*Beat* REF statement (300 words) Virginia Pitts

The research question underpinning *Beat* is: ‘How can a dialogic mode of human interaction (i.e. a mode acknowledging “simultaneous resemblance and difference”[[1]](#footnote-1)) be expressed non-verbally through performance, narrative, music and film style?’ During extensive workshopping, synergies were discovered between thematic intent and creative process in that the intersubjective nature of dialogic interaction is also central to the mechanism of kinesthetic empathy (muscular empathy with aestheticized bodily movements) that characterized my relationship to the performers during the development process. In the hope that audience members might also experience that synergy, the initial research question was expanded to ask how the project might trigger an embodied response to an academic construct in the film-viewing experience.

The resulting film is a hybrid narrative/screendance in which the narrative line revolves around the preparation of food – at first individual snacks and, finally, a jointly prepared meal. As the characters begin to connect, the distinct musical genres they listen to begin to merge, as do the associated dance styles. Though initially somewhat dissonant, the musical and choreographic dialogues develop until, in the denouement, they coalesce coherently without quashing the visibility and identity of each generic influence.  With the microcosmic narrative line and the dance sequences brought together through rhythmic structures fashioned in the editing process, *Beat* demonstrates how the simultaneous resemblance and difference characteristic of dialogic interaction can be rendered in the filmic medium.

The findings of this PaR project are relevant for suggesting that, by blurring the lines between subject and object, we can progress beyond the mutual ‘othering’ that often taints interpersonal and cross-cultural interaction. The choice of an accessible communicative strategy that triggers kinesthetic empathy in the viewer is designed to encourage an embodied (and therefore an augmented) understanding of this contstruct.

1. Holquist, Michael. *Dialogism* (2nd edition). Oxon: Routledge, 2002. Print: 26 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)