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Performance Place and Politics: A blog about the local/global interfaces of audience and event

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“*Kwan Yin* is a twenty-minute duet that Kwan has created with her 77-year old father, Lihuen Kwan. Wanting to explore the idea of patience via the heart sutra of the Chinese Buddhist Bodhisattva who gives the piece its title, Kwan decided to work with the person with whom she is most often impatient. What has resulted is a tender father-daughter exploration of the “colour of emptiness,” again accompanied by the live on-stage cello stylings of Lee. The piece begins with the three performers in separate moons of half-light; Lihuen Kwan, sitting on a chair, is the furthest downstage. His daughter, whom he will come to identify as his shadow, slowly advances towards him, taking first one and then the other arm before letting each drop, the weightless thud of Lihuen Kwan’s hands on his thighs at this point signalling how far apart these two yet remain. But the pair will eventually come together, including in some very moving bits of unison and partnering late in the piece. It is a testament to the reserves of patience Kwan ended up finding and drawing upon in the making of this piece that, in these sequences, she lets her father (who is certainly a spry mover) take the lead.”