alignment of curricular goals, and troubleshooting potential failures.
- Digital access disparities: USC and Whistling Woods benefited from advanced resources; however, scaling this model to less technologically resourced institutions will require alternative solutions for equity and accessibility.

Future Research and Iterations

- Flipped classroom model: Pre-recorded instructional modules from this 1.0 program will be developed, so students can review content asynchronously prior to workshops, freeing live sessions for embodied practice and deeper intercultural engagement.

- Expanded cross-cultural pairings: Future iterations aim to include mixed grouping from both international cohorts (not just from the same local campus) to further broaden the comparative lens of intercultural performance pedagogy research. Rehearsal, using technology, will be required outside of class time amongst the international students for live performance presentation.
- Production applications: Workshops will be expanded into hybrid rehearsal processes that culminate in devised intercultural performances, exploring the potential of digital and in-person collaboration.
- Longitudinal impact assessment: A future goal is to conduct a follow-up study how students integrate Navarasa and Viewpoints into their evolving acting methodologies, assessing long-term pedagogical impact.
- Language barriers: While English functioned as the shared working language, it would be a useful experiment to use technology such as the Live Translation in the new Apple product AirPods Pro 3 where the Indian students can express themselves more freely using Hindi and other native languages.

These challenges underscored that the future of intercultural performance pedagogy depends not only on artistic innovation but also on sustained infrastructural and institutional commitment, and implementation of advancing technology.

VII. Conclusion

This study demonstrates the pedagogical value of intercultural methodologies in digitally mediated performance training. The synthesis of Navarasa and Viewpoints illustrates the potential for inclusive actor training that transcends geography. As scholars note, telepresence technologies encourage students to ‘broaden their horizons, [permit] discipline-based academic theories to be contrasted with practice and, in addition, [allow them] to have greater confidence in assessing how theatre is created in other countries [and cultures]’(Kanninen, Syrjä, & Gorman, 2016, as cited in Gorman, Kanninen, & Syrjä, 2020). This study and our own findings affirm that such digitally enabled exchanges can expand artistic practice while strengthening cultural understanding. By leveraging the iPodia framework, acting pedagogy can advance toward a global, collaborative model that enriches artistic practice and fosters cultural understanding.

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논문투고일 2025. 10. 06.
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This study investigates the integration of the Indian Navarasa tradition and the American Viewpoints methodology in a “glocal” (global learning in local) classroom context, facilitated through University of Southern California’s iPodia model of ‘classrooms without borders.’ Conducted through two synchronous workshops in the fall 2023, linking the University of Southern California’s Actor’s Instrument (Movement) class and Whistling Woods International Film Academy in Mumbai, India, the project examined how digital platforms and intercultural acting methodology exchanges can reshape and enhance actor training. Student reflections and workshop evaluations indicated that combining diverse cultural methodologies enhanced their engagement, broadened their artistic perspectives, and strengthened their embodied performance practices. The study further highlights the pedagogical significance of technology in global performance education, while identifying logistical and technical challenges for scalability and accessibility.

Keywords: Intercultural acting(상호문화적 연기), Navarasa(나바라사), Viewpoints(뷰포인트), Glocal education(글로벌 교육), Digital performance pedagogy(디지털 공연 교육학)